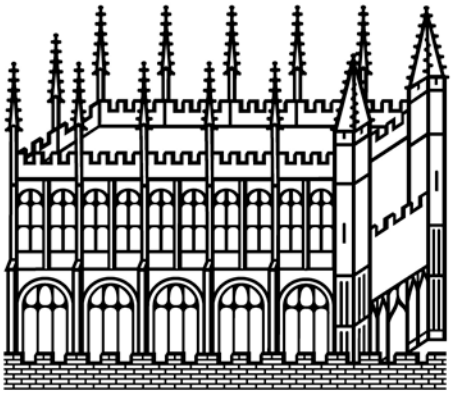

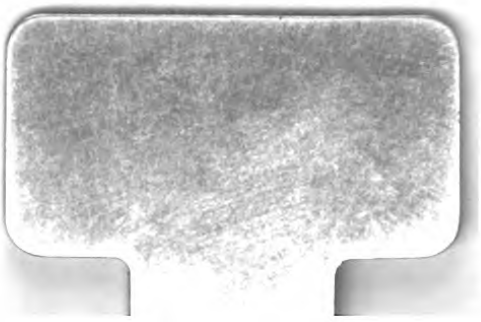


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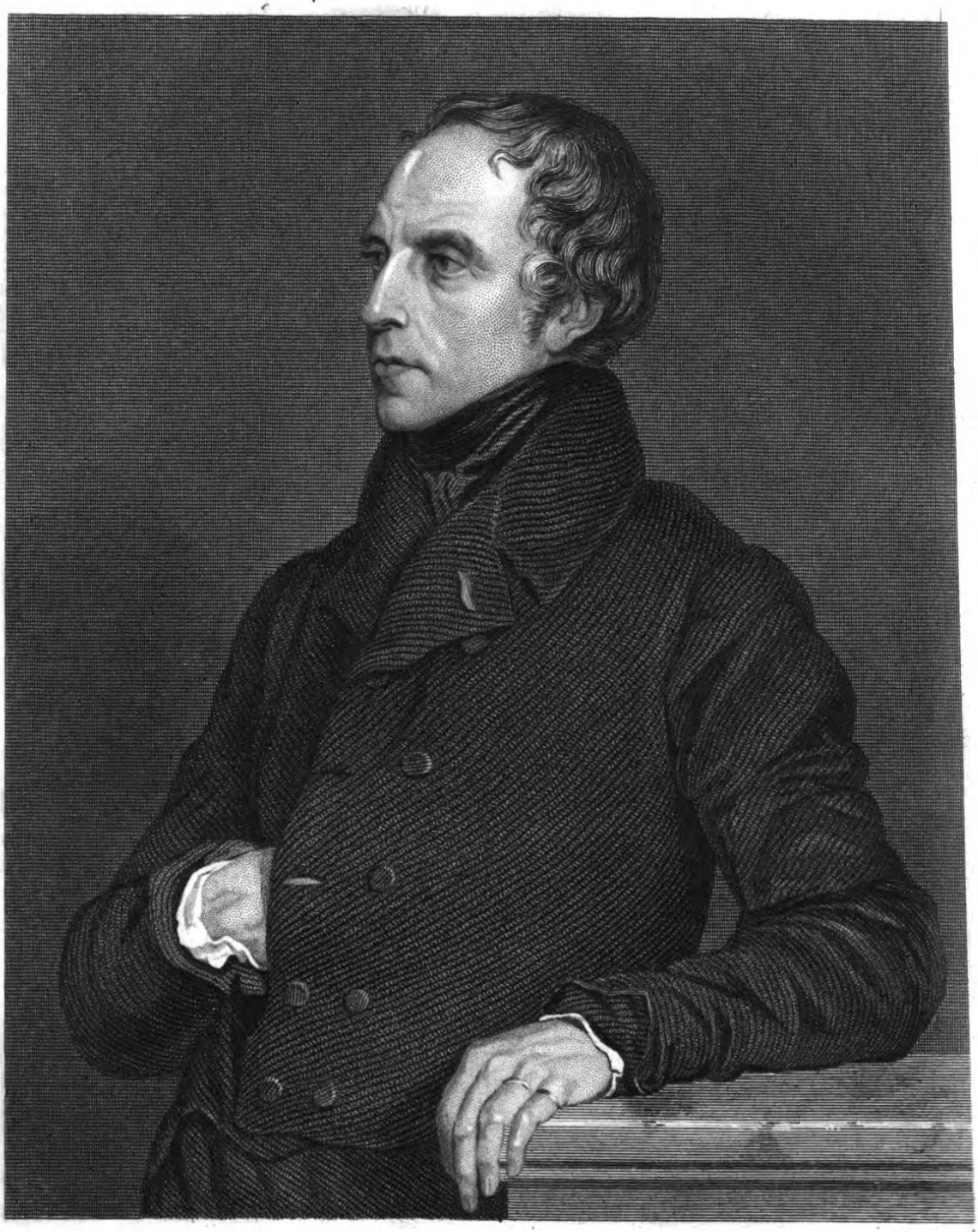

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Guizot

WHY WAS THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION SUCCESSFUL?

A Discourse

ON

THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION.

By F. GUIZOT,

AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION,"

ETC.

TRANSLATED BY WILLIAM HAZLITT.

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MDCCCL.

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE

ON THE

HISTORY OF THE REVOLUTION OF ENGLAND.

THE Revolution of England succeeded. It succeeded twice. Its authors founded in England constitutional monarchy; its descendants founded in America the Republic of the United States. There is no longer any obscurity about these great events: time, which has sanctioned, has illumined them. Sixty years ago France entered upon, the other day Europe precipitated itself upon, the paths which England had opened. I seek to show the causes which have given, in England to constitutional monarchy, in English America to the republic, the solid success which France and Europe have hitherto been pursuing in vain, amid those mysterious experiments in revolution, which, as they are well or ill sustained, make nations great, or send them astray for ages.

It was in the name of Faith, and of religious liberty, that, in the 16th century, commenced the movement which, from that epoch, suspended at times, but ever renewed, has been agitating and exciting the world. The tempest rose first in the human soul: it struck the Church before it reached the State.

It has been said that Protestantism was, at bottom, a political, rather than a religious revolution: an insurrection, in the name of worldly interests, against the established Church, rather than the bounding impulse of a faith, in the name of the eternal interests of man. To say this, is to judge superficially, and altogether from appearances, and it is an error which has involved, in courses fatal to themselves, the powers, spiritual

or temporal, that have been misled by it. Absorbed in the suppression of the revolutionary element of Protestantism, they have taken no heed to its religious element. The spirit of revolt is, doubtless, very powerful: but it is not powerful enough to accomplish of itself such results. It was not merely to shake off a yoke, it was also to profess and to practise a faith, that the Reformation of the 16th century burst forth and continued onward. After the lapse of three centuries, a sovereign, incontestable fact, demonstrates this most emphatically. Two Protestant countries, the most protestant of Europe, England and Holland, are at this moment the two countries in which the Christian faith preserves most life and most empire. It would manifest strange ignorance of man's nature, to imagine that the religious fervour would have thus sustained and perpetuated itself, after the triumph of the insurrection, had the movement been, in its outset and in its fundamental principle, other than essentially religious.

In Germany, in the 16th century, the revolution was religious, and not political; in France, in the 18th, it was political, and not religious. It was, in the 17th century, the fortune of England, that the spirit of religious faith and the spirit of political liberty reigned together in her heart, and that she undertook, at one and the same time, both revolutions. All the high passions of human nature were thus set in array, without her wholly breaking bounds; and the hopes and ambitions of eternity remained to men, after they believed that their ambitions and their hopes of this world had failed.

The English reformers, the political reformers more especially, did not consider that there was any need of a revolution. The laws, the traditions, the examples, the whole past of their country was dear and sacred to them; and therein they found alike the fulcrum for their pretensions and the sanction of their ideas. It was in the name of the Great Charter, and of the many statutes which, in the course of four centuries, had confirmed it, that they claimed their liberties. During four centuries, not a generation had passed upon the English soil without pronouncing the name, without seeing the face of parliament. The great barons and the commons, the country gentlemen and the burgesses, met together in 1640, not to quarrel about new acquisitions, but to re-enter upon their common inheritance; they met to resume ancient positive rights, and not

to pursue the experimental combinations, infinite yet unknown, of human thought.

The religious reformers did not enter the Long Parliament of Charles I. with equally legitimate pretensions. The Episcopal Church of England, as it had been constituted, first by the capricious and cruel despotism of Henry VIII., and then by the ably designed and systematic despotism of Elizabeth, did not suit them. It was, in their eyes, an incomplete, incongruous reformation—incessantly compromised by the danger of a return to the catholic church, from which it had never far enough removed—and they meditated, for the christian Church of their country, an entirely new remodelling, and a new constitution. The revolutionary spirit was with them more ardent and more avowed, than with the party that more especially occupied itself with political reforms. Not that the religious innovators themselves were wholly given up to theoretic fantasies: they had an anchor to which they held fast, a compass in which they had full faith. The Gospel was their Great Charter; subjected, it is true, to their interpretations and their commentaries, but anterior and superior to their will; they respected it sincerely, and humbled themselves, despite their pride, before that law, which they themselves had not made.

To these guarantees of moderation, which, in the disposition of their own partisans, the two revolutions now commencing, possessed, Providence added a further favour. They were not, in their outset, condemned to that wrong, which soon becomes a danger, the spontaneously assailing, without clear and pressing necessity, a mild and inoffensive power. In the seventeenth century, in England, royal power was the aggressor. Charles I. full of haughty pretensions, without high ambition, and rather that he might not sink in the estimation of the kings, his equals, than from any desire to oppress his people, twice essayed to give authority to the maxims and practice of absolute monarchy; first, in presence of the parliament, and himself governed by a vain and frivolous favourite[1] whose presumptuous incompetence shocked the good sense and wounded the honour of the obscurest citizens; then, by dispensing with any parliament at all, and governing alone, by a minister, energetic, able, ambitious and imperious with grandeur; devoted to a king who neither understood nor sustained him, and learning,

[1] George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

too late that, to save kings, it is not enough nobly to sacrifice oneself in serving them.[1]

Against this aggressive despotism, enterprising rather than powerful, and which alike attacked, in State and Church, the ancient rights and the new liberties demanded by the country, the country had no thought of going beyond legal resistance, and placed its reliance in the parliament. There, resistance was as unanimous as it was legitimate. Men the most various in origin and in character, nobles, gentry, and burgesses, courtiers, and men wholly strange to the court, friends and enemies of the Established Church, all rose with one accord against such infinite and great grievances and abuses; and the abuses fell, the grievances disappeared, as the decrepit walls of an abandoned fort crumble beneath the first blows of the assailants.

In this explosion of national indignation and of national hopes, some minds more clear-sighted, some consciences more scrupulous than others, already felt uneasiness. Vengeance not merely disfigures, but wholly distorts and alters justice; and passion, haughty in its right, goes further than it has the title or even the intention to go. Strafford was justly accused, unjustly judged. The politicians, who did not seek the destruction of the episcopal church, suffered the bishops to be outraged and humiliated, as men fallen never to rise again. The ill-regulated blows that struck from the crown its usurpations and its illegal pretensions, wounded it at the same time in its just prerogatives. Incidents of grave import revealed, courageous voices denounced, the spirit of revolution hidden beneath the demand for reform. Warnings, rays of light cast upon their future progress, have never been withheld from rising revolutions; but the necessity to triumph, and its glory, overpowered the conviction of faults and the presentiment of their dangers.

When the work of reform was accomplished—when the grievances which had aroused the unanimous reprobation of the country were redressed—when the powers, authors of those grievances, and the men, their instruments, were prostrated, the scene changed—a new question arose: How was that which had been acquired to be retained? How make sure that England should thenceforth be governed upon the

[1] Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford.

principles and by the laws she had reestablished? The political reformers began to feel themselves perplexed. Above them was the king, who was conspiring against them, while he seemed yielding to them. If the king resumed in the government, the power which the reforms accomplished still left him, he would make use of it against the reforms and the reformers. Around them were their allies, the religious innovators, presbyterians and various sectaries, for whom political reform was not sufficient, and who, in their hatred of the Established Church, aspired not only to shake off its yoke, but to destroy it, and to impose their own upon it. For the security of their work, for their own security, the chiefs resolved to remain under arms. Even had they wished to lay aside their weapons, their soldiers would not have permitted it.

One means alone could, in their eyes, confirm their security: this was, that parliament should retain the sovereign power it had assumed; and that it should be rendered permanently impossible for the king to govern against the opinion of parliament, and of the House of Commons in parliament.

This is the result which, in England, constitutional monarchy has attained—this is the aim which, two centuries ago, its partisans pursued. But in the 17th century they had neither the enlightenment nor the political virtues which this government requires.

There is in the heart of man so much arrogance and so much weakness combined, that he aspires, at one and the same time, to all the glory, and to all the repose that may be hoped from success. He thinks it little to surmount obstacles; he must suppress them, that he may relieve his mind wholly from their thought; and triumph itself does not content him, unless he can enjoy it in all the insolence of complete security. Constitutional monarchy does not satisfy these evil tendencies of human nature. To none of the powers which it sets in array, does it accord the pleasures of undivided and wholly secure domination. It imposes upon them all, even upon the most preponderant, the continuous labour of obligatory alliances, of mutual circumspection, of constant arrangements and rearrangements, of indirect influences, and of a struggle incessantly renewed, with the chances, incessantly renewing, of success and failure. It is on these terms that constitutional monarchy definitively assures triumph to the interests and

feelings of the country, itself subject to moderation in its desires, and to vigilance and patience in its efforts.

Neither the crown nor the parliament of England understood in the 17th century these conditions of their mutual government; they refused, accordingly, to undergo them. Royalty claimed to remain, the House of Commons claimed to become, directly and infallibly sovereign. Their pride required this satisfaction, their fears this guarantee.

To attain this object, to keep and to exercise the sovereign empire they had grasped, the House of Commons could no longer be content with the reform of abuses, and with the re-establishment of legal rights. They felt it necessary radically to alter the old laws, to get all power into their own hands.

When things had reached this point, there was a great break up amongst the reformers. The more far-sighted, or the more timid, embraced the defence of legal order and of menaced monarchy; the rest, more daring, or less scrupulous, entered upon the path of revolution.

At this period took birth the two great parties, which, gradually developing themselves under various names and various aspects, have since for two centuries presided over the destinies of England: the party devoted to the maintenance of established order, and the party favourable to the progress of popular influences; the Tories and the Whigs, the conservatives and the innovators.

The struggle in parliament was fierce, but brief. The monarchical party sought to organize itself around the king, and to govern in his name. These first essays of constitutional rule failed ere they had scarce begun; failed by the faults of the king, inconsistent, mutable, obstinate in frivolities, and as insincere with his counsellors as with his enemies; by the inexperience of his counsellors, themselves in turns too exclusive and too feeble, and incessantly tricked and betrayed alike in the palace and in the parliament; by the distrust and pretensions of the revolutionary party, resolved not to be content until the absolute power it sought to destroy had passed under its hands.

One day, in relation to a fresh remonstrance to be presented to the king against old grievances, as though they had not been redressed, the question of majority was clearly and

distinctly put to the two parties. The debate became so violent, that even in the House of Commons itself the members were on the point of coming to blows. A majority of eleven gave the victory to the revolutionary party.

Fifty days after this vote, the king quitted as a fugitive the palace of Whitehall, which he was only to re-enter on his way to the scaffold. The House of Commons immediately ordered that the menaced kingdom should be placed in a state of defence. The parliamentary struggle ceased, the civil war began.

At this solemn moment, patriotic sorrow, dark forebodings were given utterance to, here and there, in both parties, more especially in the party of the king, less confident in its strength, and also, perhaps, in its cause. But such was not the general feeling. Passion, and the hope of success, held power in most hearts. The spirit of resistance to illegality and oppression has been one of the noblest and most salutary characteristics of the English people, throughout the whole course of their history. Docile, and even favourable, to authority, when it acts in virtue of the law, they boldly maintain against it what they deem the law of the land, and their right. Amid all their dissensions, this sentiment alike animated both parties. The revolutionary party struggled against the illegalities and oppressions which England had undergone at the hands of the king in past times, and which they apprehended at his hands in the future. The monarchical party struggled against the illegalities and oppressions which, at the present time, the parliament was inflicting upon the country. The respect for right and for law, though forgotten and violated every hour, still occupied the recesses of men's hearts, and veiled from them the wrongs and the ills that civil war was preparing for them.

The manners of neither party were antagonistic to civil war. The Cavaliers were rough, hot-headed men, still full of those habits of fighting, of that impetuous tendency to violence, which characterised the feudal ages. The Puritans were hard, acerb, stubborn, nurtured in the passions, as in the traditions of the Hebrew people, who defended and avenged their God in smiting their enemies: with both the sacrifice of life was familiar, and the sight of blood no matter of horror. Another cause, less potent, provoked and aggravated the

explosion. Political and religious parties were not alone in the field. Beneath their struggle, lay a social question, the struggle of the various classes for influence and power. Not that these classes were in England radically segregate, and hostile one to the other, as they have been elsewhere. The great barons had asserted and maintained the people's liberties with their own, and the people did not forget this. The country gentlemen and the burgesses had for three centuries sat together in parliament, in the name of the Commons of England. But, in the last hundred years, great changes had taken place in the relative strength of the various classes in the bosom of society, without any analogous changes having been wrought in the government. Commercial activity and religious order had, in the middle classes, given a prodigious impulse to wealth and to thought. In one of the first parliaments in the reign of Charles I. it was remarked, with extreme surprise, that the House of Commons was three times richer than the House of Lords. The high aristocracy no longer possessed, and no longer communicated to the royalty it continued to encircle, the same preponderance in the nation. The burgesses, the minor country gentlemen, the farmers, and the small landed proprietors, at that time a very numerous body, did not exercise over public affairs an influence proportionate with their importance in the country. Their elevation had not kept pace with their growth. Hence had arisen amongst them and the ranks beneath them a proud and powerful spirit of ambition, eager to seize the first occasion to burst forth. Civil war opened a wide field to their energy and to their hopes. It presented, at its outset, no aspect of a social classification, exclusive and hostile: many country gentlemen, several even of the greatest of the great lords, were at the head of the popular party. Soon, the nobility on the one hand, and the middle class and the people on the other, ranged themselves in two masses, the one around the crown, the other around the parliament, and sure symptoms already revealed a great social movement in the heart of a great political struggle, and the effervescence of an ascendant democracy, clearing for itself a way through the ranks of a weakened and divided aristrocracy.

Both parties found in the state of society, nay, in the very laws of the land, natural, and almost regular, means of sus-

taining by arms their rights or their pretensions. From the reign of Elizabeth, the House of Commons had applied itself with ardour to the abolition of the remaining institutions, already tottering, of the feudal system. But deep traces of that system still subsisted, and its habits, its sentiments, in some instances its rules, still presided over the relations of the possessors of fiefs, both with the king, their suzerain, and with the portion of the population grouped around them in their castles or upon their estates. These assembled at their voice, whether for festivals or for fighting, as they themselves obeyed the summons of the king, when he claimed their services. It was one of those epochs of transition, when ancient laws, honoured in their obsolescence, still decide the actions of men, whom they no longer formally bind. Devotion had taken the place of servitude; the fidelity of the vassal became the loyalty of the subject; and the cavaliers, rich or poor, flocked round the king, ready to fight and to die for him, followed by a troop, or, as the case might be, a handful of retainers, ready to fight and to die for them.

On their part, the burgesses, the artisans, the people of the towns, had also, under other forms, their means of independent action, and even of war. Organized in municipal or commercial corporations, they met freely to discuss their affairs; they levied taxes, raised militia, administered justice and police, deliberated, in a word, and acted, within the circuit of their walls and the limits, however obscure, of their charters, like so many petty sovereigns. And the extension of commerce and of industry, their wealth, their connexions, their credit, gave to these corporations a power which they applied to the service of their cause, with all the impulsive daring of a youthful and inexperienced pride.

Neither in country nor in town did royalty exercise the empire of a central and sole administration. The financial, military, even the judicial affairs of the country, were, more or less completely, in the hands of local, and well nigh independent authorities: here, of the landed proprietors of the country; there, of the municipal bodies, or of the corporations, who appropriated more and more thoroughly their administrative authority to the promotion of their political cause—now to aid the central power, king, or parliament—now to resist it. And, where these means did not suffice—where it was

necessary for the action to extend itself beyond the sphere of the old and recognised local powers—the spirit of association, traditional and potent in England, speedily established between the counties, the towns, the divisions of the kingdom, and the various classes of society, practical, efficacious combinations, in virtue of which new associations, freely springing up wherever and whenever required, levied taxes, raised troops, formed committees, and selected chiefs, deputed to furnish and direct their share of action in the general cause they embraced.

It was in an association of this character, that of the five Eastern counties united for the support of the parliament, that Cromwell gave the first indications of his strength, and sowed the first seeds of his power.

In a society thus organized and disposed, civil war seemed nothing impracticable. It soon covered the whole face of the country; here, by order of the royal or parliament agents; there, the spontaneous work of the people; and it was maintained by both parties with an energy, mournfully in many cases, but in all unhesitatingly displayed as the exercise of a right and the accomplishment of a duty. Each party had a profound conviction of the justice and of the greatness of its cause. Each, to serve its cause, made those efforts and those sacrifices which elevate the soul even in the very act and moment of leading it astray, and which give to passion the aspect, and sometimes the merit, of virtue. Virtue itself was wanting to neither party. Violent and licentious, the cavaliers had yet in their ranks the finest models of the generous, grand, high-souled old families, full of disinterested devotion, of dignity in submission. The puritans, hard and haughty, rendered to their country a service beyond all price: they established in it austerity of private life and sanctity of domestic manners. The two parties fought with fierce animosity, but still without laying aside, amidst the struggle, all the sentiments of the times of order and of peace. There were no sanguinary outbreaks, no judicial massacres. It was civil war, earnest, fierce, determined, full of violence and of evil, but without barbarian excesses, and kept, by the general manners of the population, within certain limits of right and of humanity.

I the earlier pay this tribute, because the virtues of parties are frail and short-lived, when they have to undergo the blast, and to struggle against the storms of revolutions. From day

to day, with the prolongation of the civil war, respect for right, and just, generous sentiments grew feeble. The natural consequences of the revolutionary state developed themselves, distorting more and more, in both parties, the ideas and habits of law and of morality. The king wanted money: the cavaliers gave way to unbridled pillage. The taxes levied by the parliament did not meet the exigencies of the war: it established in every county a system of confiscation, more or less undisguised, which, under the pretext of *delinquency*, placed in its hands the rents, and in many cases the estates, of its enemies, a daily source of wealth for its partizans. In this general and continuous disorder, amidst the abuses of force and the excesses of desperate misfortune, the evil passions were incessantly called forth; chances of gratification presented themselves to every evil desire; hatred and vengeance took possession of more energetic souls; the feebler sank into base fear and prostrate servility. The parliament, which pretended to act in the name of the laws, and to serve the king it combated, was condemned, even in its most violent acts, to a false and hypocritical language. Among the royalists, many, distrusting the by-views of the king, called upon for sacrifices wholly beyond their means, and daily more and more dubious of the success of their cause, felt devotion fading away in their hearts, and submitted in despair, or indemnified themselves for their losses by licence and rapine. Falsehood, violence, grasping avarice, mean pusillanimity, egotism in every form, made rapid strides among all who were actually engaged in the strife; while the population, which took no part in it, or but a remotely indirect part, itself undergoing, after a while, the detestable influence of the revolutionary spectacle, lost, little by little, or retained in but dim, flickering memory, its pristine notions of right and of duty, of justice and of virtue.

It was assailed at the same time, and suffered most cruelly in its material interests. War everywhere present and everywhere unrestrained, ravaged town and country, and destroyed the subsistence, the hopes, and the industry of the people. The financial measures of the parliament, worked by local hostilities or intrigues, involved landed property in universal confusion and depreciation. There was no longer security for present means or for the expectations from future labour. Civil life was assailed and unhinged, even in the bosom of

families perfectly unconnected with the political struggle. And as the fear of evil ever spreads further and more rapidly than the evil itself, the country, in its grievous distress, was the prey of an anxiety still more general and more grievous even than its distress. The outburst of its complaints and of its wishes was not long delayed. War was still at its height when, already the cry of *Peace! peace!* resounded at the doors of parliament. Repeated petitions demanded peace, brought by large assemblages, so large and so excited that it was necessary to employ force to disperse them. In the House of Commons itself, notwithstanding the almost universal withdrawal of the first royalist party, a new royalist party was formed, in the name of peace, eager to seize every occasion to proclaim its necessity, and to open negotiations with the king. Essayed, over and over again, all such negotiations failed, by the machinations of those who, in either camp, refused peace, not choosing to make the concessions it necessitated, by the incapacity or weakness of those, who, willing peace, dared not will its conditions. Civil war continued; but the party which had brought it about was broken up; the struggle had re-commenced in parliament, for and against the revolution.

Out of doors, more especially in the country, the people did not content themselves with asking the parliament for peace; they endeavoured themselves, locally at least, to impose it on both parties. Associations were formed, armed bodies set themselves on foot, declaring that they would no longer suffer their lands to be devastated either by parliamentarians or by royalists, and attacked both alike, whenever they encountered them. A sort of armed neutrality in the bosom of civil war: an attempt futile in itself, but serving to manifest how deeply the two parties who insisted upon war, already wounded the feelings and interests of the country. So long as the war was strongly in movement, and the issue doubtful, these sufferings and these convictions of the people, though leading them to a pacific reaction, directed their attention but hesitatingly and glancingly towards the king. They accused him as obstinate and false. They bitterly denounced his secret machinations with the queen and the catholics, whom they passionately hated and feared. They held him responsible for the calamities and for the prolongation of the civil war, at least equally with the parliament.

When the war was at an end, and the king a prisoner in the hands of the parliament, the pacific reaction became more decidedly and more generally royalist. The king could do nothing, and bore his misfortunes nobly. The parliament could do everything, yet put no stop to the calamities of the country. Upon the parliament, therefore, now weighed the whole responsibility: against parliament were directed all the ebullitions and discontent of disappointed hopes, of suspicions, of anger and malediction for the present, of terrors for the future. Impelled by this national sentiment, enlightened by the imminent danger, the political reformers, the first chiefs of the revolution in parliament, and with them a portion of the religious innovators, the Presbyterians, enemies of the Episcopal Church, but not of the monarchy, essayed a last effort to effect peace with the king, and to terminate, at one stroke, the war and the revolution.

They were sincere, nay, passionately earnest in their desire, but still full of those revolutionary prejudices and pretensions which had already, on several occasions, rendered peace impossible. By the conditions which they sought to impose upon the king, they required him to sanction their destruction of the monarchy and of the church; or, in other words, to complete with his own hands, as he re-entered it, the downfall of the edifice which constituted his security, and to which he had vowed his faith.

They had proclaimed as a principle, and put in practice, the direct sovereignty of the House of Commons; and, constrained in their turn to resist the popular current, they were astonished no longer to receive the aid, nay, to encounter the distrust and hostility, of that aristocracy and of that church which they had decried and demolished.

Even had they succeeded in concluding peace with the king, peace would have been vain. It was too late to arrest revolution, too soon to guide it to its true and national goal. God was only then beginning to exercise his justice, and to administer his lessons. The instant that the first chiefs of the movement sought to reconstruct the ruins they had made, the real revolutionary party rose, and, treating their new-grown wisdom with brutal contempt, drove them from parliament, condemned the king to death, and proclaimed the republic.

Two centuries have past away since the republic of England

caused the head of Charles I. to fall, itself falling almost immediately afterwards upon the soil stained with that blood. The French republic has since presented over again to the world the same spectacle. And yet we still hear it said that these great crimes were acts of high policy, commanded by the necessity of founding those republics which have scarce survived them a few days!

It is the pretension of insane folly, and of human perversity, to cover itself with the veil of grandeur; neither the truth of history nor the interest of nations can endure the lie.

The spirit of faith and of religious liberty had degenerated, with some sects, into a fanaticism, arrogant, quarrelsome, intractable to all authority, and which found its sole gratification in the wild invectives of dogmatic independence and of inflated pride. By the civil war these sectaries had been made soldiers, at once casuists and devotees, enthusiasts and disciplinarians. Emanating, most of them, from the popular classes and avocations, they revelled in the delight of commanding, of dominating, of thinking and calling themselves the chosen and mighty instruments of the will and of the justice of God. Favoured partly by religious enthusiasm, partly by military discipline, partly by the democratic spirit, Cromwell had gained the confidence of these men, and made himself their chief. His youth, spent amid the erratic excitements of a wild, fiery temperament, amid the impulses of an ardent and restless pietism, or in the service of the interests or desires of the population around him, when high politics and war opened before him, he rushed into the new path with passionate earnestness, as that path in which alone he could develope his powers, and satisfy his ambition: the most wildly vehement of sectaries—the most energetic of revolutionists—the most able of soldiers—equally ready, eager, to harangue, to pray, to conspire, to battle; his oratory characterised by an expansive, winning ease, full of power; lying at need, with an inexhaustible and unhesitating hardihood, which struck even his enemies with surprise and embarrassment; at once lofty, impassioned, and coarse, reckless and rational, mystic and practical; the perspective of his imagination without limits, the necessities of his action impeded by no scruple; resolute to succeed at whatever price; more prompt than any man to

discern and to grasp the means of success; and impressing upon all, friends or foes, the conviction that none would triumph so fully and go so far as he.

To such a party, led by such a man, a republic was exactly suitable. It provided the satisfaction of their passions, an opening for all their hopes, a security for the interests which they had carved out of the civil war. It delivered over the country to the army, by the genius of its chief, and empire to Cromwell, by the discipline and complicity of his soldiers.

From respect for their sincerity, their genius, their misfortunes, I will not express the whole of my judgment of certain men, whose names have become celebrated, republicans also, from a political theory, constructed upon the models of antiquity, rather than from religious fanaticism,—Sidney, Vane, Ludlow, Harrington, Hutchinson, Milton; high minds, great souls, nobly ambitious for their country and for humanity; but of such weak judgment and of such insane pride, that neither fortune nor misfortune taught them a lesson; credulous as children, obstinate as old men, ever blinded by their hopes to their faults and to their dangers; and who at the moment when, by their own anarchical tyranny, they were preparing the way for a tyranny more rational and more powerful, thought they were founding the freest and most glorious of governments.

Out of these sects, organized in regiments, of these coteries setting up for a parliament, no person in England desired a republic. A republic was wholly offensive to the traditions, the manners, the laws, the old affections, the old venerations, the regular interests, the order, the good sense, and the moral sense of the country.

Incensed and uneasy at this manifest aversion of the public for their designs, the sectaries and Cromwell deemed that, to found a rule so generally odious, it was essential, at the very outset, by a terrible and irremediable blow, to prove its power and to affirm its right. They agreed to crown the republic upon the scaffold of Charles I.

But revolutionists, even the ablest of them, are short-sighted. Intoxicated by the passion, or dominated by the necessity of the moment, they do not foresee that what to-day constitutes their triumph, will be to-morrow their condemnation. The execution of Charles I. handed over England, stupor-struck,

to the republicans and to Cromwell. But the republic and Cromwell, mortally wounded by the same blow, were, from that day forth, but a violent and ephemeral regime, branded with that seal of supreme iniquity which devotes to certain ruin, powers the most powerful and the most illustrious.

The judges of Charles I. tried by every conceivable means to divest their work of this fatal attribute, and to present it to the world as the justice of God, which it had been their mission to accomplish. Charles had aimed at absolute power, and had waged civil war. Many rights had been violated, much blood had been spilt by his orders or with his sanction. They cast upon him the whole responsibility of the late tyranny, and of the war: they demanded at his hands the reckoning for all the liberties which had been oppressed, for all the blood which had been spilt: his was a crime without specification, which his death alone could expiate. But the conscience of a people is not to be thus mystified and blinded, even when it is half paralysed with anxiety and perturbation. Others, besides the king, had oppressed the country, and imbrued it in blood. If the king had violated the rights of his subjects, the rights of royalty, also ancient, also written in the laws, had been equally violated, attacked, usurped. The king had waged war, but it was in self-defence. Who was there that did not know that at the very juncture when he made up his mind to war, war was resolved upon against him, for the purpose of constraining him, after so many concessions, to yield up what still remained to him of rights and of power, the last wreck of the legal government of the country? And now that the king was vanquished, he was judged, he was condemned, without law, against all law, for acts which no law had foreseen or categorised as crimes; which the conscience neither of the king nor of the people had ever imagined to consider as falling under the jurisdiction of men, or punishable at their hands. What utter indignation, what a revolt of the universal mind of the country would have burst forth, had the obscurest of its citizens been thus treated, been put to death for crimes defined *post facto*, by self-appointed judges, yesterday his enemies, to-day his competitors, to-morrow his heirs! yet that which none would have dared essay against the least of the people of England, had been done against the King of England; against the supreme head of the Church and of the State; against the representative and the

symbol of authority, of order, of law, of justice—of all that, in the society of man, touches upon the limits and awakens the idea of the attributes of God!

There is no fanaticism so blind, no policy so perverse, which, in the very moment of its triumph, has not been startled by the apparition at its side, within its very ranks, of some dazzling effulgence, the solemn and unexpected protest of the human conscience. Two republicans, one of them placed in the list of the king's judges, the names the most glorious of the party, Vane and Sidney, whether from scruple or from prudence, would not sit on the trial, and quitted London, in order that they might not even witness it. And when, sovereign mistress, the House of Commons nominated the republican council of state, of forty-one members, summoned to constitute it, twenty-two absolutely refused to take the oath, which set forth an approval of the king's condemnation; and the regicide republicans, with Cromwell at their head, were fain to accept for their colleagues men who refused upon any terms to pass for their accomplices.

The new government encountered at first only passive resistance; but this it encountered everywhere.

Of the twelve judges, six absolutely refused to continue their functions; and the other six only consented, on the condition that they should still administer justice according to the ancient laws of the land. The republican parliament accepted their condition.

The parliament had ordered that the republic should be proclaimed in the city of London. The lord mayor refused to proclaim it. He was removed from his office, and sent to prison. Notwithstanding the immediate presence of the new lord mayor, three months elapsed before the proclamation was ventured upon; and when it at length took place, many of the aldermen absented themselves. The ceremony was protected by troops, but they could not wholly repress the ebullitions of popular scorn and hate. The common council was re-organized; many of the members nominated refused to accept the office. It became necessary to authorize the council to act with a materially diminished number. It was even at one time a question whether it would not be expedient to abolish the franchises of the city altogether.

When the republican coinage had to be struck, the Master of

the Mint declared that he would have nothing to do with it, and resigned his office.

An oath of fidelity to the republic, drawn up in terms the most simple and inoffensive that could be devised, was required from the civil functionaries and from the beneficed clergymen. Thousands gave up their places and their livings, rather than take it. More than a year after the establishment of the republic, the convocation of the Presbyterian clergy, assembled in London, formally declared that the oath ought not to be taken. It was sought to be imposed upon the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge: the most eminent members of those corporations, professors and heads of colleges, resigned their posts.

The order was issued, throughout England, to destroy the insignia of royalty upon all the public edifices and monuments. The order was executed in scarcely a single instance. It was several times renewed with as little success; and the republic, after it had been established more than two years, found itself constrained once more to renew the order, throwing the responsibility and the cost of performance upon the parishes.

Lastly, it was not until two years after the condemnation of the king that the republican parliament ventured formally to vote that the authors, the judges, and the executioners of that act had done their duty; to sanction the proceedings, and to order their insertion in the records of parliament.

Never did a people, vanquished by a revolutionary faction, and undergoing its overthrow without absolute insurrection, refuse more distinctly and positively to its conquerors its adhesion and its concurrence.

To the passive resistance of the country were soon added, against the government of the republic, the attacks of its enemies.

The first of these came from the republicans themselves. In the seventeenth, as in the nineteenth century, this name covered ideas, designs, parties profoundly various the one from the other. Behind the reformers of political order, came the reformers of social order, and then the destroyers of all order and of all society. To the passions and pretensions of religious fanaticism, blinder and more unbridled the lower you descend in the ranks of the party, the republic of Sidney and of Milton in no degree sufficed. The Levellers burst forth.

The Communists appeared. The republic had scarce been in existence six months, when already, around London and the parliament, four insurrections of sectarian soldiers, excited and sustained by an incessant fire of pamphlets, preachings, and popular processions, revealed its internal anarchy, and imperilled its government.

The royalist party took longer time to rise. Its repeated defeats, the execution of the king, the violent compression which had been weighing it down, had struck it with stupor. The dissensions of its conquerors, and the evident ill-will of the people towards the new government, soon restored it to life and to hope. Within two years, seven conspiracies and insurrections, the work either of the pure royalists, or of royalist presbyterians, alike fiercely hostile to the republic, proved to its chiefs that they had not with the same blow killed the king, and the empire of royalty.

Soon, between the royalist conspirators and the republican conspirators, between the Cavaliers and the Levellers, a secret correspondence was established. They conspired in concert, one common hatred superseded all special dislikes. And while England was struggling in this passionate anarchy, Scotland and Ireland, both royalist countries, though from very different motives, and with very different feelings, openly repudiated the republic, proclaimed Charles Stuart king, invited and received, upon their soil and at their head, the former Charles himself, the latter his representatives, and proceeded to make war for his establishment.

In this dislocation of the three kingdoms, amidst these plots at once opposite and combined, no sooner frustrated than revived, and which alternately raised and depressed, in every corner of the kingdom, the hopes and the fears, the ambitions and the machinations of all parties, the social bonds became relaxed, the springs of power were rapidly loosened. In county and parochial administration, in general or local finance, in public employments, in private fortunes, in every interest of civil life, there was an entire absence of order and of security. On the highways, around the towns, robbers multiplied, going about in bands, mixing up political passions with their crimes, demanding from those whom they stopped whether or not they had taken the oath of fidelity to the republic, and maltreating them, or releasing them unharmed, according to their answer.

For their suppression, it became necessary to station bodies of troops at different points, and to keep several regiments of horse constantly in motion; and the suppression, though energetically proceeded with, succeeded but very imperfectly, for the disorganization of society gave birth to disorders faster than the republican government could stifle them.

Assailed by so many and so great dangers, the chiefs of the republican parliament did not falter; they had all the energy and the pertinacity, some among them of faith, the rest of self-regard; their noblest hopes and their vulgarest interests, their honour and their life were involved in their enterprise. They devoted themselves to the work courageously; but in their anxiety to secure its triumph, they lavished with blind prodigality those means of a corrupt nature which only save a cause for a few days to involve it then in more utter destruction.

At their very outset, they carried political tyranny well nigh to its uttermost limits; for they decreed that whoever in the course of the civil war had sided with the king, or had shown any hostility to the parliament, should be held incapable of being elected member of parliament, or of occupying any post of importance in the state. And shortly afterwards the same incapacity was extended to every municipal function, and even to the simple right of voting at elections: thus placing, by a single blow, all the adversaries of the republic in the condition of Helots, excluded from every right, from all political life in their country.

The oath of fidelity had been, in the first instance, only required from civil functionaries and from ecclesiastics, and their refusal was attended with no other result than the loss of their posts. The infinite refusals incensed and disquieted the conquerors; to appease their anger, and in the vain hope of removing their disquietude, they imposed the oath upon every Englishman above the age of eighteen; and whoever refused to take it was no longer permitted to appear in a court of justice for the maintenance of his interests; so that political dissent involved civil incapacity.

Sequestration and confiscation were put in force against the conquered, in a manner the most intolerable and revolting; upon no fixed or general principle, by partial, unsettled processes, aggravated or modified in severity according to the necessities of the moment, the avarice of a powerful enemy,

the most accidental circumstance, and by lists of names, in some cases very comprehensive, in others very limited, and all more or less arbitrary; so that none of those who felt themselves menaced, knew beforehand, with any approximation to certainty, what was his situation or what would be his fate.

Since the termination of the civil war one weapon alone remained to the vanquished, royalist, or levellers: publicity, the press. They used this daringly, as, throughout the whole course of its struggle with the king, the party now victorious had done. They might well think themselves entitled to do this, for the last censor of the monarchy, Mr. Mabbott, had given in his resignation, no longer choosing to be the instrument of such an abuse; and the first secretary of the republican council of state, Milton, had eloquently demanded the liberty of the press as the essential right of a free people. The republican government did not appoint a new censor; but they passed, as to the regulation of the press, a law which might well satisfy the most uneasy vigilance. Four towns only in England—London, York, Oxford, Cambridge—had the privilege of printing. No journal or periodical could appear without the authorization of the government, and the printers had to give security; and not only whoever had taken part in a seditious publication was incriminated and punished, but every purchaser of a seditious writing incurred a penalty, unless within four-and-twenty hours he placed the work in the hands of the nearest magistrate, and pointed out to him its dangerous tendency.

One liberty at least, religious liberty, might, it would seem, under the republic, expect a better fate. The republican sectaries had, from the outset of the republic, emblazoned it on their banner. Not only had they occasion to claim it for themselves, but their principles imperiously required it; for they repudiated any general or compulsory government in the church, and recognised in each separate congregation the right to govern itself. But by one of the most afflicting perversions of our nature, it is precisely there where it is most iniquitous and revolting—that is to say, in matters of conscience and of faith, that human inconsistency developes itself in its broadest aspect. The same party, the same men, who, for the past half century, had been devoting themselves with ad-

mirable steadfastness to the cause of religious liberty, and who put forward that liberty as the basis of Christian society, themselves become sovereign, now absolutely excluded from all liberty three great classes of persons, the Catholics, the Episcopalians and the Freethinkers. Against the Catholics the persecution had no limits; it was absolute proscription for their faith and their worship—for their laity, disqualification and privileged confiscation—for their priests, imprisonment, wholesale banishment, and death itself. The Protestant episcopal church, overthrown and dispersed by the Presbyterian parliament, found, under the republican parliament, the severity of its condition grievously aggravated; the sectaries made it the double victim of their vengeance and of their mistrust; oppression went the length of prohibiting, even in private families, the presence of its ministers, and the use of its liturgy and of its prayers. As to the Freethinkers—much more numerous at this period than is commonly supposed—if one of them, from imprudence or from scorn of hypocrisy, openly avowed his opinions, he was prosecuted, imprisoned, excluded from parliament, and expelled from any situation he held, however humble. The Presbyterians, as enemies of the Episcopalians, enjoyed a certain toleration, indeed, but it was limited in its extent, precarious in its tenure, and frequently disturbed by the suspicions or violences of the sectaries, who disliked them equally for their ecclesiastical organization and for their monarchical tendencies. It was in vain that, in the republican parliament, some men of a generous spirit sought to modify these reforms; they were soon taught, and fain to undergo, their own powerlessness. Under the republic, in short, there was no real religious liberty, except for the victorious republican sects, whose common union in one political cause, ever menaced with danger, made them forget or tolerate their dissensions in matters of faith.

To protect and sustain a political tyranny so extended and so harsh, judicial tyranny was indispensable. The republican parliament exercised it without scruple. The trial of the king—that monstrous derogation from all the principles and all the forms of justice, became the model of political trials. For the seditions of military levellers, martial law sufficed; but when a royalist insurrection or conspiracy broke out, a high court of justice, the members of which were appointed

by the parliament itself, was forthwith established; a true special commission, placed above, as to itself, all the rules, and as to the accused, all the guarantees of law. Was there any reason to apprehend that a knowledge of the proceedings would excite the anger or pity of the country? the publication was absolutely prohibited. Nor were these courts made use of merely against the more important personages handed over to their immediate jurisdiction; they were applied also as instruments against the obscure multitude, whom, in person, it was not practicable to bring before them. For example: before the republic was proclaimed, the Thames watermen had, in a petition, demanded that peace should be made with the king. After the king's execution, the parliament transmitted this petition, with their names affixed, to the High Court of Justice it had just appointed for the trial of five of the principal royalist chiefs; thus striking terror into the hearts of the humble by the same blow which struck off the heads of the great. Sometimes the employment of High Courts was deemed inexpedient; they might excite too much popular emotion, or involve too much of formal show, or be tardy in their work. In such cases the republican parliament itself acted as judges, inflicting, by a simple vote, enormous fines, the pillory, or banishment; now to prostrate some pertinacious foe, now to gratify the passions, or to cover the blunders of one of its own leaders. Did no pretext present itself for prosecuting and condemning the men they feared—for example, the first political reformers, whom the republicans had been able to conquer only by absolutely expelling them from parliament? they were arbitrarily seized, and dispersed in remote prisons. The Cavaliers, the Roman Catholics, the soldiers of fortune, all the Suspected, were banished from London, *en masse*. And if some royalist writer, instead of conspiring in secret, openly denounced to the country, by the voice of the press, the misdeeds, real or supposed, of the republican ringleaders, he was arrested and sent to the Tower, where, awaiting judgment, he died.

So much oppression, in the heart of so much anarchy, seemed all the more odious and intolerable that it was the work of men who had but just before, in the name of liberty, required so much from the king, and promised so much for themselves!—men of whom a large proportion were previously

unknown, obscure persons, proceeding from conditions of life wherein the people were in no way accustomed to recognise and to respect supreme power, and having no other title than their personal merit—a title pertinaciously contested until it had attained a position beyond all controversy and all comparison; and the material force at their disposal — a title offending and alienating even those who submit to it, until their conqueror has brought them to the point of thorough, prostrate degradation.

Despite the double intoxication of power and of peril, several of the republican leaders had the instinct of their position, and of the public feeling towards them. Powerful, they felt themselves isolated, and, to a large extent, scorned. There is no power potent to render a man indifferent to isolation, or insensible to scorn. They ardently desired to give themselves other titles to domination than civil war and regicide; to elevate themselves, by some great and national act, to the level of their fortune. They meditated and framed many reforms of internal government, in the laws, in the administration of justice, in taxation; but the most important of these, by no means indisputably meritorious in themselves, were energetically opposed by most of their leading partisans; and persevered in, so far from elevating the republic, they would but have plunged it still deeper in the ranks of the sectaries and levellers. It became evident that no measure of internal regulation could give the republican leaders that which they required. They directed their eyes abroad. It required little effort on their part, and involved no risk, to sustain, in their relations with foreign powers, the dignity and the interests of their country. The days of the wars of religion were well nigh passed away; those of political theories were not yet come. None of the great European governments, though all detested the new republic, thought of attacking it; each, on the contrary, sought to forestal its rivals in its friendship, or to make use of it against them. Simple neutrality would have sufficed to secure for England entire independence in her own internal affairs, and great weight in the affairs of the Continent. The leaders of the republican parliament aimed at more. Prominently before them were three powerful states, France, Spain, and Holland: the two former, as catholic and monarchical, the natural enemies—

their enmity more or less kept in check or disguised—of the new republic; the last, as protestant and republican, attracted towards England by all the sympathies of faith and of liberty. All at once an idea seized upon those daring and restless minds, and agitated them like a whirlwind: Why should not England and Holland unite in one sole, grand republic, soon subjecting all Europe to their common policy and their common faith? There was matter in this wherewith to please the most pious, wherewith to occupy the most ambitious. What gratitude would not the English people bear to the men who should thus aggrandize their grandeur, who should thus gratify their conscience and their pride! For such a consideration, monarchy would be soon forgotten, the republic be firmly established, and the republican parliament be permitted to become a senate of kings.

The work was at once essayed. The republican leaders laboured upon it with passionate ardour; some, by the medium of indirect influences, and by the dissemination of their idea in every corner of the kingdom; others, by solemn embassies abroad, whose business it was to lay the foundations of the future union of the two nations. But the day-dreams of revolutions are even still vainer, as to foreign relations, than as to the internal government of a state. The English republicans did not choose to reflect that in this fusion the republic of Holland would be absorbed in the republic of England, and that the republic of Holland might not be disposed to accept this absorption. It did not even accept its insinuation. The Dutch republicans, proved by a century of hard-earned success, were too proud to sacrifice their country, too prudent to sacrifice themselves, by uniting their destinies with this Utopia of a new-born and tottering republic. The cause of the English royalists, moreover, enjoyed in Holland the favour, not only of the House of Orange, but of the large body of the people, whose justice had been revolted by the murder of Charles I., as their common sense had been by the absurdities of the sectaries. The national pride of Holland dissipated with a breath the chimera to which the ambitious pride of the English parliament had given birth. But the failure of such attempts is never permitted to pass with impunity. From the present failure there resulted between the two nations, naturally rivals already, profound jealousy and mistrust; between their leaders,

the bitter rancour of wounded self-love. So agitated a source speedily swelled into the torrent of war, and the high diplomatic conceptions of the protestant and republican parliament of England had no other issue than a rupture and a fierce struggle with the only republican and protestant state among its continental neighbours.

Thus, from without as within, the English republicans had, from external events or from their own acts, the lie given most markedly and most mournfully to all their ideas and to all their hopes. They had promised liberty; they practised tyranny. They had promised the union and the triumph of protestantism in Europe; they had carried war into its very heart.

It was in vain that this government endured, or gained battles, or crushed its enemies: it strengthened itself not a jot. Amid all their successes, in the submission of all around them, the republic and its leaders declined, from day to day, into deeper and deeper discredit and degradation.

A man, the principal author of the death of Charles I., and of the establishment of the republic, Cromwell, who had foreseen this result, now prepared to profit by it. The king dead and the republic proclaimed, a vast, but perfectly natural, metamorphosis had taken place in Cromwell. Impelled, hitherto, by his passions, as a sectary and man of ambition, against the enemies of his faith and the obstacles to his fortune, he had wholly applied himself to their destruction. The work of destruction consummated, another necessity presented itself to his mind. The revolution was accomplished: a new government had now to be constructed. Providence, which rarely bestows upon one man a double power, had marked out Cromwell for both the one work and the other. The Revolutionist disappeared; the Dictator made ready.

At the same moment that this dominant necessity of the new situation of things became impressed upon his sound, powerful mind, Cromwell perceived further, that the government it was then sought to establish would never succeed: neither the institutions nor the men. The institutions had no unity, no stability; they had no past, no present, no future; the very heart of power was agitated with intestine war and permanent uncertainty. The men were men of narrow and chimerical views, of blind or petty passions; with them there

would be nothing but a perpetual revolutionary struggle between power and the people. Elevated into sovereigns, the republican parliament and its leaders were soon measured by the common sense of Cromwell, and found wanting. It was impossible that from them anything like a strong and regular government could proceed.

One resolve from that moment occupied the thoughts of Cromwell, never to mix himself up with the policy or with the destiny of those institutions and of those men; to keep wholly apart from their blunders and from their reverses; to separate from the parliament, by employing himself elsewhere as their servant.

To separate from it was nothing: the great point was to rise as others declined. Cromwell foresaw the downfal of the parliament and of its leaders; resolute not to fall with them, he set about the work of exalting himself beside them.

The great men of action never construct their plan of action beforehand or in one piece. Their genius lies in their instinct and their ambition. From day to day, in each circumstance as it occurs, they see facts such as they really are. They discern the path which these facts indicate, and the chances which that path opens to them. They enter it resolutely, and advance along it, still guided by the same light, as far as space opens before them. Cromwell thus advanced, on and on, to the dictatorship, without well knowing whither he was going, or at what cost; but onward still he went.

The position he sought, remote from, and independent of, the reigning power, the parliament itself offered him. The presence of Cromwell in London incommoded and disquieted the ringleaders. They asked him to go and take the command of the army, about to march for the subjugation of Ireland, risen well nigh as one man for Charles Stuart, or rather, against the parliament. Cromwell by no means yielded to a first or second application; he had to be entreated; he exacted infinite concessions;—first, for his friends, his patronage was zealous and vast; then for himself, he required great, sure means of success; well provided troops, distinguished honours, uncontested power. Everything he asked was given, so eager were they to get rid of him. His departure was solemn and magnificent. Sermons were preached predicting, under prayers to God, his success.

Cromwell himself preached and prayed in public, seeking and finding in the Bible allusions full of encouragement to the war he was about to wage. He quitted London, surrounded by a numerous staff of officers, splendidly equipped. At Bristol, where he stayed awhile previous to embarkation, the people from all the adjacent country flocked to see him as he took his departure. He omitted nothing, and nothing was wanting with him, to excite the public attention, to fill men's minds.

It was England he sought to gain by the subjugation of Ireland. Ireland was the country of a race and of a religion, the one scorned, the other detested, by the English people. Upon Ireland he waged war to the knife,—massacreing, despoiling, driving out the Irish, hesitating no more at cruelty in the camp than at falsehood in the parliament, justifying the one as the other by the pretext of necessity, and prompt himself to credit the pretexts, that he might the sooner attain success.

The glory of his victories and of his name soon disquieted the parliament. Cromwell was in every one's mouth, the subject of universal conversation, the populace blindly admiring him, the politicians discussing his conduct and his future career. In Scotland, at the time of his departure for the army in Ireland, it was rumoured that it was to Edinburgh, and not to Dublin, that he designed to lead it, and the population was thrown into a state of excitement from one end of the kingdom to the other. Other rumours set it abroad that on his return from Ireland, he meditated to proceed to France, no one knew in what position, or to what purpose. Pamphlets were seized, entitled *The Character of King Cromwell.* Things had reached that point when the most trivial circumstances, the most ordinary proceedings on the part of a man, rising to greatness, excite to intensity the popular curiosity and the solicitude of his rivals. The parliamentary ringleaders thinking to avail themselves of the winter quarters he had just established in Dublin, recalled him to London. Cromwell did not obey the order—did not even reply, but, suddenly resuming the campaign, pursued his work of destruction in Ireland, and did not consent to return to England until new and grave perils of the republic opened to himself new prospects of independence and of greatness.

Scotland had recalled Charles Stuart. The republic and the monarchy were about to meet face to face. The republic needed a tried champion to set against the king: it essayed to have two, Fairfax and Cromwell. Fairfax refused. The parliament nominated Cromwell alone, constrained with deeply painful reluctance, to give him, that he might save the republic, another kingdom to conquer.

In Scotland, Cromwell conducted the war and himself in a manner wholly different from that which he had observed in Ireland. As towards the Irish Catholics he had been violent, harsh, pitiless, so towards the Scottish protestants he was moderate, patient, conciliatory. In Scotland, around the royalist party, even within its ranks, there were deep-seated dissensions; presbyterians, fanatics rather than royalists, and who served the king mistrustingly and with infinite conditions and reservations; sectaries as ardent, as democratic as the English sectaries, full of sympathy with Cromwell and his soldiers, and more disposed to aid than to assail them. Cromwell applied all these tendencies to the best account, and while seeking to do battle with the king's army, exhibited every consideration to the country, negociated separately with the leaders whom he knew to be wavering, or inclined rather towards himself, entered into correspondence, into conference, into religious controversy with the Scottish theologians; skilful to please, and leaving a favourable impression of himself even where he did not succeed in convincing or in decoying. He thus advanced into Scotland, gaining ground every day by his military successes, and by his influence over men's minds, and detaching from the king, one after another, counties, towns, and leaders. Charles found himself pressed upon, hemmed in, overtaken. With the impulsive energy of youth, he at once took a resolution, striking from its very desperation; he proceeded with his whole army, by a rapid movement, towards England, relinquishing Scotland to Cromwell, and resolute to try the fortune of royalty in the heart of the republic.

A month had not elapsed since Charles and the Scottish army had put their feet on English soil, before Cromwell overtook, defeated, and dispersed them at Worcester, where Charles had just been proclaimed king. Charles wandered from asylum to asylum, in one disguise after another, seeking a vessel to convey him out of England; and Cromwell re-

entered London in triumph, surrounded by members of parliament, by the council of state, by the common council, and by an enormous crowd, proclaiming him their liberator.

The great joy thus succeeding a great fear, got the better, for a while, of all jealousy, of all hate. The parliament heaped favours upon Cromwell: a large property in land was voted him; the palace of Hampton Court was assigned him as a residence; the men hitherto the most mistrusting him lavished upon him marks of their gratitude and deference. The enthusiasm of the republican community was more sincere, and of more value. The revolutions which have overthrown ancient greatness, are proud and eager to raise up new. It is their security, it is their highest gratification to see themselves consecrated in glorious images; it seems to them as though they are thus making reparation to the society whom they have despoiled of the original. Hence the instinct which, despite democratic passions, impels popular parties to those pompous manifestations, those measureless flatteries, that idolatry of language with which they ever delight to intoxicate the great men whom they see mounting upon the ruins they have made. Sectaries and philosophers, citizens and soldiers, parliament and people, all, of their own will or other people's, concurred to aggrandize Cromwell, as though to aggrandize themselves with him; and the republicans of the city of London, when they met and harangued him on his entering their walls, gratified their own vanity as they repeated to him: "Thou wert ordained to 'bind their kings in chains, and with links of iron' their nobles." Blind creatures, who little thought how soon these chains would weigh down their own hands!

Cromwell received this homage and this greatness with a calculated sincerity, which yet was not wholly destitute of sincerity. "To God alone be the glory," was his constant reply; "I am but his feeble and unworthy instrument." He thoroughly understood how exactly this language suited his country and his party, and he exaggerated it and repeated it beyond measure, to gratify the men whose confidence and devotion he thus animated. But it was at the same time the expression of his own heartfelt thought. God, his power, his providence, his unintermitting action upon the affairs of the world and upon men's souls, these were not with Cromwell cold abstractions or obsolete traditions; they were his faith—

his deep, genuine faith: a faith, inconsistent indeed, and inexacting, having but slight influence or check upon his actions in the temptations of life, and the necessities of success, but which subsisted in his heart's core, and gave inspiration to his words whenever the greatness of the circumstance or of his own situation thoroughly moved him. It is very easy besides to speak humbly and to call oneself the instrument of God, when God has made this instrument the master of nations. Neither the power nor the pride of Cromwell suffered from his humility.

Thus, the greater his position grew, the greater did his ambition grow with it, carrying him at last above his position. Through his so humble language, darted from time to time in his actions lightning gleams of sovereignty. At the field of battle of Worcester, he had the desire to knight, with his own hands, two of his bravest generals, Lambert and Fleetwood; and it was with great ill-humour that he gave up the notion, when he was reminded that this was a privilege of royalty. On the day of his triumphal entrance into London, as he advanced, amid the public acclamations, such was the expression of his countenance, that a man who knew him well, the sectarian preacher, Hugh Peters, said as he passed, "Cromwell will make himself our king." He had just saved the republic, and subjected to her two kingdoms. Out of London, and by the agency of arms, he had no further greatness now to do. He remained in London, powerful and unoccupied, receiving the constant visits of his officers and soldiers, the centre of all discontents and of all hopes. Before him was the republican parliament, so curtailed, that scarcely from sixty to eighty members could be got together from day to day; some of them earnestly and honestly occupied with public affairs, with the navy, with the Dutch war, with reforms projected in the laws —but the majority petty in their greatness, devoted to low passions, to sordid interests, monopolizing all the public employments among themselves and their relations, making their power subservient to their fortune and to their private animosities—a clique, day by day more selfish, more isolated, more decried; giving to the country neither repose, nor liberty, nor a future, yet manifesting entire determination to retain the sovereign power, as though the salvation of England could have required the perpetuation of so miserable a government.

Cromwell hesitated and waited a long time. At the very moment of his triumph, when he resumed his seat in parliament, he had commenced the struggle; two great and popular questions were his weapons—a general amnesty, proclaiming the civil war at an end, and an electoral law, regulating the mode and period of assembling a new parliament. These two measures had been proposed some time before, but they had remained buried in committees, merely brought forward from time to time, on critical occasions, by way of bait. Under the influence of Cromwell, they were seriously resumed and debated. The amnesty was carried with difficulty at the end of five months, after numerous attempts to introduce restrictions and reservations, chiefly of a pecuniary nature, all of which had been successfully opposed by Cromwell himself, too sensible to indulge in any useless animosities, and intent upon creating for himself in all parties supporters and personal friends. But the decisive measure, the electoral law, still remained in suspense. Cromwell urged it on, though without any particular earnestness, and rather to elicit for public observation the obstinate selfishness of the parliamentary ringleaders than to effect any speedy result. He was himself exceedingly perplexed. By what plausible means was he to constrain the parliament to dissolve? What would be the result of new elections? and would even new elections be sufficient to raise up and establish the country on a solid basis? Had the experiment of the republic succeeded? was it not still evident that monarchy was more in conformity with the laws, with the habits, with the feelings, with the permanent interests of the country? if the country desired it, if the country needed it, how reinstate it?

Cromwell put these questions, not merely in confidential conversations with some of the leading public men, but in conferences wherein he assembled officers of the army and members of parliament. He attained no satisfactory result: the officers insisted upon remaining republicans; the politicians inclined to monarchy, would hear of none other than the old monarchy, and counselled Cromwell to treat with it for its re-establishment. He would then break off the conversation, returning to the charge on some later occasion, pliant in appearance, but indomitable in his ambition; now frank to audacity, to lure men into his designs, at others crafty to effrontery, to conceal

them; from each successive interview he derived the advantage of more and more deeply compromising the army in his struggle with the parliament. The sectarian spirit was still potent in the army, and the military spirit had at the time strongly developed itself. The passions of the fanatic, and the interests of the soldier, combined there and mutually sustained each other; these Cromwell operated upon, incessantly inciting them against the parliament. What iniquity, that the pay of the conquerors should be withheld, and that men who had neither fought nor suffered should alone gather the fruits of victory! what an insult to God that the councils of his saints should be so little heeded! Petitions presented by the general council of officers in the name of the whole army haughtily demanded the payment of arrears, the reform of the abuses of the government, the satisfaction of the hopes of the people of God. The menaced parliament defended itself, grew angry, and at length assailed in its turn. It pressed forward the disbanding of a considerable portion of the army; it put up for sale the very palace of Hampton Court, which it had assigned to Cromwell as a residence!

This state of tension had already endured eighteen months. On both sides it was felt that the crisis approached. Who was to remain the master? All at once parliament took a resolution—the very resolution which was demanded from it. It vigorously resumed the discussion of the new electoral law. But that law had precisely for its object to perpetuate power in the very hands whence it should have withdrawn it. The present members of the republican parliament remained of right, without any re-election, members of the new parliament. Fresh elections were only to fill up vacancies in the assembly, according to the total number fixed by the law. And that nothing might be wanting to the security of the combination, the old members alone were to form the committee charged with inquiring into the new elections, and with the admission or rejection of the elected.

This was no dissolution of the parliament; it was a new lease. Cromwell no longer hesitated: abruptly breaking up a conference of officers assembled in his house, at Whitehall, he proceeded to the House of Commons, silently took his seat in the midst of the discussion, and at the moment when the electoral law was about to be put to the vote, he suddenly rose,

and with thorough brutality, profiting by the discredit into which the parliamentary ringleaders had fallen, to overwhelm them with gross insults, and insulting them grossly in order to place them in still deeper discredit, he signified to them, that they were no longer a body, drove them from the House by a company of soldiers, as intruders too long tolerated; and thus, at a blow, put an end to the Long Parliament. Not a man resisted, not a man raised his voice in opposition. Not that the expelled parliament had not friends, earnest and faithful, though few in number; but they had against them force and opinion. All the other parties, whether or not they approved of the act of Cromwell, rejoiced in it as in an operation of justice, and a deliverance. Intimidated or powerless, the defeated party quietly submitted; and those revolutionary ringleaders who had for nine years waged civil war, who had driven from parliament three-fourths of their colleagues, condemned their king to death, and tyrannically changed the constitution of their country, were now in a position to comprehend that the government of a people is a work infinitely higher and more difficult than they had imagined before they themselves succumbed beneath it. The republic had been established in the name of liberty; and under the domination of the republican parliament, liberty had been but a vain word, veiling the tyranny of a faction. After the expulsion of the parliament, the republic in its turn became a vain word, retained merely as one of those lies which still serve a formal purpose, though they no longer deceive the mind; and the despotism of a sole ruler was for five years the government of England. Despotism in great nations, which resort to it in a fit of perplexity or of lassitude, can only subsist upon two conditions—order and grandeur. Cromwell, become the master, exerted all the resources of his genius to impress upon his government both these characteristics. A stranger to the petty malignant enmities, to the narrow and impracticable prejudices which factions bring to their rule, he was willing that all, without distinction of origin, of party, cavaliers and presbyterians equally with republicans, provided they kept clear of political machinations, should have, in all the interests of civil life, protection and security. The act which imposed upon every Englishman the oath of fidelity, under penalty of incapacity to appear before the public tri-

bunals in assertion of his rights, was abolished. The administration of justice became once more regular, and as a general principle, impartial. Cromwell, general of the revolution, had always managed to keep up a correspondence and to have creatures in all parties. Cromwell, protector of the republic, sought to rally round his government the higher forces of society. Too sensible to separate himself from his roots, and to transfer himself to his enemies, a superior instinct warned him at the same time, that until power is accepted and supported by the men whom their position, their interests, their habits, render its natural allies, nothing is thoroughly organized or solidly established. The fierce, curbless chief of the popular innovators, now manifested himself full of respect for the institutions consecrated by time. In their aversion for human sciences, and for aristocratic or royal foundations, the sectaries wished to suppress the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Cromwell saved them. Great by nature, and now high by position, he assumed the taste for all that was high, for all that was great in past memories, in present intellect, and learning, and renown; he felt it his interest to attract all such around him, and he took a pleasure in protecting it against all low and petty hostilities. And he employed in support of this policy, in the maintenance, for the general benefit of order and of law, in the re-establishment, everywhere, of power and of respect for power, that very army with which he had overthrown so much ancient grandeur, and whose strict discipline, and whose personal devotion to himself, imperfectly and with difficulty kept in check the passions smouldering within it.

Abroad, in the external relations of England, Cromwell, freed from the yoke of parties, applied a juster judgment of the interests of his country and of his own situation, and attained a success still more thoroughly complete. Peace was the basis of his policy. From the very moment of his accession, he applied himself to its re-establishment or confirmation in every quarter,—with Holland, with Portugal, with Denmark; laying aside here those dreams of republican and protestant fusion which formerly he had himself conceived or fomented; there, religious or party grudges; eager to arrange differences, to settle disputed questions; at times exhibiting a haughty sensitiveness, in order to establish the dignity of a new govern-

ment, but always rational, indulging in no extravagant exactions, in no chimerical ambition, seeking abroad only that which was required for his essential interests, for the security and the strength of his power at home. Upon the same principle, peace once assured, the second basis of his policy was neutrality. Europe was now witnessing the crisis of the struggle between the House of Austria and the House of Bourbon,—between Spain, now declining, and France, now in rapid ascension. Each made earnest, and at times degrading, efforts to draw England into its alliance. Cromwell listened to both, giving to each enough of hope to obtain from it what he needed on behalf of his government, but pledging himself to neither cause. Upon a thorough consideration of the whole case, he judged that from Spain he had less to hope, less to fear, and much more to take. He had it in contemplation to give the power and the commerce of England a large field in the New World. He quitted neutrality in time and manner so happily selected, that while his war with Spain gave him beyond seas the conquest of Jamaica, his alliance with France procured for him, at the threshold of the European continent, the possession of Dunkirk, without his involving himself so deeply in the struggle of the two parties as to compromise the external independence of his country.

It was under his government the constant characteristic of his policy to keep itself free from system and from passion, and to meddle no further with other people's affairs than its own affairs really required. The Stuarts had taken refuge in France. The court treated them with favour, though hesitatingly. The essays at civil war of the Fronde agitated the kingdom. The protestants in it were, if not persecuted, disquieted and discontented. The opportunity seemed favourable, and the temptation was great, for Cromwell to intervene there against his enemies, and in support of the religious and political cause by which he had achieved his greatness. The Prince de Condé, chief of the insurgents, and the city of Bordeaux, their bulwark, earnestly solicited his aid, maintaining in his court envoys, who heaped entreaty upon entreaty, offer upon offer, to obtain his consent. Cromwell listened, gave some ground of hope, sent in his turn messengers and agents into France, commissioned to sound the dispositions and to measure the strength of the protestants and of the Frondeurs,

and thus seriously disquieted Mazarin; then, finding on the side of the French malcontents neither real strength, nor able conduct, nor chance of success, he laid aside all aspirations of ambition or of passion, let all the offers he had received, all the hopes he had encouraged, fall to the ground, and negotiated with Mazarin, putting to full profit all the uneasiness he had excited in the mind of that minister.

When, however, an opportunity, less tempting in itself, but at the same time less compromising, presented itself elsewhere for sustaining oppressed Protestantism, Cromwell seized it with avidity. To protect against the duke of Savoy, some poor peasants driven from their valleys, he multiplied declarations, embassies, money-aids, menaces; summoned the court of France to interpose, unless it desired that he himself should do so, involved in his proceedings the United Provinces and the Swiss cantons, attained his end solely by the movement which he put in operation, and thus gave the religious opinion of England a distinguished triumph, without involving it in any grave and dubious struggle.

When English interests abroad, important in themselves, though secondary, were at stake, claiming protection or reparation, Cromwell supported them energeticaily, keeping them carefully apart from general and more exciting questions. He sent into the Mediterranean Admiral Blake with a strong squadron, commissioned to proceed wherever England had demands or complaints to make; and Blake presented himself successively before Leghorn, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, settling in a brilliant manner, without aggravating them, the various disputes, and never withdrawing until he had obtained from free will or by compulsion, the redress of the grievances of his country.

Such earnest efforts, such great successes, did not remain wholly without result; but they did not effect the true and ultimate aim of the conqueror. This government, so energetic without temerity, so skilful in flattering the national passions without becoming their slave, which abroad aggrandized its country without compromising it, and at home maintained order by the soldiers of the revolution,—this government, Cromwell, was obeyed, feared, admired, but did not take root. England submitted to his genius and his force; she did not accept his domination. Consummate in the art of drawing

men to him, every day he detached a greater or less number from the ranks of the old parties, inducing some absolutely to enter his services, others at least to cease from acting as his enemies. He obtained, to the fullest extent that it has ever been attained by the masters of nations, all that good sense, weariness of resistance, personal interest, weakness, cowardice, sordid baseness, treachery, can give to power. But the old parties still subsisted,—cavaliers, presbyterians, republicans, compressed, but alive, and renouncing neither hope nor action. During the five years of Cromwell's rule, and omitting from consideration a host of obscure attempts, fifteen conspiracies and insurrections, royalist or republican, or coalitions of both parties, placed his government in alarm, and his life in danger. He repressed them energetically, alike without cruelty and without pity, rigorous or clement, according to the necessities of the moment, employing by turns the laws and arbitrary will, juries and exceptional courts, an indefatigable police, and a devoted army; silent arrests and signal executions; the banishment or the imprisonment of the defeated insurgents, or their sale in the colonies as slaves; everything that could be devised to strike enemies with impotence or fear. Nothing succeeded against him; all the plots were frustrated, all the risings in arms put down. The country took no part in them, and remained tranquil. But, at the same time, it had no faith in the right or in the duration of this daily victorious power. Cromwell did not reign in men's minds as a recognised and permanent sovereign. At the pinnacle of his greatness, he was still, in the public thought, nothing more than a master,—irresistible but provisional, without a rival, but also without a future.

He himself felt this more thoroughly than any one else. It was the characteristic of his mind to see all things, even his own position, such as they really were. Never was great man more ardent in hope, more entirely free from illusion.

He had learned, in overturning the constitutional monarchy, that it was the only government which suited England or could live there; master of the ruins of the edifice, an enduring idea took possession of him—to raise it up, and to establish himself within it.

It was his earnest desire, his constant labour, to effect a parliament with which he could live and govern. In five years

he called together no fewer than four; in some cases himself selecting, in concert with his officers, the assembly, whom he hypocritically invested with the name; in others, having it elected according to the new mode which the republican Long Parliament was on the point of adopting, when he expelled it from the house; always treating these assemblies in the outset with much solemnity of deference; putting in practice, to create majorities, artifices the most shameless, violence the most monstrous; and ever careful, in the very moment of breaking with them, to give them no idea that he renounced their co-operation.

The undertaking, on his part, was altogether chimerical. The royalists kept quite aloof from his parliament. The Presbyterians entered it, but in a very limited number. The various fractions of the republican party sat there in isolated batches, broken up and furious. The partisans of Cromwell were men little adapted to triumph by the means of parliamentary tactics and debate. His enemies, more practised in this class of combat, put into operation against him all its resources. He found himself there in presence of men whom he had dethroned, sincerely vehement against his tyranny, obstinate in their anarchical ideas and habits, and as ungovernable as incapable of governing. He himself, from day to day, supplied them with fresh and fresh weapons, in the shape of grievances; for he had not learned, in becoming absolute master, to respect right, or to endure opposition and contradiction. Warned by his acute instinct that in his despotic isolation he was establishing nothing, not even his own power, he would summon a parliament that he might make use of it in the creation of a durable government; but when the parliament was assembled, destitute of the natural force of the conservative party, and dominated by men whose only knowledge was to destroy, soon Cromwell, unable to endure either their liberty or their blind subserviency, would break in pieces the instrument he felt necessary, but which yet he was furious at finding ever fatal.

Once he thought he had, at least, succeeded in collecting a parliament that would comprehend and co-operate in his designs. He hastened to have laid before it the idea which possessed his mind, the complete re-establishment of the English monarchy, a king and two houses of parliament.

The proposition was formally made and discussed in the house, and publicly negotiated, for more than two months, between the parliament and the Protector. Cromwell displayed in the negotiation that strange amalgamation of ardour and of caution, of profound ability and of coarse hypocrisy, which constituted at once his art and his nature. In him prudence almost equalled ambition. He did choose that his accession to royalty should be at the price of a schism in his party,—that basis, already so narrow and so tottering, of his government. It was his aim to become king without imperilling the protector. He required, that not simply should the crown be offered to him, but that all the leading men by whom he was surrounded, sectaries or politicians, officers or magistrates, should distinctly commit themselves to the offer. For a long time past, before the institution of the Protectorate, before the expulsion of the Long Parliament, he had been sounding them and preparing them for such a result. Thoroughly engaged in this supreme enterprise, his labour, in operating upon them, was infinite and indefatigable; now straightforward, now indirect; he addressed himself, by turns, to their interest, to their friendship, to their reason; he sought to impress upon them that the revolution they had made, and their own position in common with his own, would remain weak and precarious until they had together established themselves in the constitution upon which were founded all the laws of England, with which were inseparably connected all the habits of obedience and respect of her people. He persuaded, or carried away, so many men, even among the long contumacious officers, that he might well think himself, and did really think himself, sure of success. The proposition was voted in parliament. The crown was formally and officially offered him. He postponed his reply: he desired to overcome all remaining opposition. This opposition he encountered close at hand, on the part of the generals most closely connected with his person. It was insurmountable, whether emanating from sincere attachment to republicanism, from very shame at giving so direct the lie to all their past life, or from the vengeance of humiliated rivalry. Cromwell flattered himself, that after all, these were but the fanciful humours of a few individuals. He had resolved to dispense with their consent, and to place upon his head the

crown which had been placed in his hands, when he learned that a petition, drawn up by one of his chaplains, and signed by a great number of officers, had, in the name of the army, been just solemnly presented to parliament, requiring fidelity to the good old cause, and protesting against the re-establishment of royalty. Cromwell instantly summoned the parliament to Whitehall, and affecting utter astonishment that they should thus appear to protest against his reply before it was given, he formally refused the title of king.

It was in vain that, enlightened by his genius as to the vice of his greatness, he sought to place it upon a basis consecrated by right and by time. God did not choose that the same man who had laid the king's head low, and trampled under foot the liberties of the country, should gather the fruit and enjoy the honour of the re-establishment of royalty and of the legitimate parliament. Potent against anarchy, Cromwell, in struggling with the difficulties of his situation, constantly fell into despotism. He had restored impartiality to civil order: impelled by the necessity of meeting the expenses of his government, he subjected all the royalists to the most iniquitous exactions, and the whole country to the rule of a military tyranny, the sole means of accomplishing those exactions. He prided himself upon having reinstated the administration of justice in all its regularity, in all its lustre; and when eminent advocates defended men against his prosecution, when upright magistrates refused to condemn those whom the laws acquitted, he maltreated, imprisoned, and drove them from their offices, with a degree of brutality altogether unexampled in the very worst times. It was over arrogance in him to suppose that he could re-establish legal monarchy without renouncing revolutionary violence. Cromwell already enjoyed a rare privilege; he had passed from the revolution to the dictatorship; it was not given him to transform the dictatorship into a rule of right and of liberty.

But his prudence did not desert him in this perilous trial. He had stayed himself only at the last moment, but he had stayed himself. England, which had witnessed the retrocession,—the republicans, who had enforced it,—still needed and still feared him. His position remained entire; and the protector was none the less powerful for having failed to make himself king. He did not abandon his design. He even set about preparing his measures for assembling a new parliament,

in the hope, doubtless, of one day quelling the army by the parliament, as heretofore he had quelled the parliament by the army.

But already the hand that was soon to quell himself lay heavy on him. His health had been for some time past giving way. A domestic affliction, the loss of a beloved daughter, aggravated his malady. He sank rapidly. He desired not to die: the many trials he had so triumphantly overcome, the great things he had done and that he contemplated to do, the power of his will, all contributed to persuade him that he had not attained the term of his life. He said to the more confidential friends about him, "I am sure I shall not die to-day; I know that God will not have me die yet." God had marked out Cromwell to be a striking example of what a great man can do and cannot do. His destiny was accomplished. He had rendered himself, by his sole genius, the master of his country, and of the revolution he had made in his country; he remained, to his latest hour, in full possession of his greatness; and he died, fruitlessly consuming his genius and his power in the attempt to reconstruct that which he had destroyed—a parliament and a king.

Amid the anarchy into which she was thrown by his death, England experienced one of those rare instances of good fortune, respecting which it is difficult to say whether they proceed from God alone, or whether man's wisdom has a share in them. The catastrophe of anarchy was in no way factitious or incomplete, or precipitate. All the ambitions, all the pretensions, all the elements of chaos and of political strife, that Cromwell had kept under, reappeared, and rushed tumultuously together upon the stage which he had filled alone. His son, Richard, was proclaimed protector without obstacle, and recognised by foreign powers without hesitation; but no sooner did he seek to govern, than around him arose a host of councillors, soon becoming his enemies and his rivals. The general council of officers; a new and more popular council of the army; a new parliament, which Richard immediately assembled; the old, mutilated Long Parliament, or, as the people called it, the Rump of the Long Parliament, which asserted that to it alone belonged the legal power, since it had received from Charles I.—the king it had put to death—the privilege of not being dissolved except by its own consent; and, lastly, this same Long Parliament, recruited by the members

whom, before the king's death, it had expelled, and who now re-entered it, as they had been dismissed from it, by force; all these spectres claimed to replace the master who of late had quelled them all; and England saw them, for more than twenty months, appearing, disappearing, flickering about, evoking or expelling one another, coalescing and combating, without any of them, for a single hour, assuming the stability or the strength of a government.

In this interregnum of twenty months—amid this ridiculous outburst of chimerical candidates—that candidate alone did not appear who to the universal thought of England, whether in hope or in fear, presented the only serious pretension. Scarce one or two insignificant movements, which merely demanded a free parliament, and did not venture to even utter the name of Charles Stuart, were essayed in his favour, and were at once suppressed without any difficulty.

It was the recollection of Cromwell which still kept the royalist party in fear and inaction. He had so repeatedly prostrated their hopes—had beaten down their insurrections and their plots with so hard a hand, that they no longer ventured even to think of success. Moreover, they had been taught wisdom by long enduring misfortune. They had learned not to take their will as the measure of their strength, and to comprehend that, if Charles Stuart was to recover the crown, it was the national interest of England, expressed by a national movement, that must restore it to him, and not an insurrection of cavaliers.

Richard Cromwell had the thought and the wish himself to terminate the general anguish and his own, by treating with the king. Without ambition or grandeur, he was deficient neither in capacity nor in probity. He had taken part in his father's destiny, rather from an indolent indisposition to oppose it, than from any confidence in it. He had no faith in the continuance of its success in his own person, and he felt himself incapable of supporting so great a burden. But neither was he capable of taking a decisive resolution upon such high concerns. He was weak and vacillating, overwhelmed with debt, and lost in vague speculations as to his future destiny. He remained the toy of a fortune, the vanity of which he thoroughly appreciated; the instrument of far less wise men than himself.

The catastrophe could not be long delayed. All the powers, all the names which had made the revolution, or which the revolution had made, had been tried, and tried over again. No external obstacle, no national resistance, had impeded them in their attempts to govern, yet all had failed, and all had well nigh sunk under the failure, all exhausted, in these sterile struggles, the little credit and the little strength they had managed to retain. Their nullity was laid bare. Yet England was wholly at their mercy. The nation had lost, in the course of these long and mournful alternations of anarchy and of despotism, the habit of itself regulating its destinies, and the courage to set about it. The army of Cromwell was still on foot, incapable of creating a government, but prostrating all that did not please it. One of its officers, high in the esteem and confidence of the soldiers, a stranger to political parties, who had done good service to the parliament, to Cromwell, and even to Richard Cromwell at his accession, Monk, foreseeing what must inevitably be the result of all this anarchy, applied himself to the task of guiding his wearied country to that goal, gently and without a struggle. There was nothing great in him; he possessed only common sense and courage. He had no yearnings for glory, no ambition for power; no lofty principles, no high designs, either for his country or for himself; but he was filled with a deep hatred of that disorder, of those measureless iniquities, which popular parties veil with fine promises. He was attached, firmly, ingenuously, unostentatiously attached to his duties, as a soldier and an Englishman. He was no mountebank, no declaimer; cautious, even to excess of taciturnity, he was absolutely indifferent to truth; and lied with imperturbable daring and pertinacity, whenever the expedient seemed promotive of what he deemed the sole, essential interest of England,—the peaceful return of the only government that could possibly be stable and regular in that country. He regarded all the rest as mere dubiety and party squabbling. He succeeded. All the fractions of the great monarchical party suspended, in order to give him their combined aid, their old hostilities, their blind impatience, and their opposing pretensions. The restoration was accomplished, as an altogether natural, as the only possible fact, without costing the conquerors or the conquered a single drop of blood; and Charles II., entering London amid the acclamations of enormous crowds, might well say:

"It has been certainly my own fault that I did not return long ago, for I have not seen a single soul to-day who does not swear that he always desired my return."

Never did government, old, or new, or raised up after a fall. find itself in a better condition to ensure regular strength and stability.

Charles II. ascended his throne without foreign aid, without internal struggle, without even an effort by his own party; by the sole impulse of the English nation, freed at length from oppression and from anarchy, and from revolutionary fluctuations, and which looked to him alone for legal order and a future.

The re-establishment of monarchy took place after the complete exhaustion, the decisive downfal of its enemies and rivals. The republic and the protectorate had appeared and re-appeared under all the forms, in all the combinations, they were capable of. All the powers, all the names issuing from the revolution, had fallen into utter disrepute and desuetude. The field of battle was clear. The very phantoms of the combatants, and of the revolutionary pretender, had vanished.

Royalty was not re-established by itself. Concurrent with the king's re-assuming his throne, the great landed proprietors, the country gentlemen, the leading citizens, who had supported the royalist cause, also resumed their places about the throne, and in the government. The republic and Cromwell had excluded them from public affairs, unable to endure their presence. Their return filled up a great void in the social organization. It is the common error of revolutionists to suppose that they can replace all they destroy, that they can suffice for all the requirements of the state. The English republicans had certainly abolished the House of Lords, and driven the royalist party from the political stage; but they did not succeed in themselves supplying its place, either for the support of power against the spirit of anarchy, or for the maintenance of the liberties of the nation against despotism. At the same time that it raised up the hereditary monarchy, the restoration reinstated landed property, family traditions, the old, high, territorial aristocracy of the country in all their rank and influence. Power thus recovered at once its principle of stability and its natural allies; and political society, for eleven years past broken up and fluctuating, re-entered upon the

possession of all its strength, and replaced itself upon its original basis.

The government of religious society, the Episcopal Church, raised its head at the same moment. No doubt, the origin of the Anglican Church, created as it was at the voice, and nurtured under the shadow of temporal power, has been a great source of weakness to it, as compared with the purely spiritual origin and the lofty independence of the Catholic Church. But England has derived from the circumstance this advantage, that all struggle has ceased between the government of the Church and that of the State: the Anglican Church, closely united with the throne, and deriving from the throne its original strength, has been constantly and loyally devoted to it; and despite the defect of its origin, and its infirmities of conduct, it has never been deficient either in fervour of faith, or in virtue of life, or in lustrous courage in the accomplishment of its mission. It has had its heroes and its martyrs, indomitable on the scaffold and at the stake, though but too frequently weakly yielding to the sovereign. When it was re-established, in 1660, with Charles II., it had, for fifteen years, undergone every description of revolutionary persecution, spoliation, the oppression of its worship, insult, imprisonment, poverty. It had supported all this with dignity and steadfast constancy; it rose up amid the impassioned devotion of the royalist party, and the general respect of the people, and brought to the service of royalty tried fidelity, and an authority aggrandized by misfortune.

The disposition of the English people entirely corresponded with that of the Church; not that the sects it had long oppressed, and which had been just oppressing it in their turn, had ceased to be fiercely hostile to it; not that the odious and ridiculous excesses of fanaticism everywhere gave way to a wise and true piety. A reaction of impiety, frivolity, licence, and utter indecency was not long in breaking out. But this scarcely penetrated beneath the upper, superficial regions of society. Amid the undisguised vices of the court, and of the classes immediately, from vicinity, subject to the contagion of its example, England remained full of sincere and fervent Christians; one portion attached, or brought back, to the Anglican church by the recollection of the evils, and by hatred of the disorders which its fall had involved; the rest, con-

nected with the dissenting sects, whom the church once more began to persecute, cruelly enough to exalt their zeal, but not enough to strike them to death. In the very heart of their struggles and mortal hatreds, the church and the sects exerted a salutary influence upon one another; they reciprocally maintained, and recalled to each other respect for God and his law, a constant striving for the eternal interests of man, and the fervour and activity of faith.

Thus, in the masses of the population, there was no want of moral basis for the re-established monarchy, while it found the political support it required in the classes habitually in contact with power.

Two formidable enemies, the spirit of revolution and the spirit of re-action, could alone render vain so many propitious circumstances, and again compromise the monarchy. The spirit of revolution long survived its defeat, and even the exposure of its utter impotence. Of the two revolutionary parties which had ruled in England, the republic and Cromwell, the latter had completely passed away; so completely, that the sons of the protector were left at liberty to die in peace, forgotten in their own country. The republican party subsisted without essaying, and almost without hoping, anything for its own cause; but ardently mixed up with all the hostilities, all the plots against the established government; incessantly seeking and finding insurgents and martyrs among the persecuted sects, particularly in Scotland. Even among the parties of constitutional opposition, strangers to any republican regrets or desires, revolutionary ideas and habits still remained potent: the more enlightened had their minds imbued with theories, and their hearts prone to the emotion of passions incompatible with the patient struggles and the compulsory negotiations inseparable from constitutional monarchy; the more moderate calculated the chances, and glided down the inclined plane of new revolutions, with a facility opposed to all stable and legal order. The revolutionary venom, deadened, but not expelled, still circulated in the veins of a large portion of the English nation, and kept it in a state of political intemperance, pregnant with obstacles and perils to power.

The spirit of reaction, that disease of conquering parties, incessantly fomented the spirit of revolution; not that we

ought to adopt all the reproaches with which history pursues, in this respect, the cavaliers and the Church of England. Revolutions long sovereign, and at last arrested in their course, have this arrogant pretension, that the iniquities they have committed remain intact; men must be content to restrain thenceforth their maleficent power; they characterize as re-action all reparation of the ills they have done. Among the measures adopted in the reign of Charles II. to redress the wrongs which the royalists, lay and ecclesiastical, had suffered during the revolution, many were only a natural and necessary return to violated right and law. But these returns have limits, which good sense will point out for the guidance of governments, and the interest of parties themselves. We must not repair injustice by injustice; nor put an end to revolutions by provocation and vengeance. All reparation which assumes this character loses its right, and seriously endangers the cause it pretends to serve. The religious re-action, especially, fell, under Charles II., into deplorable excesses. It was not a simple redress of the grievances and misfortunes of the Anglican church; it was a vindictive persecution of the dissenting sects, a want of faith towards the more moderate of these sects, to whom the king, at the time of his return, had solemnly promised liberty. Charles several times attempted to keep his word, and to secure some degree of toleration to the dissenters; his good sense recoiled from persecution, equally with the gentleness of his manners, his indifference in religion, and his secret tendencies in favour of the catholics. But his weak and transient fits of justice soon gave way before the obstinacy of ecclesiastical hatred and the fury of popular passions, with which the royalist party, blinded or hurried away, were almost all associated, both in and out of parliament. After 1660, the lay re-action was limited and of short duration; but religious re-action, for a moment restrained, soon broke out with violence, and perpetuated itself in an aggravated form, and created most of the dangers and faults, I might say the crimes, into which Charles II. and his government fell.

But these faults and these perils, though great and sad, had about them at bottom nothing vitally menacing to the English monarchy and society. Considered as a whole, the spirit of revolution no longer possessed, the spirit of re-action no longer

dominated, England. After the great revolutionary crisis of 1640–1660, the English people had the good fortune and the merit of appreciating experience, and of never giving themselves up to the extreme parties. Amidst the most ardent political struggles and violence, in which they sometimes followed, to which they sometimes impelled, their chiefs, they always on great and decisive occasions reverted to that sound good sense which consists in recognising the essential benefits it is desired to retain, and attaching itself without wavering to them; enduring the inconveniences attendant on them, and renouncing the desires which might compromise them. It is from the time of Charles II. that this good sense, which is the political intelligence of free nations, has presided over the destinies of England. Three great results, as yet confused and incomplete, but irrevocable, alone essential to the wishes and to the general interests of the English people, survived the revolution which it had gone through.

Royalty could no longer separate itself from parliament: the cause of monarchy was gained, that of absolute monarchy was lost. Theologists and philosophers, as Filmer and Hobbes, might erect absolute power into a dogma, or maintain it as a principle; and, in writings or in conversation, their ideas might excite the favour or anger of men of science and party; but in the practical thought of the nation the question was decided: royalists or revolutionists, all regarded the intimate union and mutual control of the crown and parliament as the right and necessity of the country.

The House of Commons was, in fact, preponderant in parliament. Its direct sovereignty was no longer the question; this revolutionary principle had fallen into utter discredit, was accursed; the crown and the House of Lords had resumed possession of their rights and of their rank, but they had been too roughly beaten down to acquire again all their ancient superiority, even by the fall of their enemies; and neither the faults nor the reverses of the House of Commons entirely effaced the memory of their terrible victories. The royalist party, now become masters, inherited, in its relations with the crown and in the administration of the state, the essential conquests of the Long Parliament. The confusion was necessarily of long duration, and often violent, before the different parties, whig and tory, government and opposition, had learned to

make a good use of these acquisitions, to comprehend thoroughly their meaning and extent, and to maintain among the great public powers that laborious harmony which constitutes the merit and the difficulty of constitutional government. But amid the experimentings of this apprenticeship, and despite frequently contradicting forms and appearances, the preponderating influence of the House of Commons became, from the time of Charles II., a more and more evident and assured fact.

By the side of, or rather above, these two political facts, was the religious fact also consummated by the revolution, the complete and decisive domination of protestantism in England. The English protestants had certainly never been more thoroughly disunited; and Bossuet might well allow himself the proud gratification of contemplating and describing their discords and their contests. But the unity of a common faith and passion still lived in sects separating from each other in every direction; amidst all their own battles, all professed the gospel, and all combated catholicism with equal ardour. Liberty of conscience, constantly forgotten, and oppressed among and by them, was, as against the Romish church, equally dear to them, and irrevocably vindicated.

This was all that the English nation, in its general and inmost thought, demanded from the ancient royalty, whose return it welcomed with transport, ready long to endure the faults of the government which should preserve it from any new revolution, by assuring it these three results of the revolutions it had undergone.

But this was precisely what neither Charles II. nor James II. could or would accomplish.

In politics, Charles was too sensible and too indifferent to affect or practise absolute power. He only cared for his pleasures, only loved power for the enjoyment it gave of life, and willingly listened to concession and conciliation, that he might thus ward off the peril of extreme struggles, or spare himself annoyance; but in his heart he admired and relished only absolute monarchy. He had suffered from the rigorous principles, he had witnessed the errors and defects, of his country's institutions; he had contemplated, nigh at hand, the splendour of the court of Louis XIV., and the vigour of his government. Thither his admiration and trust were directed. Hence his

tendency to fall into venal servility to Louis XIV.; he regarded him as the chief of the party of kings, and did not feel the shame which should have overwhelmed him, when he sold to him the policy and the liberties of his country.

In religion, Charles was at once sceptic and Roman catholic; believing nothing, and as corrupted in spirit as in morals; but thinking that, after all, if there was any truth in religion, it was to be found in the catholic faith,—a safer shelter for kings against the perils of power; for men against those of eternity.

Thus, though in his life he did not demean himself as an absolute and catholic sovereign, Charles was at heart catholic and absolutist; sympathizing with the kings of the continent, and not at all with the faith and policy of his nation.

James II. was a catholic and absolutist by faith, and his conduct was in keeping with his faith; blindly enterprising, moreover, with all the obstinacy of a narrow and sterile mind, and the hardness of a cold, passionless heart.

Such were the two princes whom the Restoration introduced to the English nation, resuming with delight the monarchy, and cursing the Revolution, while instinctively resolved to hold fast by its great results.

The history of England, during the whole course of the Restoration, is only the history of the profound disagreement, slowly manifesting itself, and at last breaking out, between two kings and their people, and of the persevering efforts of the English people to escape from the consequences of this fact,—that is to say, a new revolution.

For England, during this epoch, was essentially conservative. Ardent factions and selfish ambitions agitated her with their intrigues, their plots, their insurrections. She was more than once carried away by their efforts, or by her own passions, into movements to all appearance revolutionary. But far from seconding the men who sought to overturn the Stuart monarchy, she stopped short and recoiled when she perceived this tendency. In the reign of Charles II., conspirators and insurgents were only minorities disagreeing with the country, even at the moment they were receiving some degree of favour from it. In proportion as the restored royalty committed more faults, and exhibited more clearly its designs and tendencies, the public discontent grew greater, the chances of a rupture between the prince and the country stronger; but the

country struggled against the chances instead of seeking them. For twenty-six years, the English nation, to maintain the House of Stuart on the throne, without yielding up its laws and religion, made every sacrifice, every effort, that the most patient and sustained conservative spirit could make.

All the phases of the English government during this epoch—the conduct and the destiny of all the parties and of all the ministries that exercised power, were only so many various forms and striking instances of this great fact.

From the natural tendency of things, the old royalist party, the faithful councillors of Charles I. in misfortune, and of Charles II. in exile, were the first in possession of power. Clarendon was their chief. Of a firm, upright, and penetrating mind, the sincere friend of legal and moral order, courageously attached to the constitution, and passionately to the church of his country, full of respect for the rights, written or traditional, of the people as of the prince, he detested the Revolution to such a degree, that all novelty indiscriminately was matter of suspicion and odium to him. As prime minister, he was rather haughty than proud; he wanted greatness in his ideas, and sympathetic generosity in his character, and enjoyed his grandeur with pomp, as he exercised his power with stern unbendingness. With the king, who felt for him an esteem full of confidence and mingled with some attachment, he was alternately severe and humble, passing from remonstrance to compliment; speaking and maintaining the truth as an honest man, but uneasy at having spoken it; and seeking support against the court, without wishing to draw his power from the parliament. He aimed at once to maintain in the crown respect for the ancient laws of the country, and in the House of Commons the unassumingness of its ancient position; and flattered himself that the royal prerogative might he kept within the bounds of legality, and yet have no necessary responsibility to parliament imposed upon it. He failed in this chimerical attempt to found, at the starting point from a popular revolution, a government which should be neither arbitrary nor limited; and, after seven years' sway, he himself sank, odious to the commons for his monarchical arrogance, to the dissenting sects for his episcopal intolerance, and to the court for his disdainful austerity; pursued by the blind wrath of the people, who attributed to him all the public calamities

and all the wrongs of power; and unworthily abandoned by the king, to whom he had become only an inconvenient censor, and a compromising minister.

Clarendon's fall has been attributed to the defects of his character, and to some defects or some checks in his policy abroad and at home. This is to misapprehend the greatness of the causes which decide the fate of eminent men. Providence, which imposes on them so rude a task, does not treat them with such rigour as not to pardon them some weaknesses, or as lightly to overthrow them for some particular faults or checks. Other great ministers—Richelieu, Mazarin, Walpole—have had defects, and committed faults, and experienced reverses, as serious as those of Clarendon; but they understood the time in which they lived, and the views and efforts of their policy were in keeping with its wants—with the state and general tendency of men's minds. Clarendon deceived himself as to the age in which he lived; he mistook the meaning of the great events which he had witnessed; he considered and treated what had passed between 1640 and 1660 as a revolt, after the suppression of which there was nothing to do but to re-establish order and the laws; not as a revolution, which, precipitating English society into mournful frenzies, had launched it on new paths, and imposed on the old royalty, in its restoration, new rules of conduct. Among the great results which this revolution, even in its defeat, bequeathed to England, Clarendon accepted with sincerity the necessary co-operation of the parliament, and, with joy, the triumph of protestantism. He repudiated and obstinately combated the growing influence of the House of Commons on the government of the country, and could neither appreciate nor practise the means by which this new fact might be applied to further the security and even the power of the monarchy. This was one of those errors which no talents, no virtues, however great, can compensate; and which, in the pitiless destiny of public men, render fatal, errors and reverses, otherwise trivial and of little importance.

After the honest councillors of the ancient royalty came the profligates of the new court, with Buckingham and Shaftesbury at their head: the former, licentious, intellectual, giddy, and presumptuous; the other, ambitious, profound, and daring; both equally corrupt and skilled in the art of corrupting; both

ready, at the bidding of their fortune, or their vanity, to pass incessantly from the court to the multitude, and from the government to faction. They undertook to satisfy parliament, the dissenters, all the public sentiments which the stern and self-isolated policy of Clarendon had irritated. But to wish to please, and to yield, are not all that is requisite to govern. The daring and immoral successors of Clarendon did not suspect what embarrassments and dangers they were about to draw down upon power and upon themselves, in taking the House of Commons as their fulcrum. For a popular assembly to be the habitual medium of a strong and regular government, it must be itself powerfully organized and governed, which can only be, when it contains great parties united by common principles, and progressing with continuity and discipline, under recognised leaders, to a definite goal. Now such parties only form themselves, only subsist, where men are allied and bound together by powerful interests, and by firm and long entertained convictions. A certain measure of faith in ideas, and of fidelity to persons, is the vital condition of great political parties, as great political parties are the condition of a free government. Nothing like this existed, or was in a condition to be formed under Charles II., when the ministry called the Cabal endeavoured to govern in concert with the House of Commons, and according to its views. After so many shocks and blunders, and especially in the vicinity of power, men were a prey to doubt, to mistrust, to constant fluctuation, to a spirit of personality; now impatient to indecency, now prudent to pusillanimity. The House of Commons was chiefly made up of the wrecks of revolutionary parties; there were no political parties capable and worthy of sustaining a government. And men like Shaftesbury and Buckingham were incapable and unworthy of forming such parties; their only idea was to seek and to gain for themselves, by every and any means, partisans in every camp. This policy was shamelessly incoherent and contradictory; now they united England in the closest ties with Holland; now delivered Holland up to Louis XIV., according as they felt, for the time, need of the favour of the zealous English protestants, or of that of the great foreign king. They gave toleration to the dissenters, apparently out of respect to the rights of conscience, but in reality out of complaisance to the king, who wished to

protect the catholics; then, under the pressure of the irritated House of Commons, they solicited the king to sanction the most rigorous measures against the catholics and dissenters. Their policy, internal and external, displayed only a series of futile gropings in the dark; their most equitable measures were only means of corruption and deceit, insolently, and without shame, alternately adopted and abandoned; equally deficient in solidity and in sincerity.

The public, within as well as without the House of Parliament, were at times caught in these snares. There is no tendency so eager as that of popular passions to believe what pleases them, and to excuse everything in him who serves them. The profligates of the Cabal for a time obtained some favour, but it was withdrawn from them as rapidly as it had been given. Their licentious life, the known wickedness of their opinions, the versatility of their conduct, the futility of their promises, shocked the moral sense of the country, which, amid all these scandals and blunders, retained a solid foundation of faith and virtue. It would, assuredly, have done more than felt indignation, had it known that its king, with the connivance of his principal councillors, had concluded secret treaties with Louis XIV., by which he engaged to declare himself catholic so soon as he could safely do so; and, in the meanwhile, sold, for a few millions, the independence of the policy and of the institutions of his kingdom. England was long ignorant of these ignominious acts; but when mistrust is deep, public ignorance has instructors which, while they sometimes mislead, sometimes also wonderfully enlighten the people. Without knowing to what extent the ministers of the Cabal were degrading and betraying their country, the House of Commons not only did not place itself in their hands, but, in the end, attacked them furiously; and they fell under the blows of a power which they had aggrandized and flattered, in order to make use of it, but without having made any progress towards the organization of political parties in parliament, and their regular action in the government.

Their successor, Sir Thomas Osborne, Earl of Danby, had far more political genius and more influence in the development of the parliamentary principle in the government of his country. Entering public life under the auspices of the Cabal, and early associated with some of their evil practices, he differed

essentially from them, for he came from the country, not from the court. A country gentleman from Yorkshire, the country gentlemen were really his party, and the House of Commons his political country. He ardently sustained the cause of the crown and its power, but united it with parliament, instead of isolating it. He applied himself, by every means, good and bad, by persuasion, by the purchase of votes, to form a compact parliament party in the House of Commons, and to establish between his party and the administration that solid intimacy which alone can render power efficacious and powerful, by guiding its various elements to one same thought and one political action. Besides, in matters of religion and of external relations, Danby understood and shared the national feeling of England; he desired the security of protestantism and the good understanding between the English government and the powers devoted to that cause. He induced Charles II. to conclude, first, peace, and then alliance, with Holland, and to give his niece, Mary, in marriage to Prince William of Orange. Thus Danby, abroad, provided a future saviour for the faith and liberties of his country, while at home he began to give a solid form to that great party of the royal prerogative and of the church, which, since that epoch, has communicated such power to the English monarchy, and so powerfully contributed to its stability.

And by a happy combination of opposite results, while the sound judgment and ability of Danby organized the tory party, his faults caused the whigs to take an energetic and salutary development. It is to the honour of the whigs that they drew their origin and the first impulses of their greatness, from the defence of the liberties and the political morality of the country. Their party sprung to life under the invocation of generous principles and sentiments. It was in the contests against Danby and his army of Cavaliers, transformed into tories, that it began to assume its form and lustre—contests, irregular and confused, but which developed clearly two great parliamentary parties, both aspiring to the government of the country, in order to put into practice systems of policy really diverse, in virtue of principles, not essentially hostile, but profoundly different.

Sustained during four years, this struggle resulted in the fall of Danby, in the dissolution of the royalist Long Parlia-

ment, which, for eighteen years, with a singular mixture of devotion, servility, and independence, had constituted the force of royalty, and in the formation of a great whig ministry, in which the heads of the party,—Temple, Russell, Essex, Hollis, Cavendish, and Powlet, with the aid of Halifax, the head of the moderates, and of the daring renegade from the court, Shaftesbury, become the popular favourite—undertook to reform and conduct the government.

The circumstances were grave. For the first time, and despite the long resistance of the crown, the parliamentary opposition achieved power in the name of public opinion and of the majority. Would it be able to exercise it, to maintain itself in it? Would it satisfy the real wants of the country, without shaking the foundations of the monarchy, disquieted by its accession?

The whigs did not succeed in solving the problem.

Whether from want of experience, or from the influence of the false political theories with which the revolutionary Long Parliament had been imbued, their ideas as to the organization and conditions of constitutional government were confused, impracticable, full of hesitation and contradiction. They were subject, at the same time, to monarchical prejudices and to republican prejudices. They essayed to constitute the cabinet on a broad basis, so as to make it a sort of intermediate body, capable of restraining the crown by the parliament, and the parliament by the crown. An ill-conceived essay, abortive at its birth. They carried the spirit of opposition into the exercise of power, and while serving royalty, were more intent on defending themselves from it, than on supporting it.

They were mixed up with the wrecks of the anarchical factions which had survived the revolution, and which never ceased covertly to attack the monarchy. Well nigh null in the elevated classes, the republican party was too weak and powerless to ensure itself success even with the multitude; but it possessed fierce conspirators and agitators, ready to place their skill and their lives at the service of any one who gave them, or led them to expect, the satisfaction of their turbulence and of their enmities. The whigs were constantly, if not in connivance, at least in contact with those professional revolutionists, whom they desired to make their soldiers, but

who, in their turn, looked to make their leaders their tools, and constantly compromised them, first with the king, and then with the country, monarchical, though discontented, and decidedly opposed to new revolutions.

Against these errors of their conduct, and these difficulties of their position, the whigs had one resource, of which they made ample and deplorable use — obsequiousness to the popular passions. England, at this epoch, had one general, dominant passion, terror of, and aversion to, popery. Warned, by a legitimate instinct, that they were, in this respect, betrayed by the king, the English nation overstepped all bounds of reason, justice, and humanity. For three years, political and judicial persecution of the catholics was the crime of a people furious in its faith, and of a king pusillanimous in his incredulity. The whigs joined, or, like the tories, yielded to, the madness. They had, moreover, the ill fortune to attain power, when the first fever of national fury against the catholics was beginning to cool, and was giving way to a movement of re-action in favour of good sense and equity. They thus, more than their rivals, bore the weight of this re-action, and of the secret anger of the king, who took pleasure in revenging upon them the iniquities he had not had the courage to resist.

As to the foreign relations of the country, their situation was not less complicated or more secure. Whilst they were denouncing the servile intimacy of the king with the court of France, several of their leaders were themselves receiving pensions and favours from Louis XIV.: some from corruption, for the popular party had its profligates, as well as that of the court; others, full of patriotism and honour, in the chimerical hope of employing the means of influence they derived from a foreign sovereign to the triumph of the liberties of their country. It is a dangerous experiment to seek abroad a secret force wherewith to operate upon the internal affairs of one's country,—the ablest diplomatists incur hence the risk of serving rather the designs of the foreigner than their own; and Louis XIV. profited much more in his policy, from his relations with some of the whig leaders, than they did from the covert support he gave them in overturning Danby, and obtaining the dissolution of the cavalier Long Parliament.

In this position, replete with embarrassments and perils for them, the whigs undertook to change the order of succession to

the throne, and, by an act of parliament, to exclude the legitimate successor. This was making a revolution by anticipation, in virtue of conjectures, well founded, indeed, but remote; the absolute necessity of which was not demonstrated by actual, manifest facts. No doubt, the whigs thought that, in such a matter, it was better rather to be premature than too late; to accomplish at once, by the medium of legal deliberation, that which it would be necessary to do, later, by force, and perhaps at the expense of a civil war. A very superficial view, exhibiting, on their part, little knowledge of men and of the great conditions of social order. It is a much more serious matter to discuss, than to accomplish, a revolution; and the state is much more profoundly shaken by attacking its fundamental laws, in the name of human reason, than by infringing them with the hard blows of necessity. What the whigs demanded of parliament was, that, of its sole will, and before James II. had begun to reign, it should abolish his hereditary right to the crown—that is to say, in principle to make the basis of monarchy subordinate to the opinion of parliament. The public instinct warned England that this would be to ruin the monarchy itself; the monarchical spirit awoke with a start; discord broke out in the very heart of the cabinet. The whigs lost all their allies among even the moderate tories, and found themselves reduced to the forces of their own party. They, moreover, found themselves faced by an obstacle scarcely foreseen,—the conscience of Charles II. This selfish prince did not think himself entitled to dispose of his brother's right, and defended it at all risks. To the honour of the English people, the popular passion checked its course in homage to legal power; the bill of exclusion, adopted by the House of Commons, was thrown out by the House of Lords, and no attempt was made to proceed with it, or to triumph by other means.

But still the question remained high on the horizon. The House of Commons which had voted the exclusion of James II. was dissolved. In that which succeeded, the bill was proposed and carried anew. The two great parties, which had slowly formed in the course of the reign, were resolved, the whigs to set aside the future monarch, the tories to maintain the monarchy intact. Charles also took his resolution; he dissolved the House of Commons, dismissed the whigs, formed his council of tories alone, and governed four years without a parliament,

mournful years, which England passed listening to the muttering of the approaching storms. Again in opposition, the whigs conspired, with different projects and in different degrees; some, legally to recover power; some, to compel the king, even by insurrection and a civil war, to submit to what they deemed the right and wish of the country; some, the inferior and desperate soldiers of the party, wished, at any cost, even by assassination, to get rid of the king and his brother, the only obstacles to the success of the cause. These plots, sometimes exaggerated, sometimes confused by imperfect publicity, and by prosecutions conducted with subtle iniquity, spread various dismay throughout the country. The conservative party was indignant, alarmed for the safety of the throne and of established order; the popular party became more and more incensed to see all its attempts frustrated, and its noblest leaders delivered up to the scaffold. Monarchical reaction and destructive hostility grew side by side. The charters of the towns and principal corporations, the last ramparts of the popular party, were judicially attacked and abolished. The conspirators, feeling their weakness and danger, left the country, and went to Holland, to conjure the Prince of Orange to save the protestant faith and the liberties of England. It was clear that, of the three great results of the Revolution which England was bent on preserving, the two political results, the influence of parliament on the government, and the preponderance of the House of Commons in parliament, were suspended and dangerously compromised; the religious result, the domination of protestantism, remained as yet intact. It was the Anglican church herself that invariably supported the crown, and struck with anathema every attempt at resistance. Strong in this support, the high tories, directed by Rochester, drew daily closer round James, forgetting his devotion to the catholic church, and only seeing in him the heir and representative of monarchy. But a third party formed round Halifax, combating violent measures, demanding that parliament should be assembled, and predicting extreme perils if this course was not adopted. Charles hesitated and procrastinated, promising the high tories that he would sustain the rights of his brother with unshaken perseverance; the moderates, that he would respect the constitution of the country; the church, that he would support the protestant

establishment. Perplexed and wearied, employing all his remaining address and skill in eluding the necessity of choosing from amongst his promises, he died before events imposed this necessity on him; but when he arrived at the term of life, and stood on the threshold of eternity, the fears of the dying man overcame the precautions of the king; he rejected the entreaties of the English bishops; he summoned a Benedictine monk, who was concealed in the palace, and died in the bosom of the catholic church; confirming, at his last hour, his country in the suspicions against which he had constantly sought to defend himself, and his brother in the resolution to live devoted to that church out of which Charles, notwithstanding his sceptical indifference, had not dared to die.

During his reign of four years, James II. had no other thought. It was not from the mastery of a strong and dominant nature, nor to satisfy a passionate ambition; it was from an utterly blind and intractable fanaticism, that he insisted upon absolute power. The principle which forms the basis of the infallibility and independence of the supreme power, was in his eyes a maxim of government as well as an article of faith. In his hard, narrow mind, temporal and spiritual order were blindly confounded; and he thought himself, as king, entitled to exact from his subjects in the state, the same absolute submission which, as a catholic, he was himself, in the church, bound to practise.

From his infancy, he had seen those who shared his faith, and himself, on account of his faith, cruelly oppressed. Become king, he regarded the deliverance of the catholic church in England as his duty and his mission; and he comprehended no other mode of accomplishing her deliverance than by restoring her domination.

By a sad concatenation of human errors and iniquities, mutually evoking and engendering each other, instead of recognising and respecting their mutual rights, protestants and catholics only thought of persecuting and enslaving one another.

Whether in the sincere hope of success, or of sheltering himself afterwards from all reproach, James at first essayed to govern legally. The very day on which he ascended the throne, he promised to maintain the laws established in church and state. He soon after assembled a parliament, and to it solemnly renewed his promises. Some important though

isolated facts soon belied them. He continued to levy taxes which parliament had not voted. At the very time when, to please the Anglican church, he redoubled the severities against the dissenters, he began to suspend the laws against the catholics, and to aim serious blows at the political and religious government of the state.

His language was still more alarming than his actions. All the time protesting the legality of his intentions, he indirectly asserted his right to absolute power, and his resolution to make use of it, unless the country appreciated his moderation, and was content with what he chose to concede.

It is the pretension now of kings, now of the people—the former in the name of divine right, the latter in that of popular sovereignty—to intimidate each other by indicating beforehand the deadly blows they can strike: a pretension as senseless as insolent, which enervates and shakes, now the government, now the liberties of the country. It behoves alike kings and peoples, in their mutual relations, to advance only their legal rights, and to bury in profound silence the mysteries and the menaces of *coups d'etat* and revolutions.

The promises of James, and his essays at legal government were received by the country with favour, almost with enthusiasm. The more vivid the fears of men, the more earnest are their hopes. The tories ruled in parliament. The Anglican church strove to bind the king to the engagements he had made with her, by showing herself more and more monarchical and devoted. The dissenters saw glimpses of toleration and liberty. Good and evil tendencies, honourable and dishonourable views, concurred to insure to the king the patient and almost servile submission of the country. At court and in parliament, the majority of the leading men, corrupt sceptics, were ready, beyond all precedent, to sacrifice their opinions and their honour to their fortune. In the nation, a profound feeling of lassitude combined with the monarchical spirit and with religious discipline to repress the explosion of discontent and alarm. James was no longer young; his daughters, sole heirs to the throne, were devoted to the protestant faith; it was better for a short time to endure evils, the term of which was certain, than to risk new revolutions.

Ardent faction, professional conspiracies, despairing ambition, the exiles who had taken refuge in Holland, were

not so resigned or so patient. Despite the counsels of the Prince of Orange, who protected, and at the same time sought to restrain them, they attempted two simultaneous risings in Scotland and in England, under the direction of Lord Argyle and of the Duke of Monmouth. The people were aroused by them; a marked sympathy for the insurgents spread rapidly through the popular classes, but it did not break out. The whig party did not support the rebellion; the tory party powerfully aided the king to repress it. Both attempts failed; the two leaders lost their heads on the scaffold; their fate excited public compassion; neither their personal characters nor their views responded to the national sentiment.

But the appearance of success is fatal to weak princes engaged in a struggle with their people. James, victorious over his enemies, and obeyed by his subjects, abandoned himself to the vices of his nature. He took pleasure in the harsh, nay, in the cruel exercise of power, and found in Jeffreys a daring and malignant minister of his vengeance. The judicial rigours exercised against the partisans of Argyle and of Monmouth, with a gross contempt of legal guarantees and of human feelings, excited in the public mind, high and low, friends or enemies of revolt, profound indignation and deep disgust. Concurrently with this, James gave full play to his designs; he attacked at once the Anglican church in her vital rights, and the most faithful of his own protestant servants in the deepest recesses of their conscience. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were ordered to nominate catholic heads to protestant establishments. Rochester received from the mouth of the king the intimation, that if he did not become a catholic, he should lose all his offices. Even by the catholic party itself, menaces, so evidently illegal and extreme, were combated. Two coteries—the one, honest and prudent, the other, intriguing and rash—contended for the king's favour, and daily pointed out to him, to restrain or to excite him, the one, the peril into which he was precipitating himself, the other, the aims to which he aspired. Nothing was wanting to enlighten James; neither the loyalty and long patience of the protestants, nor the moderation and wise counsels of the catholics themselves. All was wrecked on his blind, though sincere, obstinacy. He officially summoned to his council a Jesuit, Father Petre, and ordered the

Anglican clergy to read from all the pulpits of the kingdom the declaration by which, in virtue of his sole power, he definitively abolished the statutes passed by parliament against dissenters and catholics. The Archbishop of Canterbury and six bishops refused to execute this order, and presented a petition to the king against it. He had them arrested, taken to the Tower, and prosecuted in the Court of King's Bench for a seditious libel.

At the same time, contrary to the expectation, and to the great suspicion—unfounded, but natural, of all England, a son was born to James. The dominant coterie gave loud expression to their joy, promising themselves to train up and to rule the son as they had ruled the father; and the new regime, hitherto tolerated by reason of its approaching close, assumed the form of an endless perspective.

No disorder broke out; the country remained motionless; but the heads of the country changed their resolution. Driven to extremity, the Anglican church adopted passive resistance; the political parties took a more decisive step—whigs and tories alike. Experience had shown the whigs that alone they could neither rally the nation nor found a government; their conspiracies had failed, like their cabinets; they had the rare wisdom to recognise that they themselves did not suffice for their designs, and that their close union with their old adversaries could alone ensure them success. The tories, on their part, saw that every principle has its limits—every engagement its conditions—every duty its reciprocity. For forty years they had asserted the maxim of non-resistance to the crown, and maintained a scrupulous fidelity towards their kings. Called to a new trial, they felt that their country also had a right to their fidelity, and that they were not bound, merely for the sake of consistency in language, servilely to deliver up to a senseless prince their liberties and their faith. Glorious names—men high in both parties—Russell, Sydney, and Cavendish; Danby, Shrewsbury, and Lumley—concerted and united. Sounded by them, Halifax, the chief of the moderate party, declined any active part in their plans, but attempted no dissuasion. And on the 30th of June, 1688, at the moment when the solemn acquittal of the seven bishops filled London with impassioned acclamations, Admiral Herbert, disguised as a sailor, departed for Holland, conveying to the Prince of

Orange, on the part, and under the signature, of these six chiefs of the two parties, and of Compton, bishop of London, a formal invitation to come to the succour of the faith and laws of England, and their engagement to sustain him at all risks, and with all their power.

William had only awaited for this step. "Now or never," said he to his confidant, Dykenveldt, when he heard of the trial of the bishops, and of their resistance. So soon as he received the message, with an able and daring mixture of frankness and caution, he publicly announced and prepared for his design. He was not going, he said, to make a conquest and usurp a crown; he was going, at the request of the English themselves, to mediate between them and their king, to protect the menaced laws of England, and the protestant faith. He discussed the propriety of the enterprise with the States-general of Holland, demanding their assent and support. He notified the matter, not only to the protestant princes, but also to the Emperor of Germany and to the King of Spain, in the character with the former, of defender of protestantism, with the others, of maintaining the balance of power in Europe. Never was such an enterprise so avowed, discussed, explained, justified, before-hand. All Europe saw, and comprehended. Conspiracy, and personal ambition disappeared in the grandeur of the cause and of the event. And, less than four months after the arrival of the whig and tory message, William set sail for England, at the head of a fleet and army; bearing with him the secret adhesion and good wishes of the majority of the kings, protestant and catholic, and of Pope Innocent XI. himself, whom the haughty conduct of Louis XIV. had inspired with profound resentment, and the insane temerity of James with profound contempt.

James alone comprehended and believed nothing. In vain did he receive from Louis XIV. precise information, and offers of effective succours. In vain did his own agents at the Hague and at Paris, give him an account of the preparations and progress of the undertaking. He rejected all offers and all information. From a remnant of English and kingly pride, he did not choose to be publicly supported by the soldiers of the foreign king, from whom he had secretly accepted gifts without a blush. From the very fear concealed in the depth of his soul, it was in the presentiment of his

powerlessness, that he rejected the idea of his danger. This presentiment did not deceive him. More than six weeks elapsed between the disembarkation of William and his triumph at London. He slowly advanced across the country, equally ready for adhesion and for resistance. Resistance nowhere manifested itself; not an effort was made, not a drop of blood was shed in defence of James. As prostrate in peril, as of late obstinate in not foreseeing it, he attempted to regain by his weakness that which he had lost by his temerity: he retracted all he had done, granted all he had refused, restored to the towns their charters, to the universities their privileges, to the bishops his favour, dismissed Father Petre from his councils, and sought to negotiate with William. Weakness was as futile as temerity had been powerless.

James, shut up in his palace, heard every day of some new defection of his generals and councillors. His daughter, the Princess Anne, escaped and repaired to the head-quarters of the prince. Whitehall became a solitude, and menaced soon to become a prison. James himself fled in his turn. Recognised in his flight, and brought back to London by a vulgar crowd, after some days more of unavailing perplexities, he fled again, never to return. On the 18th of December, 1688, he had scarcely quitted London three hours, when six English and Scottish regiments entered it, with flying banners, in the name of the Prince of Orange. William himself, avoiding, as much from taste as from calculation, all appearance of triumph, arrived in the evening at the palace of St. James's; and five weeks afterwards, January 22nd, 1689, a parliament, extraordinarily assembled under the name of Convention, met at Westminster, to consecrate and to regulate the revolution.

In it broke out between the various parties, and in the heart of each respectively, those dissensions which the common danger had till then restrained. With the tories, all the monarchical scruples were aroused. Among the whigs, all the revolutionary temptations re-appeared. The more timid of the tories said it would be wise to recal James, merely obtaining from him some guarantees. The more violent of the whigs talked of founding a republic, directed by a council of state, of which the Prince of Orange should be President. Between these extreme opinions floated the moderate opinions, equally various and agitated. Many whigs, monarchical by

disposition, and still embued with the maxims of the republican long parliament, wished that James should be formally deposed, and the crown be only offered to William after they had, by sovereign laws, organized the republic in the monarchy. On their part, the tories, devoted to the church, demanded that, in declaring James incapable of governing, the foundation of the monarchy should be respected, and that they should confine themselves to the establishment of a regency. Others, more daring but subtilely scrupulous in their monarchical principles, admitted, with the whigs, that James, by his conduct and his flight, had abdicated the government; but they maintained that, by this sole fact, the throne, which could not be vacant one single day, belonged of right to his eldest daughter, the Princess Mary, and that all that was required was formally to proclaim her queen. As these various plans were brought forward, they were expounded, contested, and discussed with ardour, both in and out of parliament; men's minds grew excited; the parties developed themselves more distinctly; the ambitious unfurled the banner under which they hoped to rise; division sprang up between the Lords and Commons. The revolution, scarcely accomplished, was already in danger.

But the same profound political acumen which had united the chiefs of the parties in resistances, guided them in the first steps of government. They set aside all absolute theories—all practically futile questions—reduced the conditions and principles on which the new power was be founded to what was strictly necessary to give it a powerful basis, and were only anxious to arrive at a speedy conclusion, and to rally round that conclusion the great interests of the country. William aided the wisdom of the leaders, first by his reserve, and next by his firmness. He gave free play to all systems—to all projects—testifying neither displeasure at opposition, nor desire of success, and keeping apart from every discussion on the subject. But when he felt that the crisis approached, he assembled the leading men of both houses, and declared to them, in simple terms, brief but unanswerable, that he had the highest respect for the right and the liberty of parliament, but that he also had his own liberty and right, and would never accept mutilated power—a throne where his wife should sit above him. The step was decisive. The

two houses came to an understanding; a declaration was adopted, proclaiming at once the fact of the vacancy of the throne, the essential rights of the English people, and the elevation of William and Mary, Prince and Princess of Orange, to the throne of England. And on the 13th of February, 1689, in the principal quarters of London, the public received the official proclamation of the act of parliament with acclamation.

It is the safety of nations, in the crises of their destiny, to comprehend and to practise, alternately by submission and by action, the counsels which God has given them in the events of their life. England had learned by her first trials that a revolution is, in itself, an immense, inscrutable disorder, inflicting on society great evils, great perils, great crimes, and that a rational people may some day be constrained to accept it, but that it should dread and delay it till the very hour of absolute necessity arrives. England remembered this in her new trials. She endured much, she resisted long, in order to escape from a new revolution, and she only submitted to it in the last extremity, when she saw no other mode of saving her faith, her rights, and her honour. It is the glory of the revolution of 1688 that it was an act of pure defence, and of necessary defence; that was the primary cause of its success.

Defensive in its principle, this revolution was, at the same time, precise and limited in its object. In the great convulsions of society, a fever of universal ambition, sovereign, impious, sometimes seizes upon men; they imagine in themselves the right and the power to lay hands upon all things, and to reform the world as to them seems fit. Nothing is more absurd, more vain, than these vague extravagancies of the human creature, who, treating as chaos the grand system in the bosom of which his place is marked out, essays to erect himself into a creator, and only succeeds in communicating the disorder of his own dreams to whatever he approaches.

England, in 1688, did not fall into this frenzy; she did not aspire to change the basis of society and the destinies of humanity; she asserted and maintained a positive faith, positive laws, positive rights, within which she limited her aims and her thoughts; she accomplished a revolution at once

lofty and unassuming, which gave to the country new chiefs and new guarantees; and which, this object attained, remained content, admitting nothing less, and seeking nothing more.

This revolution was accomplished, not by popular insurrection, but by organized popular parties; organized long before the revolution, with a view to regular government, not in a revolutionary spirit. Neither the tory party, nor the whig party itself, notwithstanding the revolutionary elements that entered into its composition, had been framed to overturn established order. They were parties of legal politics, not of conspiracy and insurrection. They were led by circumstances to change the government of the country; they were not created for this design, and they resumed order, without an effort, after quitting its limits for a moment, not from habit or from taste, but from necessity.

And it was not one of the great parties, so long opposed, that had alone the merit and the burden of the revolution; they united together and concerted to accomplish it. It was with them a work of concession, of mutual arrangement, under a common necessity; not a victory or a defeat. Whigs and tories saw it approach, and received it with different feelings; all welcomed and took part in it.

It has often been said in France, and even in England, that the revolution of 1688 was a work essentially aristocratic, and not popular; accomplished by the combinations and for the benefit of the upper classes; not by the impulsive energy of and for the benefit of the people.

This is a remarkable example, among many others, of the confusion of ideas and the oblivion of facts, which so often regulate the appreciation of great events.

The revolution of 1688 accomplished, in political order, the two most popular things known to history: it proclaimed and guaranteed, on the one hand, the personal and universal rights of individual citizens; on the other, the active and decisive participation of the country in its government. Every democracy which does not know that this is all it needs and ought to claim, is ignorant of its greatest interests, and will never be able to form a government, or to guard its own liberties.

In moral order, the revolution of 1688 had a still more popular character; it was effected in the name and by the power

of the religious belief of the people, for their security and their sway. In no other country, and at no epoch, has the faith of the masses exercised more empire over the fate of their government.

Popular in its principles, and in its results, the revolution of 1688 was aristocratic in the execution; it was conceived, prepared, and perfected by great men, faithful representatives of the interests and sentiments of the nation. England has had this rare good fortune, that powerful and close bonds of union have been established and perpetuated between the different classes of her society. Her aristocracy and her democracy have had the wisdom to live and prosper together, amicably sustaining and checking each other. Her leaders have not isolated themselves from the people, and the people have not been left without leaders. It was especially in 1688 that the English nation reaped the fruits of this happy combination of hierarchy and harmony in the social order. To save its faith, its laws, its liberties, it was forced to the formidable necessity of a revolution; it accomplished it through men of order and government, not through revolutionists. The same influences which essayed the work, were also those which restrained it within just limits, and undertook to establish it, the cause of the English people, triumphing by the hands of the aristocracy. Such was the grand characteristics of the revolution of 1688, and, from its outset, the pledge of its future fortune.

All this union and power was in no degree beyond the requirements of the occasion, for such is the innate vice of all revolutions, that even the most necessary, the most legitimate, the most powerful of them, throws the society it serves into great disorder, and itself long remains after menaced and precarious. Two or three years had scarcely elapsed; already the sovereign of England, king William, had become intensely unpopular. His manners at once plain and proud, his cold silence, his distaste, which he took little pains to hide, for the manners of the English aristocracy, his intimacy reserved for, and his favours lavished upon old Dutch friends,—everything about him contributed to render him a stranger among and unpopular with his new people. He was, in matters of civil and religious liberty, far more enlightened than the English, and little inclined

to become the instrument of the rigour of episcopal intolerance, and of the animosities of aristocratic party spirit. He had slight regard for the exigencies of the constitutional regime, did not understand the game of the parliamentary parties, still confused and scarcely formed,—was shocked at their selfishness, jealous of their influence, and defended his own power against them at times with more vigour than discretion. In his government, as in his thoughts, the general policy of Europe was his grand, almost his sole business. It was more especially to put in operation the whole force of England, in his struggle against the European domination of Louis XIV., that he had aspired to her throne; the protestant passions of the English people accorded with his designs. But William compromised England in the combinations and wars of the continent, more than suited the habits, tastes, and interests of the nation. It became weary of seeing itself more and more deeply engaged in remote efforts and perils, by the very prince whom it had summoned to deliver it from internal dangers; and William, on his part, was indignant to find, in the people and in the parties whom he had delivered on their own soil, so little devotion for the great cause on which, in his opinion, their safety and liberty so intimately depended. Hence arose, between the king and the parliament, misunderstanding, rancour, conflicts, which troubled and shook the new government. William knew his power, and used it haughtily: he went so far as to say, that he might chance to abdicate and withdraw to Holland, if he was not better understood and supported. When the danger became pressing, parliament, parties, church, and people, felt how necessary William was to them, and once more hailed him with the most cordial professions of attachment. But mutual discord soon revived; parties returned to their rivalries, the people to their ignorant prejudices, the king to his European policy, his war demands, and his susceptibilities of power. The Jacobites had resumed hope: beaten in Ireland and Scotland, discovered and condemned in England, they none the less renewed their essays at civil war and conspiracy. Even in William's council, King James had correspondents, who worked as best they might the chances that still remained to him. During the whole course of this reign, notwithstanding

the facile success of the revolution, the firm genius of the king, and the sincere adhesion of the country, the establishment of 1688 was incessantly assailed and tottering.

The same evil subsisted under Queen Anne. The whigs and tories, more and more disunited, fiercely contested for power. In the European struggle for the Spanish succession, the two parties, at first, alike pursued the policy of King William as to intervention and continental war. Misled by the easy course of routine, and by success, the whigs desired to carry the war beyond its limits, or the necessity of the case. The tories took in hand the cause of peace. They represented in this the feeling of England, and the Queen favoured them. By the treaty of Utrecht they removed the precarious tension which had agitated Europe. The tories were all but Jacobites; despite her protestant fidelity, family sentiment awoke in the heart of Queen Anne; internal intrigues, became mingled with external complications; the banished Stuarts seemed again to have a chance; the establishment of 1688 seemed again to become a question. The death of Anne, however, and the peaceful accession of the House of Hanover, confirmed it. Under the reigns of George I. and George II., men's minds took another course: foreign policy ceased to be their principal affair; the internal administration, the maintenance of peace, finance, the colonies, commerce, the development and contests of parliamentary rule, became the engrossing objects of attention, both with the government and with the public. Yet the question of revolution and of dynasty was not extinct: the English nation felt no affection for German kings who did not speak their language, who were uncomfortable amongst them, who eagerly seized every pretext to absent themselves, and live for a while in their own petty state abroad, and incessantly involved them in their continental affairs, to England wholly unimportant and uninteresting. The domestic quarrels of the royal family, the coarsely licentious manners of the court, were offensive to the country; the constant change of ministers, the selfish rivalry, the factitious passions, the exaggerations and the intrigues of parliamentary parties, shocked its honesty and its common sense. In Scotland, in Ireland, even in England, Jacobite conspiracies and insurrections pertinaciously sprung up, one after another, always suppressed, but always finding earnest adherents, and no longer exciting in

the country any excitement of fear or antipathy. Amid these continual attacks upon established order, indifference, listlessness, a humour of critical questioning, disaffection, became the prevalent tendency; the public seemed to withdraw from a power which it had ceased to like or be anxious about. Fifty-seven years after the national impulse which had elevated William III. to the throne, the grandson of James II., at the head of the Scotch Highlanders, penetrated, without resistance, to the very centre of England; and already men, everywhere, asked one another, whether he would not enter London in a few days, as easily as William entered it, after driving away his grandfather.

But England and her government were not at the mercy of a fever of popular humour, or of the defeat of two or three regiments, or of the bold stroke of a faction. The same social force, which in 1688 had made the Revolution, defended and saved, in 1745, the establishment it had founded. When the peril became evident, the enemies of that establishment encountered the strong organization of the aristocratic parties, the good sense of a disciplined democracy, and the faith of a Christian people. The whig leaders, and many of those of the tories, regarded their honour and political fortune as bound to this cause. The parties were faithful to their leaders; the middle classes forgot their discontents, their displeasures, and the little personal sympathy with which the government inspired them, in order to occupy themselves only with the essential interests of the country and their own. Churchmen and dissenters showed themselves animated by the same devotion. Before this intelligent union of the aristocracy and people, of political with religious spirit, the success of the Jacobites faded away as rapidly as it had burst forth. The greatest danger which the English monarchy had encountered was also the last. From this epoch a few secret plans, a few attempts, abortive as soon as conceived, faintly revealed the existence of its enemies. Seventy years of laborious and painful trials had to elapse before the establishment of 1688 could overcome the vices natural to every revolution, restore peace to society, and become an undisputed rule. In 1760, when George III. mounted the throne, the work was already accomplished; I have said by what means, and at what price.

George III. had reigned sixteen years, when, at a distance

of three thousand miles from his capital, more than two millions of his subjects broke the bonds which united them to his throne, proclaimed their independence, and undertook to found the United States of America. A struggle of seven years sufficed to make England recognise this independence, and treat on equal terms with the new State. Since that, seventy-seven years have elapsed, and without effort, without extraordinary events, solely by the development of their institutions and of a pacific spirit of policy, the United States have gloriously taken their place among the great nations. Never was rapid greatness so cheaply bought at its commencement, and so little troubled in its progress.

The United States of America are not indebted for this rare good fortune solely to their distance from all powerful rivals, and to the immense space open before them. Causes less fortuitous, and more moral, have also contributed to the rapid growth and serenity of their greatness.

They entered on life under the banner of justice and right. With them, too, the revolution, with which their history began, was at first an act of defence. They claimed the guarantees and principles set down in their charter, and which the parliament of England, who refused them these, had itself anciently claimed and made triumphant in the mother country, with much more violence and disorder than their resistance brought with it.

They did not, truly speaking, attempt a revolution. Their enterprise was, without doubt, great and perilous. To effect their independence, they undertook to make war against a powerful enemy, and to found a central government to replace the distant power whose yoke they had thrown off. But in their local and ordinary institutions, they had no revolutions to make; each colony was already governed freely in its interior, and found, on becoming a state, but few changes to make in the maxims and organization of the public power. There was no old social order to fear, to detest, and to destroy; attachment to the laws and ancient customs, affectionate respect for the past, were, on the contrary, the general feeling. The colonial government, under the patronage of a distant monarchy, was transformed without effort into a system under the bond of a federal government.

Of all systems of government, the republican is most cer-

tainly that for which the general and spontaneous assent of the country is the most necessary. We can imagine, and we have seen monarchical states founded by force, but a republic imposed upon a nation, a popular government established against the instincts and the wish of the people, is repugnant to good sense and right. The English colonies of America had not, in order to become a republic, such a difficulty to surmount. They were republicans quite voluntarily; in adopting the republican government, they only fulfilled the wishes of the nation, and developed, instead of abolishing, their ancient system of rule.

Social order was not more deranged than political order. There was no struggle between the different classes, no violent displacement of influences. Although the crown of England retained partisans in the colonies, the same spirit, the same design, ruled in all grades of the social scale. The rich and influential families themselves were in general the most firmly resolved on the conquest of independence, and the founding of a new government; the people advanced, and the event was accomplished under their direction.

Nor was there any greater revolution in mind than in society. The philosophical ideas of the eighteenth century, its moral scepticism, its religious incredulity, doubtless penetrated and circulated in the United States; but they did not completely invade the minds they came in contact with; they did not fix themselves there with their fundamental principles, and their final consequences. The moral gravity and practical good sense of the old puritans still endured among the greater part of the American admirers of the French philosophers, and the bulk of the American population remained profoundly Christian; as much attached to its dogmas as to its liberties, submissive to God and to the Bible, at the same time that it rose against the parliament and the King of England, and governed, while struggling for its independence, by the same faith which had led its ancestors into that land, there to lay the foundations on which arose the new state.

The ideas and passions which now-a-days, in the name of democracy, hurry away and disorganize society, are spread abroad and powerful in the United States of America; there they ferment with all the contagious errors and dangerous vices they contain. But hitherto they have been efficaciously

restrained and purified by the Christian faith, by the excellent political traditions, and strong legal habits, which govern the population. At the same time that the principles of anarchy audaciously display themselves on this vast theatre, the principles of order and conservatism exist there solid and energetic, in society and in man himself. We everywhere recognise their presence and influence, in the very bosom of the party which qualifies itself with the name of democratic *par excellence;* they temper and regulate it, and often, unknown to it, save it from its own passionate precipitation. These are the tutelary principles which presided at the origin of the American revolution, and which have given it success. May Heaven grant that in the fearful struggle they have in our day everywhere to sustain, they may continue to prevail among this powerful people, and may ever turn it in time from the abysses which are so near it!

Three great men, Cromwell, Washington, and William III., remain in history as the chiefs and representatives of those sovereign crises which have decided the destiny of two great nations. In extent and energy of natural talent, Cromwell is perhaps the most eminent of the three. He possessed a mind of wonderful activity, prompt, firm, just, supple, inventive, and a vigour of character which no obstacle could repel, no struggle tire; which pursued its designs with an ardour and patience equally inexhaustible, alternately by steps the most tortuous and slow, the most abrupt and bold. He excelled equally in gaining and in ruling men in his personal and intimate relations; in organizing or in conducting an army or a party. He had the instinct of popularity and the gift of authority, and could, with equal boldness, unchain or bind faction. But born in the bosom of revolution, and carried by shock after shock to the supreme power, his genius was, and remained, essentially revolutionary. He had learned the necessities of order and government; he could neither respect nor practise moral and permanent laws. It may have been the fault of his nature or his position; but he wanted steadiness and serenity in the exercise of power, resorted, on the instant, to extreme measures, as a man, perpetually assailed by mortal perils, and by the violence of his remedies, perpetuated or aggravated the violent evils he wished to cure. The formation of a government is a task which demands more regular proceedings, more

conformable with the eternal laws of moral order. Cromwell could master the revolution he had made, but could not establish it. Less gifted naturally perhaps, William III. and Washington succeeded in the undertaking where Cromwell had failed. They decided the destiny and founded the government of their country; and this was from their never, even in the midst of revolution, admitting or practising a revolutionary policy; they never accepted the fatal situation of first anarchical acts of violence for a footstool, and then despotic violence as a necessity of power. They found, or placed themselves, from the very beginning, in the regular path and permanent condition of government.

William was an ambitious prince. It is childish to believe that, till the call was addressed to him from London in 1688, he had been a stranger to any desire to ascend the throne of England,—to the labour, long in process, to convey him the throne. William, step by step, followed the progress of this labour, without being an accomplice in it, but without rejecting its aim—not encouraging it, but protecting its authors. His ambition had, at the same time, this character, that it clung to the triumph of a great and just cause—the cause of religious liberty, and the balance of power in Europe. Never did man make more than William a great political design the thought and sole object of his life. He had a passion for the task he accomplished, and his own greatness was to him only a means. In his views on the crown of England he did not attempt to succeed by violence and disorder; his spirit was too elevated and well balanced not to know the incurable vices of such success, or to take their yoke; but, when the career was opened to him by England herself, he did not suffer private scruples to stop him. He wished his cause to triumph, and to receive the honour of triumph. A glorious combination of ability and faith, of ambition and devotion. Washington had no ambition. His country had need of him; he became great to serve her, from duty rather than from taste, and at times by a painful effort. The trials of public life were bitter to him; he preferred the independence of private life and repose of mind, to the exercise of power; but he accepted, without hesitation, the task which his country imposed on him; and, in accomplishing it, he did not allow himself or his country any indulgence even

to lighten its burthen. Born to govern, although he took little pleasure in it, he told the American people what he believed to be true, and maintained, while governing them, what he believed to be wise, with a firmness as unshakeable as it was simple, and a sacrifice of popularity, the more meritorious because he was not recompensed for it by the joys of ruling. The servant of a growing republic, where the democratic spirit prevailed, he obtained its confidence and ensured its triumph, by sustaining its interests against its inclinations, and by practising that policy, at once modest and severe, reserved and independent, which only seems to belong to the leader of an aristocratic senate, placed at the head of an ancient state. Rare success, equally an honour to Washington and to his country.

Whether we look at the destiny of nations, or at that of great men—whether a monarchy or a republic is in question —an aristocratic or a democratic society—the same truth is revealed by facts; definitive success is only obtained by the same principles and in the same way. The revolutionary spirit is fatal to the greatness it raises up, as to that which it overturns. The policy which preserves states is also that alone which terminates and founds revolutions.

THE END.

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