

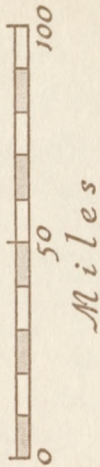
ENGLAND

*A Short Account
of Its
Life and Culture*

WALTER S.
HINCHMAN

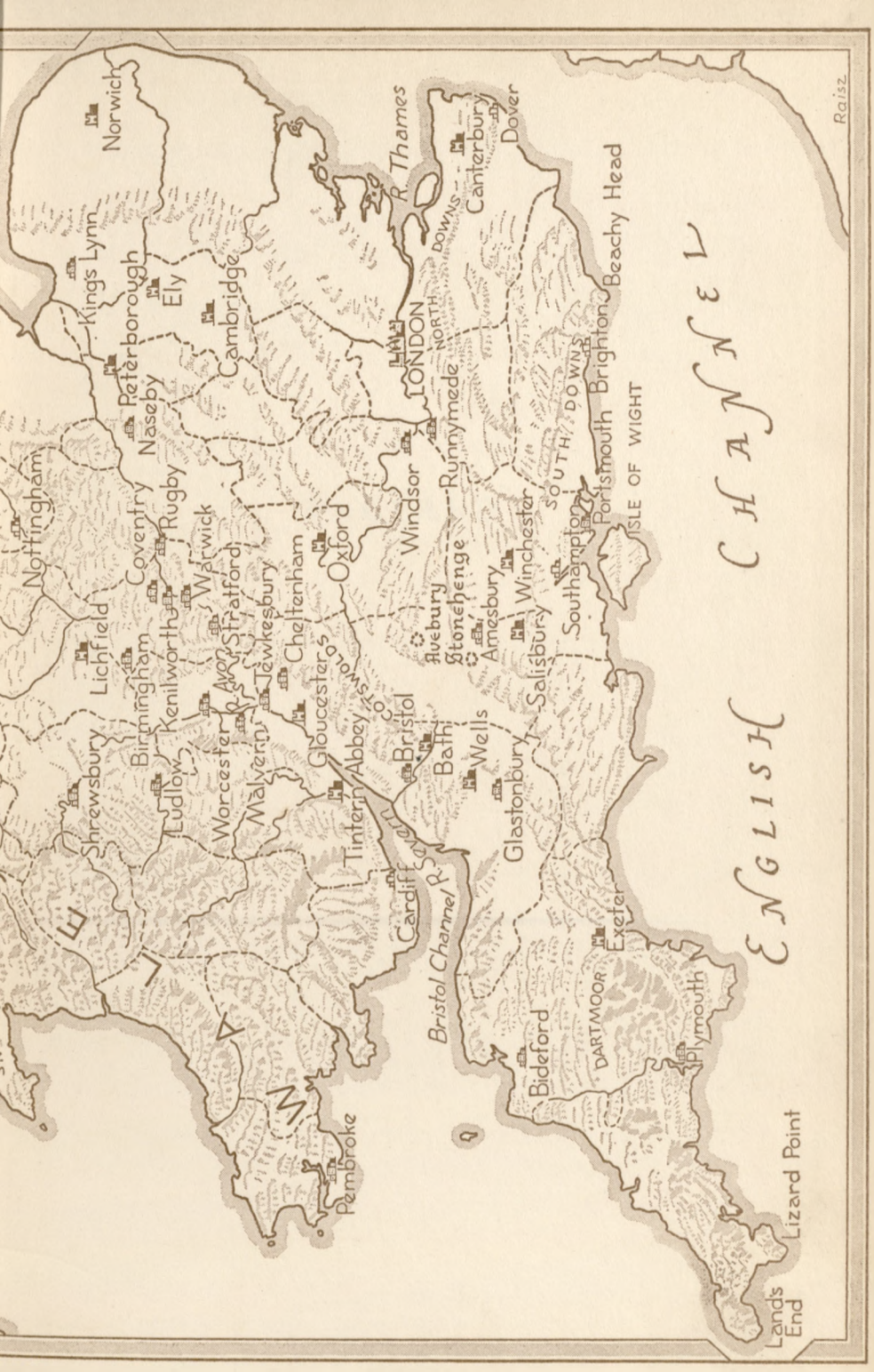
Map of

ENGLAND



NORTH
SEA





ENGLISH CHANNEL

Lizard Point

Lands End

Beachy Head

ISLE OF WIGHT

Exeter

Bideford

Glastonbury

Wells

Bath

Bristol

Abbey

Gloucesters

Cheltenham

Malyern

Worcester

Stratford

Warwick

Kenilworth

Birmingham

Lichfield

Nottingham

Southampton

Winchester

Amesbury

Stonehenge

Runnymede

Windsor

LONDON

Oxford

Rugby

Naseby

Peterborough

Kings Lynn

Cambridge

Ely

Canterbury

Dover

Norwich

Lizard Point

Lands End

Beachy Head

ISLE OF WIGHT

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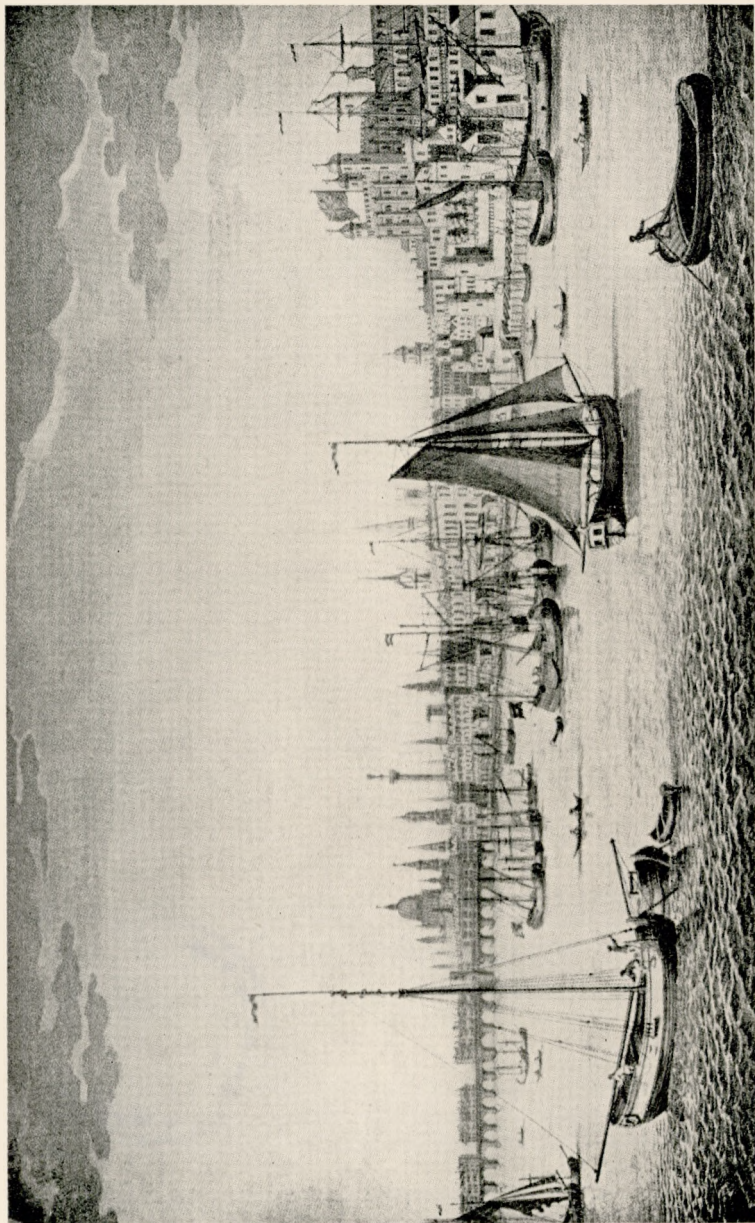
Canterbury

Dover

Norwich

ENGLAND





From "Old London" (G. B. Ravettings)

THE THAMES AND LONDON BRIDGE ABOUT 1800

ENGLAND

A Short Account of Its
Life and Culture

BY WALTER S. HINCHMAN



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY · BOSTON
1941

Dar
ZWIĄZKU NARODOWEGO POLSKIEGO



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TO MY WIFE

Preface

WILLIAM CHASE GREENE, the author of *The Achievement of Greece*, has made a valuable distinction between what he calls the "experience" of the Greeks and a mere succession of experiences. Many nations, like individuals, have experiences, but the total of them does not always result in an experience significant to mankind. It is with this idea, of emphasizing the English experience, that I have undertaken a brief account of the English people. In the case of a living and changing nation one may not wisely attempt to gather the multifarious experiences into a single synthesis, but it is possible, at least, to stress the more important ones in its long story, and to leave the synthesis to posterity.

The English experience, of course, is not merely political and imperial, as many "short histories" present it, but involves important contributions to industry, to maritime activities, to ways of living, to education, to the sciences and the arts. This inclusive picture has been given, over and over again, in many volumes; but the one-volume history has usually minimized cultural developments, a large aspect of the "experience," to make room for a multitude of political and military facts. Yet Byrd and Purcell, or Wren and Chippendale, or Newton and Faraday, or Hogarth and Turner, are of far greater importance, if we would understand England, than many political figures who held the public eye in their own day. It is equally important, however, to realize that "culture," detached from the political and social background, is apt to turn academic or *précieux*. It is therefore my purpose to give some idea of the various significant phases in the growth of England, a "cultural view" in the broader sense of that much-abused term, and to set it, for convenience, in the conventional chronological pattern.

The answer to such an inclusive purpose, with respect to so big a subject, is that it can't be done in one volume. I have been finding that out. My only plea is that I have not sought, by condensation, to write a "tabloid" history, but rather, by omission, to save space for the most significant English experiences. I have never been an advocate of what may be called "history by omission," and I frankly advise anyone who has the time for it to take Professor Lunt's excellent history in one hand, to ring himself round with a few books

of reference, and then to read several score of volumes on special aspects of English life, government, and culture. But he ought also to visit England a good many times, talk to people in pubs and buses as well as in drawing rooms — and think it over for forty years. It is something of this sort that I have tried to precipitate into a single volume.

Such a course is obviously open to criticism. Why have I omitted this and that? Frequently, I fear, the answer is simply Dr. Johnson's: "Ignorance, madam, pure ignorance!" Again, why have I made so much more reference to literature than to the other arts? Partly, I suspect, because I am more familiar with it; but, largely, I hope, because it is far and away the chief of the English artistic experiences, and because most people come at their knowledge of the past through books — "that great body of printed speech which we loosely call literature." Still further, so much of the English story is familiar to some readers that it may seem gratuitous to include elementary information about well-known figures like Elizabeth or Nelson or Browning. It would have been easier to write a series of essays omitting familiar material, but that would have been to write round rather than on the subject. In a book which attempts to record the main facts, such omissions would be equivalent to leaving Hamlet out of the play. I am advised, moreover, that English History has not been a required study in American public schools for twenty years; so that readers under forty, as well as older readers who wish to refresh their memories, may not wholly resent the inclusion of some elementary information.

As a matter of fact, to what Stevenson called "the philosophic eye," *all* the facts that can be used in so brief an account of a long period are reasonably familiar, recorded in many books. I have therefore not attempted footnote documentation except where I have quoted an opinion. Nor is the list of books at the end even an approximate bibliography. An honest one would include not only reading over a long period of years, but countless conversations and letters from friends. The tail would wag the dog. The list is intended merely as a suggestion for those who wish to read more fully in a particular period or in a special phase of the subject.

As I am uncovering no new facts, in general I have attempted, at least up to the present century, to record commonly accepted opinion rather than to introduce novel interpretations. So far as I

am aware, the only conspicuous innovations are a division of the Victorian Period, which is usually — I believe, erroneously — treated as a cultural unit, and an emphasis on the social significance of sport in the nineteenth century. What is novel in the book, I hope, is the inclusion of aspects which are omitted from one-volume histories, and the offering thereby, for the general reader, of a new perspective for the picture of the English "experience."

Many of the buildings which I have described, particularly churches, have recently been destroyed by ruthless and vindictive bombing. Since Roundheads stabled cavalry in St Paul's, churches, by any stretch of the imagination, have not been "military objectives," but a church is the easiest mark for a nervous and indiscriminate bomber. In any case, it is impossible to tell, in these tragic days, how many English churches will survive; it is therefore futile to attempt to alter the text "till this tyranny be overpast." The indulgent reader may have sometimes to change "is" to "was" as he goes along.

I have leaned so heavily on the wisdom of kind friends that I might make a long list and still not repay their services. All the blunders are mine; many of the corrections are theirs. In particular, I wish to express my appreciation of the patient and generous advice of my friends, Mr. Howard Abell, Mr. David Sage, Mr. Roger L. Scaife, and Mr. Markham W. Stackpole; of my sister, Miss Margaretta S. Hinchman; and of my daughter, Mrs. Herwin Schaefer.

For the use of certain pictures I am indebted to: B. T. Batsford, Ltd., for the photograph, by Mr. F. P. R. Stringer, of "Chalk Cliffs above Worbarrow Bay," Dorset, in *English Downland*, by H. J. Massingham, London, 1936; George H. Doran Company, for the photograph of "Knole House," in *Knole and the Sackvilles*, by V. Sackville-West, N. Y., 1923; the *Connoisseur*, for the photograph of a painting by James Pollard, "Approach to Christmas," in the issue of January, 1908; and Little, Brown and Company, for the frontispiece, "London Bridge," from *Old London*, by Gertrude B. Rawlings, Boston, 1927.

WALTER S. HINCHMAN

Milton, Mass., 1941

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ENGLAND

Chapter I

THE ENGLISH AND THEIR LAND

STRANGERS are frequently puzzled, sometimes amused or annoyed, by the paradox of the Englishman. It is only one of many paradoxes that this nation of poets should have produced so many practical men of affairs; a romantic people, ill at ease in the French dress of classicism assumed for a century, yet withal possessed of a hard sense of fact. A more contemporary paradox is that a "nation of shop-keepers" should all act with the fine heroism and devotion of a Bayard "when honour's at the stake." To the one-track mind, the apparently contumelious pact of Munich and the heroic miracle of Dunkerque simply do not make sense. Similarly, these people, in spite of Taine's "brutality of the race," are the most civilized people in the world; primitive, indeed, in the ordinary devices of civilization, such as the culinary caress, but accomplished in the courteous arts of living, and, above all, capable of live-and-let-live to an astonishing degree.

Nimble-witted foreigners too commonly suppose that the English are a dull race. It comes much nearer the truth to find, as Price Collier did, that roughly two million of them are among the most intelligent and most accomplished in the world, one-fifth part of which they control with skill and equanimity, and that the other thirty-eight million are indeed slow-witted in comparison with neighboring races. But even this distinction is losing validity as class demarcations disappear. It is much more to the point to realize that, whatever the amount or distribution of mental agility, common sense seems to be widely diffused. This quality, together with a widespread sense of humor and a somewhat obstinate reliance on tradition, possibly accounts for the Englishman's stability in a crisis and his practical sense of fact, his resistance to nostrums and panaceas, which is in such conspicuous contrast to the mercurial enthusiasms of other nations. Englishmen are incontestably tenacious, proud of their bull-dog reputation, yet few people have shown greater adaptability in world affairs — perhaps because they are

too wise (or too "stupid"!) to worship clever formulas and shibboleths.

It is perilous, however, to attempt to compress the character of a great people into a few phrases. Defoe, when he wrote of "that heterogeneous thing, an Englishman," over two centuries ago, gave sufficient warning to historians not to do it. It is absurd, furthermore, to assume that certain characteristics have been forever immutably fixed in the race. One has only to call to mind the theater audience in Shakespeare's day — a gay, emotional crowd, quick to jeer or to cheer — and compare it to the decorous, good-natured queue at the doors of a modern playhouse. Swift may have seen his Yahoo "riding in a carriage in Hyde Park," but for the most part that Englishman, later incarnate in Thackeray's bully patronizing the hotels of Europe, has learned his lesson in the schools of sport and trade. Similarly, "the grand old name of gentleman" may date from the Middle Ages, but the self-superiority of the gentleman in the nineteenth century, his scorn of trade, really dates from the squirarchy of the seventeenth and eighteenth; while "a certain condescension towards foreigners" began after the successes at Trafalgar and Waterloo. So also, the English love of liberty, ancient as it may seem, is the accumulation of a special English experience in self-government and may hardly be ascribed to the independence of early German ancestors, else we should find the individuals of other Teutonic tribes insisting, as they conspicuously have not, on their inalienable rights.

It is important, in other words, to view the course of English experience in order to see how this "heterogeneous thing, an Englishman," came into being. To this end a brief consideration of the racial mixtures and the significant inheritances is obviously necessary. First, however, it is essential to consider the place in which he came into being — its climate, its physical geography, and the significance of its location.

It has been often remarked that America has climate, but that England has weather. Boisterous winds stir the blood and penetrating fogs chill it, but the bulwarks of Ireland and Wales to the west somewhat temper the fury of the Atlantic gales. Perhaps only a hardy stock could have endured in such weather, but undoubtedly that stock, granted survival, has been toughened and quickened by

it. As a matter of fact, England has a climate peculiarly favorable to its inhabitants. Lying in the latitude of Labrador, it rarely has severe frost in the southern counties and it enjoys, even in the North, a far milder winter than the interior of Germany, yet, except for unusual years, the summers are as cool as they are on the coast of Maine. The range in mean temperature between January and July is little over twenty degrees (compared to over sixty degrees in North Dakota), but, unlike the equable climates of more southern regions, it is a sufficiently energizing atmosphere.

'Tis the hard grey weather
Breeds hard English men,

sings Kingsley, while Kipling celebrates

The sun that never blisters,
The rain that never chills.

More significant than the climate, possibly, is the location of England. As long as the Mediterranean world was the center of trade and civilization, that is, till the great discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, England was on the edge of the world. The people there during centuries must needs have been locally occupied, with agriculture and fishing for the most part. Continental culture crept belated, diluted, into such remote regions; even the Pope, like the Turk in Kurdistan, "governed with a loose rein that he might govern at all." Yet, once the trade routes to America and the Orient had been developed, England moved suddenly from the edge of the old world to the middle of the modern world; and England, on account of this central position in the Northern Hemisphere, forged ahead as a great trading and industrial nation.

In early times, moreover, as in later, the physical resources of England made possible developments which would have been arrested elsewhere — in Norway or Scotland, for example. When the forests had been cleared and the swamps drained, there was abundance of well-watered, fertile land, as well as plenty of grazing upland; while coal and minerals, particularly iron, provided the basic materials for the enormous industrial expansion of the past century. Long before oil became an essential of modern civilization, England was the center of a great colonial empire, with virtual command of trade routes to all parts of the world.

It was not for these merits, however, important as they are, —

the climate, the advantageous location, or the variety of resources,
— that Shakespeare called England

This precious stone set in the silver sea,
that Browning longed

. . . to be in England,
Now that April's there,

or that Rupert Brooke celebrated

Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Any brief sketch of England which would portray the experience of the people who have lived there must take into account what England looks like — the landscape; and, above all, what man has done, in village and city, in manor house and farm, in castle and abbey, to bless or curse the natural scene.

It may be profitable, before discussing the people and their ways, to remind ourselves, by a sort of rapid airplane view, of the variety and character of the English scene. In actual practice, of course, one should go leisurely, even on foot, to see England properly; in any case, should enter the old towns by the post roads, by the old ways over which carts and horsemen and stagecoaches have gone for centuries. The railroads sneak up to the back door.

THE ENGLISH LANDSCAPE

Everyone knows that England is small, about the size of New York State, or little larger than Cuba. The really impressive fact, though, is that into so small an area should have been packed such a various landscape. From the well-watered Midland plain, inviting to agriculture and, later, to manufacture, one passes in a few hours by motor to the bleak Yorkshire Moors or, in the extreme north-west, to the crags and tarns of the Lake District, to mountains not very high, but singularly mountainous, with their rocky peaks rising above heather and gorse and wooded, lake-strewn dales — wild crags wreathed in the mist driving in off the Irish Sea. This upland rocky country runs all the way down the west side of England, and farther west, in Wales, it breaks out again into bold mountains; but, lower on the English border and broken where the Mersey, Dee, and Severn



From Massingham's "English Downland." Photo by F. R. P. Stringer

CHALK CLIFFS — WORBARROW BAY, DORSET

cut through and spread into alluvial plains, it presents again a different aspect, favorable to farms, but marked by conspicuous sentinel hills — “beacons,” such as Clee in Shropshire and Worcester Beacon in the Malvern Hills. Still farther south, beyond the picturesque, tumbled Cotswolds, one may pass southwestward to an incredibly different country, the steep Devonshire moors, breaking sharply into fertile, narrow valleys or falling down a rocky coast to Bristol Channel and the sea. But if one should turn southeastward instead, he would come soon to the thin soil above the chalky North and South Downs, with the wooded Weald between, and beyond, where the Downs run out, the fertile hop valleys of Kent. Northwards across the Thames on the east coast stretches the Fen Country, presenting soft lights and atmosphere found nowhere else in England or in the world — a painter’s paradise.

The modern traveler, of course, sees a very different picture. Everywhere this landscape has been marked by the hand of man.* Even the sparsely inhabited Downs, as Kipling puts it, are “half wild and wholly tame.” The Midland area is dotted with old villages — thatched roof, hedge and garden wall, spires above the trees, all touched by the kindly caress of years — “God laughed when he made Grafton”; while stately country houses, set in magnificent parks, or ruined castles and great abbeys, some falling to decay, others preserved as city churches — all are eloquent of the human life lived in this landscape. The Midlands have large cities, too, and going northwestward nowadays, the traveler comes on the “Black Country” and in it and beyond it great manufacturing centers with mile on mile of dingy houses — the “deforming mechanism” that Ruskin abhorred. Warwick, Tewkesbury, Evesham conjure up the “drums and tramlings” of the past, Stratford takes its fame from a poet, Leamington from its curative waters, but Birmingham and Manchester mean machinery, mills, and trade. Again, Lichfield, a little, lost cathedral town, “field of the corpses,” recalls the massacre there in Diocletian’s day and, westward a short distance, just off Watling Street, lie the ruins of ancient Uriconium. On the south coast “the wise turf cloaks the white cliff edge as when the Romans came,” but Brighton, a crowded seaside resort, and Southampton, a great shipping port, remind the traveler of a wholly modern

* Now sadly desecrated, too, by indiscriminate and vindictive bombing.

civilization; while a little way inland on the Downs cromlech and barrow tell of a culture already old when Cæsar landed, and Winchester, near by, speaks of Alfred and his Saxon kingdom. Oxford, in the Thames valley, is at once the home of an ancient university and of a large motor-car industry; while down the river the greatest city in the world, the human center of England for centuries, is a sort of epitome of the whole.

It is only by seeing England somewhat in its geographical perspective that one can realize the layer on layer of cultural growth, with the resultant modern England, a growth represented by such talismanic names as Stonehenge, Watling Street, Winchester, Warwick, Tintern, Oxford, Bideford, Bath, Manchester, London.

ROMAN AND BRITON

Stonehenge, of course, conjures up the early Britons. The word "Briton," however, often used to describe anyone before the Roman conquest, breaks up on examination into several races distinct as to type and fairly distinct as to periods and customs. By 2000 B.C. the long-headed neolithic man was being superseded, or absorbed, in the British Isles by a race which developed far beyond the hunting stage. Its agriculture, the use of domestic animals, its villages, and a certain amount of trade mark a growing civilization. It was this civilization which produced, especially in southern England, but in other parts of western Europe too, those astonishing circles of standing stones, most conspicuous at Stonehenge, but on a greater scale at Avebury, monuments that still speak eloquently of a vanished race. But these people, except in Ireland, are of interest chiefly to archeologists; we can assume only a negligible trace of them surviving in the later Englishman. Even in Ireland they are mixed with their long-headed predecessors and with the subsequent Gael; while in England the red-headed Brython, different from the Gael, seems some centuries before Christ to have displaced or absorbed the earlier inhabitants.

What is perhaps most important to note, in so brief a survey, is that by 500 B.C. a civilization almost as developed as that of the early Saxons a thousand years later had grown up in England, and that the Brythonic "Celts," by the time of the Roman invasion, had pushed civilization, with the use of iron, to a stage represented by wheeled vehicles, the manufacture of cloth as well as of many house-

hold, agricultural, and military implements, the beginning of stone dwellings, and sufficient commerce to require currency. Such people, conquered by the Romans, were capable of adapting themselves to the cities of the still more complicated Roman civilization; capable of accepting Christianity in the fourth century; and incapable, when the Roman legions were withdrawn, of resisting the barbaric invaders from the German coast. The survivors retreated into the hill fastnesses of Cornwall, Wales, and Strathclyde, but, except in Wales, only place-names and a few dialect words remain today. In fact, the most notable English inheritance from the Britons is the Arthurian legends, stories based on a probably historic figure at the time of the Saxon invasions and kept alive for centuries among the Celts of the West, to be finally enlarged and glorified in French and English during the Middle Ages. Beyond this and the distinct racial inheritances, of Brython in Wales, and of "Iberian" * and Gael in Ireland and Scotland, inheritances which have played an important part in the political history of England, English history begins almost anew with the Anglo-Saxon invasions.

For the Romans, though they built more substantially than the Britons and occupied Britain for as long a period as the white man has been in America, withdrew so completely, when the Western Empire was threatened by Goth and Hun, that the Saxons had little to do but pillage and destroy. Some Roman merchants remained, at such places as Chedworth in the Cotswolds, but the Roman blood and civilization did not provide, as they did in southern France, a continuing basis of education and government. One realizes, nevertheless, as he drives today on a Roman road in Britain, or comes upon the broken baths of cities and villas, that the Saxons did not come to a new land, as the English later came to North America, that they must have felt much as the Spaniards breaking in on the Mayan Civilization in the West. Like the Spaniards, they did not value it, and they imposed their will; but unquestionably these Roman remains, as also the standing stones and burial mounds of the early Britons, had some sort of influence on the new race — if only to stir their imaginations and thereby to give some direction to

* It is not clearly established that the "Mediterranean" race which preceded the Gael in Ireland and Scotland was related to the Basques of northern Spain and southwestern France, but the word "Iberian" has come to be loosely used to describe these early inhabitants of western Europe. Characteristics of them are still conspicuous in the west of Ireland.

their growth. In one of the early Anglo-Saxon poems, *The Ruined City*, the author speaks sadly of the departed glory, probably of the City of Bath, much as Byron later wrote of the ruins of the Colosseum; and a modern English poet, looking up from the fallen city of Uricon to the Wrekin, cries

Then — 'twas before my time — the Roman
At yonder heaving hill would stare;
The blood that warms an English yeoman,
The thoughts that hurt him, they were there.

Roman civilization was wiped out of Britain, but the Roman influence was indestructible.

THE ANGLO-SAXONS

The invading Low German tribes during the fifth and sixth centuries, unlike their Celtic and Roman predecessors, have never been superseded. For the most part they drove out the occupants, and when subsequent invaders or conquerors came to Britain, the Anglo-Saxons * gradually absorbed them and dominated the civilization which emerged. "Heterogeneous" as the modern Englishman may be, the Anglo-Saxon inheritance is nevertheless the strongest and most enduring element in his blood as well as in his speech and in his way of life.

Since the invaders destroyed the civilization they found, built their houses of wood, and had no writing beyond a few runic inscriptions, we know very little about them for the first two centuries of their occupation. It is a fair inference, however, that they were people of singularly sturdy and tenacious character. Their continuance in Britain may be partly accounted for, to be sure, by the fact that with them the flux of migrations in Western Europe was nearing its end, for the conquests by Sweyn and William were military expeditions, not migrations; but the Saxons did resist and eventually absorb the migrating Danes in the eighth and ninth centuries; and in later times they have absorbed and made peculiarly English such large invasions of thought as Christianity and Socialism. At least, by the time records become available, from Bede

* "Anglo-Saxon," the term commonly used for the Germanic invaders, was employed a century before Alfred to describe the tribes not yet united into a nation; but the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes were fairly separate groups at first, with further divisions among themselves. The Angles gave their name to the language, but the chief political development was Saxon.

onward, the Anglo-Saxon seems to have been a vigorous warrior, with a strong sense of the individual freeman's rights, primarily occupied with agriculture and hunting, primitive rather than barbaric, and tribal in instinct even after larger political units were formed. He had his pastimes and his songs over the mead, but, compared to Latin and Gaul, he was serious and taciturn, and he seemed both dull and gloomy to Norman and Plantagenet, who came to rule over him and ended by being absorbed by him. But everywhere his tenacity comes out: the Anglo-Saxon in course of time could be modified, but not driven out or destroyed.

Tradition has it that the Britons first invited the Jutes to England in 449 to protect them against the marauding Saxons on their south coast, and that the Jutes liked the new land so well that they came to settle, to the discomfiture of their hosts. By 477 the Saxons began to settle in the South, and soon afterwards Angles occupied the east coast. The Britons evidently resisted stubbornly, but in the course of the next century were either killed or driven into the hills and mountains of the West, and with their withdrawal the British-Roman civilization of the plains was obliterated.* By the year 585 England had become Anglo-Saxon — pagan, agricultural, tribal — from the Channel to the Firth of Forth, and as far westward as the Severn.

The newcomers, finding that cities were only ambushades for the enemy, destroyed them. Living in small wooden villages and farmsteads, they were ruled largely by tribal custom. Though there is no evidence that the democratic gatherings of freemen noted by Tacitus among the early Germans of the continent existed among the Anglo-Saxons, nevertheless the freeman, the "ceorl," was the backbone of the early community and it is reasonable to suppose that his rights, as expressed in later laws, were virtually immemorial. In fact, the king, as war-leader and judge, took on greater power, not less, through the extension of his domains; and as king, Church, ceorl, and thegn gradually acquired control of most of the land, the ceorl, though he still kept his rights, lost a large measure of his economic liberty and became little more than a peasant. It is there-

* It is impossible to tell, even approximately, how much British blood survived, but unquestionably women and slaves were often retained by the victors.

Couched upon her brother's grave,
The Saxon got me on the slave.

fore a mistake to suppose that English freedom "broadened slowly down" from the earliest times.

Though the Anglo-Saxon tribes settled into seven distinct kingdoms, three of them were especially prominent. Northumbria was the first to exercise large control, in the seventh century; but Mercia gained the supremacy in the eighth, and Wessex in the ninth and tenth centuries. Yet the cohesion in the first two of these kingdoms was slight, based largely on the temporary power of local kings. Perhaps no permanent unity would have been later accomplished had it not been for the unifying and civilizing influence of the Church and for a common cause in resistance to the Danes.

Official Roman Christianity first came to the Anglo-Saxons in 597, when Pope Gregory I sent his famous mission to Kent, where the King's wife, a Frankish princess, was already a Christian. St. Martin's Church at Canterbury, therefore, built on the site of Bertha's chapel, where King Æthelbirht is supposed to have been baptized, is rightly called "The Mother Church of England"; and the Roman bricks in its walls point to an earlier British church that preceded even the old Saxon font, part of which remains. The older Christianity of the Celts, moreover, kept alive in the Northwest, especially by Columba on the island of Iona, penetrated the North and East of England; and in 655 Celtic Christianity, antedating the Roman organization and therefore different in many rules and practices, was established in Northumbria. As the Roman form spread northwards, it came into conflict with the Celtic form; and it was on this account that King Oswiu of Northumbria called the famous Synod of Whitby in 664, at which he made the momentous decision in favor of Rome — because Peter held the keys of heaven! Thus Oswiu provided astutely for his own salvation and set up the Roman system in Britain.

Rome moved with characteristic energy. Theodore of Tarsus, sent by the Pope in 669, spread the ecclesiastical authority systematically throughout the island, and by the end of the century all England, pagan a hundred years before, was organized into bishoprics. Monastic foundations, with schools, gave new life and a new direction to an infant culture, and during the next century Northumbria became the Anglo-Saxon center of learning and literature. In fact, when Voltaire remarked of the court of Catharine of Russia that "light now comes from the North," he should have said



ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND ABOUT 700 A.D.

"again from the North," for, after the fall of the Western Empire, Anglo-Saxon culture was the earliest native culture in western Europe. Cædmon, the poor cowherd who was said to have learned to sing at the behest of an angel, made his hymns at Whitby Abbey, on the Yorkshire coast; Bede, "the Venerable," wrote the first English history at Jarrow in the early part of the eighth century; Alcuin, the illustrious monk called to the court of Charlemagne, made his cloister school at York famous throughout Europe; and Cynewulf, the greatest English poet before Chaucer, wrote his fine Christian poems, *Elene*, *The Christ*, *Juliana*, and *The Fates of the Apostles*, under the spell of this new culture. Some of the noblest lines in English poetry occur in *The Dream of the Rood*, usually ascribed to Cynewulf. The Cross speaks: —

On me a while suffered the Son of God;
Therefore now full of majesty I tower
High under heaven; and I have power to heal
All those who do me reverence.

Of old

Was I a punishment, the cruelest,
The most abhorred by men, ere I for man
Had opened the true way of life. So, then
The Prince of Glory, Guardian of heaven,
Above all other trees exalted me.*

Thus began in English poetry that "high seriousness" which persisted far beyond the Saxon period and which reappeared again and again, to the amazement of Frenchmen, in such verses as those of Milton, Wordsworth, Tennyson — men who believed that life and so the art which expressed it was not merely beautiful, but earnest.

Poetry was, in fact, the only permanent Anglo-Saxon contribution to the arts, as it has continued to be the glory of English culture. Only a few stones of the early architecture remain, chiefly in the foundations and crypts of churches, in contrast to the quantities of Roman ruins; but, thanks to the industry of Alfred and his scholars, much of the old Northumbrian poetry has been preserved in the West Saxon dialect.

For the chief Anglo-Saxon secular poetry, as well as the religious, was first written in Northumbria. Of this group *Beowulf* is of course the greatest. Based on a story which had its origin along the Danish

* Translation by LaMotte Iddings.

coast and which grew during countless recitals by the *scoþ*, or glee-man, it became in course of time the national epic. Though it was probably first written down about the close of the seventh century, our oldest copy, in the West Saxon dialect, is of the tenth century. Every child knows of Beowulf, the hero with "thirty men's heft of grasp in the gripe of his hand," the man who could swim seven days and nights with his armor on, and how he rescued the Danes from Grendel and that monster's terrible mother. For the older reader the story, like other primitive poetry, comes to life in its vivid imagery. Here is the picture of Grendel's home: —

By wolf-cliffs haunt they and windy headlands,
fenways fearful, where flows the stream
from mountains gliding to gloom of the rocks,
underground flood.

By night is a wonder weird to see,
fire on the waters. So wise lived none
of the sons of men, to search those depths!
Nay, though the heath-rover, harried by dogs,
the horn-proud hart this holt should seek,
long distance driven, his dear life first
on the brink he yields ere he brave the plunge
to hide his head: 'tis no happy place!
Thence the welter of waters washes up
wan to welkin when winds bestir
evil storms and the air grows dusk,
and the heavens weep.*

This translation, in the old Saxon rhythm, with its alliterative rhyme, gives not only a good idea of the Saxon verse, but also a revelation of the Saxon character. The rhythm, as Dr. Gummere points out, "is all weight, force — no stately, even, measured pace, as in Greek epic verse. Our old meter inclines, like our ancestors themselves, to violence . . . a verse cadenced by the crashing blows of sword and ax."

Besides *Beowulf*, fragments of other epics remain, notably *Widsith* and *The Attack on Finnsburg*, while such lyrical poems as *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, and *Deor's Lament* add to the tale of early English poetry. In addition, riddles and charms in verse, and the later *Battle of Brunanburgh* and *Battle of Maldon*, both included in the *Chronicle*, give us a lively sense of a fundamentally poetic race.

* Translation by F. B. Gummere.

It is idle to speculate how much literary light might still have come from Northumbria if the Danes had not invaded it. The whole northeast coast was ravaged and, but for the stubborn resistance of the West Saxons under Alfred, all might have been obliterated.

Alfred was certainly one of the greatest English sovereigns. Discounting the halo of legend and skipping the pretty story of the cakes, we still find a man who, in spite of poor health, led his country to success in a life-and-death struggle, who reformed education and stimulated literature, who gave real life to a methodical record, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, who promoted manufacture and trade, who drew up a code of laws and judged wisely, and who had the vision to think in terms of a united England and the ability in some measure to realize his vision. "My will," he says in his preface to a translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, "was to live worthily as long as I lived, and after my life to leave to them that should come after, my memory in good works."

When Alfred came to the throne of Wessex in 871, at the age of twenty-three, the Danes were marauding as far southward as Berkshire. Some of the earlier records of his Danish wars, it is true, read like familiar communiqués of the World War. Thus we find that, though the Saxons "put to flight" the enemy at Wilton, "the Danes possessed the place of slaughter." There must have been a good many of these strategic retreats, for the Danes captured both London and Winchester, Alfred's capital, and he was forced to buy them off with a ransom. Nevertheless, he did drive them back when the war was renewed in 877. He built a navy, to prevent their landing on the south coast, and the next year he defeated them in a great battle at Edington, in Wiltshire, and compelled them to sue for peace when he starved them out of their fortress at Chippenham. Soon afterwards, Guthrum, king of the English Danes, embraced Christianity, and in 886 he and Alfred drew up the famous treaty which defined the Danelaw, a region north and east of a line roughly from London to Chester. Angle and Dane in the north obeyed the Danish law; while south and west of that line, Mercians, South Saxons, and Kentishmen, as well as West Saxons, were under the jurisdiction of West Saxon law. Thus, though the new Danes from Scandinavia kept up the warfare till 897, Alfred consolidated the whole southern half of England into one kingdom.

But the Danes had wrought terrible havoc in the monasteries. "So

clean was learning fallen away among the English," runs Alfred's oft-quoted preface to his translation of Gregory's *Pastoral Cure*, "that there were very few on this side of the Humber who knew how to render their daily prayers in English, or as much as translate an epistle out of Latin into English. I ween there were not so many beyond the Humber." To remedy this defect, Alfred set himself to reform the schools and he established, in imitation of Charlemagne, a court school at Winchester. He took a personal part in the work, and translations of renowned Latin writings, as well as of Northumbrian poetry, were made either by him or under his direction. Almost incredible energy in a sick man, who, according to tradition, gave eight hours to affairs of state and eight to study, yet had leisure and appetite to entertain far-come visitors at his court!

In the political field King Alfred's work was equally important. He regulated the administration of justice and made some attempt to set down a code of laws. These were usually not new laws, but rather the precipitation of custom-law. Some of them are quaint, as, for instance: "If a man strike off another's nose, let him make *bot* (recompense) with 60 shillings." . . . "If a man's tongue be done out of his head by another man's deeds, that shall be as *eye-bot*." Under *eye-bot*, the penalty prescribed was high, but only if the eye was "struck out," for "if it remain in the head and he cannot see aught therewith, let one third part of the *bot* be retained." Each man had his *wergeld*, or cash value; that of a king, in Athelstan's time, was 30,000 thrymsas,* of a bishop 8000, of a thegn 2000, and of a ceorl 266. These laws of Alfred and his successors would seem to indicate a strong sense among the early English for fines and cash penalties. They were a practical folk. Indeed, from the enumeration of land-laws, church laws, trial laws, and penalties we get a fairly clear picture of Anglo-Saxon government in the tenth century.

In this government there was no legislative body. The king, with the advice of the Witanagemôt, a meeting of wise men (chosen by the king, not elected), did occasionally issue new laws, but the Anglo-Saxons to the end had no conception of the legislative function. This reliance on custom rather than edict is perhaps the most important feature of their government practice, for, deeply im-

* A thrymsa was a Northumbrian coin worth about three fourths of a Saxon shilling.

bedded in their nature, it carried over to subsequent times and, together with the principle of the right of every freeman to fair trial, it was fundamental in the development of justice in later England. More than any other people, the English have distrusted and resisted decree and star-chamber justice. Charles I ought to have known this!

Though the Anglo-Saxon king was chief executive, the administration of justice remained largely local. The king was represented in the shires by the ealdormen, and the importance of this jurisdiction increased as the thegns and Danish earls became powerful in control of the land. The majority of cases, however, were decided in the "hundred-môt" (or "wapentake" in the North), representing smaller divisions within the shire; while the "burgh-môt" had the same function in the towns. In these smaller groups every freeman had a right to a hearing, and each man was required to have a pledge-lord, who should answer for him if he did not appear for judgment; and though the primitive trials by ordeal of fire or of water persisted, the provision for "compurgators," who should answer on oath for the character or innocence of the accused, reveals a beginning of justice based on sworn evidence, while the hearing before fellowmen in the burgh or the hundred, especially in the Danish North, where committees of twelve were appointed, suggests the jury system which grew up in Plantagenet times.

Land in early Saxon days was owned by families rather than by individuals, and presumably was all under the folklaw. Soon, however, certain folklands were given by the king to the Church, and these lands, called "booklands," were not bound by folklaw and were often loaned by the Church. Similarly, we find the thegns gradually acquiring the actual ownership of large tracts, or the virtual ownership through judicial and military power, till they had increasing economic control of the ceorls who worked the land. The germs of feudalism were here, and they flourished considerably under the great earls and powerful thegns of Edward the Confessor's time, but no national, regulated system was developed till after the Norman invasion.

Saxon England was still largely forest, moorland, and fen, sparsely settled, with few inland communications. Game abounded, and there were as yet no preserves and restrictions, so that hunting and

fishing for livelihood were still as important as agriculture. But to the poor ceorl or to the toiling serf it was by no means a paradise — in spite of the deer and salmon and grouse that would seem sheer ambrosia to a modern Manchester mill-hand. "That grey beast, the wolf of the weald," as well as the human robber, meant a stern life for farmer and herdsman, a life constantly punctuated by still sterner moments when the Danes came raiding through his region. With the thegns, as with the lords of the Church, things were somewhat better no doubt. The thegns took fighting as their natural lot, evidently with relish, and were supplied by the king, or some bigger thegn, with sword and buckler and coat of mail. In their hours of ease they feasted in their great halls and listened to the minstrels, who sang of illustrious deeds. They probably had a few of the luxuries that came with trade, chiefly in Danish bottoms, and the Saxons themselves, like their Viking neighbors, possessed skill in the making of jewelry. It was a civilization, however, far less advanced than that which their ancestors had found in Britain and had destroyed, five centuries before. We may imagine the halls as spacious and decorated; but the pungent fire-smoke, drifting towards a hole in the roof, and the clamorous feasters, heady with mead or ale and engaged in "fliting," — a sort of boasting-contest, — bring before us a very different scene from that which we conjure up in the tiled and heated hall of a British Roman villa.

To return to the historical narrative: The prestige of Wessex was extended by Alfred's successors, who conquered the Danelaw and brought it under one rule with Mercia and Wessex. Then followed an interlude of peace, strange in Saxon history, when Eadgar (959-975) "loved God's law and bettered the peace of the folk." He rebuilt the fleet, kept on good terms with his Celtic neighbors, advanced Alfred's regulation of justice in the hundreds, and conciliated the Danes by calling some of them to his Witanagemôt. "Twice a year . . . he rode through every shire inquiring into the judgments of his ealdormen." Under him, Anglo-Saxon England reached its greatest unity and its greatest glory. A large part of that glory was due to Archbishop Dunstan, who accomplished in some measure his great effort to reform the now degenerate monasteries after the pattern of Cluny. At least, a better tone was given to monastic discipline, the secular clergy were driven out in favor of

genuine monks, the scholarship promoted by Alfred was revived, and an effort to enforce celibacy was in part successful. Unfortunately, soon after Eadgar, Ethelred, the "redeless," a weak king, gave no support to the reforms of Dunstan, and the monastic life quickly reverted to its former level.

With Ethelred began the rapid decline of Anglo-Saxon fortunes. Sweyn "Forkbeard," King of the Danes, invaded England and levied heavy tribute, the Danegeld; and Ethelred's frantic attempt to massacre Danish newcomers in England only provoked a worse attack by the Vikings. In despair, the North revolted in favor of Sweyn, the South soon followed, and Ethelred fled to Normandy for his life. When he died there a few years later, Sweyn's son Cnut, after a brief civil war, was accepted as the English king in 1016.

Cnut, King of Norway, Denmark, and England, seems to have combined Viking vigor with a good measure of statesmanship. His kingdom was too large for him and before his death Norway and the Scottish part of Northumbria had broken off, so that the English rule no longer extended to the Firth of Forth; but as far as England was concerned, he ruled wisely and well. He had the good sense to send his Danish army back to Denmark and, though he appointed Norwegian and Danish earls to the higher offices in England, he not only kept English law, but drew it up in a code and enforced it. The only conspicuous change under Cnut was the division of England by him into four great earldoms, which soon threatened to grow as independent and powerful, as disuniting, as the great duchies of France.

The English Danes, gradually absorbed into the Anglo-Saxon stock, contributed a valuable ingredient, for they were large and sturdy men; and though they soon ceased to be a separate race, they gave a character to the North which in course of time provided desirable variety rather than irreconcilable antagonisms. Their fortified burghs, imitated by the Saxons, supplied the nucleus for the shires on the northeast coast and for trading centers, while certain features of Danelaw justice persisted; but English law in the main, and English speech, eventually prevailed among the English-Danish descendants of Guthrum's people.

Cnut's rule was so English, in fact, that, when his son died in 1042, the Witan recognized no Dane, but Ethelred's son, Edward the Confessor, as king. Edward moved his capital to Westminster,

hard by the city of London, which, with the growing trade of the east coast, had now become the chief town of England; and at Westminster he built his great Abbey.* A pious man, to whom the magical power of curing by touch was ascribed, he nevertheless was a very weak king, controlled in large measure by Earl Godwin of Wessex and by Godwin's son Harold. It was natural enough, therefore, that Harold, on Edward's death, should be chosen king, but he found the rival earls of the three other earldoms, as well as his outlawed brother Tostig, opposed to him; so that when William of Normandy, pressing his claim to the throne, landed on the south coast, Harold was occupied far to the north fighting his brother and Harold Hardrada, a stalwart Viking ally of Tostig's. Though he managed to defeat them at Stamford Bridge, Harold was forced, without time for rest or for gathering an adequate army, to hurry south to meet William.

The Battle of Hastings, or Senlac, ranks with the defeat of the Armada and Waterloo in its effect on English history. It took William five years to complete the Conquest, but the decisive blow was struck at Senlac. Harold rallied with his "huscarls" on a little hill, and withstood wave after wave of Norman attack, even of the knights on horseback — a new mode of fighting in England. At length William, an old hand at stratagems, feigned flight, only to turn on the pursuing Saxons. Even then, tradition has it, the Saxons rallied and resisted till William, his bright unhelmeted hair serving as a banner, himself led the charge. Harold went down fighting.

With the Conquest we are too prone to close the chapter of early England, and consign the Saxons to the finished history of perished races; or, equally bad, we start with the conquest and ascribe all subsequent English virtues to these sturdy Saxon forebears. It is important to remind ourselves that the Anglo-Saxons were dominant in England for six hundred years; that the Norman Conquest is as near the Spanish Armada in point of time as it is to the landing of Hengist in 449. When Alfred came to the throne, he had already over four hundred years of Saxon England behind him. New England, proud of its venerable traditions, has but three hundred. The main governmental structure of the Saxons disappeared,

* Almost wholly rebuilt in the thirteenth century.

the folkland too, and what little culture there was at court or hall. But the race remained, and it proceeded, if not with enthusiasm, to adapt itself to the new structure and to absorb the invaders. The Normans, of course, came in smaller numbers than the Danes — as overlords, not as a migratory folk; and though their work, both in government and buildings, long survived them, their race and their language were swallowed up. It is not wholly fanciful, moreover, to assume that with the Anglo-Saxon race persisted the instinct for custom law, for fair trial, and for practice rather than theory in government — features which have been a steadying influence through the whole course of English history. These characteristics seem to have been native, not superimposed or taught. Among these people, furthermore, the old English language persisted, not for a while as the tongue of court or culture, but eventually to emerge, enriched by French and Latin derivatives; and with that language lived on an instinct for poetry, hidden during the culturally barren period of the Normans, but coming to its own again when Chaucer wrote in English.

But in all their long history the Saxons had never developed a strong sense of national organization. There is no Saxon word for "nation." The development of towns and trade, furthermore, was slow, except under Danish influence. A dogged but not enterprising folk, the Anglo-Saxons needed some power outside themselves to develop the vigorous and versatile nation that England eventually became.

Chapter II

NORMAN AND ANGEVIN

BETWEEN Anglo-Saxon Britain and later England lies the canyon of the Conquest. Across it run many trails, but the life on this side has little communication with the old life on the other side. For the Norman conquerors set up a new government and a new social structure as quickly as modern Russia and Germany have changed to their totalitarian régimes. More than that, the change was made by foreigners, so that England of one language, though of many dialects, became bilingual, and soon, with the growth of legal and scholastic Latin, virtually trilingual. It is important to note that the conquerors were few, that the Anglo-Saxons, with Celtic and Danish elements, still made up the English race, and that subsequent developments were different from continental changes largely on that account.* But it is equally important to realize that the Conquest was complete, that there was no reversion; so that, when foreign rulers and the foreign Church had done their work for over two centuries, the English nation which emerged in the time of Edward III, though largely Anglo-Saxon in blood, was fundamentally transformed.

Again, between this middle England and modern England lies another barrier. It is not so difficult of passage as the canyon between old England and the Middle Ages, but it nevertheless leads us to misinterpret, often to undervalue, a period largely foreign to ours both in ideals and in practices. We are the heirs of the Renaissance. Our glorification of the State, for example, our industrial society, and our political democracy stand in sharp contrast to the authority of the Church, the feudal society, and the corporate governments of the Middle Ages. Our science and our material progress make scholasticism and asceticism seem unreal. In an age of self-assertion and individualism we too easily misjudge the medieval qualities of humility and anonymity.

It is true, of course, that some of our most important customs and institutions have their origin in the Middle Ages — particularly

* Only about 20,000 Normans came with the Conquest, both as warriors and as settlers. The whole population was about 2,000,000.

universities, parliaments, and English common law. The people of Plantagenet days, furthermore, were very real human beings, as Chaucer's portraits abundantly show. "Blessed damozels," "enchantments drear" — all the mystery and magic which caused Walter Pater to describe Romance as "that longing for a shudder" — are largely the pretty fiction of romantic poets. Yet the barrier remains. Aquinas or Edison, cathedrals or subways; few contrasts could be more striking.

In England this middle period, on account of the Conquest, begins rather abruptly towards the end of the eleventh century* and continues till the Tudors at the end of the fifteenth. Again, this stretch of four hundred years breaks rather clearly into three parts: the period of Norman and Angevin, which runs for about a century and a half; the second period, the heart of Medieval England, which covers about one hundred years; and the third, which continues the Medieval institutions but without their old vitality and which, with a new nationalism and a new skepticism, leads to the last stages on the threshold of the Renaissance.

THE NORMANS

The most conspicuous experience in English development during the Norman period was the introduction of a special type of feudalism, with a centralized administration of government. The new social order involved in this development gave rise to that sturdy architecture which all over England is the most durable evidence of Norman domination. The remains of nearly four hundred castles, great and small, may still be seen. Bishops, moreover, were often barons and officers of state, and at many places, — Durham, for instance, — castle and church grew together. For though the invaders were castle-builders by instinct and church-builders somewhat by accident, the continental aggrandizement of the Church came with them to England, and many of the greatest cathedrals and abbeys are in large part Norman establishments.

In the century and a half since their Viking ancestors had settled at Rouen, the Normans had lost all sense of kinship with their blood-brothers in Scandinavia and the Danelaw. They had taken

* It is customary to call the whole period from the fall of the Western Empire to the Renaissance "The Middle Ages," and in that inclusive sense, of course, Anglo-Saxon England was part of the earlier phase.

over not only French feudalism, but also the French language and with it a quality manifest in their art and poetry. Their Church was continental, and their architecture was an adaptation of Romanesque. Nor was this change a veneer of Frankish civilization; it was a genuine transformation. Yet the invaders of England were by no means wholly French; they were that peculiar amalgam which can be described only by "Norman." For within this amalgam persisted the old Viking aggressiveness and the sure instinct for system still characteristic of Scandinavians. Roman law had not yet been formulated in Northern Europe, and the Normans brought no ready-made code or legal theory to England. They made few changes at first in "Edward's law," but their systematic administration of the law was their own, pursued with a keen, litigious nose.

The first Norman king of England was a great ruler; not only a mighty warrior, but an astute and able executive. If William finally turned the tide at Senlac by leading an irresistible charge, he made that charge possible by first feigning flight. After the victory, he did not march on London, but harried the country round till the citizens invited him in and offered him the crown. This he received modestly, with a promise to keep "Edward's law," even though he did not always keep it. Again, he was clever enough later to arrest his rebellious half-brother Odo, not as Bishop of Bayeux, but as Earl of Kent. His successful rule was as much the result of his adroitness as of his military prowess.

"Stark man he was and cruel," says the old *Chronicle*, and the grim witness of flaming villages and of mutilated prisoners amply justified the statement. A man of strong passion and great energy, he kept his enemies in terror as he thundered his terrible oath, "Splendeur Dex," and grasped in two mighty hands the sword which became almost as famous as Roland's Durendal. As a mere boy, William had found himself duke over a turbulent, cutthroat baronage. He was leader of a pack which would turn on him the minute he "missed his kill," and, sure enough, his dead body was hardly cold when he lay naked on the floor at Rouen, stripped even of clothes. But during his life he contrived not only to rule such rascals as Odo and Taillebois, but to lead them to victory after victory till he was more powerful than his overlord, the King of France, and held Ponthieu, Maine, and Brittany in fee.

But the Conqueror was more than leader of a wolf-pack. He set

up a systematic government in England and strove to deal justly, if sternly, with the native inhabitants. Even the *Chronicle* admits that during his reign a man "with bosom full of gold" might travel "unmolested" throughout the land.

It took William five years to complete his conquest, for resistance in the North and East was stubborn, but he pushed forward relentlessly and subjugated the whole land as far as the Firth of Forth. How relentlessly may be judged from the record that he left no house standing and no people alive between York and Durham. The old Danelaw was obliterated and the great earldoms of Cnut were broken up.

The Conquest was no mere marauding expedition, however. As fast as he advanced, William confiscated the land and gave it to Norman vassals and through them organized a strong feudalism. Though a sort of feudalism had already existed under the earls and thegns of later Saxon times, William's was different in that it was starkly military, complete, one system for all England, with the king at the head. Yet he astutely avoided the evils of French sub-infeudation by requiring all sub-vassals to swear allegiance directly to him as well as to their overlords. The holdings of the great barons, moreover, were scattered; William de Warenne, for instance, held some three hundred manors, but they were spread over Yorkshire, Norfolk, Surrey, and Sussex. There was thus little chance in England for the growth of such powerful duchies as Burgundy, Normandy, and Anjou.

In order to maintain this rule, strongholds were built at every point of vantage. These at first consisted of the simple "motte and bailey" — a mound surrounded by a yard and protected by a stockade and ditch. The original, essential idea of the Norman castle, then, was a fort. Thus, as the establishment became permanent, the keep, or donjon, was really a glorification of the old blockhouse. Soon these were built of stone; larger baileys, sometimes inner and outer yards, were surrounded by great stone walls; and provision was made for stables and knights' dwellings, in case of siege. But the Norman stone castles were fairly simple — a prison in the cellar of the keep, storeroom above, and over that the lord's hall, with but one fireplace, and perhaps one or two separate chambers for the lord's immediate kin or retinue. Separate, spacious halls and long rows of kitchens and sculleries, as at Kenilworth and Ludlow, came

later and provided amenities little known among the Normans.

These simple Norman castles, however, did supply the nucleus of the great fortified dwellings of the medieval nobility. Though some of them have vanished, and others, such as Windsor and Warwick, have been rebuilt beyond recognition, there have remained in this century many splendid examples of the great solid donjons of the earlier day. Perhaps the most famous of these, the White Tower of London, the chief member of the group of buildings known as The Tower, was, though later a museum, for centuries a fortress, palace, and prison. So also the center of the impressive pile at Dover is the great keep, with walls twenty-one feet thick at the base. Many of course are noble ruins, as at Corfe in Dorset, or the fine keeps at Kenilworth, Richmond, and Ludlow. Most of these donjons were square, some very large; but a few were polygonal, as at Carisbrooke, in the Isle of Wight; and the keep at Coningsborough, in Yorkshire, is a great circular tower, sixty feet across and ninety feet high.

The organization of William's feudalism was simple. Each vassal, on investiture, promised loyalty and military support, to be supplied by armed knights. Obviously the origin of the system was military, but the basis of its continued existence was agricultural. In addition to service, the king required money "aids," and the overlords, bound to supply such aids, must collect them from their vassals, who in turn must collect them from the soil. The whole structure therefore rested on the land and worked fairly well so long as trade was conspicuously less important than agriculture.

In this structure the smallest unit was the manor, consisting of the lord's house, usually fortified, the dwellings of freemen and villeins, built closely together but each with a small strip of land, and, outside this "vill," two or three fields worked by the villeins for support of the manor, and an area of common meadow, pasture, and wood. The freemen were few, for most of the Saxon ceorls were forced into villeinage, so that, below the lords, lay and clerical, and the knights of the shire, the great bulk of the rural population was made up of villeins.* These men might hold property, and they had some protection in the courts through what was called the "custom

* In the *Domesday* record approximately 9300 families are listed as tenants-in-chief and under-tenants, 25,000 as freeholders and socmen (yeomen), and 224,000 as villeins, cotters, and bondsmen.

of the manor," but they had none of the legal rights of freemen. In addition, they might not leave the manor or marry without their lord's consent, and they could be sold with the land. But though this system tended to develop a few rich tenants-in-chief and to throw the majority of people into virtual bondage, it was by no means a ruthless tyranny. Each individual had obligations, the lord to his tenant as well as the tenant to his lord, obligations clearly defined by oath and by law and eventually enforced by the king's officers. In the better instances, moreover, the villein enjoyed no doubt the solicitude for his welfare that is often the case where generation after generation serve in the same family, a human rather than legal relation, which continued among many of the English gentry and their servants long after feudal times.

To enforce the collection of taxes and to provide justice, William appointed his own officers, the shire-reeves. He kept the old hundred, burgh, and shire courts, but he appointed also a Great Council, in some respects advisory, like the old Witan; but an inner division of it, the Curia Regis, grew under Henry I to have important judicial functions, especially in the branch which came to be called the "Exchequer." The "Chancellor," who later was important as head of the Exchequer and later still as head of the equity courts, was little more than the king's secretary and keeper of the seal in Norman times and was overshadowed by the "Justiciar," who was the Crown's chief officer and its representative during the King's absences in Normandy.

The business of collecting taxes and bringing delinquents to justice was evidently a major concern of the Norman rulers. Acting with characteristic thoroughness and using an old Frankish method of inquest, William caused his agents to make a careful record in 1086 of all property, and to set it down under the names of the tenants-in-chief, who were held responsible. This record, called the *Domesday Book*, was much resented by the Saxons: "There was not a single hide," says the *Chronicle*, "nor a rood of land, nor — it is shameful to relate that which he thought it no shame to do — was there an ox, or a cow, or a pig passed by"; but *Domesday* was nevertheless the chief instrument in substituting orderly, if exacting, taxation and government for the haphazard, tribal practices of Saxon days. More oppressive, really, were William's forest laws, for he not only seized and set apart large tracts for royal forests, but

ordered mutilation of anyone poaching therein. "He loved the tall stags as if he were their father," says the *Chronicle*; loved them more, evidently, than the poor Saxon who took a chance in search of dinner.

The Conqueror probably could not foresee the trouble he was preparing for his successors by giving the Church more power in England. He was careful to reserve his right of appointment, but he brought in Papal influence by appointing continental bishops and abbots and by setting up church courts, with their own continental canon law. The power of these courts was enormous, since they handled crimes by all persons in holy orders, and covered trials in connection with marriage, testament, and slander — to say nothing of penance and heresy. However, this is to anticipate, for the quarrel over these courts came in the time of Henry II, and at least the beginnings of common law under the same king would hardly have been possible had William not separated the church courts from the secular.

With this increasing prestige of the Church, we inevitably associate Norman architecture, the chief cultural expression of that energetic race. For, though the castles were more numerous than the churches, they eventually passed out of use and fell to decay, if not to oblivion, while many of the churches have been repaired and maintained to the present time. So great was the building activity, in fact, that the majority of English cathedrals have Norman elements, particularly in nave and crypt.

In their architecture, as in their other practices, the Normans seem to have had a genius for adaptation. In Sicily, where the Greek and Saracenic builders had already improved the cruder Romanesque, they were content to follow that style; but when they brought the simpler Lombard Romanesque to Normandy and England, they changed it rapidly for the better. Though they retained the round arch, they improved it with decoration and with recesses till it has become one of the chief marks of their architecture. Conspicuous in every Norman church, it is most perfectly seen, perhaps, in the little church at Iffley, Oxford. The old apsidal choir was retained at first, too, as at Peterborough, and timber roofs, also preserved at Peterborough, continued the Romanesque pattern, for vaulting came later, when Norman was passing into Early English Gothic. The really great departures, besides the decorated arches, were the

transepts, with a great square lantern tower; the length of the nave; and the proportions and majestic solidity of the whole structure. Winchester, for example, is 556 feet long; Ely, 520. Without the length, the solidity is unimpressive; it is the combination, with the long view between the great columns, nowhere more striking than at Durham, that gives Norman architecture a quality which mere bulk or mere decoration could never supply.

The massive walls and piers of the Norman churches were probably the result of poor building at first, for many of the earlier structures collapsed — as, for instance, the towers of Winchester and Ely. The Normans, laying wide-jointed courses, after the Roman fashion but without Roman mortar, soon learned to rely on sheer bulk to hold their piers and walls in place, and this quality of bulk persisted, even when fine jointing was common. It was during the later Norman period, roughly from 1125 to 1175, that the more elaborate decoration of arches and capitals and the occasional use of the pointed arch as a decorative feature of the clerestory came in. Together with these, clustered columns and twisted shafts produced a happy combination of Norman strength and "Saracenic grace" — a style easily adaptable to the Early English fashion, into which it changed towards the end of the twelfth century.

Few will wholly agree as to the finest instances of Norman architecture. There is no single specimen, as Salisbury is of Early English, which has not been altered and overlaid. Norwich, in spite of many later additions in the upper parts, is in its nave and its apsidal choir perhaps the most wholly Norman of English cathedrals. But for impressive Norman characteristics one remembers, rather, the grandeur of Durham, high above the River Wear; Ely with its great tower dominating the wide stretches of fen country; the massive squat towers of Tewkesbury and Winchester; or perhaps some memorable detail, such as the shafts and arches of the Galilee at Durham, the little crossed arches in the ruins of Much Wenlock Abbey, the beautiful doors of the round "Templar" Chapel at Ludlow Castle, or the sculptured, recessed porch of Malmesbury.

All this takes us many years beyond the Conqueror, but the distinctive architecture, like the feudal system, had its beginning in his reign. He and his bishops and barons set the patterns which, though developed by later Normans, were not fundamentally changed. The same does not hold in the main for learning and

literature. It is true, of course, that the Normans had a great feeling for the *geste* type of poetry; in fact, the greatest of the French heroic narratives, the *Chanson de Roland*, comes to us in a Norman French manuscript. In England, the finest poetry of this type did not flourish till the reign of Henry II, and the same is substantially true of scholarship and Latin prose. A new vigor certainly appeared with the advent of the Normans, both in the monasteries and among scholar bishops — witness Lanfranc, Anselm, and Adelard of Bath; and such chroniclers as William of Malmesbury are of great assistance to the historian; but the chief influence of continental scholarship belongs to Angevin days.

By far the most important literary work of this period, at least in its consequences, was that curious compound which Geoffrey of Monmouth, later Bishop of St. Asaph, called his *Historia Britonum*, containing a little history, a good deal of legend, and extraordinary inventions. Written about 1140, it soon became popular, and before the turn of the century was the chief source of the great cycle of Arthurian romances; while in later times it supplied Elizabethan chroniclers and dramatists with the stories of Gorboduc, Lear, and Cymbeline.

The general paucity of literature in Norman England is not surprising when one considers the handful of Normans who came to England, many of them mighty warriors but unlettered, and the preoccupation of men with setting up a new régime. At the same time, literature in the Anglo-Saxon dialects was negligible. The monks did keep up the *Chronicle*, chiefly at Peterborough, till 1154; but with foreign bishops and abbots, as well as a foreign, French-speaking court, the native dialects retreated into oral obscurity.

To return to the political narrative: William left Normandy to his unruly son Robert "Curthose," and England to his second son, William "Rufus," an unworthy successor to his great father. Rapacious and cruel, Rufus sold justice and plundered the Church. His death in 1100 from an arrow shot by an unknown hand, when the King was hunting in the New Forest, mercifully saved England from impending anarchy.

Henry "Beauclerc," the Conqueror's third son, in great contrast was an able ruler. His first act was to grant a charter to the barons, and this was followed by charters to towns, restoring some of their

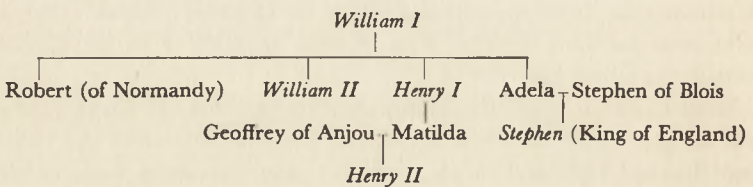
old rights. Towns did not prosper much under the early Normans, and even now, in spite of the charters, the feudal courts were superseding the borough courts, as well as the hundred courts; but with the charters and with increasing trade and much building activity under Henry I, the boroughs were slowly advancing towards the prosperity which gave them unique political as well as economic importance in the next century.

Henry's most important step was the development of the Curia Regis, a small group of the Great Council, which sat as a sort of higher court and which, as the Exchequer in financial affairs, greatly increased the Crown's control. The administration of justice was still under the old "dooms," tribal, confusing, often contradictory, but this court provided the nucleus for those great changes under Henry II which saved England from the tyranny of the seignorial courts of the Continent.

Henry I came early into conflict with his brother Robert and finally managed to defeat him at the battle of Tinchebrai (1106) and to bring the duchy of Normandy again under one rule with the English kingdom. Robert was taken prisoner and, after the fashion of those days, was confined in English strongholds for the rest of his life, nearly thirty years. A significant aspect of this conquest by Henry was that, in order to gain the support of Anselm against Robert, he made important concessions to the Church, concessions which came home to roost in succeeding years. For centuries in England, bishops had been given not only their lands but their signs of office (ring and staff) by their overlords. Henry, though church officers were still considered "temporal" vassals, now conceded entire "spiritual" authority to the Pope.

With Henry's death in 1135, his nephew Stephen of Blois succeeded to the throne, but his right was at once contested by Henry's quarrelsome daughter, who claimed it for her son Henry.*

* Succession of Houses of Blois and Anjou: —



The two claimants kept up a civil war for nineteen years. This long anarchy with fearful conditions — brutal murders, tortures, devastations by fire and sword — produced one of the worst periods in the whole English story, a time when

A woman weeping for her murdered mate
Was cared as much for as a summer shower.

Stephen finally, in 1153, conceded the succession, after his death, to Henry of Anjou, and, fortunately for England, he died within a year.

It is worth noting, however, that England was not wholly disrupted by the anarchy. More monasteries were built in Stephen's reign than in a century before — twenty in Yorkshire alone. "God's castles," the chronicler calls them. With the Normans new vigor returned to monastic life, and the strict rule of Cluny, introduced in Edgar's time but since much neglected, was again revived. The Cistercian monasteries, particularly, increased in number and importance more than those of any other rule; and this group is largely responsible for the vigorous monastic life of the time. Later, with increasing wealth, the conventual establishments relapsed into their old indolence — comfortable retreats for retired Christians — but during the dark period of Stephen they were the chief centers of light and learning.

THE ANGEVINS

With the Angevins there was no invasion, as with the Normans, but merely the accession of a ruling house. During the new reign additional Frenchmen filtered into England, chiefly to fill church offices or to supply the demands of building and trade; but this sort of infiltration had been going on through the whole Norman period. Nor were the newcomers only Frenchmen, but, in considerable numbers, Flemings and Jews.

The first of the Angevins was a host in himself. Hotheaded, stubborn, dictatorial, blasphemous, and much occupied with promiscuous love-affairs, Henry II nevertheless was an extraordinarily wise and able ruler. Like the first William, also of violent temper, he was in constant conflict with rebellious sons. In fact, it is almost incredible that a man who employed the vigor of several men in his passions and his quarrels should have had energy left for

anything else; yet in his organization of England after the anarchy of Stephen, with far-reaching changes in both law and administration, he surpassed the Conqueror in his genius for constructive government. He stands next to Edward I as the greatest monarch of medieval England.

Henry II, by his marriage with Eleanor of Aquitaine, added nearly half of France to his domains on both sides of the channel. Master of a great empire from Scotland to the Pyrenees, he was the most powerful ruler in Europe. This fact, even if it did give new opportunities to the merchants of Angevin days, had important consequences of doubtful value to England. In the first place, England was of secondary concern to Henry. He passed, all told, less than a third of his time there, for he was preoccupied with the great Capet-Angevin struggle for the mastery of France. In the second place, the inherited feeling that French lands, when lost, must be won back produced through coming centuries a succession of valiant but unprofitable wars.

Henry's first step, on his accession, was to break the power of lawless barons and to raze the castles which had sprung up in Stephen's time. Another step towards centralizing power in the Crown was the institution of *scutage*, or payments by the barons in place of armed knights. The King then hired his army, no longer a barons' army, and, though he later issued an assize which revived the old levies of armed freemen, a sort of militia, he made this additional force entirely responsible to the Crown. The immediate result was to check the growing feudal power; but a more important eventual result, if undesigned by Henry, was to throw the knights, no longer occupied primarily with arms, into the agricultural pursuits of landed gentry and thus to produce a group which in time became the ruling class of England. As the Middle Ages progressed and feudalism broke down, the country gentleman, often in alliance with the merchant, came more and more to hold the balance of power.

Henry kept the barons in check by the use of force as well as by just dealing. But his three oldest sons, helped by their mother, as well as by the Kings of France and Scotland, came near to restoring the anarchy of Stephen. They sought in 1173 to bring about at once the division of the Angevin territories which Henry had provided should take place at his death. The King, however, taking advantage

of jealousies and quarrels, crushed each uprising separately with great skill and vigor, till the King of France sought peace, and the captured King of the Scots was forced to do homage at York. "It was no light task," said Henry's treasurer, "to wrest the club from the hands of Hercules." A dozen years later broke out the same sort of insurrection, with sons plotting and counterplotting. For five years the struggle went on. Finally, a new king of France, Philip Augustus, who was later to humiliate John, seized Anjou and Touraine; Henry found that his fourth and best-loved, though really most unworthy, son had long been in the plots; and at last, broken and prematurely old at fifty-six, he died in 1189. With the two older sons now dead of their own mischief, Richard, already Duke of Aquitaine, succeeded to the English throne.

In Henry's rule of the barons, nevertheless, he had been in the main successful, so that, in spite of the confusion abroad, he left an orderly government in England. But in his conflict with the Church he had met an organization which ever since the days of Charlemagne had been gradually increasing its temporal power in Northern Europe. One by one the great kings and emperors who had opposed it had yielded; the writing was on the wall. But Henry, stubborn, insistent on his special legal warrant in England, fought the Church and won a Pyrrhic victory — a success turned to virtual defeat by the murder of Becket and saved from disaster only by Henry's humble pilgrimage to the shrine of the murdered prelate.

Becket, made Chancellor in 1154, served the King well and sought to escape the appointment in 1162 as archbishop. But the King insisted, and Becket, when he accepted, not only changed his allegiance, but changed his whole manner of life — from one of pleasure and gaiety to one of almost ascetic piety. From now on he was the Pope's servant. Moreover, he was as stubborn as Henry. To the investiture issue of Henry I's time was added the question of the jurisdiction of the church courts. The King, as a matter of fact, was in reasonable protest against the protection by the church courts of notorious clerical crimes, among them murder and poisoning the sacramental wine. The Constitutions of Clarendon, issued in 1164, returned the authority to the King, but Becket — not to condone crimes, but to support his prerogative — refused to accept and accentuated his protest by withdrawing to France. After six years Henry yielded

somewhat and Becket returned; but the primate at once began to punish royalist prelates, and Henry in a burst of rage is said to have cried, "Will no one rid me of this miserable clerk?" Four knights took him at his word, and their murder of Becket in the north transept of Canterbury Cathedral turned the King's victory into a boomerang. Henceforth Becket was a martyr, and thousands made pilgrimages to his shrine.

The Becket quarrel, besides its literary interest as a source for poets and dramatists, was an important link in the special English experience in church history. In spite of the virtual failure of Henry and the actual failure of John, the old English insistence that the Crown was superior to the Church would not die, but kept cropping up under the Plantagenets, till in the English Reformation sovereignty and anticlericalism were mightier factors than doctrinal questions.

By far the greatest experience of Henry's reign was the direction which the development of justice took. For in this reign began those two peculiarly English features of legal practice known as the jury system and common law. The practice of sworn inquest was not wholly new. Henry II, nevertheless, was the first to make it part of the regular judicial practice; henceforth it was not employed at the whim of the sovereign, occasionally, but as the privilege of the subject. The jury system of Henry's day, however, was very far from the modern practice. Centuries passed before it took its present shape, but by the end of the thirteenth century it had largely superseded in the royal courts the older methods of individual accusation and trial by ordeal, and gradually the hundred courts, which still stuck to the old ways, died a natural death.

A striking feature of Henry's inquests was that the jurors, twelve men from each hundred and four from each vill, were neighbors of the accused and therefore supposed to know best whether he deserved indictment. They did not sift evidence; they merely presented a true bill, or verdict, based on their own knowledge. The culprit then proceeded to trial by the old ordeals of fire or water, or by the Norman innovation, ordeal of battle. But it is only necessary to imagine a jury impaneled from men unfamiliar with the accused and required to base their indictment on sifted evidence and you have the grand jury.

Actual trial by jury was used in Henry's assizes* in the case of land disputes, but it was not used in criminal cases till the next century. The chief benefit at first was to protect small landholders from powerful and greedy neighbors. No freeman could be dispossessed without jury trial, if he wished it, in the King's Court. It is easy to see that even the crude system of Henry's time was of great service to both Crown and subject. Even if a sworn body of jurors might be loath to report the crimes of their neighbors, at least powerful criminals, who heretofore had bought off, or frightened off, the individual accuser, were more likely to be brought to justice; and the innocent man could not be so easily bullied and blackmailed by his neighbor. Again, the Crown took more and more authority away from the feudal courts, while the litigant, in his turn, was protected from haphazard justice in the manor court. It is no wonder that the practice of jury trial, as it grew into entrenched tradition, came to be looked on as "the bulwark of our liberties."

In the matter of common law, Henry promoted its establishment by appointing permanent justices, in place of the old, local, part-time justices. The result was that there gradually grew up a group of men trained in judicial procedure and with them a tendency to develop a coherent body of law for the whole kingdom. The worn-out remains of tribal Saxon "dooms," conflicting and disuniting, were thus gradually brought into harmony and altered, as new cases arose, to make a consistent but flexible body of legal principles.

This practice might not in itself have given birth to common law, as we understand it, if the Roman law, which during the twelfth century was spreading into Northern Europe, had come a little earlier. As it was, the Roman law had a considerable influence in England; obviously so, when we reflect that most of the learned men were churchmen who had studied in continental schools and that the canon law was based on the continental system. Further, the conflict between "natural law" and "common law" was a perennial source of discussion all through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; indeed, the triumph of common law in England was not secure till the time of Coke and Hobbes.

Briefly, the distinction seems to be that "natural law," though

* *Assize* was used to describe royal decrees, such as the *Assize of Northampton*, then came to be used to describe legal actions in connection with such decrees, and finally to describe the sitting of courts which handled these cases.

discernible to human reason, is God-given — in the nature of things. In itself it is perfect; it does not change, but rather man's interpretation of it as his reason enables him to understand better the true nature of things. This quality at once gives it a sort of sacred permanence; it is above the caprices of man; it is above the State, above the King. Common law, on the other hand, is man-made, a device for regulating the complicated relations of human beings. Founded on man's experience, it may — indeed, it must — change, to suit the practical needs of his experience. As time passes, however, and experiences recur, there must gradually be built up an accumulated body of laws and practices, based on precedent and practically, if not absolutely, impregnable against the attacks of mere caprice. The philosophers have much to say on both sides, but, whatever the philosophical merits either way, our chief concern here is to record the issue, which will reappear from time to time, and to note that the set towards common law in England began with Henry's justices when they tried to make order out of confusion in English law — not a beautiful Aquinian cosmos out of chaos; just a practical, working human system. That was rather English of them, especially when you reflect that they read Latin and spoke French!

The new cultural life which began in England with the Normans gathered momentum, as it did all over Europe, during the twelfth century. Centers of scholarship were already forming, as at Bologna, Paris, Chartres, Oxford; architecture and literature were quickened; and though in England it was not a great culture, it shared in some measure the new vigor that was manifest on the continent, not only in scholarship and architecture, but in the writings of such men as Chrétien de Troyes and Gottfried von Strassburg.

Henry II was himself something of a scholar and a patron of the arts. Through his influence the Jersey poet Wace was made prebend at Bayeux, and it was Wace who picked up the Arthurian inventions of Geoffrey of Monmouth and wrote them out, together with the rest of the alleged history of Britain, in his poem *Brut d'Angleterre* — a true Norman work, epic rather than romance.* Actually at Henry's court were Marie de France, author of Arthurian *lais*, and

* Wace also wrote the *Roman de Rou*, the story in verse of the Norman dukes from Rollo to Robert Curthose, an epic full, like the famous *Roland*, of the force of a "fighting aristocracy."

Walter Map, a Welshman who is falsely credited with the authorship of a great deal of Arthurian romance, but who probably did write, in French, a poem on Lancelot which served as model for Chrétien de Troyes.

Of English literature there was practically none except Layamon's *Brut*, largely a paraphrase of Wace's earlier poem. But Layamon, a Worcestershire priest, knew Bede's history, both in Anglo-Saxon and in Latin, and he made important additions of his own, notably Arthur's journey on the barge to the "island valley" of Avalon. This poet, writing about 1205, is sturdily old English; he uses only about ninety French words in the whole poem. Clearly the compound English of Chaucer's day was scarcely born, but Layamon's odd mixture of the old Saxon alliterative meters with occasional rhyming couplets shows that the foreign leaven was working.

English culture at this time, then, was almost wholly French. Even the architecture, which soon became distinctively English, took its new departure towards Gothic through the influence of a French master-builder, William of Sens. In 1174 the Norman choir of Canterbury Cathedral burned, and soon afterwards William of Sens built the magnificent present structure in the pointed style.* This date is usually taken as the beginning of the transition to Gothic. In the first twenty years of Henry's reign the architecture was still Norman, and much of the best Norman work was done all through the Angevin period; Early English Gothic was hardly the established form till the reign of Henry III. In the fifty years, then, from 1175 to 1225, the two styles were mingled, with the pointed style gradually superseding the round arch, heavy piers, and horizontal lines of the Norman Romanesque.

The earmarks of Gothic, fully developed, are of course the pointed arch used structurally, with vaulting based on that arch, and an increasing tendency to concentrate the thrust of the roof on piers and buttresses, so that walls become negligible and may be replaced by windows. The general result of lightness and grace, with the effect of vertical rather than horizontal lines, is in its perfection a far remove from the solidity of the Norman style. In the transition,

* The old Norman nave lasted another two hundred years. Much of the church has been rebuilt, but older parts remain too, so that in Canterbury one may study, step by step, the various stages of Norman, Transition, and Gothic for a period of four hundred years.

however, the chief departure was the structural, rather than the purely ornamental, use of the pointed arch, and with it vaulting. In this style the simple lancet window became increasingly popular, and the typically Gothic dog-tooth ornament was often combined with the Norman zigzag. But there was at first little attempt at height, and the elaborate traceries and vaultings of later Gothic were still to come, so that the mixture of styles is not incongruous.

The transition is nowhere better seen than in Malmesbury Abbey, where the pointed arch, side by side with the Norman, does structural work.* So also we find them together in the ruins of St. John's at Chester, and the mixtures of mouldings, as well as the structural pointed arch, conspicuously at Canterbury and in Christ Church Cathedral at Oxford.

The greatest English scholar of this "twelfth-century Renaissance" was a Saxon, John of Salisbury. He studied under Abelard at Paris, possibly also at Chartres, was secretary to the archbishops Theobald and Becket, and himself became Bishop of Chartres in 1176. His interest in the classics, as in the case of other twelfth-century scholars, was primarily theological and literary. It was not till the next century, when all of Aristotle was discovered, that the classics became a scientific source. John of Salisbury, whether he was writing on philosophy and life or on the classics themselves, was eager in defense of their value, not only for theology, but for solace and pleasure and breadth of view, for the quality which scholars of his time called *urbanitas* — roughly the same thing that Matthew Arnold meant by "culture." And Peter of Blois, Henry's secretary, wrote with less "urbanity" in the same defense: "Though dogs may bark and pigs may grunt, I shall always pattern on the writings of the ancients." He sounds strangely like an exasperated Latinist in our own day.

It is significant, too, that with this culture schools were springing up outside of the monasteries. Much of the teaching, as of the study and writing, was still done in the large conventual establishments; but in addition to the groups gathering in embryo universities, schools for boys were also attached to some of the city churches, as at St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. William FitzStephen, writing in the time of Henry II, is very amusing in his description of the

* It is interesting to go direct from Malmesbury to the best example of full-grown Early English at Salisbury, not far away.

studies and pastimes of the scholars, with so much detail that the picture must be fairly veracious: —

The youth . . . dispute, some in the demonstrative way, and some logically. . . . The boys of different schools wrangle with one another in verse; contending about the principles of grammar, or the rules of the Perfect tenses and the Supines. Others there are who, in Epigrams, or other compositions in numbers, use all that low ribaldry we read of in the Ancients; attacking their school-masters, but without mentioning names.

Of their pastimes he says: —

On the day which is called Shrove Tuesday, the boys of respective schools bring to the masters each one his fighting cock, and they are indulged all the morning with seeing their cocks fight in the school-room. After dinner all the youth of the city go into the field of the suburbs, and address themselves to the famous game of football. . . . The elders of the city, the fathers of the parties, and the rich and wealthy, come to the field on horseback, in order to behold the exercises of the youth; . . . their natural heat seeming to be revived at the sight of so much agility.

Robber barons may come and go, but youth goes on forever!

The above picture would indicate that London was a prosperous town, and such was beginning to be the case in the reign of Henry II. The smaller towns (probably none except London had more than 10,000 inhabitants) had suffered at first from the Normans, who had exacted heavy taxes and had destroyed many houses to make room for their castles. But Normans brought trade, and gradually foreign merchants and craftsmen came to London, Winchester, and the East Coast boroughs. Moreover, though the lord's court superseded the burghmôt, the charters from Henry I and Henry II gave the towns specific rights; and by the Angevin's time merchant guilds began to appear and were supported by royal charter. Gradually boroughs were allowed to commute their taxes for a fixed sum, guaranteed by the merchants; and, as this financing was controlled by the guilds, the old court and the lord's court lost importance. The government of towns was increasingly government by guilds. In London, furthermore, the merchants were becoming rich and powerful. "The citizens of London everywhere," writes FitzStephen, "and throughout the whole kingdom, are esteemed the politest of all others in their manners, their dress, and the elegance and splendour of their tables. Insomuch that whilst the inhabitants of other cities are styled *Citizens*, they are dignified with the names of *Barons*."

This too, like the picture of the schoolboys and the outcry of Peter of Blois, sounds strangely modern, with its "barons," if not "captains" and "kings," of trade. It is true that the prosperity and the growth of guilds were only just beginning in Henry's time and belong more properly to the next two centuries, but a settled, merchant society was beginning to rise and to point beyond the static feudal society of the time — indeed, to point beyond the Middle Ages themselves.

The rest of the familiar Angevin story may be briefly told. Richard I, *Cœur de Lion*, — accomplished, attractive, and a mighty man of valor, — gave little time to ruling England, but spent most of his time and energy in conflicts with foreign princes and in one magnificent gesture — the Third Crusade. His great deeds won him the devotion of troubadours, and even Englishmen submitted, if grudgingly, to enormous levies to ransom the picturesque vagabond King when he was captured on his return from the Holy Land. With a sort of perverse genius for great efforts in obscure issues, he met his death in 1199 in a petty war with the Viscount of Limoges.

Richard's services to England were entirely undesigned. The chief of these was that his followers brought back from the Eastern Mediterranean the influence of a culture far more advanced than that of Northern Europe. This influence, not only in trade, art, and architecture, but in Arabic learning and with it a new knowledge of Aristotle, spread gradually into Europe through the last years of the twelfth and early years of the thirteenth centuries. It was not of course an exclusive possession of Crusaders, but the Crusades unquestionably played a large part in its transmittal, particularly the Third Crusade so far as England was concerned. Further, by leaving the rule in the hands of an able justiciar, Richard unwittingly had given the barons and knights the experience of carrying on, without a king, the well-ordered machinery of government which Henry II had set up. John, after Richard, was to find a more formidable temper among the barons than that which Henry had found after the anarchy of Stephen's reign.

John "Lackland" * provided the worst rule in the history of the realm. He has no apologists. In addition to his immorality, cruelty,

* "Lackland" because Henry had divided his domains among the three older brothers.

and rapacity, worse even than those of William II, he failed in the three major tests of his reign; also, he taxed beyond endurance, and he left England in virtual anarchy.

The first test concerned the French lands. John's divorce of Isabel of Gloucester and his unwarranted marriage to Isabella of Angoulême gave Philip Augustus, his overlord in France, a pretext to move against him. When John, summoned before the feudal court, failed to appear,* he was judged guilty; and upon John's murder of his nephew Arthur, Philip seized Normandy, Maine, and Anjou. John made a belated attempt to regain his lands, but lost ignominiously in the battle of Bouvines. A sorry story, which need not have detained us if English sovereigns in the next century had not suffered under the delusion that they must win back the French territory.

The next test came over the right of the Pope to appoint the Archbishop of Canterbury. England was under papal interdict for five years; then, when Innocent III and Philip, always ready to gore John, moved to invade England, and the barons joined Scotland in rebellion, John found it suddenly convenient to abandon his stubborn attitude. In yielding to the Pope he virtually transferred the control of England to the Church — a control not entirely broken till the reign of Henry VIII.**

Finally, there was the capitulation to the barons. Taxes, already oppressive under Richard, were increased. John flouted the charter of Henry I and invaded the rights of burghers, churchmen, and barons. Further, he embellished his violations with acts of singular brutality; few were safe if with the flimsiest pretext he could rob them and throw the victims into dungeons to starve. Heretofore commoners had supported Henry II, who protected them against lawless barons, but now the exasperated baronage found not only Archbishop Stephen Langton, but an army of London citizens ready to support them. This "Army of God and Holy Church" marched to Runnymede and forced John, on June 15, 1215, to sign the Great Charter.

Magna Carta in time came to have ascribed to it almost all the

* John was perhaps wise not to appear, but his father or his brother would have appeared *in force*.

** It should be noted, however, that Edward I ably saved England somewhat from this domination.

virtues of a great constitutional document. The barons probably had no such conception of it, but rather conceived it to be what it was in fact, a clear statement of their feudal privileges. It provided no constitutional machinery of government, though it had this important promise, that it began the limitation of monarchy. It bound the King himself to keep the law. Further, by providing for regular itinerant justices and forbidding sheriffs and coroners to try Crown cases, it gave the sanctity of parchment to a development, begun under Henry II, which in course of time led to a great tradition in English legal procedure. Again, though it was primarily a barons' charter, it contained definite provisions in regard to burghers, merchants, and villeins. Finally, other clauses, scarcely enforced in feudal days, became important as a documentary basis for what later came to be called the "liberties." Among these were the two provisions that no one might be imprisoned or exiled save by the judgment of his peers and that justice was not to be sold, denied, or delayed.

The barons themselves violated the Charter first, and John, with the backing of the Pope, sought to revoke it; but he thereupon found himself in civil war with the lords, supported by Philip of France. Only the King's death in October, 1216, saved England from disaster, for the barons then withdrew from the alliance with Philip and favored the King's son, Henry III.

In spite of the confusion in John's reign, England was on the threshold of a great era. His father's government had endured. The barons were now more interested in their rights than in rapine. The knights were becoming articulate. London merchants were a voice in the land. Finally, the culture which had spread over Europe towards the end of the twelfth century was about to produce the scholarship of Grosseteste and Roger Bacon, the definite establishment of the universities, and the greatest architecture in the history of England.

Chapter III

THE HEART OF THE MIDDLE AGES

THE thirteenth century in Europe is the great period of medieval culture — the century of the *Minnesänger* and the French romancers, of Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, of the finest Gothic architecture, of merchant guilds, and of a still vigorous feudal order. Before this, even as late as the twelfth century, Europe had been in transition, still confused by the last vestiges of the conflict between the new nations and the old Roman Empire, a confusion marked by shifting populations, by lawless barons, and by a precarious culture kept alive only here and there, chiefly in the monasteries or at the court of some enlightened monarch. Now, by the thirteenth century, the relic of the old empire in central and western Europe was under the domination of the Church.

Medieval Europe, then, once it settled into something like stability, was essentially the Europe of the Roman Church. Powerful princes were held in check by this greater, international power; and, though the Church conducted "holy" wars on its own account, though it often intrigued to set king against king in dubious sanctity, it was not yet topheavy with material wealth or narrowly preoccupied with the maintenance of its dogma and the suppression of heresy. Nor was it an international solvent in the political field alone. It was the nurse of medieval culture, and since nearly every activity, lay as well as religious, was influenced if not controlled by it, we find the roots of drama, art, scholarship in its soil.

Most of the characteristics of this medieval civilization extend through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Nevertheless, new forces were then at work, producing a State which challenged the jurisdiction of the Church and a clergy which began to challenge its doctrines and practices. In England, to be sure, a distinct change in the political aspect was taking place even before the thirteenth century was out. Not only was feudalism declining, but English government, after two hundred years of foreign influence, was beginning to develop along lines of its own in an England ruled by English kings. The full development of this new nationalism, how-

ever, belongs to the time of Edward III. In the main the thirteenth century, particularly the reign of Henry III, represents especially those characteristics which we commonly associate with the heart of medieval culture — scholasticism, friars, knighthood, guilds,* romances, and Gothic architecture.

HENRY III

Henry III, in spite of many accomplishments, had no political wisdom. He was pious, polished, well educated; but by his extravagance and his political subservience to Rome he provoked continual opposition. Only nine years old when he ascended the throne, he at first ruled through the regency of William Marshal, who, in the three years before his death, almost restored order out of the anarchy John had left. On Marshal's death in 1219, however, discord arose when Pandulf, the Papal legate, and Peter des Roches, Henry's tutor, were at loggerheads with Archbishop Langton, and with the justiciar, Hubert de Burgh. When Pandulf was recalled to Rome in 1221, Hubert de Burgh was in control till Henry came of age in 1227, and was in virtual control for another five years.

But conditions under Hubert were not much improved. The barons resented his harsh, if just, rule and his constant exactions for the Crown's expenses. Henry made three futile efforts to recover French lands, and the cost of these ventures was augmented by the extravagant life of the Court, and particularly by heavy levies to supply money to the Pope. Direct taxation, as opposed to feudal dues, aids, and services, was a fairly new thing, particularly objectionable when it was exacted for Papal expenses outside England. To this financial irritation, furthermore, was added the new practice of Papal provisions, that is, of appointing foreign priests to English benefices. As yet there was no serious question of the Pope's spiritual authority, but the two matters which for centuries roused stubborn opposition in Englishmen were already at issue: arbitrary taxation and clericalism.

Henry did not have the sense to respect this opposition. Like Charles I, he could see no reason why his pious purposes, however extravagant, should not be carried out. When, therefore, he saved his face with the barons by dismissing the unpopular Hubert and ap-

* Discussed in Chapter IV.

pointing his old tutor, Peter des Roches, he only made matters worse. And when later Henry ruled alone, as the Pope's man, he kept up the unwelcome practices. England was flooded with Italian priests, the King's foreign favorites were appointed to influential posts, and oppressive levies continued. However pious and well intentioned the King, such provocation eventually led to opposition in force.

The first concerted action was headed by Henry's brother-in-law, Simon de Montfort. Simon was somewhat visionary, but an able and energetic man; and his vision of an English government uniting the middle class with the baronage was realized in course of time. In 1258 the barons, led by him, drew up the Provisions of Oxford, specifying a baronial council of fifteen, to whom all royal officers were responsible. This group was to meet three times a year with twelve of the King's Council. Henry, on the edge of civil war, had to submit. But conflicting factions in the new council emboldened Henry, backed by the Pope and the French king, to abolish Simon's government in 1261, so that, after two years of chaos, civil war broke out. Simon, at the head of a strong party of barons, defeated Henry at Lewes, made him prisoner, and became the virtual ruler of England for a year.

But Simon was no baron's pawn. With his vision of a more representative and equitable government, he called to a parliament in 1265 two knights from each shire and two burgesses from each town, as well as the Barons' Council, now reduced to nine, and the Great Council of the king. Though this was not the first time that knights and burghers had been called to council and though this assembly was in no sense a legislative body, it was the first attempt at a regular, representative parliament and served as a precedent for subsequent assemblies with middle class representatives included. But Simon went too far in his time. Many barons, resenting the division of power with the middle class as well as Simon's arrogant ways, deserted their leader and, joining the royalist barons under Prince Edward, defeated and killed Simon at the battle of Evesham in 1265. Henry was released and the Baronial Council was abolished, but the Great Charter was confirmed again, and the energetic and popular Prince Edward, as Henry's viceroy, brought England into some sort of order. Henry, thus left to his pomp and his piety, managed for the rest of his reign to keep peace, and on

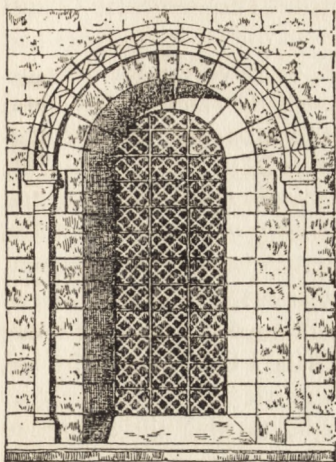
his death in 1272 the barons gladly acclaimed his competent son as king.

But there is another side to Henry's reign. His piety and his cultivated mind, in contrast to his political unwisdom, promoted a great cultural growth in England, and his master, the Church, happened just then to be at one of the brightest periods in its history. If Henry and his churchmen were unwilling instigators of the beginnings of Parliament, they were also eager promoters of the universities, of scholarship and literature, and of the most glorious architecture in English history. And in this reign, the friars, in the first vigor of their mission, accomplished a revival among common people as regenerative as the Great Revival of the eighteenth century.

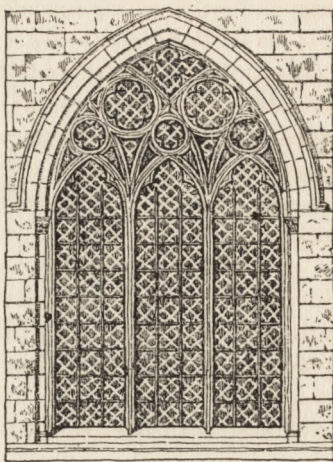
Early English Gothic, which came in during the transition from Norman architecture in the reign of Henry II, had now wholly superseded the Norman. Many of the older cathedrals were falling to ruin or, like Canterbury and St. Paul's, had been badly damaged by fire, and there was still need for new churches and monasteries. All that was necessary for a great era of building was a vigorous Church, a devoted king, and a worthy style. The thirteenth century provided this happy combination.

We have already noted, in Chapter II, the pointed arches growing out of a structural feature in stone vaulting and similar arches in the lancet windows of early Gothic. Other characteristics of the thirteenth century, or Early English, architecture were clustered columns, a triforium below the clerestory, some foliage decoration, and the use of simple buttresses. All these changes gave lightness and grace to the buildings, in contrast to the Norman effect of solidity, while the buttresses, by helping to carry the thrust of the roof, opened the way for larger windows; but the great height, large windows, and elaborate tracery commonly associated with Gothic were not so conspicuous in the Early English style as in the Decorated of the fourteenth century and the Perpendicular of the fifteenth.

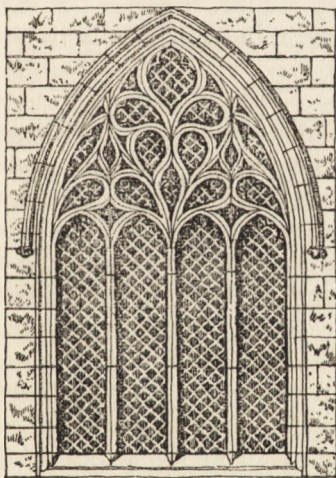
It is futile to state categorically that any one Gothic style in England is superior. As a matter of fact, nearly all the great churches, as we think of them, combine all three styles, to say nothing of Norman vestiges. Possibly the superiority usually accorded to Early



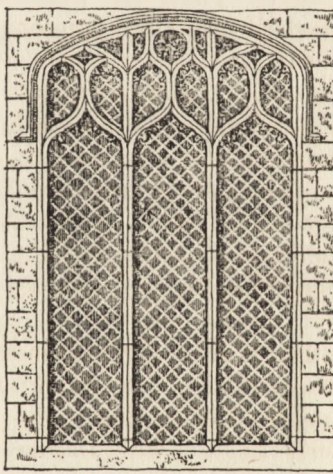
NORMAN



EARLY ENGLISH



DECORATED



PERPENDICULAR

English would not seem so great if the later forms had been built independently, as, for instance, the beautiful Perpendicular Chapel of Henry VII at Westminster; but the need for great churches had been supplied when these forms came in, so they were for the most part added in alterations and repairs. As such, they lack the structural significance of the Early English style. The master masons, furthermore, who were probably the architects,* seem to have been unable to keep the later alterations to a unified plan, with the result that workmen handling purely ornamental features sometimes "captured the show." But though the best Early English work, as at Salisbury, Lincoln, Wells, seems on the whole the greatest English Gothic, many individual features, such as the Decorated nave and chapter house at York, and the famous fan tracery at King's College, Cambridge, are mighty witnesses to the virtues of later styles. Indeed, the earlier Decorated improved the Early English by turning the groups of lancets into broad windows with beautiful tracery and by gaining light and loftiness through the use of higher clerestories supported by flying buttresses. It was only in the later stages that the decorations became so elaborate that they give the impression of mere ornament without structural value.

Of the many fine instances of Early English, Salisbury is the standard example, for it was built, except the spire, entirely between 1220 and 1260 and not only in one style, but in one distinctively English, without the French characteristics of the first Gothic during the transition from Norman. The regularity of its plan and the sweep of the great nave, flanked by columns with slender shafts of Purbeck marble, give the impression of simplicity and beauty combined. Not less satisfactory are the lovely cloisters and high-roofed, octagonal chapter house, while the spire, the highest in England, is an imposing landmark all over Salisbury Plain. Wells, next to Salisbury, comes nearest to pure Early English, and, though not so impressive as others, has been called the most "harmonious" cathedral in England. Its fine west front is Early English at its best, while its choir shows the happy combination of Early English with Decorated, and its east end has a beautiful Decorated window with glass of 1330. Lichfield, too, is famous for its magnificent west front, as well as for its three stone spires.

* Though Bishops This-and-That get most of the credit.

Lincoln, notable as the first "dated" Early English, begun in 1186, has in its Presbytery (or "Angel Choir"), one of the loveliest blends of the Early English and Decorated styles, while its quaintly carved stalls, of the late fourteenth century, rank with the stalls at Chester as the finest in England. The Decorated chapter house at York Minster has already been mentioned, and York has, too, a great Decorated nave, with a magnificent west window; but, though the major part of the minster is of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the transepts are Early English, with splendid clustered piers and with five beautiful lancets in the north transept.

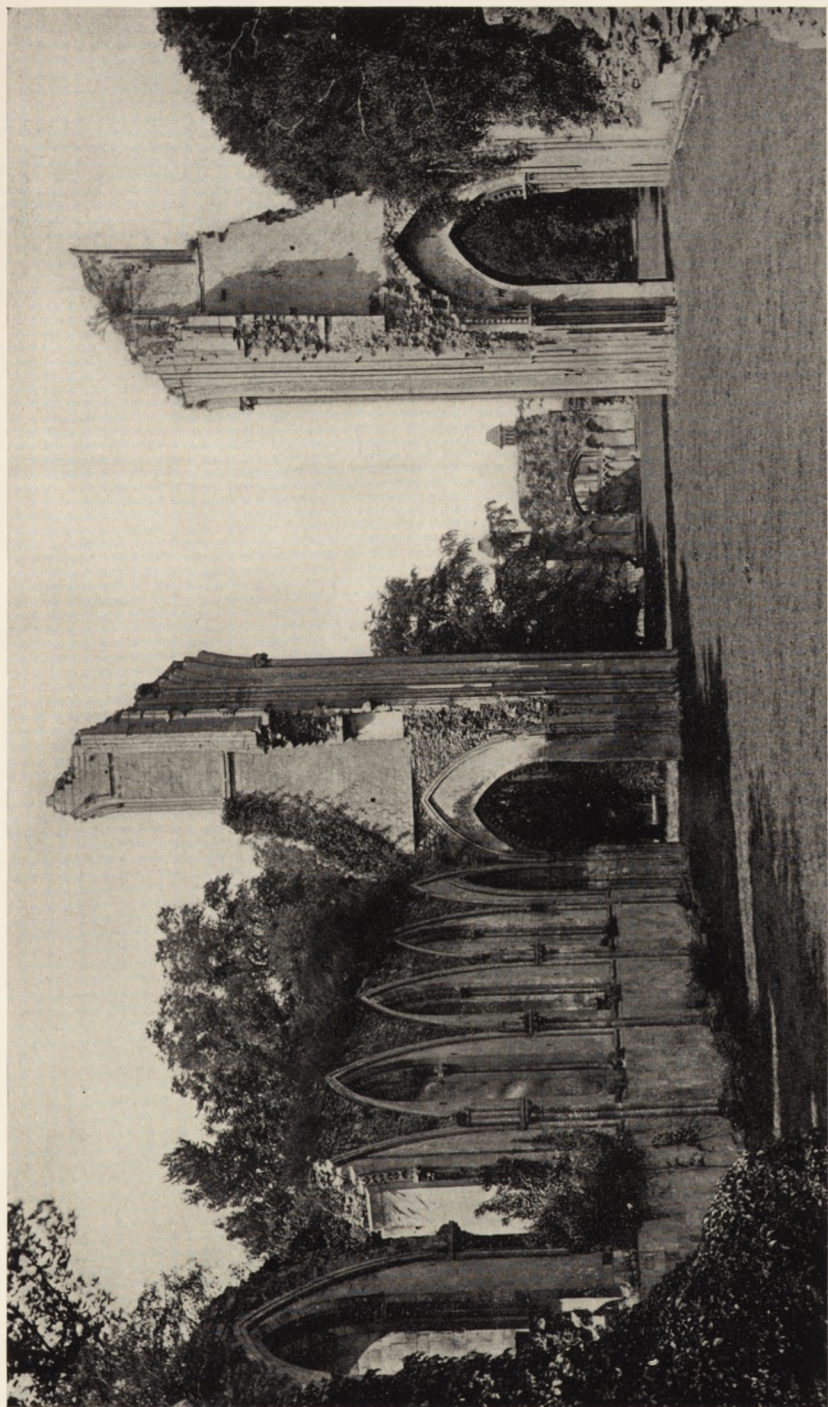
The above are only a few of the more famous instances of the great church-building of the thirteenth century. Any list, however, would be incomplete without mention of the two churches which, together with Canterbury, have been the most important in the English story. The first of these, old St. Paul's, was a gigantic structure, 590 feet long, longer than Winchester, with a spire estimated by Wren to have been 460 feet high, loftier than Salisbury's. There were thirteen large bays to the great nave, as against eleven in Winchester and nine in Canterbury, and the original church stretched far beyond the west porch of the present structure. After surviving several serious conflagrations and Puritan desecration, the old building was finally destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666. The other church of first historical importance is, of course, Westminster Abbey. This church of Edward the Confessor, entirely rebuilt during the reign of Henry III, is largely Early English, with an impressive nave * and a fine triforium, as well as beautiful choir chapels and the Confessor's Chapel, repository of the bones of ancient kings and of the old Coronation Chair, above the Stone of Scone. From the purely esthetic point of view, Westminster seems positively cluttered with tombs and monuments, and the famous Poet's Corner is so dreadful artistically that the shade of Goldsmith, lying under the open sky by the Temple Church, may well not envy his successful friends, Johnson and Garrick, imprisoned in the floor of the Poets' Corner and for so long tramped over daily by the pop-eyed tourist. But *historically* the Abbey, with its great list of remembered dead, "hushes the beholder" — perhaps more than any place on earth — "into noiseless reverence."

* A good instance of later rebuilding in the Perpendicular style, but rebuilding in the spirit of the original Early English.

Besides these mighty cathedrals, the thirteenth century gave birth also to some of the finest conventual churches. Most of them are now in ruin, a desolation begun with Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries, but, like the ruins of Greece and Rome, they have taken on an enchanted loveliness with the passage of the years. Glastonbury is the most famous of these historically, for it is reputed to be the site of the first British church, credited in legend to Joseph of Arimathaea, and in medieval days a holy shrine of pilgrimage — the "English Jerusalem." Supposed to be the burial place of King Arthur, it was the one British church in England that miraculously survived the Saxon invasion. It eventually became a Saxon monastery, was rebuilt by the Normans, and again in the reigns of Henry II and Henry III, till the whole church stretched over an area almost as great as St. Paul's. Tintern Abbey, in the early Decorated style, about 1300, is one of the most beautiful ruins in England, but it takes its charm largely from its lovely setting in the Monmouth Valley. Fountains Abbey, in Yorkshire, with its Early English choir and its chapel of the nine altars, is usually considered the finest of these

Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.

When we moderns visit these old churches, whether in fortunate reality or in the thin pages of a book, we should realize that even those standing do not look now as they did in the Middle Ages. It is not merely the mellowing touch of time that makes the difference; the life itself was different. "The rigid divisions of smooth grass and gravel walk" which Ruskin pictures, "where the canons' children are walking with their nursery-maids," and the "secluded, continuous, drowsy felicities" conjure up the old cathedrals as we of today know them. But in the Middle Ages they were young and, though the monasteries made much of agriculture, the town cathedrals knew nothing of gardens and smooth grass and drowsy felicities. The church was by the market square; it was open twenty-four hours a day; and the life of the time passed continuously in and out, from market to tavern to church and back again — to a church not stripped and somber, or remote in its close, but adorned with images and bright with altar-pictures, a church used for miracle plays as for services, the center of the town life seven days a week. Yet so well did the ancient craftsmen build that their



GLASTONBURY ABBEY

churches, now somewhat aloof, but gray and lovely with age, have served as an unbroken link during seven centuries, and the modern architect turns, as at Washington or New York, to models of long ago.

If the chronicler is ever justified in sentiment and rhapsody, he has ample warrant in these magnificent survivals from the great Middle Age. In the unroofed, broken abbeys, with grass for paving and with moss and ivy and flowers high up on the crumbling walls, or in massive old cathedrals, still roofed and in active use, but with worn stones, where generations have come and gone, — worshipers and mockers both, but all aware at some transfigured moment of the busy, ephemeral living and of the enduring, illustrious dead, — in these great structures, even the dull historian drudge must hear the echo out of the past and the persistent triumph of man's faith and hope; must hear, not now the drums and tramlings, but the matins and the vespers, of the centuries. Each age writes its record in its architecture. The Middle Age rests its case on its Gothic cathedrals. If to some they spell superstition and bigotry, they also spell beauty and faith.

The vigor of the Church in the thirteenth century and the favor of the king were largely responsible for the crystallization of the universities into corporate existence. Master Puleyn is said to have lectured at Oxford as early as 1133, and during the intellectual revival near the close of the twelfth century Oxford was a center of wandering scholars, after the pattern of Paris and Bologna; but its existence at that time was precarious.

The origin of the corporate organization lay in the conflicts between town and gown. The burgesses in 1209 had hanged two Oxford scholars for murder. Already, masters and students claimed the privileges and immunities of the clergy; and, soon after this action by the civil authorities "in contempt of clerical liberty," the Papal Legate ordered the burgesses to reduce rentals and to pay a fine to the university.* Evidently some sort of organization already existed. A chancellor is mentioned as early as 1214, royal charters were granted from time to time, for the churchmen who promoted the seats of learning were the king's best friends; and gradually the *universitas*, a sort of guild of scholars, secured its own rights independent of the town.

* Thus began the university "chests" and the foundations for poor scholars.

The form of this organization was, and still is, much like that of the numerous craft guilds of the Middle Ages. As the latter consisted essentially of master-craftsmen, journeymen, and apprentices, so in the universities the whole corporate institution was made up of masters, bachelors, and scholars. Unlike American universities, which are in the main amplified colleges, the English university corporations antedated the colleges and still maintain a separate existence and separate functions. Now, as in the thirteenth century, the university provides lectures and examinations, but the colleges — which Mr. Hale aptly describes as partnerships within the larger guild or scholastic union — take care of the preparation of students for the examinations. It was the university, not the college, which had political existence within the town, which in the Middle Ages had its own courts and police, and which in course of time sent its representatives to sit in Parliament beside the burgesses and knights of the shire. In other words, though the colleges are parts of the university in that they are incorporated within it, the university is not merely the sum of those parts.

In the Middle Ages there was no prescribed period of study at the university. A student merely submitted himself for examination when he was ready, though a period of seven years, as in guild apprenticeships, soon became customary. The first studies were largely an extension of the earlier schooling in grammar, rhetoric, and logic, but a sort of science and a rote philosophy were added, with further study in theology, law, or medicine. Bachelors, like journeymen, were qualified to continue advanced study but not to teach; masters and doctors, like the master-craftsmen, were the sole authorized teachers. They gave the lectures which composed the major part of the instruction, for books were few, and to these lectures the students listened for six or seven hours a day. Apart from "debates," which seem to have been common, the student's chief mental exercise was memorizing the material of the lectures.

Before the colleges were founded, however, there was a fluctuating body of students. If a great teacher appeared at one of the universities, students flocked from other seats of learning, remaining perhaps for only a few weeks, perhaps for years, and we find many foreigners at Oxford, as we find Oxonians at Paris. The rather incredible figure of 30,000 students at one time is a persistent tradition. Again, lectures might be suspended if the burgesses were too exacting, and

the whole student body was then disbanded, with great financial loss to the town.* The scholars at first lived in lodgings or in rented halls,** and though most of them were destined for the Church, either as priests or as lawyers, they were evidently a boisterous crew. Some sympathy may be felt for the burgesses when the hilarity of youthful students led not only to pranks, but at times to arson and murder, and when the culprits could not be brought to justice in the borough courts.

The most famous of these "town and gown" riots was the battle of St. Scholastica at Oxford in 1354. It began innocently enough when some exhilarated clerks threw wine at the vintner of the Carfax Inn, who replied with "stubborn and saucy language." But soon the bell of St. Martin's called up the townsmen, and the bell of St. Mary's summoned the students to the conflict. The battle raged for several days; halls were invaded, chaplains were scalped, students killed. The Bishop of Lincoln put the town under interdict, and the King placed it under the jurisdiction of the university, a restriction not removed till 1824. At both universities, too, there were frequent clashes between the North and the South, as well as between the Irish and any others willing to fight, to say nothing of constant opposition to friars and Jews.

The colleges were founded largely in answer to the obvious need of discipline in the students' life. This initial motive, of social organization and regulation, gave them characteristics which still persist; so that, in contrast to American colleges, where the regulations deal chiefly with attention to studies and course requirements, the rules at the Oxford and Cambridge colleges deal chiefly with such features as dining in hall, being in by ten o'clock, and spending a certain number of nights a term at the college. Students and masters, thus shut in together in relatively small groups, soon developed a special character, peculiar to each college, and this quality of difference, both social and scholastic, has done much to preserve the variety within unity so distinctive in the two older universities.

Merton, founded at Oxford in 1264, was the first incorporated

* In 1209 a great group of Oxford masters and students moved in a body to Cambridge, and this hegira is usually considered the beginning of the younger university.

** Of these old halls, or hostels, St. Edmund's at Oxford is the only surviving example.

college.* Balliol followed in 1282, and Peterhouse was started at Cambridge in 1284. All others date from the next century or later. Indeed, fewer than half of the Oxford Colleges were founded before the Renaissance, so we must think of the majority of medieval students as living in hostels or in private lodgings. Later foundations, nevertheless, were modeled largely on the early colleges, with the same emphasis on social regulation, and much of the later architecture continued the Gothic tradition of the earlier buildings. Even the more recent styles have been rapidly shaded and softened by the damp climate of the Oxford valley and the Cambridge fens, so that the modern poet may with truth call most of them the "hoary colleges"; and they, in fact, quite as much as the older institution of the university itself, preserve the ancient usages.

Between Oxford and Cambridge there are superficial differences. Cambridge is usually thought of as the home of science, Oxford of the liberal arts; but Oxford gave more heed to science in the Middle Ages. The supposed bias of Cambridge in that direction began with Isaac Newton, and it is worth noting that most of the great English poets have gone to Cambridge, not Oxford. Each university of course has its own terminology, equally mysterious to strangers. "Commoners" at Oxford are "Pensioners" at Cambridge, Oxford examinations called "Schools" are Cambridge "Triposes"; an Oxford "quad" is a Cambridge "court." But to the outsider, the most striking difference today lies in the contrast between the two cities: Oxford a busy manufacturing center close to the "grey spires" and "shaven lawns" of the old collegiate city; Cambridge solely a compact, university town.

Behind these and other differences, however, lies a fundamental similarity which sets the two older universities apart as unique, not only in England, but in the whole world. In a sense they are the oldest institutions in England, for the institution of the Government has undergone many important alterations and the institution of the Church experienced a fundamental change at the Reformation. But the universities, though they have marched with the times in scholarship and the methods of scholarship, have preserved in the

* In 1249 the University College endowment provided for twelve masters, but the college was not incorporated till after Merton. It actually claims foundation by King Alfred, and in 1727 a highly imaginative King's Bench declared the title valid!

main their original structure; their traditions grow out of an unbroken experience through seven centuries. "Oxford, in fact," writes Arthur Bryant, "was where a man learnt to love England, and for that best of all reasons for loving, because beauty, concentrated in that hallowed and haunted temple of her faith, culture, and heroic history, left him awed and shaken." * Curiously enough, though, the universities have been the hotbeds of liberalism and heresy, so that there are no better instances than they of the peculiar English blend of liberalism and conservatism — illogical, but strangely practicable; a recurring feature of the English experience. Indeed, one can scarcely understand much of the history of England without knowing something of the universities.

The friars, out of all logic with their original purpose, promoted scholarship as much as the universities did. The Dominicans, it is true, set emphasis on preaching and the defeat of heresy, and these aims implied thorough schooling, but the Franciscans, who provided the chief English scholars, set at first no store on preaching or learning. Both orders, however, were alike in their protest against monastic seclusion; they went forth to help the sick, to convert sinners, to rouse men from spiritual sloth — in short, to evangelize the world. So magnetic was the leadership of their great Founders, St. Dominic and St. Francis, that in a few years the two orders spread from Spain and Italy through France to England. By 1220, only five years after St. Dominic had founded his order, his followers were preaching in England, and by 1224 the disciples of St. Francis were there too. With the Pope's approval, they carried authority; sincere, walking humbly among the common people, they accomplished a great spiritual awakening. In course of time, to be sure, they became corrupt and secretly wealthy, but the hypocritical friar whom Chaucer pictures belongs to a later day and was, even then, by no means typical of the majority in the brotherhoods.

The friars came into scholarship by a side door. St. Dominic set up conventual schools to train his disciples, and the Franciscans soon copied this method, while the Dominicans on their part copied the Franciscan emphasis on poverty. But though both sent their members forth on missionary work, the teachers in the great friaries,

* *Illustrated London News*, 1939.

especially at Oxford, were more or less resident; and very soon, under their expert guidance, the new institutions became rivals of the universities. That the barrier between the two was not great at first is attested by the fact that Robert Grosseteste, chancellor of the university, became the first rector of the Franciscan school at Oxford in 1224. Later, as Bishop of Lincoln, he championed the clerical courts against the crown, though he stood firm in defense of national liberties against the encroachments of Rome, and in these struggles as well as in support of the constitutional liberty for which Simon de Montfort subsequently fought, he engaged in much acrimonious controversy. But his real greatness lay in his teaching, for more than any of the early lecturers at Oxford he kindled the fire of scholarship. Learned especially in the natural sciences, he anticipated many of the ideas which appear in the writings of his great follower, Roger Bacon.

The scientific trend of scholarship in the thirteenth century stands in contrast to the more literary interest of the twelfth. All of Aristotle was now known, and, with the further stimulus from the Arabian scientists, medieval thinking threatened to move into scientific channels. But the medieval mind, rooted in the Church, turned this new intellectual energy largely into metaphysical subtleties. Hence the ingenious, laborious effort of the schoolmen to reconcile revelation and reason, Papal authority and the individual conscience, the unseen world and the world of fact. It was a noble effort to solve the perennial problem of mankind, an attempt shown at its best in the great work of Thomas Aquinas, who sought to synthesize everything — from the First Cause to the last, least fact — into a harmonious philosophy. The issues raised in these intellectual controversies naturally brought heresy into sharp relief, and Roger Bacon, who questioned the orthodox Thomist theories, was eventually found guilty. For, though he accepted the authority of the Church and the Bible, he doubted the authority of the Church Fathers and he pushed emphasis on scientific experiment so far that he implied a doubt as to the very authority he did accept.

Born early in the thirteenth century, Bacon studied at Oxford and Paris till middle life. As he then entered the Franciscan order, he must have done most of his experimental work in his earlier years, work which might have passed into little more than a rumor had not Pope Clement IV asked him in 1266 for specimens of his

scientific investigations. With incredible industry Bacon thereupon wrote in only eighteen months his *Opus Majus*, *Opus Minus*, and *Opus Tertium*. With the death of the Pope in 1268, however, Bacon lost favor, and his subsequent writings are full of savage attacks on the ignorance and prejudice of authorities, both lay and clerical. Imprisoned as a heretic in 1278, he was released only shortly before his death, about 1294. Thanks to this condemnation by the Church as well as by hidebound scholastics, his scientific work came to be thought of for centuries afterwards as the black art of a fabulous magician.

How much Bacon accomplished in scientific experiments will probably never be known. He speaks of "important secrets" and he mentions, as actual or possible: explosives, incandescent lights, vehicles moved without draft animals, flying machines, microscope and telescope, and burning glasses. Many of his notions reveal the typical medieval habit of accepting hearsay evidence, such as that a magnet attracts all metals, that the severed parts of animals attract each other, that the circle had been indubitably squared. He considered his alchemy and astrology truly scientific, and he hoped that he could persuade the Pope to use his science to combat Anti-Christ. He wrote rather cryptically of a "*Scientia Experimentalis*" as if it were a sort of talisman, or perhaps a super-science. Recent enthusiasts have certainly gone too far in pretending that Bacon, neglected in his own day, was the one great modern mind in the wilderness of medieval thinking. But, though much of his thinking was medieval, he was never lost in the contemporary bog of metaphysics, and, in spite of his occasional credulity, he enunciated clearly and persistently the important principle that scientific knowledge rests on the evidence of the senses through experiment, a repudiation of the deductive method popular among his contemporaries and a prophecy of the inductive science championed by his great namesake three hundred years later.

Two other English Franciscans were among the great schoolmen of the Middle Ages. John, Duns Scotus, famous for his "dialectical ingenuity," was more of a critic than a philosopher. Shortly before his death he became regent of the theological school at Paris and led the defense of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception against the Dominican adherents of Thomas Aquinas. The trend towards science and realistic thinking, promised in the work of

Grosseteste and Bacon, was now disappearing in the verbal subtleties of the philosophers, but during the next century the first stage of a new order of thought began to appear in a growing scepticism. Of this, as well as of the spreading inclination to question the temporal power of the Pope, another English Franciscan, William of Occam, was a conspicuous instance. Further, he came into constant conflict with Pope John XXII over the question of poverty, which he held necessary throughout the Church as well as in the brotherhoods.

Though theology was the chief interest of thirteenth-century scholars, a notable work in another field was the treatise on English law by Henry de Bracton, a remarkably systematic survey by the great forerunner of Blackstone. A good deal of chronicle history was written, too, the best by Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris at the monastery of St. Albans. But literature as such flourished little in England during this period, in contrast to the great blossoming of romances across the Channel. One critic has said that the English did not possess "the heart of the mystery" of romance. It would be fairer to say that they did not possess an adequate English language. It should be noted, however, that Anglo-Saxon dialects had already passed into the early stages of "Middle English." Inflections had broken down, French and Latin words had come in, and new idioms had arisen. It is significant that Henry III saw fit in 1258 to issue a proclamation in English, the first of its kind. But French and Latin were still the literary and scholarly tongues; it was not till the next century that Chaucer considered his native language "sufficient" for poetry.

There was, however, some writing in Middle English dialects during the thirteenth century. One of the earliest prose pieces is the quaint *Ancren Riwele*, or directions for anchoresses. Equally quaint are the early bestiaries, allegories in rhymed octosyllabics, after the French fashion; and a little later came several blithe songs, including the famous "Sumer is icumen in." Towards the end of the century Robert of Gloucester wrote his rhymed chronicle-history and possibly the metrical *Lives of the Saints*. A few English narratives, such as *King Horn* and *Havelok the Dane*, appeared at this time, and Arthurian romance was beginning to come back across the Channel and find its way into English. Among the earliest of

these were *Arthur and Merlin* and *Sir Tristrem*. The latter was for a long time but probably erroneously ascribed to that mysterious rhymist of the North, Thomas of Ercildoune, fabled to have lived with the Queen of Faery beneath the Eildon Hills — whence his magical gift of prophecy, as he sang to his “faery harp that couldna lee.”

Still another important aspect of the Middle Ages was the cult of chivalry. Knights, in the simple sense of armed followers of the king, are almost as old as time; but knighthood, in the sense of a special order or brotherhood, with a ritual of service, is a peculiarly medieval institution. And though it extends over the whole period from the Conquest to the Renaissance, it reached its highest point in the thirteenth century. In the early twelfth century it was in the making and in the late fourteenth it was declining into a social distinction.

The origins of English knighthood are somewhat obscure. The basis of it, when it appears in recognizable form under the Normans, was feudal; it was primarily the pledged loyalty of one individual to another, probably for military service, not for tenancy, and the Norman word, “chevalier,” is apparently equivalent to the Saxon “ridere” in the *Chronicle* of the Conqueror’s time. Eventually the Saxon word “cniht” came to be the word for the composite conception of the mounted aristocrat who received land in return for military service. But the religious aspect of knighthood and its vows seem to have begun with the Crusades. Under their stimulus soon sprang up religious orders of knights, such as the Knights Templars; and it was this combination, of religion and military service, which gave rise to the ideals and rituals of chivalry.*

In medieval times throughout all Western Europe the organization of knighthood was much the same. The ideal procedure was a careful preparation through the stages of page and squire to that of knight bachelor, dubbed by the simple accolade, or, in rare cases, to that of knight banneret, spurred, sworded, and kissed by his lord only after an elaborate ritual of bath and vigil. But in actual practice, especially just before a war, many men were knighted without

* By the early fourteenth century, the order of Templars was suppressed in England. It had grown corrupt and was suspected, with some warrant, of abominable and secret rites. But the idea of orders, service, and elaborate ritual had become a tradition of all knighthood long before this.

the long training. So also the life of the individual was frequently far from the true ideal of chivalry. We could wish for nothing finer than Chaucer's knight — modest, devout, courageous, gentle. Chaucer was no visionary, either; his knight is probably as authentic as his friar, his miller, his wife of Bath. Such model knights as he describes, moreover, were no doubt more common a century before his day, when the feudal basis of a "fighting aristocracy" still had validity. In fact, Chaucer slyly hints, in such lines as

And though that he were worthy, he was wys,

that some other fellows he might name were not exactly patterns of the "verray parfit gentil knight." Even at its best, moreover, the ideal of chivalry was a narrow, class ideal. The knight must be courteous to others of equal rank, but felt no obligation, such as the later code of the gentleman required, to be considerate to those of lower station. There is apparently little question, furthermore, that the elaborate initiation of the squire into the arts of love, under the tutelage of high-born damsels of rather easy manners, led the knight, after such long apprenticeship, often to temper his courtesy with loose morals. This aspect, however, together with the pride of class, was more conspicuous in the fourteenth century and later, when chivalry became a fantastic cult, when the knights no longer, but the yeomanry, were the king's mainstay in war. In the thirteenth century, chivalry was still feudal, rough but genuine, with more buffets than caresses, and the motive of the Crusaders was still alive; so that knighthood at its best was a fine discipline. In any case, whatever its merits and defects, it played an enormous part in the life of the Middle Ages and bequeathed a tradition woven into the English experience for many centuries and still preserved in the titles and rituals of societies and orders all over the world.

This account of the cultural and social developments has run ahead of our political story. But Edward I, most of whose reign actually falls in the thirteenth century, initiated policies which reached forward into the next century. Therefore, though we have followed the philosophy and literature to 1300 and the architecture, universities, and knighthood beyond that, in the next chapter we must go back, for the political growth, to 1272, when Edward I became king.

Chapter IV

NATIONAL ENGLAND

THE fourteenth century, as, indeed, the last quarter of the thirteenth, looked in two directions. The structure of society was still feudal; government was still largely corporate, representative of social and institutional groups. These characteristics were now traditional, as were the guilds, knighthood, scholasticism, romances in literature, and the Gothic style in architecture. But in most of these inherited features changes were taking place. The feudal structure was breaking down—from such causes as the decline of villeinage and the rise of yeomanry, the growing importance of the gentleman farmer and the citizen merchant, and the increase in the authority of the king. The great feudal lords were still the chief power below the throne; it was a long cry yet to mercantile England; but these changes, together with increasing industries, pointed forward, not backward. The same may be said of Parliament, gradually evolving into a lawmaking assembly. Again, though chivalry was still the ideal of the knight and in a somewhat romantic sense was in its fullest flower in the early days of Edward III, it was gradually becoming little more than a social grace. Similarly, the vigor was gone out of scholasticism, now degenerating into verbal gymnastics. In its place was arising a new scepticism, to question the sacrosanct doctrines of the Church, and a new protest in favor of a simpler, personal religion. Not only was the temporal power of the Church declining, as evidenced by the growing importance of the State and the frequent restriction of clerical privileges, but the whole medieval ideal was passing—the ideal of salvation through adherence to an authoritative formula.

What gave the century a distinctive character in England, moreover, was the rapid development of a strong national sense. This growth began with Edward I in the thirteenth century, but it was accelerated enormously by the French wars under Edward III. For the Hundred Years' War, unlike the earlier conflicts, was not the quarrel over feudal sovereignty of a French duke who happened to be an English king, but a war between two nations, England and France; and before the end of the war the inhabitants of England

were no longer Saxon, Norman, and Angevin, but a united people. At the same time the native language triumphed in the law-courts, and the Thames Valley dialect of Chaucer, "first fyndere of our faire language," became a literary tongue.

EDWARD I

Though he succeeded his father as early as 1272, Edward I hardly belongs with the thirteenth century, at least in a political sense. For he inaugurated changes which dissociate him sharply from the Church-ruled, Continental England of Henry III. Born at Westminster, not a foreign duke like the Normans and Angevins, he was the first sovereign since Harold the Saxon to treat England as his major concern. Old-fashioned in his careful regard for the punctilios of a feudal chivalry, he was nevertheless in actual practice a good deal of an opportunist.

Edward had astonishing skill in appraising and handling practical problems both at home and abroad. In a changing England, when feudalism was breaking down and when the invasions by Papal authority were arousing resentment, he capitalized the evolution to strengthen the authority of the Crown, but he did this by wise laws, not by military despotism, and in the main for England's good. To this end he adroitly used the new instrument — Parliament. An able and vigorous general, Edward had the sense to see, too, that he could not push foreign wars in every direction at once, and so he conciliated France while he subjugated Scotland. Indeed, he is frequently called England's greatest sovereign.

Edward I provides an interesting comparison with Henry II, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth. Henry II had similar energy and great ability as a lawmaker and executive, but died broken by his ungovernable passions and by civil strife. Edward, as Duke of Gascony, had been proud, violent, and unpopular in his early years, but he soon learned to control himself; he turned willfulness into will-power. Henry VIII is almost a reverse picture of Edward. Popular and capable in his youth, he degenerated into an inconstant and cruel man. Elizabeth, with perhaps even greater shrewdness than Edward in determining the wise course both at home and abroad, developed in her later years a vacillation which, though it sometimes brought good results, did so often by accident rather than by design. Edward seems to have had all the time what Elizabeth had

most of the time — sufficient wisdom to see what direction he should take.

Tall, handsome, a bold hunter, a faithful husband * and a loyal friend, the new king was an attractive figure. His just and able management of the kingdom during his father's declining years made his succession obvious and secure. So popular had he become, in fact, that though he was absent on the last Crusade in 1272 and did not actually return to receive the crown till two years later, he had no fear for the stability of his kingdom.

When he did return, one of his first steps was to make a systematic record of taxable property. This record, called the *Hundred Rolls*, much like the Conqueror's *Domesday Book*, provided the Crown with a fair basis of taxation. Furthermore, observing the tendency of the knights to pass from a purely military to an agricultural life, the King issued a writ, in "distrainment of knighthood," requiring all possessed of land valued at twenty pounds or more to become knights and to pay the knight's fee. In fact, as the whole feudal structure weakened with the growth of entailed estates and conflicting vassal obligations, Edward shrewdly suited his lawmaking to contemporary conditions. This he did in the form of statutes.**

Of these the three Statutes of Westminster and the Statute of Merchants are the most important. The first of Westminster, which enjoined free elections and regulated such matters as the fee for knighting sons or marrying daughters, is notable in that it was issued not by the assent of the council alone, but at "parliament general" by the assent of council, clergy, barons, and "the commonalty of the realm." The second of Westminster included the famous provision against "entails," which, by preventing heirs from pledging estates, protected the landholders against the merchants; and the third abolished the conflicts in feudal obligations. The barons themselves had sought this last measure, but they found that it soon transferred much of their power to the king. Edward felt constrained to deal justly with the townsmen, too, and in the Statute of

* The crosses set up by Edward from Lincoln to Westminster to mark the stages of the funeral journey in 1290 of his queen, Eleanor of Castile, are among the most picturesque monuments in England. The one at Charing Cross, however, is a copy, the original of which was destroyed in 1647.

** Edward I was the first to make laws in the form of statutes, as opposed to the older constitutions, assizes, and ordinances.

Merchants he gave a creditor the right to bring a debtor before the mayor, who might on good cause seize the debtor's property and reimburse the merchant.

As a matter of fact, the King had a practical reason for showing consideration to the merchants. For some time feudal dues had been inadequate, especially with the expense of foreign wars. Whether further-revenue was to be obtained through taxes, customs, or grants, the merchants were increasingly the source of supply. We have seen that as early as Henry II's time the traders, organized into guilds, were in virtual control of municipal affairs and were beginning to underwrite the borough taxes. As these merchant guilds developed through the thirteenth century, they joined in a sort of federation called the "Gild Merchant," so that there was a kind of interborough freemasonry among merchants. Members might thus get fair treatment in almost any borough, while within each town the individual organization, with its guildhall, had most of the privileges and responsibilities of government. More than this, the towns under guild control had often closer relations with the incorporated towns of the Continent than with the neighboring country estates in their own shires — an international character which disappeared only in the intense nationalism of the Renaissance.

As yet there was very little manufacturing in England. There was already the "cloth of assize" from the looms of Flemish weavers and a growing activity among cordwainers and workers in leather and metal; but most articles used by ordinary folk were homemade, while the fine articles of the rich were imported. But there was a large export of raw materials. England sent out such articles as wool, hides, grain, and tin, and imported fine cloths, silks, furs, jewels, wax, tar, wine, and spices. Besides the local fairs held in the market-towns, where the chief traffic was in surplus farm produce, there were important annual fairs, where all sorts of foreign goods were bought and sold. The greatest of these were at Stourbridge and Winchester, and the licensed merchants fenced in the fair grounds and jealously guarded their rights.

It was during Edward's reign that the Merchants of the Staple became important. For, though the import of manufactured wares was largely in the hands of foreign traders, the chief English exports, such as wool and hides, were controlled by English merchants.

These men, with royal support, secured the privilege of shipping their goods to a specified continental town, such as Antwerp, where their organization controlled the market.* Edward designated as well certain English seaports, at which staple goods were taxed before export. He attempted to regulate the whole matter of customs dues, which had been irregular and exorbitant, and he made an effort to suppress the flagrant piracy in the Channel.

At the same time, under pressure from the traders and clamorous Christians, he expelled large numbers of Jews from the kingdom. The Jews had for a long time been indispensable to kings and merchants, as moneylenders, but now the Hanseatic traders, the Flemings, and the Italians were taking their place as capitalists; and the economic argument, supported by the common medieval belief that the Jew was the devil incarnate, led to much cruelty and injustice. Brutal as the whole procedure may seem, we must recall that Edward acted in accordance with, not against, the common opinion of Christendom in his day.**

But support of ordinary Christian ideas was a very different thing from supporting the temporal authority of the Church. The King's stand on this question proved to be momentous in the history of England. To prevent the accumulation of taxless land by the Church, the Statute of Mortmain provided that forfeited property should not pass, "under color of gift or lease," into the possession of the Church. In addition, when later the Pope tried to control grants by the clergy to the Crown and threatened with excommunication those who disobeyed him, the King countered with a threat to outlaw the offenders against his statute, who would then have no protection in any court. The opposition of the churchmen was made difficult for the King by baronial demands at the same time, and with a French war over Gascony and a Scottish revolt on his hands Edward was for a while in a critical position. But by a concession here and a bold stroke there he worked his way adroitly through his troubles and eventually succeeded in the matter of clerical grants. He had correctly gauged the growing hostility to clerical abuses and immunities.

* Edward III made an effort to stop this monopoly by temporarily abolishing the requirement of a staple city, but the effort was unsuccessful. In 1363 Calais was made the port of staple, and remained so for nearly two centuries.

** In sober fact, kings confined the Jews in Jewries not so much to protect the citizens as to protect the Jews and their useful money from predatory Christians!

Though Edward supported his first statute with the phrase "by the assent" of "parliament general," these early assemblies of his were not political or legislative, but were called merely for voting grants and were dismissed thereupon. It is significant, however, that Edward, now the time was ripe, utilized Simon's premature reliance on the middle class. In the "Model Parliament" of 1295, initiating what came to be the traditional procedure in calling national assemblies, there were 89 churchmen, 41 barons, 63 knights, and 172 citizens and burgesses. From now on country gentleman and town merchant, who together largely paid the cost of government, became more and more important in English affairs.

Edward, a strong believer in the ideals of manly virtue in his day, was himself an expert in the lists. As an old Crusader, he emphasized the sterner side of chivalry, made much of the rugged sports which kept men hard, and inspired martial prowess in the knights who followed him into battle. Nevertheless, by his "distrainment of knighthood," a tax-raising measure, he broadened the class of knights and thus himself contributed to the decrease of its earlier military characteristics. He realized that he could no longer rely solely on knights in warfare, and by the use of paid soldiers as pikemen and bowmen he began a practice which had important consequences in the wars with France under Edward III.

An energetic general, Edward I defeated the Welsh under Llewellyn and in 1284 annexed Wales. But the "wild Welshmen," though they never regained their freedom, were frequently in revolt. The main part of Wales was governed under common law by the king's officers, but the turbulent border * was for centuries under the feudal law of powerful Lords Marchers. In 1536, after many years of penal statutes, Wales was incorporated into the realm, and since then has regularly sent representatives to Parliament.

A few years after the conquest of Wales, the Scots appealed to Edward to arbitrate a disputed succession to the crown and agreed that the winning claimant should recognize the English king as overlord. But the Scottish barons soon deserted John Baliol, to whom Edward awarded the throne, and made an alliance with France. Edward wisely yielded the issue over Gascony for the time

* The "rows," or raised and barred sidewalks at Chester are interesting evidence of the measures the border townsmen took to protect themselves from Welsh raiders.

being so that he might attack Scotland. It was at this time that he called his famous Model Parliament, with the significant words in the summons, "What touches all should be approved by all, and . . . common dangers should be met by measures agreed upon in common." Thus backed by his subjects, he conquered Scotland in 1296, and returned to the Gascony dispute. But now arose the conflict over clerical grants to the State and the well-timed opposition of the barons, while the Scots, under Wallace, broke out in revolt and won the famous Battle of Stirling. In 1298 Edward marched in person at the head of his troops and crushed the power of Wallace by a great victory at Falkirk, but the irrepressible and independent Scots were by no means subdued. It was at this juncture that Edward realized that he must yield again in some directions in order to win in others. He had reluctantly confirmed the charters, to appease the barons, and now, in 1299, he made peace with Philip of France, married the French king's sister Margaret, and eventually secured the restoration of Gascony. Thus protected, he moved once more against Scotland, completed the conquest there in 1305, and brought the ancient Scottish coronation stone to Westminster. Two years later the Scots revolted, this time under Robert Bruce, and the old king again marched northward to battle, but he died in 1307 just before he reached the border, and Bruce, by routing Edward II at Bannockburn in 1314, established the independence of Scotland for four hundred years.

Edward I failed in his last great ambition, to subdue Scotland permanently, but he failed through death, not through incompetence as did his unworthy successor. In his justice and lawmaking, moreover, as in his strengthening of the State against churchman and baron, he accomplished a great work. England was now a nation in which all three estates of the realm had responsible parts.

EDWARD II

The strict military training which Edward I gave his son was of no avail. A fine figure of a man, but lazy and extravagant, ruled by favorites and usurpers, Edward II lacked the redeeming graces of Henry III, piety and culture. Indeed, during the twenty years of his nominal occupancy of the throne, England threatened to return to the anarchy of an earlier time. That this disaster was in some measure averted was due to the orderly government which Edward I

had set up, particularly to the new instrument of Parliament in that government.

For a while, after disposing of Edward's first favorite, Piers Gaveston, the barons attempted to rule through a baronial committee, called the Lords Ordainers, but their rule was so incompetent that a full Parliament, summoned in 1322 by the King during a momentary lapse into vigor, not only repealed the committee's ordinances but declared that any important matter must be approved by all the estates of the realm. Four years later, when Edward, under the influence of new favorites, the Despensers, had sunk again into incompetent government, even the barons sought the semblance of parliamentary support. After capturing the King and throwing him into a dungeon, they called an assembly in 1327 in the name of the monarch's young son, and with its support declared Edward deposed. Affairs were now in control of his faithless queen, Isabella, and her unscrupulous lover, Roger Mortimer. Soon after, probably at their instigation, Edward II was murdered — crushed, the story runs, under an inverted table as he stood up to his knees in dungeon filth. A pathetic figure he makes in Marlowe's play as he cries to his assailants —

Tell Isabel, the queen, I looked not thus,
When for her sake I ran at tilt in France
And there unhorsed the Duke of Cleremont,

but, though one may grant him a passing tear, the significant thing to remember is that an English king had been deposed *with the consent of Parliament*.

Edward III was now crowned king and for three years ruled under the brutal regency of Mortimer. But he was of sterner stuff than his father, and at the age of eighteen he arrested Mortimer, had him tried and put to death, and became king in fact.

EDWARD III

The young king was a sort of combination of his father and grandfather. Physically strong and attractive, as both were, he had the military virtues of his grandfather as well as a measure of that ruler's skill in government. But, like his father, he was inclined to frivolity and extravagance, and he lacked the steadfastness of purpose and integrity of the first Edward. Nevertheless, he was a popular and powerful monarch. Himself a model knight, he had not only en-

gaging manners, but an impressive personality. Perhaps more than any other English sovereign he combined graciousness with majesty. His court for a while was the most brilliant in Europe, and England had far more prestige in continental esteem than it had had during any period since Henry II.

But Edward III was not a constructive monarch. Like Richard I, he delighted in military adventures for their own sake, and in his French wars he promoted the glory of his house more than the good of England. He left a country not only crippled by the Black Death, but impoverished by the expense of futile wars and the extravagance of the court, disturbed by labor troubles, and menaced by the plots of his masterful and self-seeking sons.

The so-called Hundred Years' War stretched over a period of one hundred sixteen years, but a state of active war existed for little more than half that time. The first stage was marked by Edward III's brilliant successes; the second, by his dismal failures; the third, by Henry V's spectacular victories; and the fourth, by the loss of everything but Calais under Henry VI. The chief result of all this fighting, perhaps, was that it threw Englishmen back on their island kingdom and prepared them, all unwitting, for the life of maritime adventure in which they soon were to lead the world, a life which a nation preoccupied with continental conquests could hardly have followed with a single mind. Englishmen lived on or near tidewater, and sooner or later they must conquer, not France, but the sea.

The war began over the old Gascony issue, buttressed by Edward III's claim to the French throne. The first effort, to invade France with the help of German and Flemish allies, was unsuccessful, but a brilliant naval victory at Sluys (1340), in which the English Navy, led by the King himself, destroyed a French fleet of one hundred ninety ships, cleared the Channel of opposition. But Edward did not follow this advantage up at once, and, except for temporary control of the Narrow Seas, the Navy did not play an important part in the medieval wars. Whether one dates it from Alfred, or from Richard I, who undertook a Mediterranean naval expedition, or from John, who first kept seamen in permanent pay, its great glory begins with the Tudors. Poets do not sing of Sluys as they do of Crécy and Agincourt, but celebrate the later feats of Drake and Blake, of Rodney and Nelson.

The Saxons, it is true, had set some store in a navy, both mer-

chant and war, but the Normans were contemptuous of trade and, though they had a war navy, exercised little control either of the sea or of the ports. Under Henry II and Richard I some merchant shipping was developed and various naval laws were enacted. The ships, too, had grown from the open, undecked boats of the Normans to fairly large galleys, with about thirty oars, after the Mediterranean pattern. Under Henry III there was an attempt to control the ports, particularly the Cinque Ports of the south coast, but they were little more than "nests of chartered sea-robbers," and the licensed privateers were about as bad. There is record at this time of ships as much as one hundred feet long, and under Edward I the introduction of the rudder and two masts, with elevated stages and fighting tops, points to increasing naval activity. Early in the fourteenth century England's claim to sovereignty of the Narrow Seas was recognized by foreign powers, but it was hardly a real sovereignty, with the Channel controlled largely by piratical sea-rovers out of the Cinque Ports. In the next century Henry V realized the importance of the sea force as no English monarch before him had done, but until the Tudors England was never, like Venice, a great mercantile and naval power.

It was on land, rather, that the English won and lost the important battles of the Hundred Years' War. Following a delay of several years, during which Edward amused himself by rebuilding Windsor Castle, he invaded France again. At the brilliant victory of Crécy (1346) the valorous French knights were no match for the English bowmen. Edward soon took Calais and was master of a large part of Northern France. Returning for a while, he built up a magnificent court, with the splendor of knightly entertainments; then in 1356 he sent his able son, the Black Prince, to renew the campaign. After a great victory at Poitiers, further English successes drove the French to the so-called Treaty of Brétigny, signed at Calais, by which Edward gave up his claim to the French throne, but received the whole of Aquitaine, as well as Ponthieu and Calais.

But though the French wars make the great noise of Edward's reign, the changing domestic conditions are more significant. In the first place, Parliament became a permanent institution, with legislative functions. An infant assembly in the reign of Edward I, it was already strong enough in 1327 to force Edward II to abdicate. Edward III, moreover, had constant recourse to it, to provide him-

self with revenues for his wars and his expensive court. Under these conditions, and with feudal power declining, the Commons gradually bargained themselves into a strong position. By a statute of 1340, it was definitely established that Parliament should control taxation; and, soon after, the practice of common petitions, rather than individual, — that is, of petitions representing the *commune*, — began to substitute legislative functions for judicial. It is significant that the Statute of Provisors (1351), forbidding any to receive benefices from the Pope, and that of Praemunire (1353), forbidding appeal to the Pope, were not royal decrees, but acts of Parliament. Early in Edward's reign the Commons began to meet as a separate body and, since all but the higher clergy had now withdrawn from parliamentary sessions, the House of Commons consisted solely of knights and burgesses. So also the Council in Session, or lords summoned to Parliament, was distinguished more and more from the King's Council out of Parliament, and became the House of Lords. The king could still deny petitions and not only could, but did, legislate through his council; or he could grant petitions and fail to carry them into statutes, as Edward III sometimes did. Though the changes were gradual and were not secure, indeed, till the end of the seventeenth century, the important points to grasp are that an assembly of two houses was established in the fourteenth century, that it controlled taxation, and that it was beginning to exercise a legislative function. With the two exceptions of freedom of speech and of the right to impeach the king's officers, the assembly had already acquired all the powers which it held under the early Stuarts.

In the social field the changes were equally momentous. As strictly feudal conditions disappeared, villeinage declined. In many cases, landholders found it profitable to lease their lands to freed villeins or to hire farm-labor. A good many villeins, moreover, had run away to the towns; others wandered as outlaws and beggars. Further, with the sale of lands the number of small freeholders, or yeomen farmers, increased. Among the higher classes, too, since only the oldest son inherited the title to nobility, the gentleman in the small manor house became almost as important as the baron in his castle. The baron, in fact, except for a few great lords, was rapidly abandoning the obsolete and expensive castle structure for the manor-house

type, with more reference to comfort than to warfare. Apparently simple economic necessity, not the baby cannon, was the chief factor in breaking down castle walls.

All these changes were enormously accelerated by the Black Death, in 1348-1349. Long believed to have been bubonic plague, but possibly a virulent form of influenza, the great scourge produced a serious shortage of labor. The traditional estimate that over one third of the population died is probably an exaggeration, but outside of London no plagues have been so bad in the history of England. For, though it ravaged the east coast particularly, it was active everywhere, especially in monasteries and among the poor of the towns and farms; and, followed by wet weather and famine, it played havoc with the farming industry. The Statute of Laborers (1351), requiring workmen to take work at the old wages, could not be enforced, and landholders were driven to sell or to lease to tenant farmers on a large scale. Thus began, overnight as it were, the "labor problem" in England, with a long line of "Poor Laws."

The economic difficulty which arose after the Black Death was a sort of reverse picture of the situation in the modern world. As means of production have improved, we find a surplus of labor. In the fourteenth century, when there was a sudden shortage of labor, production remained low. To feed the small population, it was necessary to keep almost as much land under cultivation as at the present time. In wheat, for instance, a fair crop was only four times the amount sown. The bulk of the population was in agriculture; even townsmen, students, and lawyers went into the fields at harvest time, and the now quaint anachronism of the "long vacation" probably arose from this practice. There was, moreover, no division of labor as yet. Even though the old communal basis of feudal farming was giving place to the tenant farm, sheep, hogs, cattle, wheat, hay, vegetables, fruit were raised indiscriminately and often with poor economy.

Obviously the trade of the towns, largely foreign, though affected by the Black Death, would not be so crippled as agriculture. In the crafts there was more trouble, but before the plague the artisans had become so well established that the craft guilds, upstart rivals of the merchant guilds in the preceding century, had taken on equal importance, if not equal social prestige, with the trade associations in the control of the boroughs; and the picture Chaucer paints of

the prosperous artisans, some forty years later, reveals their comfortable estate: —

Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys,
To sitten in a yeldhalle on a deys.

Chaucer, the courtier, is of course somewhat contemptuous of these *nouveaux riches* and their ostentatious wives: —

It is ful fair to been y-clept "ma dame,"
And goon to vigilyes al bifore,
And have a mantel royalliche y-bore.

Nevertheless, the system, with the master proud of his eminence in his craft, — precisely as baron or abbot, knight or merchant, guarded his leadership in his particular group, — was a natural expression of the medieval point of view. In the true medieval pattern, society was stratified vertically rather than horizontally. No one, ideally at least, strove to pass sidewise into another group, as now he seeks to push upward through the horizontal stratifications based on capital. A wide range of opportunity was therefore impossible to the craftsman, bound to his narrow field; but within his own group, or class, the sky was the limit. When the country gentleman sought to become merchant, or the merchant or rich craftsman to become gentleman, when the toe of the peasant began to gall the heel of the courtier, — above all, when capital and division of labor upset the old economy, — new discontents as well as new opportunities arose.

Perhaps the best feature of this medieval craft system was the kind of work it produced. The long period of apprenticeship and the stage of journeyman before one might become a master meant slow progress, but it meant thorough training and an ingrained pride in the product of one's hands, a creative joy which kept the crafts close to the arts. It is hard to tell where the goldsmith leaves off and the artist begins, or whether the carving in the great churches is craft or art. With this aspect always fundamental in their work, the craftsmen, when they organized into guilds, had in doing so not merely a wish to safeguard their legal rights, or to take care of the unemployed and widows, as do modern unions, but had, quite as much, other social and human motives. To put it in modern terms, the guilds were at once the clubs, the fraternal orders, the strawberry festivals, the art centers, and the labor unions of their respective crafts.

Nor must we forget that this was "Merry England." In spite of cruel punishments, plague, and famine, it was a happy society. "Those who listen to the Middle Ages," says Agnes Repplier, "instead of writing about them at monstrous length and with undue horror and commiseration, can hear the echo of laughter ringing from every side, from every hole and corner where human life existed." To realize this, one has only to consider the frequent village festivals, with their merry antics, the grotesque humor in gargoyle or miserere carvings, the slapstick comedy of the Biblical plays.* Of Chaucer's varied group on pilgrimage to Canterbury, only the choleric reeve and the serious clerk seem incapable of mirth. Knight, prioress, and parson are above the rude japes of those of the baser sort, but they are not aloof or solemn, like first-class passengers. The key is set by the squire, in his gay garments, "sing-inge and floytinge al the day," and by the jolly friar, whose eyes, when he had sung,

Twinkled in his heid aright,
As doon the sterres in the frosty night.

And behind the fiction of Robin Hood and his merry men, there is substantial evidence of lively adventure and good fellowship along the highways and byways of Old England.

The roads were thronged with pilgrims. For, besides the journey to Canterbury, there were constant pilgrimages to Glastonbury, the oldest shrine in England, to Durham, to Westminster, to St. David's. One of the most popular was Walsingham Abbey, where a vial with milk of the virgin might be adored. But these pilgrimages, in spite of the religious motive, were primarily social junkets, the equivalent of a modern excursion, and, if we may judge from Chaucer, a good time was the main motive. In addition to pilgrims, too, all sorts of people were on the roads — not only the king with his retinue and itinerant courts,** but bishops on diocesan rounds, abbots and

* In the old play of *Noah*, after that patriarch has advised his audience,

"Ye men that has wifis, whyls they ar yong,
If ye luf youre lifis, chastice thare tong."

the old lady evidently swings at him and he ducks, exclaiming, "Yit may ye mys, Nicholl Nedy!"

** For all this moving life in detail see Jusserand's *English Wayfaring Life*, London, 1897. He estimates that Edward I journeyed seventy-five times in one year.

monks on monastery visits, mendicant friars, pardoners, barons with retinue, knights with squires and grooms, merchants with body-guard, traveling cobblers, carters, peddlers, quack doctors, beggars, wandering minstrels and acrobats. And to these people on more or less legitimate business and pleasure must be added robber bands and outlaws. Langland gathers together in one tavern a tinker, a hackneyman, a needle-seller, a clerk of the church, a hayward, a hermit, a hangman, a dyker, porters, pick-purses, and "bald-headed tooth-drawers."

Barring the old Roman roads, the ways on which people journeyed were not good, but, except for royalty in carts, uncomfortable boxes without springs, most traveled on horseback or afoot. To accommodate them inns of all sorts grew up, and particularly ale-houses, conspicuous with bush or garland on a pole. With no public agencies for transportation or for news, these visitors brought one part of England to another. It is a lively and moving scene, the medieval prototype of the stagecoach days — both to be eventually superseded by railroad and motor travel, more expeditious, but far less provocative of jollity and good fellowship along the way.

Such contacts, perhaps as much as the French wars, bred a national sense. An audience for a truly English literature was coming into existence, but the divergence of dialects held that literature back till the latter part of the century. During the first two thirds of the period a few English versions of the Arthurian stories continued to appear, but this was now an old tradition. Among these were the *Morte d'Arthur* and the incomparable story of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, perhaps the best of all the English versions of the Arthurian legends, though Malory did not include it in his later collection. An interesting literary figure at this time was Jehan de Mandeville, who says in the preface to his astonishing *Travels* that he was a knight born at St. Albans. His fabulous and entertaining book, most of it traced to other writers, was written in French and first published at Liege in 1355. It is really not English literature at all, but the English translations of it in the next century, long but erroneously ascribed to his own hand, had such popularity that it came to be regarded as an English book. The great bulk of English writing during Edward III's reign consisted of dull chronicles, lives of the saints, religious histories such as *Cursor Mundi*,

and moralizing treatises such as Dan Michel's *Ayenbite of Inwit* and Robert Manning's *Handling of Synne*. In this field, however, the anonymous poems *Cleanness* and *Patience*, written about 1370, stand out as literature of quality. They are usually ascribed to the same authorship as *Sir Gawain*, as is also *The Pearl*, a beautiful elegy on the death of the author's child.

Nearer the common folk were the Miracle Plays, popular now for many years and already in the hands of the guilds. These plays seem to have had a twofold origin. First, the services at important festivals such as Christmas and Easter were interrupted and elaborated by the acting of scenes from the story of Christ. In an "Easter Dramatic Office," all in Latin, the stage direction indicates "three brothers as if Maries seeking Christ." They advance to a sepulcher at the entrance to the choir, find the Master gone, but are consoled by an angel who tells them He has risen; whereupon the "*Executo officii*," that is, the director of the play, or office, begins "*Te Deum Laudamus*" — and here we are back in the regular morning service. These liturgical offices grew into the Mystery Plays, and are probably as old as the Norman invasion. Similarly, down in the nave of the church, stories and tableaux from the Old Testament and the Lives of the Saints, to enliven the sermon, grew into acted and spoken plays; and in England the term "Miracle" came to be used rather loosely to describe both these and the Mysteries. The first version in English of one of these old plays was *The Harrowing of Hell*, about 1250. By the early fourteenth century, they had taken on so much slapstick humor, and had become so sufficient in themselves, that they moved from the church into the public square or village green and were acted in cycles by the guilds.

The inheritance in the Elizabethan drama from these plays has been exaggerated. The buffoonery was about the only enduring feature of the plays themselves, but the Elizabethan theater springs directly from the innyards, where the guilds in course of time arranged to set up their stages — merely boards spread across the wagon, or pageant, on which the craftsman actors moved from town to town. The steps up to the platform, the rear entrance, the "heavens," the gallery for the better seats, the dirty pit for the standing audience, and lighting by way of a roofless pit — all these features of Shakespeare's play-houses had their crude ancestors in the improvised theaters of the old innyards.

Unlike the slow-maturing literature, the best architecture of the fourteenth century comes at the beginning. In Chapter III we have already noticed several characteristics of Decorated Gothic: the higher, broader windows, the higher clerestories with flying buttresses, and the richness in the ornamental tracery, the flower decorations, and the lierne vaulting. This was the age of the rose window, too, though in England it never attained the importance or beauty that it did in France. Again, the finest work in sculpture and in glass, though also inferior to the French, belongs to this period; and though the deep ruby of the earlier glass was never surpassed, the drawing, design, and variety of color were much improved. Reference has already been made to the Decorated features in the nave at York, in the angel choir at Lincoln, and in the choir and Lady Chapel at Wells. Of the great churches, perhaps the best example is Exeter, almost wholly in this style, but, since the demand for cathedrals and abbeys had already been supplied, most of the later work in them is in extension or repair of Norman and Early English structures. It is often in the parish churches, therefore, that the best instances of Decorated appear; notably, for example, in the fine rose window of St. Mary's, Cheltenham.

Except for technical distinctions, however, it is on the whole not profitable to separate the two earlier types of Gothic. Decorated was not really a new style, but, as Reginald Hughes puts it, "simply a rich and highly cultivated variety of . . . Early English." * The great glory of English church architecture spreads over an unbroken period from the end of the twelfth to the middle of the fourteenth century. After that, it falls off in quality and soon gives place to the last Gothic style, the Perpendicular, which, in spite of a few great instances, lacks both the spirit and the beauty of the Early English and Decorated.

In domestic architecture, we have noted that the baron's castle was disappearing in favor of the moated grange. In a few conspicuous cases, though, — in royal fortresses or in the castles of great lords, — a new type of structure superseded the Norman during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. This castle, called the "Edwardian," was not based on the Norman principle of a central keep, or donjon, but on two walled enclosures, roughly

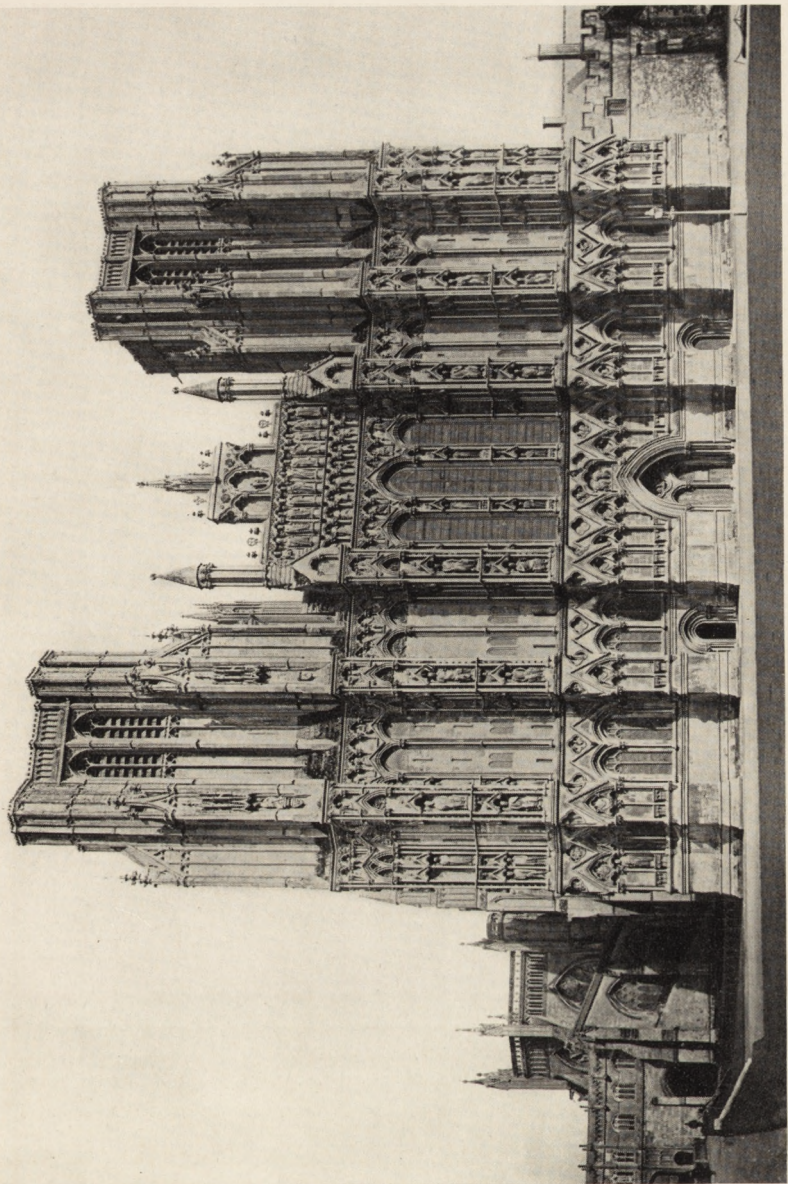
* Traill and Mann, II, p. 64.

concentric, each protected by a moat. The outer wall was usually double, with towers at strategic points, and inside the large central stronghold were spacious halls, kitchens, and quarters for the garrison. Sometimes a cliff, as at Ludlow, or a river, as at Warwick, altered the plan slightly, but these great structures, like those at Conway and Carnarvon, are typical "Edwardian" castles. Nevertheless, even in the fortresses, it will be seen that the castle is turning to a mansion — a stronghold at times, but a comfortable dwelling at all times.

One of the most important buildings of the fourteenth century was Westminster Hall, part of the Palace of Westminster. The old hall, begun by William Rufus, had been damaged by fire in 1291 and was rebuilt, with its magnificent oaken roof, by Edward II and Richard II. The scene of many royal festivals and of many famous trials, Westminster Hall, now part of the Parliament buildings, vies with the Tower for first place in rich historical associations.

To return to the political story: The bright morning of Edward III's reign turned to gloom at the end. His refusal to pay his Italian creditors caused the collapse of great Florentine bankers, and though English capitalists began now to take their place, the economic conditions after the Black Death meant retrenchment everywhere. In less than ten years from the peace of 1360, the French King repudiated the treaty and reopened the war. Edward left the campaigns to his sons, but the Black Prince was failing in health, and a succession of reverses led to a truce in 1375, with the loss of all in France but Calais, Bordeaux, Bayonne, and Brest.

At home the situation was little better. The King, in his dotage, fell under the influence of Alice Perrers, his mistress, and the government was disordered by the rival factions of the Black Prince and his brother, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The "Good Parliament" of 1376 managed a brief restoration of order and extended its authority by successfully impeaching the King's ministers, but the Black Prince died in the same year, and chaos had already returned when the King passed away in 1377 and Richard II, a boy of ten, succeeded to the throne. As Henry VIII is conspicuous for his wives, Edward III is marked for the number of his descendants. His twelve children provided a veritable host of rival claimants to



WELLS CATHEDRAL

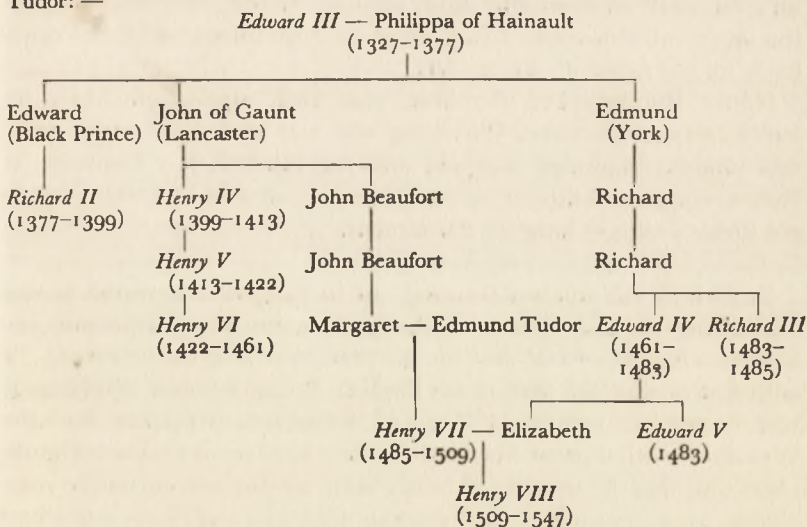
the crown, claimants who kept the country in turmoil for over a hundred years.*

RICHARD II

During his minority Richard was at the mercy of counterplotting uncles. England, not yet recovered from the Black Death, was in a deplorable condition. An eloquent priest named John Ball inflamed the peasants with new communistic doctrines, and the learned reformer, John Wiclif, gave syllogistic support to similar teachings. By 1381 the peasants were so aroused that they followed Wat Tyler in a dangerous revolt; but, just when it appeared that London was at their mercy, — Tyler killed, and confusion and riot in the city, — the King, a boy of fourteen, made his spectacular gesture. Going out to meet the turbulent mob, he offered himself as their leader, and the rebellion soon petered out.

This gesture of Richard's was characteristic. Imaginative, emotional, cultivated, he was in some measure the poet-king Shakespeare has pictured. As he grew to manhood, he displayed considerable ability; but he had little practical shrewdness or stamina, so necessary in dealing with his masterful relatives, and towards the end of

* Simplified table showing the succession of the Houses of Lancaster, York, and Tudor: —



his reign his illusion of a sumptuous court and an absolute monarchy proved to be a disastrous anachronism.

When Richard first attempted to assert himself, the nobles, led by the Duke of Gloucester, forced him in 1386 to submit to a council government. A few years later, with the return of Lancaster from Spain, he managed to check Gloucester and to rule fairly well, with respect for economy and justice. In 1397, with the temporary support of Lancaster's son, Henry Bolingbroke, he contrived to get rid of Gloucester and the duke's friends by execution or exile; but the following year, on his marriage to Isabella of France, his illusions of grandeur and absolutism beset him. On a flimsy pretext he banished Bolingbroke and in 1399, when John of Gaunt died, he confiscated the Lancastrian estates. Bolingbroke, thus provoked, invaded England in force, to claim not only his estates, but the crown itself.

Perhaps the worst mistake Richard made was to flout the growing power of Parliament. In 1397 he had the author of a petition in Parliament tried for treason, and though this custom of petition was not yet an established right, it had half a century of tradition behind it. Further, in 1398 he called a packed Parliament, which annulled recent laws restricting both barons and church, provided that the king's ordinances should be equivalent to statute law, and voted him the duty on wool and hides for life. At the very moment that the medieval world was dying, these steps promised to set the clock back to the reign of Henry III.

Henry Bolingbroke, therefore, met little opposition when he landed on the east coast. The King, who was in Ireland at the time, was unable to muster support, and his surrender at Conway, in Wales, was soon followed by abdication. Henry IV had the sense to get himself chosen king by Parliament.

But while the tide was running out in the political world, it was advancing in other directions. Richard's reign was conspicuous for a great religious revival and for the first great English literature. In addition to this, the first of the English Public Schools, Winchester, was founded in 1387 by William of Wykeham, to prepare boys for Wykeham's other great foundation, New College at Oxford. Significant, too, was the growth of trade, with an increase in native merchants, soon to supplant the Venetian, Flemish, and Hanseatic aliens who had hitherto handled the bulk of English commerce. With

this growth went also an increase in the number of native weavers. A century later these two activities, of trade and of the manufacture of cloth, were to revolutionize the whole English economy.

In the religious field we have noted John Ball and John Wiclif preaching social reform. Wiclif, for a while Master of Balliol and a scholar who translated the Bible into his native tongue, preached also reform of doctrine and ritual and advocated simplicity and godliness among clergy and laity. Like the Franciscan reform, as well as like the later revivals under Puritans, Quakers, and Wesleyans, the movement made its greatest appeal to the simple poor. For a short time it had a tremendous following, so that it was said that every other man in London was a Lollard. But soon the valuable feature of the reform, the emphasis on simplicity and purity, was lost sight of; the criticism of the worldliness of the clergy was an attack on the vested interests of bishop and abbot and of the whole ecclesiastical establishment; and the denial of transubstantiation was an attack on a fundamental doctrine. Soon after the death of Wiclif, "the morning star of the Reformation," his body was exhumed and burned, and the ashes were scattered in the River Swift. Lollardry was dangerous; it must be stamped out. The Church, as it grew weaker, had recourse to violent measures. With royal support, it secured in 1401 the Statute of Heretics, and thus began the long story of burnings and persecutions which during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries broke into conflagrations of international scope.

A vivid expression of this movement towards a simple and honest life was the poem known as *Piers Plowman*. Long ascribed to William Langland, it was probably the work of several men and is really two poems: that called *The Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman*, and another vision called *Do-well, Do-bet, and Do-best*. In spite of inequalities and vagueness, attributable to the composite origin of the 1377 text,* the vision is by far the greatest moral literature of its time, keen in its satire, earnest in its condemnation of timeservers in the Church. Like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, it is "in the similitude of a dream." Falling asleep on Malvern Hills, the author beholds a "field full of folk," a sort of Vanity Fair, and

* The first text, 1362, is much more direct, but lacks some of the best parts of the second, notably the fable of the *Belling of the Cat*. The old cat is John of Gaunt.

he pictures in vivid language the hypocrisy and avarice of mankind. Next the scene shifts to Westminster, with the trial of "Meed," but soon the author finds himself listening to the confessions of the Seven Deadly Sins. Then Peter, the poor plowman, appears leading the penitent Sins to the shrine of Truth, and later, in *Do-bet*, he reappears in a kind of mystical transfiguration, the embodiment of Love. Finally, in *Do-best*, after much disaster, Conscience sets out to wander through the world in search of Piers.

This great poem, however, in the West Midlands dialect and in old-fashioned alliterative measure, had little influence on later English literature, except perhaps as a link in the tradition of "high seriousness" which runs from Cynewulf's *Elene* to Kipling's *Recessional*. It was rather Langland's contemporary, Geoffrey Chaucer, writing in the Southeast Midlands dialect and in the newer French meters with end-rhyme, who set our literary language in a pattern which it has ever since followed. He was not much concerned with "high seriousness," though he was capable of that too —

What is this world? What asketh man to have?
Now with his love, now in the colde grave,
Allone, withouten any compaignye.

Primarily, he was alert, in the sense that Landor implied in his fine tribute to Browning: —

. . . Since Chaucer was alive and hale,
No man has walk'd along our roads with step
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue
So varied in discourse.

Singularly medieval, yet singularly modern, Chaucer was typical of his century — at the parting of the ways. He knew the passing age of chivalry and the new era dawning in the Italy of Petrarch and Boccaccio. He is romantic in his early writing, but sturdily realistic in much of his later. He is capable of conventional moralizing, yet he scores the contemporary hypocrites in the Church. He glorifies knighthood as if it were still in its prime, but he gives us in his "marriage group" of tales an almost modern discussion of feminism.

Born probably in 1340, the son of a prosperous London wine merchant, Chaucer soon came under the patronage of John of Gaunt and he reflects in his early poetry the knightly ideals and the

fashion of French romances so characteristic of the court of Edward III. His long *Romaunt of the Rose* is a free translation of the famous French original. Later, under Italian influence, he wrote his *Troilus and Cryseyde* and *Legende of Gode Women*, but here also he is still interested in the romantic point of view. His *Hous of Fame* again shows Italian influence, particularly of Dante. Incidentally, it contains an especially Chaucerian bit of wisdom regarding the fickleness of fame. The poet decides that oblivion is best, prefers

That no wight have my name in honde.*
I woot myself best how I stonde.

But in the *Canterbury Tales*, though the plan of a collection of stories was of Italian origin, Chaucer rose above his foreign models and became a great English poet in his own right. Similarly, though his rhymed verse had continental ancestry, his reliance on stress rather than primarily on quantity retained a native characteristic. He made popular the great English measure which has come to be known as "heroic verse" and which, whether rhymed or unrhymed, has been the vehicle of the best English poetry for over five hundred years.

But though the direction which language and meter took under Chaucer is of great historical moment, his fame rests on his pre-eminence as a storyteller and a portrayer of character. His stories are not merely well told. They have a variety, a relationship to the individuals telling them, which, with the little prologues and end-links, gives the whole collection of tales a sort of dramatic vividness, a quality lacking in the Italian narrators. And how real the people are! What novelist or dramatist would dare present all his characters in advance — not three or four, but the whole bookful, "Well nyne and twenty in a compaignye"? But Chaucer does it, and, in spite of the old-fashioned language, they still come out of the printed page and ride for us in the flesh along the pilgrim's way to Canterbury. With an eye for details, with a refreshing sense of fact, with brief illuminating comment, often slyly humorous, the poet makes individuals of them all. The knight, pattern of chivalry; his son, the young squire, who loved so hotly that he could not sleep; the hard-riding monk, happier on the road than in the cloister; the jolly, hypocritical friar; the Oxford clerk, still as eager to learn as

* That is, he doesn't wish any fellow to have charge of his reputation.

to teach; the dainty prioress; the hearty, promiscuous wife of Bath; the well-fed franklin —

It snewed in his hous of mete and drinke;

— we should have no difficulty in seeing them and all the rest of the company, even if Blake had not put the immortal procession in a picture. But we do more than *see* them. This is, after all, the great point: we go along with them, while the miller with his pipes brings us “out of towne” and the drunken summoner bears a “stif bur-doun” to the treble of the goat-voiced pardoner.

Chaucer came early into prosperity. He served as a youth in one of Edward's expeditions to France, was captured and ransomed, and after his return became a yeoman of the king's chamber. When he was only thirty, he was sent on royal business to France and Italy, and by 1374 he was made comptroller of the customs of the port of London, a position he held for ten years. In spite of ducal and royal pensions, however, Chaucer, like many poets, found himself in straitened circumstances; in his *Compleynte to his Purse* in 1398 he tells the King that he is shaved “close as a friar.” But in 1399 Henry IV, his old patron's son, granted him a further pension, and Chaucer seems to have spent his last year in fairly good case. With the *Canterbury Tales* unfinished, he died in 1400 and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

All other literary lights of the English Middle Ages show dim beside Chaucer's, but for many years his friend John Gower held as high a position in critical esteem. As a matter of fact Gower, who was precise and methodical in his language and verse, did much to fix the channel of literary currents. An able storyteller, he is at his best in the *Confessio Amantis*, a collection of tales with reference to the seven deadly sins and their moral application to love; but he lacks the realism and humor of Chaucer. In his instinct for moral allegory he is solely of his own age; his great contemporary, like Shakespeare, is “for all time.”

Chapter V

OLD AGE AND YOUTH

THE fifteenth century is often treated as a sort of vacuum in English history. There no doubt is a good deal to be said for this view when the period is measured by the devastating quarrels of kings. In that aspect the century, except for a brief flash of glory in the reign of Henry V, was a sterile period, occupied for the most part with the conflicts of the innumerable descendants of Edward III. We do well therefore to remind ourselves that the bulk of the people were going on about their pursuits, agricultural and mercantile; to recall, with Hardy, the old man and the horse harrowing clods, the youth and the maid plighting troth, to realize that "this will go onward the same though dynasties pass." In spite of the political and social turmoil, furthermore, the now ancient institutions, parliament and the universities, were building traditions; and Mr. Pollard takes pains to remind us that culture and literature were not wholly dead.

Nevertheless, though Parliament made notable gains under the early Lancastrians, establishing precedents which were later invoked by seventeenth-century champions of "liberties," the national assembly declined into little more than a tradition in the latter half of the century and came near to perishing altogether, as it did in France. Again, medieval scholarship was bankrupt, and the New Learning, already a fact in Italy, did not penetrate the sleepy universities at Oxford and Cambridge till Tudor days. Capable young men, the sons of nobles and gentlemen, youths who might have caught the fire of the Italian Renaissance, gave their lives in an ignoble royal family feud. Culturally, the fifteenth century, though it was not dead, makes a sorry comparison with the thirteenth or fourteenth. Some noteworthy architecture, in the Perpendicular style, was produced, but it is insignificant beside the building of the Early English and Decorated periods. In literature Malory made his great collection of Arthurian romances, Occleve and Lydgate continued the Chaucerian tradition, and Caxton, a pioneer of the days to come, introduced printing. For the best literature, though, we must go to Scotland or to the ballads of the common folk. Music,

alone, was not a "last enchantment," but was refreshingly a harbinger of what became a distinctive culture in the next century.

To this picture of decay, furthermore, must be added the decline of the monasteries and, without their leadership, a stagnancy in agriculture. In fact, the only vigorous activity was among merchants and artisans; and, even there, the old guild economy was dying. Commerce and the crafts were passing into the control of private enterprise, but this new economy did not find itself till Tudor times.

All this is only another way of saying, with reservations, that the fifteenth century *was* a vacuum. But where there is a vacuum in the cultural atmosphere a strong new wind is likely to blow. After the chief barons had pretty well killed themselves off in the grisly Wars of the Roses and Henry Tudor had seized the throne, the belated Renaissance with new life came to England. At last the great Middle Age, moribund for a century, was dead. A new age, an age of youth and hope, began.

LANCASTER AND YORK

When Henry IV usurped the throne of Richard II in 1399, he found himself confronted by insurrections; but, when this opposition was mastered, the House of Lancaster ruled for a number of years without serious question of its validity. It was not till the reign of the gentle and incompetent Henry VI that the Yorkist faction developed its claim, but from then on the issue was paramount till Henry Tudor routed Richard III at Bosworth Field in 1485.

Henry IV, the first of the Lancastrian line, as a young man was of a rather open nature, but, surrounded by plotting foes, he soon became calculating and cruel. A champion of the old ecclesiastical authority, he hunted down the heretical Lollards. But he was a practical man, who recognized that he owed his throne to a vote of Parliament, and, somewhat inconsistently with his support of clerical authority, he respected the rights of the anticlerical assembly and called it frequently to session.

Soon after his accession, Mortimers, Percies, the Scots, and the Welsh gave the King a difficult struggle to maintain his throne, but with the death of the dashing Harry "Hotspur" Percy, at the Battle of Shrewsbury in 1403, the chief opposition was broken. Then new troubles arose. In 1406 Parliament, on whom the King must rely to

hold his precarious throne, forced him to govern under a council. It recovered, moreover, its rights of petition, of freedom of speech, and of impeachment; and though these powers were not firmly established till more than two centuries later, the authority of the assembly under the Lancastrians was greater than it had yet been. Already in poor health, Henry practically left control of affairs after 1410 to his son, Prince Hal, and in 1413 the King, when he was only forty-six, fainted and died while at prayer in Westminster Abbey.

Prince Hal had already shown himself a vigorous youth when he took a man's part at the age of sixteen in the Battle of Shrewsbury. As King Henry V he proved to be one of England's ablest monarchs. Like his father, he recognized the prerogatives of Parliament, but he did more: he stood positively for government through Parliament and he promoted commercial development. Just but stern, he ruled well. A man of good private morals, pious, fond of sport, cultured, he reminds one somewhat of Edward I, but, unlike that ruler, he went backward as well as forward. Except for his support of Parliamentary government, he was reactionary. He was in the main a typical medieval hero — too late for his times. On this account his reign is not notable, as Edward's was, for new developments, and his glorious exploits in the renewed war with France overshadow all other aspects of his time. The cynical chronicler is disposed to muse, "We have had this sort of thing before, at Crécy; it belongs in the days of Edward III." But the romantic poet takes a different view.

And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

cries Shakespeare's King Harry to his men before the Battle of Agincourt.

In 1415 Henry V renewed the old war on the pretext that France had aided the Welsh rebel, Owen Glendower. Landing at Harfleur, he was soon met by a French force which outnumbered his little army four to one. But the French, like their forebears at Crécy, relied on obsolete tactics; the English archery in ambush shot down the horsemen "thundering past beneath the oriflamme"; and Henry wrote into English history a battle, Agincourt, which ranks in

glory, if not in historical importance, with Blenheim and Waterloo.

But Henry was far more than a clever field general. An able strategist, he invaded France again two years later and laid systematic siege to town after town, till by 1419 he had control of all Normandy and was at the gates of Paris. The French, disunited by their own factional wars between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs, could not withstand him. In the Treaty of Troyes, 1420, Henry was recognized heir and regent of France. Shortly afterwards he married Catharine of Valois, the daughter of Charles VI, and thus cemented his claim to the French throne. In a few years he had won back the French lands and had restored the prestige of England; had made it, in fact, the chief power in Europe. Then, true to his medieval ideal, he hoped, a century and a half after the last Crusade, to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, but before his expedition started, he died suddenly of dysentery in 1422, at the age of thirty-five. His baby son, less than a year old, succeeded him under the protectorate of Henry's brothers, the Duke of Bedford abroad and the Duke of Gloucester at home. In 1429 Henry VI, still a boy, was crowned King of England, and two years later King of France.

Bedford managed affairs in France with skill and vigor, but the appearance of the miraculous Joan of Arc in 1429 rallied her countrymen in irresistible opposition. After her martyrdom at the stake in 1431, her patriotic zeal lived on in the French soldiers, and, with the defection of the Burgundians, England's allies, and the death of Bedford in 1435, the English cause south of the Channel was as good as lost. For nearly twenty years the struggle went on, but one by one the conquests of Henry V and Bedford were relinquished — Paris, Maine, Normandy — till finally, in 1453, with the loss of Gascony, all French possessions except Calais were given up. The futile Hundred Years' War was at last over.

Conditions at home, furthermore, were equally bad. Gloucester lacked both the ability and the integrity of Bedford, and the Council, in nominal control, was weakened by factions. At the same time lawlessness was rife. Great nobles with armed retainers robbed, murdered, and bullied, often with the connivance of local justices. Before there was any question of succession to the throne, civil war, somewhat after the brutal pattern of Stephen's day, was almost a fact. Nor did the King's coming of age improve matters. Gentle,



WINDSOR CASTLE

studious, pious, Henry VI was grieved when he heard of abuses — and returned to his studies. In his zeal for scholarship, he founded two famous institutions, Eton in 1440 and King's College, Cambridge, in 1441, but misgovernment went on. The Duke of Somerset and the Earl of Suffolk succeeded in displacing the Duke of Gloucester, on the charge of treason, but the failures abroad soon brought the impeachment of Suffolk. The gentle King attempted to substitute banishment for trial, but citizens took the law into their own hands and beheaded the Earl. Soon afterwards Cade's rebellion, at first a political demand for good government, not a mob riot, drove the King and most of his council from London. Orderly at first, the rebels soon began looting, whereupon the citizens rose and drove them out. Here was anarchy, no government at all, rather than ordinary civil war; and though the rebellion soon died down, England could not long continue under such conditions — a weak king, baronial quarrels, virtually no enforcement of law and order.

Such briefly were the main disasters preceding the Wars of the Roses. In 1453, when the King became temporarily insane, Richard, Duke of York, had himself made Protector, and, when Henry somewhat recovered his sanity in 1454 and restored Somerset to power, York led the opposition. Confusion and anarchy were soon followed by a bitter dynastic war, in which the common people of England were not much interested. It was a war of rival factions, the white rose of York and the red rose of Lancaster, and its melancholy significance in the English story really is that by its many sanguinary battles it eventually so weakened the baronage that some sort of orderly government could arise — a horrible, but evidently necessary, purge. Valorous as the fighting may have been, it is probably sufficient to record here that, following the death of Richard of York at Wakefield, his son Edward led the Yorkist faction and with the help of Warwick, "the king-maker," had himself recognized as king in 1461 after his victory at Towton. But Warwick, displeased by Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville, turned against him and succeeded in restoring the pathetic Henry for six months in 1470.* Soon after, however, Edward defeated Warwick at Barnet in 1471 and the Lancastrian forces at Tewkesbury, and the Wars of the Roses

* Henry VI died in prison, in 1471, probably from violence.

were virtually over except for the final rout of Richard III fourteen years later by Henry VII.

With such conditions of disorder one could hardly expect great advances, either in government or in culture. We have seen that, under the early Lancastrians, Parliament added to its power. In 1430, to prevent the control of elections by powerful lords who dictated the vote of their retainers, the franchise was restricted in rural elections to freeholders with an annual profit of forty shillings or more, a qualification which held for four hundred years except for a brief period under Cromwell. Henceforth, for centuries, gentlemen, prosperous yeomen, and middle-class citizens were to control the Commons. Labor had no voice, either as the tool of employers or as champion of its own causes. In spite of the increased prestige of the assembly in the early fifteenth century, moreover, true representation declined; only 99 boroughs were summoned in the reign of Henry VI as against 166 under Edward I. Further, the Council, which had been responsible to Parliament, began to perpetuate itself, then came under the control of one man, Suffolk; and though Parliament succeeded in impeaching him, the assembly was generally powerless under a weak king to assert its rights. Gradually the Council ceased to rule, and Parliament sank into obscurity. By the time of Edward IV the power of the monarch was virtually absolute.

Turning to cultural conditions, reference has been made already to the decline in Gothic architecture. The Perpendicular style, which was its last phase and especially characteristic of the fifteenth century, is distinguished, however, for many beautiful towers, among them those of York,* Gloucester, Canterbury, and Magdalen at Oxford. Some of these towers were first designed as separate campaniles, after the Italian pattern, and Magdalen Tower so stood at first, but Chichester is the only remaining instance of a cathedral with separate belfry. Towards the end of the century another distinguishing feature of this style, the famous fan-tracery, found important expression in Westminster Abbey, Gloucester Cathedral, Peterborough, St. George's Chapel at Windsor, and King's College Chapel at Cambridge. But one characteristic of late Perpendicular was the flattened arch, so that it is not really the *pointed* style and is at best a sort of

* Perpendicular began to supersede Decorated in the latter half of the fourteenth century. York's towers were finished in 1472.

degenerate Gothic. In fact, the name "Tudor Gothic," though it is far from accurate, prophesies the window, with flattened arch, so typical of Tudor domestic architecture.

In literature the decline is equally conspicuous. The medieval impulse was gone, and the Renaissance had not yet come. Thomas Occleve and John Lydgate, the chief poets of the century, are instances of the moribund culture. Both followed Chaucer — "maistre deere and fadir reverent," as Occleve called him — but it was the early, academic Chaucer they copied, not the vital, human author of the *Canterbury Tales*. Occleve's most important work, the *Governail of Princes*, is in the *rime royal* made popular by Chaucer, and Lydgate's *Troy Book*, a sort of belated preface to Layamon's fabulous story of Britain, is in Chaucer's heroic couplets. Of far higher value is Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, a collection, in long retrospect, of the Arthurian stories, "reduced," as he says, "into English." Not only has Malory's book, after Caxton gave it circulation, remained through centuries the most popular version of the old romances, but it did for English prose, with simple vigorous style, what Chaucer had recently done for English verse: made it a "sufficient" vehicle, at least for narrative. In learned essays Latin still persisted, but French was now dead as an English literary tongue.

Among the most interesting literary remains of the fifteenth century are two pieces of writing which are not literature in the ordinary sense of the word. The first of these, *The Libel of English Policie*, was a treatise in verse about 1436 on the commercial and naval conditions in England. Extolling the naval prowess of Edward III and Henry V, the author warns England that her future lies in commerce and control of the "Narrowe Sea"; and his book, printed and popular in the next century, sets down principles which have ever since guided English policy. The other document was the *Paston Letters*, correspondence and records through three generations of an aggressive family. These particular people seem to have had no interest whatever in any cultural aspects of life, but they give us, as Evelyn and Pepys do in the seventeenth century, an intimate, detailed picture of the conditions in their day — a time of political disorder and social confusion.

It was this confusion, moreover, which retarded the culture of court and of the universities. Scottish literature shines by com-

parison. In the fourteenth century, after the success of Bruce, the Scots realized their first national consciousness. The various racial ingredients, the Scots from Northern Ireland, the Britons in the southwest, the Angles and Danes of the east coast, were by then united in one nation, and though Gaelic was still the tongue of the Highlanders, the derivative of North Anglian, what we now call "Scots," had become the national tongue of the Lowlanders. Already in the time of Edward III, John Barbour had written the epic of the new Scottish nationalism, *The Bruce*, a sort of mixture of epic and romance in short eight-syllable couplets, direct ancestor, both in measure and in handling of material, of Sir Walter Scott's heroic poems. In the next century Scotland enjoyed a veritable literary revival.

The first of the poets in this revival was the King himself, James I, to whom the *Kingis Quair*, or King's Book, is usually ascribed. In Chaucerian stanza and reminiscent in thought and in descriptions of *The Knight's Tale*, it tells of the author's love for Lady Jane Beaufort, whom he married in 1424; but, unlike Chaucer's tales, the poem is chiefly lyrical and reveals the character of the author himself, a perfect gentleman and knight. Important among the other Scottish poets was Robert Henryson, whose *Robin and Makyne*, a sort of pastoral lyric, gave rise to a style popular in Scotland and recaptured many years later by Robert Burns. Henryson also showed the Chaucerian influence — in versions of Aesop in *rime royal* and in his *Testament of Cresseid*, a sort of sequel to Chaucer's poem. The greatest of these Scottish poets, however, was William Dunbar, whose *The Thrissel and the Rois*, after the manner of the *Kingis Quair*, celebrated the marriage of James IV and Margaret Tudor. But Dunbar, living well into the sixteenth century, was already under the spell of the Renaissance, with its "aureate" diction, and his longer poems lack the directness and simplicity of the earlier Scottish verse. Primarily a lyric poet and a satirist, like Burns, he is really at his best in his shorter poems, such as *The Old Gray Horse*, *The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins*, and *The Merle and the Nyctingall*. Here is the true forerunner of Burns: —

Had I for warldis unkyndness
 In hairt tane ony haviness,
 Or fro my plesans bene opprest,
 I had been deid langsyne, dowtless:
 For to be blyth me-think it best.

The moribund culture of England, moreover, was no deterrent to the growth of ballads among the common people. For, though ballads go back to the time of Edward III and continue in great popularity through Tudor and Stuart days, the fifteenth century is especially the period of this form of poetry. Not written literature, they grew through oral tradition among unlettered folk and flourished particularly in the Northern Midlands, where the stories of Robin Hood and his merry men made Sherwood Forest famous, and along the border, where the exploits of rival barons or of border outlaws furnished abundant material. Of this second group *The Hunting of the Cheviot* and *Johnie Armstrong* are typical examples. But many of the fine old ballads, such as *Sir Patrick Spens*, *The Jew's Daughter*, *St. Stephen and Herod*, and *Kemp Owyne*, spring from other sources. In any case, a distinctive feature of these old narrative songs in simple four-line stanza is their anonymity. Granting an original "maker" of some crude skeleton form, they nevertheless lost all sense of authorship as they changed and developed. In the form in which we know them, with their stock phrases, their repetitions, their "leaping and lingering," they can be traced to no original author; like *Topsy*, they "just growed"; and the writers of the versions we know, like Sir Walter Scott at a later time, were merely recorders of what they heard old wives sing at their cottage doors.*

A breath of simplicity and freshness, a kind of native lyric charm, untouched by academic or literary art, runs through these old ballads. Crude but melodious, plaintive, often gruesome — for the simple folk liked stark tragedy — they bear witness to an instinctively poetic nation. What could be gayer than the description

In summer when the shaws be sheen
And leaves both large and long,
It is full merry in fair forest
To hear the fowles' song . . .

or sadder than the brief picture of the Countess of Murray waiting for her luckless Earl —

Oh lang will his lady
Look o'er the Castle Down
Ere she see the Earl of Murray
Come sounding thro' the town . . .

* Many old English ballads live on in oral tradition in the "lonesome tunes" of the Kentucky and Tennessee mountains.

— or what more simple and impressive than the last lines of *St. Stephen and Herod?*

Token he Stephen and stoned him in the way,
And therefore is his even on Christes owen day.

England not only was instinctively poetic. It had its music too. In fact, the fifteenth century reveals a new interest in secular music, and in this respect the culture was not so much a living-on of medieval traditions as it was a forerunner of the sixteenth-century passion for song. Already in the early thirteenth century John of Fornsete, a Reading monk, with his "Rota" composition for six voices to the lyric "Sumer is icumen in," had made a beginning in secular music, and shortly afterwards a book of motets was composed. In the fifteenth century John of Dunstable founded the second "school" of English secular music, and the *Cambridge Roll*, possibly by him, contains twelve carols and a song, "Our king went forth to Normandy." Still another fifteenth-century school, though its musical records have perished, is identified as connected with several men who won the first doctor's degrees in music; and Robert Fayrfax, also a musical doctor, was the founder of a fourth group, the compositions of which are preserved at Oxford.

Nor was the new interest in secular song the only sign of the passing of the old order. Edward IV, the last important ruler in medieval England, was himself friendly to the new cults of the Renaissance and the patron of William Caxton, whose press, set up at Westminster in 1476, brought to England an invention * which was to be as far-reaching in its consequences as the introduction of steam transportation in the nineteenth century. In his own day Caxton gave to the public Malory's great book, hitherto little known; in the next century printing became a common practice; and in the century after that newspapers began. The wide extension of schools under the impulse of the New Learning in Tudor days would not have been possible without the press. Together with the mariner's compass, which, though older in its somewhat legendary forms, came into practical use at about the same time as printing, Caxton's press is one of the great harbingers of the modern world.

Further, with the disappearance of the feudal order and the growth of private enterprise, soon to displace guild control of trade

* The invention is usually ascribed to Gutenberg, about 1440.

and manufacture, there was promise, already in Edward's time, of the important part looms and forges were to play in the life of England. Wool, manufactured at first chiefly in East Anglia and by Flemish weavers, was now spreading elsewhere. The rise of cottage weavers, operating where the sheep pastured, brought a new and busy life to the South Downs and to the Cotswolds. Still more, the manufacture of metal and leather goods became important industries. They were by no means as important as clothmaking, but were beginning to draw considerable numbers from the farms. Even in the matter of cloth, however, we must guard against exaggeration. It was still an infant industry. Agriculture was the occupation of the vast majority of Englishmen, and trade was more important than manufacture.

In the political aspect, moreover, Edward IV's virtually absolute rule was in line with the newer developments on the Continent. There was no serious conflict with Parliament, and there was no abolition of that body, for Edward, who was a shrewd financier, kept his pockets full and had no need of grants. He confiscated Lancastrian estates and he went into mercantile adventures in a large way and with great success.

An able ruler, Edward was not a great man or a great king. He had evidently little ambition to lead in the sense that a great sovereign must lead, but was on the whole lazy and self-indulgent. Something of a Lothario, he became the friend not only of rich London merchants, but rather intimately of their daughters too. He was a good-natured and attractive sovereign, popular with the crowd. He contrived to keep his throne for over twenty years and, unlike most rulers in those turbulent days, he died in bed.

The rest of the medieval story may be briefly told. Edward's son became Edward V on his father's death, but was never crowned and was soon murdered in the Tower with his luckless brother. Their uncle, Richard of Gloucester, though he was perhaps less of a monster than tradition has pictured him, probably instigated the murder and, on the flimsy pretext that the princes were illegitimate, got a packed Parliament to proclaim him Richard III. A fairly able ruler and, like his brother, a patron of letters, he was nevertheless not so popular as Edward IV, so that, when Henry Tudor led the opposition against him, he found little support. With his death on the

battlefield in 1485, the long contention between the Houses of Lancaster and York was virtually over. To be sure, the claim of Henry Tudor, descended through his mother from John of Gaunt's third wife, was weaker than that of others, but he was master of the situation. He strengthened his position by marrying Elizabeth of York, Edward IV's daughter, thus uniting the two houses, and he found his people, who were tired of the long dynastic struggles, ready to support him against the Yorkist rebellions under the impostors, Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck.

Nor did Henry VII merely found a new dynasty. In his reign the movement which transformed Europe and which had already given rise to a great culture in Italy at last reached England. The date of Henry's accession, 1485, marks, as nearly as such things can be dated, the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Modern World.

Yet much has remained from the elder time. Before we consider the new age, which in its whole spirit was opposed to the spirit of the medieval world, we may do well to remind ourselves how many features of English experience, even to our own day, have their origin in the long period between the Conquest and Bosworth Field.

In the first place, England became a nation — in the main the same nation, not only in speech and blood, but in boundaries and government, that it remains today. Changing customs and different economies, new religions and new points of view have developed in what is virtually the same milieu and the same material. In this sense England is the oldest nation in Europe, and has perhaps more than any other a deep-rooted reliance on her traditions. In her universities, one of the great inheritances from the Middle Ages, England has much in common with the rest of Europe, but in the institution of Parliament there is a striking contrast. For, whereas in England the national assembly endured through the period of Renaissance autocrats, it disappeared on the Continent. Parliaments in other countries have been somewhat precarious, experimental, ideological; in England they have been an immemorial experience — almost in the nature of things. So also the common law, which has come down from remote times, has been a peculiar and enduring inheritance among English-speaking peoples. Again, the importance of the English country gentleman, also a medieval product, is a

special characteristic, in contrast to the continental incubus of petty nobility. Finally, though the Reformation and mercantile England are essentially developments of the Renaissance world, we do well to recall that all through the Middle Ages Englishmen showed a persistent hostility to clericalism * and that the mercantile tendency had begun long before the "nation of shop-keepers" arose.

In spite of these important heritages from earlier times, the Middle Ages, with their feudal structure, their corporate life, and their ecclesiastical supremacy, were over by 1485. This corporate view of life had been essentially centripetal in character, with an authoritative church the chief center of reference. The Renaissance, in contrast, was essentially centrifugal; as it gathered momentum, it exalted the individual and his liberty of thought and action. It was the eventual parent of Protestantism, of Democracy, of Science.

The immediate political and social effects of the Renaissance, to be sure, instead of liberating the individual, did quite the reverse. When the temporal power of the Church was in retreat, there took place a sort of transference of "divine right" from the Church to the king. More than this, the feudal structure, with a strong baronage as a check on the king, had broken down, and the virtually self-governing corporations of the towns, with their international bonds, were outmoded. With the great mass of the nation as yet incapable of self-government, the sovereign of the Renaissance reached heights of absolute power unequaled since the Roman emperors. This peculiar exaltation of the monarch sprang up largely out of necessity and was generally a useful offset to the alternative of anarchy, but it received philosophical sanction in the writings of Machiavelli, whose *Prince* became a sort of handbook; so that the great despotic dynasties of Europe moved into entrenched positions from which only revolutions could dislodge them. Still further, the social sense that gave the monarch new importance as compared with the gentleman gave the gentleman new importance as compared with the tradesman — and so on down the line. During the Middle Ages every individual, no matter how mean, was precious in the eyes of the Church — before God, if not before man. Now, in the Renaissance world, he stood high or low in a new hierarchy; the stratifications of society became horizontal, and the lower strata had a bad

* The first phases of the Reformation in England were almost wholly anti-clerical rather than doctrinal.

time of it. It was not till the seventeenth century, when the State derived its authority from the "consent of the governed," that the Renaissance principle began to find its true political expression.

But the immediate effect of the Renaissance was nevertheless invigorating in almost every field of endeavor. It turned men's minds to this world, away from the fabulous world of romance; to the practical conquest of this earth rather than to the philosophical contemplation of the future life. If this characteristic tended to produce worldliness, materialism, self-assertion, if it destroyed in large measure the humility and piety of the medieval world, it also gave a new zest to life: it liberated man from dead conventions; it gave rise to a new kind of spiritual enthusiasm; it made each man potentially a creator instead of an automaton. Under its stimulus and challenge arose not only explorations and conquests, but much of the greatest art and literature in the history of the world.

It would be gratuitous, however, to discuss in detail a movement so familiar as the Renaissance. The main point for us to realize here, in connection with England's story, is that it did at last come to England. Within the bounds of the fifteenth century, therefore, we find the final stages of the medieval world and the first stages of the modern world — old age and youth.

Chapter VI

THE BIRTH OF MODERN ENGLAND

THE sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are perhaps the most important in the English experience. It is not merely that the direction of modern thought, as opposed to medieval, dates from the Renaissance. That is true of all Western Europe. But whereas the modern developments in many countries, — of government in France, for example, — originated in later times and in direct, often violent, opposition to the Renaissance practices in those countries, the new experiences of England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries persisted and, with obvious but on the whole minor changes, have become the traditional, *old* practices of the present day. This is true of government, of Church, of the economic and social fields.

In government, the power of the monarch at first increased, as it did all over Europe; but in England it did so with the support of a national assembly, not with its suppression; with the weakening of the barons rather than with further dynastic wars; with the good will of the people rather than with a coercive army. Yet, just as the Tudor kings did not abolish the Parliament, the Stuart assembly in 1689 did not abolish the Monarchy. Men devised out of the experience of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the pattern of constitutional monarchy which still flourishes in England.

In the Church, again, the English experience was somewhat unique. For, while the early Reformation on the Continent was marked by doctrinal disputes and sectarian quarrels, in England it was at first largely a matter of sovereignty and organization. The sectarian and doctrinal disputes of the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, therefore, bitter as they were and fearful as men still were of the shadow of Rome, accomplished a special type of English reformation, among Protestant sects themselves rather than against the Roman Church.

In the economic and social fields there was also a special English experience. The development of private enterprise, contemporaneously with the era of discovery and colonial expansion, was indeed characteristic of all Western Europe near the coasts, but the small

size of England, together with her suddenly central position in the maritime world, made her, along with Holland, conspicuous in the new mercantilism. This tendency, begun in Tudor days, continued to such an extent during the seventeenth century that England became irrevocably committed to a mercantile and maritime life; and on the extension and maintenance of this life depended her priority and success in the industrial development of the nineteenth century.

In the social aspect, moreover, we note, in contrast to the Continent, the passing of the powerful feudal baron and the aggrandizement of the squire, the yeoman, and the merchant. With the exception of Holland and Switzerland, no nation of Europe was so middle-class as England.

Finally, the new culture of the Renaissance, when it did at last reach England, took a religious and moral turn which again is more like the development in Holland than that in Italy, with its great era of art and architecture and its glorious revival of pagan culture. Though the gaiety and gusto had eventually their counterpart in England, and their great literature, too, the Renaissance proper in England was conspicuous for its lack of art, architecture, and literature. It was not till the later years of Elizabeth that the new spirit found expression in music, drama, and poetry, and not till well on in the next century that Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren gave England a Renaissance architecture.* But the eager study of the classics during the Renaissance did bring about an early revolution in schools and a type of secondary education almost as unique as the English experience in their universities. This distinctive character, which eventually came to be a sort of compound of drill in the classics, muscular Christianity, and athletics, began, not with the initial Winchester and Eton, medieval foundations, but with St. Paul's School, founded in 1512 by a great Renaissance scholar.

THE TUDORS

That England during such momentous changes should have come first under the rule of the Tudors was a singular piece of good fortune. For, whatever their faults as individuals or as monarchs, the reigning family for over a hundred years strove

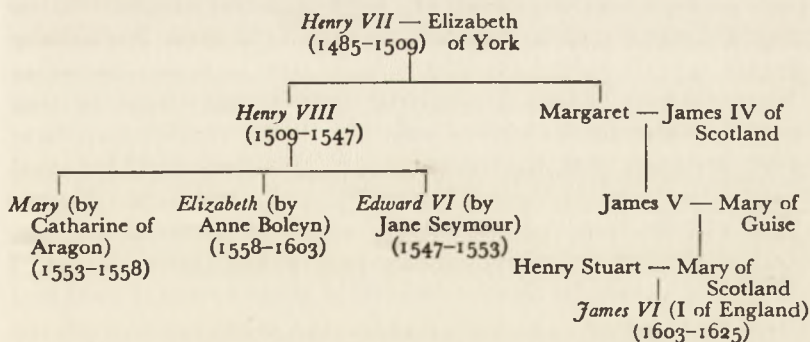
* England produced no Renaissance painting that could stand on its own feet.

vigorously to promote the welfare of their kingdom. With the exception of Edward VI and Mary, whose reigns, after all, covered only eleven years, the Tudors contrived with extraordinary success to identify their will with the will of their people and to lead England through difficult situations both at home and abroad till they left, at the death of their great Queen, a poor country grown prosperous, a disunited country grown one, and a weak little nation grown powerful, the mistress of the seas. On the surface they were opportunist; often they were inconsistent; frequently they were violent; but underneath they had a steadfast purpose. Gradually their people understood this and had faith in them.*

HENRY VII

Henry VII was certainly not an engaging figure. He has been described as the "Big Policeman" and a miser, and he seems to have been curiously indifferent to the new culture of the Renaissance. Yet he was just the sort of king that England needed after the chaos of the fifteenth century. Shrewd, practical, he had a useful capacity for seeing and steadily pursuing definite objectives: order at home, the security of the throne, peace and the encouragement of trade; and these objectives promoted, at that particular time, the best interests of the great majority of his people. Knowing well that he kept his throne through the support of the middle class, he took careful steps to foster that support, and by breaking the power of the barons he played the commoner's game as well as his own. But in his great desire for riches — apparently not only for security, nor yet for pomp

* The House of Tudor and the Stuart succession: —



and display, but for their own sweet sake — he had recourse to a good many unlovely practices. The role of Big Policeman was necessary, and he played it well; thrift was necessary, too, but here he overplayed his part. Yet it must be noted that his subjects in general gave him support, partly through fear but primarily because they welcomed order and peace after the long dynastic discord.

Henry's first step towards securing a throne to which he had only a questionable claim was to seek the support of Parliament. But, unlike the later Tudors, he had little use for parliaments, and, though he called several in the early part of his reign, he found other means of raising money and summoned only one after 1497. His next step was to appoint many commoners to his Council — a practice followed by all the Tudors — and to make increasing use of the small group known as the Privy Council. Through a committee of this group, sitting in the Star Chamber, he instituted a high-handed but expeditious type of justice without jury trial. But though Star Chamber procedure became synonymous with oppression in Stuart days, it was not generally abused under the Tudors; and it provided, when first set up, the only instrument for bringing to justice great lords who with their bands of armed retainers made a regular practice of bullying juries. "Livery and maintenance" had become a national menace. Henry stopped it by bringing offenders to book in his court. As the chief penalty was fine rather than decapitation, he made it a profitable sort of justice.

In fact, few have surpassed Henry VII in the art of raising money without general levies. In addition to income from tonnage and poundage, feudal dues, fines, and the confiscation of the lands of Yorkist rebels, the old device of "benevolences," supposed to be free gifts, was turned by him into profitable exactions. Archbishop Morton appears to have provided a convenient argument, known as "Morton's Fork" — that a man who lived lavishly must be rich enough to give freely, while a man who lived frugally must have saved so much that he too could give handsomely. The royal exactions were pushed, towards the close of the reign, into flagrant tyranny by the King's agents, Empson and Dudley, who, Bacon says, "turned law and justice into worm-wood rapine." Henry VII died the richest prince in Europe and left a great hoard of gold and jewels to his son.

But if a few rich men resented Henry's exactions, all classes applauded his shrewd foreign policy. Here, as in his domestic government, he had no grandiose schemes, but a definite, practical objective — to keep peace and improve England's international position. To this end he labored patiently, astutely, and with great success. It is worth noting that, except for his conflicts with the Yorkist pretenders, who were aided by both Burgundy and Scotland, he fought only one small war — in perfunctory support of Brittany against France — and he skillfully got out of that with a favorable treaty. He had no dreams of reconquering the old French lands, but he realized the traditional English feeling against France as well as the danger of a great power across the Channel, and the alliances which he made with Spain and the Empire to offset this danger inaugurated the policy of balance of power which has ever since guided English practice. In fact, possibly no other diplomat in English history has been so shrewd or so successful as Henry VII.

It was natural that such a man should have been interested in the promotion of trade. But here there appear conflicting motives. In his attempts to support the old Merchant Staplers he promoted a dying economy, yet at the same time, inconsistently, he gave some encouragement to the new "Merchant Adventurers," pioneer free-lances, who carried manufactured cloth to any overseas market — in contrast to the Staplers, who shipped raw wool in foreign bottoms to foreign looms. Perhaps he was trying to play both sides, for there was financial profit for him in both directions; but he evidently did not see, as the later Tudors did, the value of these new masters of trade nor yet of the explorations which were soon to provide a field of mercantile expansion. While the Spanish and Portuguese were sending their captains over uncharted seas, the English King refused to help Columbus and restricted promotion of exploration to a niggardly support of Bristol traders and to a parsimonious grant of ten pounds to John Cabot in 1497. Yet Bristol merchants had already been seeking for some years "the island of Brazil," and their activities had begun to steal trade from the old, guild-ridden cities of the east and southeast coasts.

In the matter of the enclosure of land, the same charge, of failure to understand the trend of the times, cannot be made without qualification. All the Tudors sought to prevent this inevitable

development, not so much for the sake of the old order as to avoid the alarming political consequences. For it was not the small enclosures by yeomen which changed the political atmosphere of rural districts, but the enclosures by real estate speculators from towns. These men bought up lands and rented their enclosures to people who had no immemorial place in the community and who grazed sheep for profit. Subsistence farming and the old agricultural economy were giving place, inevitably, to a capitalist mercantilism; and the King viewed with misgiving the threat to his old gentry and yeomanry.

Henry VII had another blind side. Though he was much interested in ecclesiastical building, he was almost oblivious to the new trends in religion and scholarship. Lollardry had been officially stamped out, but the spirit of it, a sort of latent Puritanism, lived on among humble folk. There was grievous need of a revival, such as the friars had provided in the thirteenth century, but neither Church nor King saw the need. This inarticulate demand was nevertheless an accumulating force, which in course of time was to become an important ingredient in the Protestant Reformation.

But though the "hungry sheep" of the parishes were not fed, the hungry scholars fared better. The New Learning, which had already transformed Italy, inspired a group of great men at Oxford towards the close of the fifteenth century. Of these William Grocyn was the chief pioneer.* Educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford, he spent the years from 1488 to 1491 in Italy, whence he returned alive with the new humanism. According to Erasmus, Grocyn taught Greek at Oxford before he went to Italy, but his great teaching was during the following decade, when he was associated with Linacre and Colet and for a short time with the great Dutch scholar himself. Grocyn evidently did little writing, and his only composition now available is a short Latin poem on a lady who snow-balled him, but his contemporaries testify to his great influence as a teacher, particularly in the new attitude towards the classics. It is significant that Erasmus called him "the friend and preceptor of us all."

Thomas Linacre, who was a pupil of Selling's at Canterbury and

* William Selling, who went to Italy in 1464 and who taught at the Canterbury Priory School, was probably the first to teach Greek in England.



KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

also studied at Oxford and in Italy, was one of the younger men associated for a while with Grocyn and was himself a distinguished humanist and physician. He numbered Erasmus and Thomas More among his pupils and was famous for the correctness and beauty of his Latin, into which he translated parts of Galen and Aristotle. Made tutor to Prince Arthur about 1501 and Court Physician in 1509, he promoted the founding of the Royal College of Physicians in London and was its first president.

John Colet was in some ways the most brilliant of them all. The son of Sir Henry Colet, who later became Lord Mayor of London, he too studied at Oxford and in Italy, as well as at Paris, and when only thirty electrified Oxford with his revolutionary lectures on Saint Paul. For he, like the other humanists, sought to find out what Paul meant, not what ecclesiastical tradition said he meant. This honest endeavor of the humanists, of whom there were no more ardent members than Grocyn and Colet, was to lead eventually to a new approach in all branches of learning. Colet later became Dean of St. Paul's and in 1512 founded the famous school, with William Lyly, another Oxford scholar, as the first "high master." It was revolutionary of Colet to appoint a layman, the first nonclerical headmaster in England; but this was only another sign that scholarship was passing out of the hands of a somnolent Church. Colet, however, held such liberal views that many considered him a heretic, though Archbishop Warham, friend of Oxford scholars, refused to bring him to trial.

The work of these Oxford men in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries is of particular significance because of the direction it gave to study. Learning henceforward was its own justification, pursued for its own sake, not solely to support a theological end. On such a basis, science might some day come into its own, not die prematurely as it did in the days of Grosseteste and Roger Bacon. With this new motive, educational rather than theological, Colet had appointed Lyly, and under the impetus which the New Learning gave to education many grammar schools were founded.* At the same time, many new colleges came into being, eight altogether at the two universities during the reigns of the first two Tudors. To the wider horizons in the geographical world, quickening manu-

* The most famous of these is the Manchester Grammar School, established in 1515.

facture and trade, were thus added new horizons in the world of mind and spirit. The first fruits were an earnest search for truth in the religious and moral fields, but subsequently in every field of human activity. The result was a gradual secularization of education, and though education inclined on that account eventually to become materialistic, even crassly utilitarian in our own day, the pioneers of the English Renaissance made a brave beginning towards the liberation of the human mind.

Towards the end of his reign, with peace and security established, Henry VII turned more and more to the business of amassing a fortune. After the death of his excellent and beautiful queen, Elizabeth of York, he sought another marital alliance and inquired with much curiosity into the physical and financial qualifications of various ladies, but the calculating old diplomat died unsatisfied in 1509. He was buried in the magnificent chapel which he had added to Westminster Abbey. Thus passes from our scene the first of the Tudors, with his mysterious smile — a shrewd, calculating sort of face in the famous Flemish portrait, but withal rather whimsical and baffling, the face of a man one might fear or follow, but not love.

HENRY VIII

Few contrasts could be greater than that between the old King and the new. Only eighteen when he ascended the throne, "Bluff King Hal" was a gay, sociable youth, of an open nature. A bounding athlete, he excelled in archery, riding, wrestling, and court tennis. He loved masques, pageants, dances, tournaments. Whereas his father stayed at home and shrewdly pulled diplomatic wires, Henry VIII went abroad with great pomp and display, to meet the French King in splendor on the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Whereas Henry VII kept to himself and counted the accumulating hoard, the son mixed freely with all sorts of people and spent not only the inherited hoard, but other vast sums raised by dubious means. The elder Henry had a sort of traditional veneration for ecclesiastical ways; Henry VIII had no religion whatever and, like his distinguished daughter, considered Church matters almost wholly from a personal or a political angle. Still further, the son was an accomplished musician and linguist, not only a scholar friendly to the

New Learning, but an active supporter of its work. Whether in physical or mental pursuits, he had, even more than the great Angevin Henry, a sort of splendid, voracious vitality.

Beneath the gaiety and the sociability, however, the new King had a strong will and a love of power. In spite of the contrast with his father, he had at bottom the same Tudor shrewdness, a determination to have his way, but always with carefully authorized, if often preposterous, sanction. A big man, he did not fear to gather big men about him; and, a capricious tyrant, he did not hesitate to break them mercilessly as the need arose. In fact, he has been called Machiavelli's "Prince in Action," and both his mastery and his magnificence justify the title as applied to him perhaps more than to any of the great Renaissance despots.

The interesting fact about his despotism, though, perhaps its saving grace, was that he rested it on the support of Parliament and thus re-established the prestige of that body when other European monarchs had generally dispensed with legislative assemblies. It was his servant, to a large extent "packed" by him, but it did meet and pass laws; and from this revival of authority it moved on during Elizabeth's reign through long practice to a consciousness of power which enabled it in the seventeenth century to win the great fight with the Crown.

Headstrong, capricious, out for himself if ever man was, Henry VIII, like his father and daughter, had the uncanny Tudor capacity for promoting England's good with his own. His propensity for cutting off heads and for marital experiments obscures the real services of his reign. He maintained, on the whole, England's policy of balance of power at a time when another course might have proved disastrous. He improved the Navy and supported trade. He enlarged and unified the scope of the central government within the British Isles. He gave England the kind of reformation it wanted, freedom from the clerical incubus, and he steadily opposed the reformation only a minority then wished — reform of doctrine. Finally, by retaining and using the Parliament, he saved the general assembly from extinction; and thus, paradoxical as it may seem, a despotic, Machiavellian prince contributed to the beginnings of democracy.

Yet, in spite of his real service to England, there is an unpleasant tarnish on his rule. Both Henry VII and Elizabeth left England

better off than they found it. Henry VIII, in contrast, found a prosperous kingdom and left it in economic distress. In addition, the popular young athlete of the early years grew gradually, through headstrong self-indulgence, into the brutish tyrant a succession of wives and martyrs knew only too well. But he was a Tudor. If he was ruthless, he was never reckless.

The first glimpses we get of the young Henry reveal the gay and popular prince. The Italian Renaissance, except among the scholars, had not hitherto penetrated England, but now the Italy where princes in State and Church vied with one another as patrons of art and as dispensers of sumptuous living found an echo at the court of the English King. His father had hardly been buried with great pomp before his own marriage to his brother's widow, Catharine of Aragon, was celebrated with even greater pomp. From then on, Henry continued to entertain himself and his court with a round of festivities. Mummers, with rich, extravagant costumes, with torches and dancing, were a frequent pastime. The Italian masque, as yet not very dramatic, was much like the mummery and depended largely on the elaborate costumes and the dancing. More dramatic was the pageant. In one a great cart was marvelously decorated with a forest and a golden "castell" and drawn by "two great beasts, a lion and an antelop; the lion florished all over with damaske gold." "When the pageant rested before the queene, the forenamed foresters blew their horns; then the devise or pageant opened on all sides, and out issued the fore said foure knights armed at all peeces." Still more dramatic was the interlude. Though morality plays continued and the best of them, *Everyman*, dates from the reign of Henry VIII, the interlude, a humorous skit, was far more popular as a court entertainment and grew, in the hands of John Heywood, author of *The Foure P's*,* into an important precursor of Elizabethan comedy. In addition to these diversions, Henry provided frequent tournaments and contests of archery. Here indeed, at the court of this expansive prince, began those spectacles popular in England for a century —

Where throngs of Knights and Barons bold
In weeds of Peace high triumphs hold,

* * *

And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique Pageantry.

* "A merry Interlude of a Palmer, a Pardoner, a Potecary, and a Pedlar."

This openhanded display made the King popular among those privileged to attend the court, a popularity which spread among their followers, and it received further impetus from such incidents as the one where he stepped aside from a royal "Maiynge" to see a company of tall yeoman shoot with the bow or to follow a "Robynhood" "into the grene wood and to se how the outlawes lyve."

So also the youthful King endeared himself to other groups. One of his first steps was to secure the conviction and execution of the notorious Empson and Dudley, his father's exacting lawyers, to the delight of the suffering rich. Again, in addition to the more frivolous entertainments of his court, he kept in lively touch with artists, musicians, and scholars. There were no English painters of note, but Henry invited many foreigners to London, including the great Holbein. He was himself a composer of ability, something of a performer, and a tremendous collector of musical instruments. A large number of compositions have been ascribed to him, chiefly songs, ballads, and instrumental pieces, and it is said that he composed two complete church services.

The New Learning had made its way unaided under Henry VII. Under his son, an accomplished linguist, it at first received hearty support. We have already noted Dean Colet, with his layman headmaster Lyly at St. Paul's, and Linacre, the great humanist and physician. In Henry VIII's reign two friends of these men and supporters of the New Learning found special favor. One of them, Sir Thomas More, was a happy combination of scholar, gentleman, and statesman — one of the noblest figures in English history. The other, Thomas Wolsey, though he had a scholarly side and founded Christ's Church at Oxford, and though he was one of the shrewdest diplomats in his day, was overbalanced by pride and self-esteem. When he became a great prince of the Church, after the Italian fashion, he lived in splendor hardly surpassed by that of the King, and his York House at Westminster, later Whitehall Palace, as well as his palace at Hampton Court,* rivaled royal establishments. He failed to realize till it was too late that his eminence rested wholly on the favor of the King, and he fell suddenly, completely from power.

* Wolsey built Hampton Court in 1515 and later gave it to the King. It was one of the private royal residences through Tudor and Stuart times.

Sir Thomas More was of different mettle. Removed from Oxford by his father, who was fearful of the new ideas, and set to study law in London, he always retained his enthusiasm for the New Learning. Though he became a successful lawyer and competent judge, his fame rests largely on his part in the scholarly and liberal thinking of his day. In greater degree than any of his distinguished contemporaries, he kept a sane balance between the old and the new. He was an ardent supporter of the new scholarship, but at the same time of Papal authority; he opposed the abuses within the Church and State, but he did not advocate revolution. In his home, Erasmus said, "is none, man or woman, but readeth or studieth the liberal arts, yet is their chief care of piety." It was this liberal Christian gentleman who wrote in Latin the famous *Utopia*, a picture of an ideal commonwealth, an interesting contrast to Machiavelli's *Prince* — the one the vision and promise of the Renaissance, the other the cynical logic of fact. It was the same scholarly More who was made High Steward of Cambridge in 1525.

More's eminence as a lawyer led him into public life. He was much in favor with Henry VIII, both for his scholarship and his legal ability. In 1518 he became a Privy Councillor, in 1523 Speaker of the House, and, on Wolsey's fall in 1529, Chancellor. But More, unlike Wolsey, suffered from no illusions of grandeur. Reposing his faith in a higher power, he went serenely to the block when the capricious King could not force him to compromise his conscience.

The tutelary genius of the New Learning, not only in England, but throughout Western Europe, was of course Erasmus. We have seen him at Oxford with Grocyn and Linacre. In 1509 he visited More in London, where he wrote his famous *Praise of Folly*; in 1511 Bishop Fisher sent him to teach at Cambridge, and he was there off and on till 1517. About this time the vigor of the New Learning passed from Oxford to Cambridge. At both universities the adherents of the old order, the "Trojans," as they were called, opposed the innovators stubbornly. The "Greeks" were suspected of heretical Lutheran notions, but most of the great Oxford scholars, including Erasmus, were staunch Romanists, with no sympathy for a Lutheran Reformation, and even at Cambridge those contemptuously called "Germans" were for the most part concerned with reforming abuses *within* the Church. But the growing interest in a vernacular Bible and in liberal discussion of doctrine flourished



CHRIST'S CHURCH, OXFORD



MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD



chiefly at Cambridge, the *alma mater* of Cranmer, Tyndale, and Coverdale.

A curious figure, somewhat associated with the scholars, yet apart from them, was the poet John Skelton. Born just after the middle of the fifteenth century, he was in many respects a medieval poet, in the Chaucerian tradition, and his famous satire, *The Bowge* * of *Court*, with its personified characters, recalls the old allegorical pattern. But he had a reputation as a scholar, both at Oxford and at Cambridge, and Caxton wrote in great praise of him, when the New Learning was young, "I suppose he hath drunken of Elycons well." He was referred to as the "poet-laureate of Oxford" and for a short time was tutor to Henry VIII. Later he secured the patronage of Cardinal Wolsey, but by 1522 he began to attack him in scathing satire, especially in *Speke, Parrot* and *Why Come Ye Nat to Courte?* In danger of his life, he sought sanctuary in Westminster Abbey, where he died in 1529.

These satires and other later poems of Skelton's, in whimsical doggerel, are his most characteristic and most interesting work. A sort of Villon, an irreverent rogue, he lacked Villon's lyric power, but, to use his own phrase, his satire, "though my ryme be ragged . . . hath in it some pyth." Except for his touch with the New Learning, he was no more a product of the Renaissance than was the great Frenchman. In fact, there was no Renaissance literature in England as yet, outside of the scholarly field. It was not till near the close of Henry's reign that poetry showed signs of the "new birth."

But though Henry was much occupied in his early years with festivals and the patronage of scholarship, art, and music, he was a vigorous ruler both at home and abroad. High-handed and capricious with the rich and powerful, he nevertheless gave "plain people" efficient government and saw to it that justice was maintained in his courts. Many more cases came before the prerogative courts than heretofore, but in local cases the King relied largely on justices of the peace, appointed by him in the communities where they resided. In this way Henry avoided an expensive bureaucracy based on Westminster and at the same time reposed extraordinary

* "Bowge" (Fr. *bouche*) means "rations."

reliance in the loyalty and cohesion of his subjects. For these J. P.'s, entrusted with many administrative functions, were as much their people's representatives as the King's. They were thus guardians of a nice balance between the monarch and his subjects. The self-importance and ignorance of some, especially in subsequent times, provided authors with ample warrant for such humorous figures as Justice Shallow, Sir Roger, and Squire Western, but most of the J. P.'s gave efficient service; there was no coercive army behind suspicious-looking royal agents; and gentlemen and yeomen, so governed, felt well disposed to their sovereign.

In foreign affairs Henry VIII, when he first ascended the throne, departed from the conservative ways of his father. His marriage naturally promoted the old support of Spain against France, but, when Henry joined the Holy League against French control in Italy, he imagined himself a sort of Henry V and set out with great pomp to win back the English domains in France. In fact, this unreligious young champion, who wrote a blast against Luther, enjoyed the title, given him by the Pope, of "Defender of the Faith." In 1513 he won a brilliant victory in northern France, and at the same time an English army routed the Scottish allies of France at Flodden Field, where James IV was slain. But they were barren victories, for the League broke up when the Pope and Ferdinand had secured their ends, and Henry was left to make what peace he could with Louis XII.

These campaigns brought Wolsey to the fore. Already Archbishop of York, he had shown great administrative ability in organizing men and equipment, and in 1515 Henry made him Chancellor and left foreign matters largely in his hands. Under Wolsey's guidance the effort to maintain a balance of power was revived and pushed so vigorously and astutely that the invention of this diplomatic policy is frequently ascribed to him. Elected Cardinal and appointed Papal Legate to England, he rose in these years to enormous influence and lived in unparalleled splendor for an English prelate.

But to maintain the balance of power was not easy when the old kings of France and Spain died. For Francis I was a vigorous monarch, and Charles V, by uniting under one crown the Empire and Spain, almost had Europe in the palm of his hand. Nor was it easy for Wolsey when Henry, thrown in a wrestling match with Francis, lost his temper and sent the Cardinal to make an alliance

with the already too-powerful Charles. This meant war, and war meant taxes, especially as Henry, with his numerous lackeys and his vast baggage trains of portable pavilions, made war an expensive sport. Parliament refused the taxes, and the wise young Tudor did not push the matter, but kept his popularity and let Wolsey try forced loans. But they proved onerous and insufficient, and poor Wolsey, not the King, was again loaded with the blame. By 1525, however, Charles V threatened to dominate all Europe, and Henry at long last switched back to an alliance with France and somewhat restored the balance of power.

From this point on the King relied less and less on Wolsey. The Cardinal was by no means wholly to blame for mistakes in diplomacy, but, ambitious to be next Pope, he could not now afford to offend Charles, who was virtual master of the Papacy. After 1529, when Wolsey was dismissed, Henry was his own foreign minister. With less ambition than at first, he withdrew to a defensive position and with something of his father's sagacity he made much of England's neutrality. His policy on the whole set the pattern which his wise daughter so successfully followed for the first thirty years of her reign and which now for four hundred years has been accumulating prestige as the traditional English policy. From Oliver Cromwell to the present day — indeed, from Henry himself, the "Defender of the Faith" — it has been customary to dress this policy with high moral motives, but it is at bottom a realistic policy, on which the very existence of England has often depended.

Unquestionably the most conspicuous feature of Henry's reign was the first stage of the English Reformation. Its significance has been somewhat obscured by the notoriety of one feature of it, Henry's drive for a divorce. The King shrewdly capitalized the growing hostility to clericalism, an old and persistent force in England, a force which in the early sixteenth century had become articulate, almost vociferous. Anticlericalism, though, was largely political and economic. A protest, it was not Protestant in any doctrinal sense; and the King, who guided the first phase of the Reformation, was no Protestant at all. While he stoutly defended his supremacy with the headsman's ax, he as stoutly defended the old faith with the stake. It is therefore important to realize that the incident of separation was only the beginning of the English Reformation, that, be-

sides the anticlericalism but later than it in becoming widespread and articulate, was a growing force of genuine Protestantism.

It is equally important to realize that the peculiar circumstances which attended the birth of the English Reformation led to an ecclesiastical experience unique in England, the institution of the Anglican Church. In Northern Germany, Holland, and Switzerland, people worshiped under new forms and held new doctrines, but their churches existed side by side, as it were, with the old churches. Their authority was at first very weak. In England, on the other hand, the new Church, with the King at its head, held all the authority, but kept the old doctrines. Gradually new ideas wrought changes in beliefs, but for a long time they were tolerated only within the established, authoritative organization. In the view of many there was no innovation, but merely a restoration of an old authority surrendered by King John to the Pope. Even when new doctrines appeared, many of the old rituals remained. In a sense, then, the new Church was not new at all, but a changed form of the old, still continuing the ancient tradition "with its singular rubrics and surplices at Allhallowtide."

This condition had a result conspicuous in England. An appalling respectability, an official sanctity, gradually came to be attached to the Anglican organization. Quite apart from good works or bad works, irrespective of doctrine or practice, a new caste, the Anglican clergy, eventually grew up. Dissenters were at length tolerated so far as doctrine and form went, but they are still set apart officially and socially. Indeed, much English history from the Stuarts to the present day is unintelligible if we do not understand this ecclesiastical caste, with its dining deans, its fox-hunting parsons, and its tea-drinking curates.*

Henry's thought of divorce was long antecedent to the idea of separation from Rome. Probably the black eyes of Anne Boleyn attracted him, but so had the eyes of other ladies whom he had no notion of marrying. His main motive in seeking divorce was undoubtedly his desire for a legitimate male heir. There was no precedent in England for a reigning queen; Catharine was past bearing; with Mary his only legitimate child the House of Tudor might dis-

* In no other country in the world could have arisen the story of the curate who, when asked by the bishop if his egg wasn't good, replied, "Parts of it, my lord, are excellent."

appear. The idea of a break with Rome came later, and later still the predatory seizure of Church property.

Technical divorce was out of the question, but annulment was possible. Wolsey pushed the matter with the Pope as early as 1527, but the Pope, eager not to offend Charles V, the nephew of the English Catharine, temporized for two years and then moved the case from England to Rome. The Cardinal, with his eye on the Papacy, could not well press the case vigorously, and Henry, impatient over the stalemate, sacrificed his chief minister. For a year Wolsey was allowed to retain the Archbishopric of York, but was arrested in 1530 on a charge of treason and died at Leicester on his way to the Tower. Vain, worldly, immoral, he was nevertheless a great diplomatist, a loyal servant of his monarch, a friend of scholars, and a patron of culture. His own well-known comment is perhaps his best epitaph: "If I had served God as diligently as I have done the King, He would not have given me over in my gray hairs."

But impatient as Henry was in some respects, he had the Tudor quality of patience in working out legal support. It was at this point that Thomas Cranmer, an obscure chaplain, suggested that, as Catharine had been the King's "deceased brother's wife," there had never been a legal marriage at all; that there was no necessity for a Papal decision, that the case could be tried at Canterbury. Seizing on this convenient suggestion, Henry marshaled a quantity of favorable legal opinions and, on the death of Archbishop Warham in 1532, slipped Cranmer into the primacy. As everything but technicalities was now secure, the seeming-virtuous Anne went abroad with Henry in November, 1532, was married to him the following January, and early in September gave birth to Elizabeth.

The precedent of this case and the pliability of Cranmer provided the King with his opportunity for those further marital experiments which have been the gossip of four centuries. Perhaps Anne's absurd arrogance in her new position disgusted him. It looks as if the adultery charges brought against her had some justification, for, though the evidence is by no means clear, the unanimous verdict included the votes of her own father and uncle. At all events, immediately after her execution in 1536, Henry married Jane Seymour, who bore him a son but died a few days later. His first motive, to get a male heir, was now satisfied, but he experimented with three other wives — probably from habit and the hope

of a good bargain. Perhaps the chief significance of this sorry succession of wives is the proof that a Tudor could do about as he pleased. The only case that has wide importance is the second, bound up as it was with the movement towards separation.

For the anticlericalism on which the King had relied dominated Parliament. Step by step that body broke the Papal jurisdiction till finally, in 1534, with the famous Act of Supremacy, it declared the King head of the Anglican Church. But not without protest on the part of some, and not without hope of new doctrines on the part of others. Sir Thomas More, who had resigned his chancellorship in 1532 when he would not support the divorce proceedings, now refused to countenance the new supremacy, as did the saintly Bishop Fisher of Rochester. With others of less note but of equal conscience they perished on the scaffold. At the same time those who wanted reform of doctrine were persecuted as heretics. The Act defining the Six Articles of Religion made virtually no change in the old beliefs; Henry continued to be a sort of preposterous "Defender of the Faith"!

More than this, the King soon used his new power to fill his empty pockets. Bishop Fisher had been right when he said, "It is not so much the good as the goods of the Church that is looked after." Thomas Cromwell, a shrewd lawyer and self-seeking moneylender whom Henry had raised to power, now became chief minister and engineered, with Parliamentary support, the dissolution of the monasteries. In 1536 the smaller monasteries were suppressed, in 1539 the greater, and the wealth of these numerous establishments went to the Crown. Parliament thus satisfied its anticlerical animus and postponed the need of further levies. The old conventual institutions had largely outlived their usefulness; in many the life was idle, in some corrupt; but the wholesale confiscation was cruel, high-handed, and a dangerous precedent. There was nevertheless only a feeble protest, an insurrection in the North called the Pilgrimage of Grace, easily put down. Fifty years before, the first Tudor sat on a precarious throne; now a Tudor despot was secure.

Many of the old abbeys soon fell to decay, but others were rented or sold to rich men, some of whom Henry raised to a subservient peerage. Henceforth the gentleman, whose lineage dated more or less from the Conquest, was inclined to look down upon what to

him seemed an upstart nobility, with a pride which persists here and there among "county" families to the present day. This helped to crystallize the gentleman class; and it is noteworthy that in England the term "*noblesse oblige*" applies far more accurately to the ideals and practices of this singular section of society than to those of the peerage or of royalty itself. For, as the gentleman class came later to be the ruling group, it tempered its authority with its sense of responsibility to such an extent that this peculiar virtue, this instinct "to play up and play the game," has become the standard definition of "gentleman" everywhere. At the same time, the nobility, frequently invigorated by new blood, for Henry's successors have continued the practice of creating peers, has been much more representative of the people than the baronage on the Continent.

The effect of the separation was more far-reaching than intended. We have already noted the slow fermentation of true Protestantism working below the more aggressive anticlericalism. Now, in spite of Henry's persecutions and his effort to keep the old wine in a new bottle, the explosive spirit of reformation gathered force. Even Cranmer, the King's man, was favorable to liberal doctrines and to the new movement for a vernacular Bible and a revised Prayer Book. One of the most distinguished of these reformers was William Tyndale, the first translator of part of the Bible into modern English. Educated at both Oxford and Cambridge, friend of Erasmus, he soon went further than the old Oxford scholars in his support of reforms. Forced to seek refuge on the Continent, he published his *New Testament* at Worms in 1526, and at Marburg two pamphlets supporting the authority of the Scripture and the supremacy of the State, as well as another attacking Henry's divorce proceedings. But he was harried from place to place and finally betrayed by a friend in Belgium. There, at the instance of Henry VIII, he was condemned for heresy and in 1536 was strangled and burned at the stake. In Tyndale the spirit of Wiclif was reborn; Protestantism was becoming far more than anticlericalism. His Bible was a great work, written in such simple and powerful English that its style haunts the later translations, including the *Authorized Version* of 1611.

Henry, much as he opposed Tyndale, saw the value of an English Bible, now that the English Church was separated from Rome,

and he approved of a translation in 1539 by Miles Coverdale.* But Coverdale, another Cambridge man, soon went further in doctrinal reforms than Henry approved and, on Cromwell's fall in 1540, he was forced to leave England. In Germany he became a Lutheran preacher, but returned to England in 1548, when Protestantism, under Edward VI, had official approval. Made Bishop of Exeter, Coverdale was forced again to leave England during the reign of Mary Tudor, but he returned with great honor under Elizabeth and, though nearly eighty, continued preaching to large crowds till his death in 1568.

These translations of the Bible and a few pamphlets were the chief English literature of the early sixteenth century, though the Scottish poems of Dunbar,** Skelton's later work, some ballads and songs, and the interludes, already mentioned, add to the rather meager tale. Towards the end of Henry's reign, however, signs of the new styles which were to flourish in Elizabeth's time began to appear. The classical infection stirred the schoolmasters not only to the study of philosophy and grammar, but to an interest in classical drama; and Nicholas Udall, headmaster of Eton, wrote the first English comedy, *Ralph Roister Doister*, to be acted by schoolboys — a dull play, but based on a Latin model, with acts and scenes, and significant as a departure from the traditional morality plays and interludes. Equally important as new ventures, and far better as literature, were the sonnets of Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. Wyatt, a courtier and diplomatist, wrote a good deal of poetry, chiefly songs and satires, during his short, active life, but his work, though not without vigorous feeling, is crude; his introduction of the Italian sonnet is his chief claim to literary fame. Surrey, of the distinguished family of naval story, was a turbulent fellow, in frequent conflict with the rival court faction of the Seymours, a conflict which led to a "framed" conviction and his execution in 1547, when he was only twenty-nine. But in the odd moments of this short and busy life he set English poetry forward in the path to Spenser and Shakespeare. His sonnets were less correct than Wyatt's, but far smoother; he abandoned the tedious allegory of medieval poetry; and he introduced the Italian love-

* This translation, *The Great Bible*, was based on an earlier one by Coverdale in 1535, the first complete English version.

** See Chapter V.

motif so conspicuous in the poetry of the Elizabethans.* In addition to this, he translated two books of the *Æneid* into the first English blank verse.

In other arts the first half of the Tudor century made no great contribution. Tudor architecture, in fact, is rather a misnomer, for the ecclesiastical and collegiate building was largely late Gothic, and much of the so-called Tudor domestic architecture was Jacobean, though there was a sort of hybrid in the lovely Elizabethan domestic buildings. There was a hint of the Italian Renaissance in the more pretentious dwellings, particularly in porticoes and windows, but it came to little till the later Renaissance structures in the seventeenth century. In smaller dwellings, as in castles and palaces, however, the large, rectangular windows, frequently three or four together, began to take the place of the Gothic arched window and of the old arrow slit; and this is perhaps the most conspicuous external mark of early Tudor building. It was in the interior that greater changes were taking place: separate chambers, more fireplaces, a dining-hall with *table dormant* even in modest houses — changes which indicate increasing wealth and comfort. Indeed, it was in the arts of living rather than in the fine arts and literature that the Italian influence was at first most noticeable. Under the same impulse there were new advances in agriculture and gardening, and such hitherto exotic fruits as grapes, plums, cherries, and apricots were introduced. The Italian contagion, in fact, was almost as great as the French influence of later times. To some extent rich merchants as well as courtiers took up the new ways — the dances, the card games, the dress of Italian society.

The well-being which such conditions indicate was not general. Merchants and weavers were prosperous, but the agricultural population, much the largest in the kingdom, suffered grievously. In desperation Henry tried a favorite resort of spendthrift government, debasing the currency. Prices rose out of all proportion to wages, and the army of paupers was seriously increased by the dispossessed monks and friars. A great growth in the population, moreover, added to the problem. Almost stationary for several hundred

* The songs and sonnets of both Wyatt and Surrey were not printed till Tottel's *Miscellany* in 1557.

years, the number of inhabitants nearly doubled during the reigns of the first two Tudors, in spite of many serious plagues. Further, the extravagant King, when he had run through the confiscated wealth of the monasteries, appropriated much of the property of the craft guilds. It was simply royal robbery and inevitably increased the distress. In an economic sense, the England of the forties was in far worse case than the England of twenty years before. Poor laws, laws against enclosures, and some expense on public works, to give employment, were of little avail. Only time could cure the dislocation caused by the inevitable trend from an agricultural to a mercantile England. Nor were the results wholly bad, even in Henry's time, for the growth of the adventuring merchants, encouraged by him, laid the foundation for the new prosperity of Elizabeth's reign.

In a political sense, moreover, England was in better case. It is true that the King's caprices and cruelties increased in his old age. He had now the scaffold habit. Cromwell, little mourned, lost his head in 1540, and a foreign observer noted that in England no gentleman seemed to be quite complete unless a member of his family had been to the block. Nevertheless, as Henry gave up his foreign ambitions, he turned more and more to promoting efficient government within his own realm. Reference has already been made to the local administration of justice. In addition, the rule which had long been established throughout most of the country was extended to Wales and to the North of England. These sections, till now largely under feudal sovereignty, were incorporated into a united kingdom and henceforth sent representatives to Parliament.

In Scotland and Ireland his efforts were not so successful. He attempted to coerce the Scots, but he was unable to win them from their sympathy for France or to persuade them to marry their Princess Mary to his son Edward. In Ireland he put English deputies in place of the Irish earls in the "Pale," the small area around Dublin, himself assumed the title of King of Ireland, and sought to extend English law beyond the Pale, but he died without accomplishing much extension of English authority.

The King's services to the Navy were important. Ever since Henry V, England had been increasingly sea-conscious. Henry VII had built a great ship, the *Henri Grace à Dieu*, and when she sank, his son built another with the same name, a boat over one thousand tons burden and gorgeously decorated, with a streamer fifty yards

long. But this was something of a gesture. Henry VIII's real contribution was in changing the design of ships, making them longer and narrower and fitting them with broadside cannon to shoot through port-holes. Hitherto navies, with galleys and galleons, had relied largely on grappling and boarding, but the newer naval tactics meant getting the weather berth and firing broadsides. These changes, begun under Henry VIII, proved their value soon afterwards when Elizabeth's nimble little ships harried the great Armada up the Channel. It was Henry, furthermore, who put the Navy on a permanent foundation as a separate arm. His fleet took an important part in the alliance with the Empire, and one of his admirals, Thomas Howard, was made commander in chief of the allied navies.

Towards the end of his reign Henry relied a good deal on his Council, but he never gave up his active part in the administration of affairs. The patron of art and learning, the engaging, open-handed prince, had long since died, and with that Henry the love of his people. But, revolting and cruel as much of his later life was, the nation seems to have sensed that he had steered them through difficult seas; he lost their love, but not their loyalty. Corpulent, gross, suffering from gout, exhausted by his own violence, he died in 1547 at the age of fifty-six. But the shrewd old Tudor did not die without providing wisely for the succession of his House — first to Edward; then, in case of the boy's death, to his daughter Mary; and finally to Elizabeth; and he took pains to have the document ratified by Parliament.

If we now look back through the reigns of the first two Tudor kings, a period of sixty-two years, we realize somewhat suddenly what important changes had taken place. The English King, like the Continental sovereigns, had become a powerful monarch, but with the conspicuous difference that he rested his strength largely on the support of the Commons. The Anglican Church had been established, and the far greater revolution of Protestantism was making. The New Learning had wrought a fundamental change in education. Finally, the new economic order of mercantilism was at hand. In contrast, the baronial wars, the feudal powers, the old Church, education submerged in theology, guild economy — all so recently the order of the day — suddenly seem remote and shadowy. Modern England had begun.

Chapter VII

CONFUSED INTERLUDE

WHEN Henry VIII died, England had need of a strong ruler. Henry VII had effectually broken the power of the barons, but there had grown up now a powerful body of exalted commoners, men held in the king's service by an astute mixture of rewards and peremptory discipline, but likely, under a weak monarch, to seize control and then to fall to quarreling among themselves. With Council and Parliament as yet unfit to manage affairs wisely, a thrifty monarch was necessary, too, to mitigate the economic distress which had developed rapidly in the last years of Henry VIII. Perhaps no one could have turned that distress to prosperity in those days, as Elizabeth later did, for it was a major economic dislocation, which in a sense could be cured only by time, but it might have been lessened with wise management. To these two serious dangers was added a third, the gathering religious quarrel — no longer solely a question of sovereignty, but a growing conflict of ideologies.

As bad luck would have it, what England needed she did not get for eleven years. The result was a period of great confusion. At first there was a boy king with rival regents on the edge of civil war, continued economic distress, and a new, assertive Protestantism, which overreached itself. Then came the brief Catholic reaction, which went to the other extreme, and foreign relations of great complexity. Meanwhile the domestic economy went from bad to worse.

The authority which the first two Tudors had established carried the Tudor crown through a decade of this confusion. It is a question whether it could have carried much farther; that is, one serious mistake by Elizabeth in the early years of her reign might have spelled disaster not only for the Tudor dynasty, but for the impoverished little kingdom which stood face to face with the two great continental powers, France and Spain.

The brief reigns of Edward VI and Mary, then, have little more than a negative significance. They contributed little positively to the English experience in government, but at least they taught

Elizabeth how *not* to govern; and they did provide in literature and exploration some promise of the greater achievements to come.

EDWARD VI

The rivalries of the houses of Seymour, Howard, and Dudley to control the Boy King make a long, complicated story, but the main pattern can be briefly drawn. Edward himself, as he grew older, revealed no latent capacity to rule. He seems to have been a quiet, studious boy, with a leaning towards an aggressive Protestantism which might have proved disastrous had he lived. Politically he was the tool of his "protectors" — Edward Seymour, his uncle, for the first three years, and John Dudley, the Earl of Warwick, for the last three.

Henry VIII had astutely provided for a Council of Regency of sixteen men carefully selected to represent both sides and the middle in religion and government. But Seymour, soon created Duke of Somerset, mastered the opposition of the powerful old Howard family and got control of the council. It was, at bottom, a Protestant-Catholic rivalry, and the new reign, with Somerset's victory, moved a long step nearer to genuine Protestantism. The Six Articles Act was repealed; priests were allowed to marry; the congregation was permitted to participate in the Communion; and Cranmer's English Book of Common Prayer in 1548 brought people into close touch with the service. It was a natural and reasonable development, as Protestantism came to mean more than anticlericalism, and, though Lutheran ideas were creeping in, there was as yet little of the harsh, fighting spirit of the Calvinists.

Seymour's government was good in many respects. He did not try to pack Parliament, and he was moderate and tolerant. But he made many enemies by his partiality to friends and by his love of display.* He made additional enemies by his foreign policy; for, though he defeated the Scots in battle, the chief result of his campaign against them was to drive their young queen into betrothal to the Dauphin, frustrating thereby the English hope of her marriage to King Edward and promoting, as well, the dangerous alliance of Scotland with

* The colossal Somerset House, partly built by him, became later the residence of seventeenth-century queens. Still a conspicuous landmark at a great bend in the Thames, it was entirely rebuilt in 1776-1786 and is now used for government probate offices.

France. On top of this, he was unable to relieve the economic distress, and his liberal views regarding social justice aroused suspicion among members of the Council and of Parliament, most of them landholders in favor of enclosure. Though Kett's "Commonwealth," set up by insurrection in Norfolk, was suppressed, Seymour was blamed for the social disorders, and in October, 1549, he was imprisoned in the Tower. Later he was released, but in 1552 he was condemned and executed on false charges.

On Somerset's fall, his rival, the Earl of Warwick, became leader of the government, though he did not take the name of "Protector." A self-seeking man, son of Henry VII's notorious fiscal agent, Sir Edmund Dudley, Warwick was little more than a brutal tyrant. He promoted enclosures, he further debased the currency, and packed the Council and Parliament. Worse than this, he championed an ugly, aggressive Protestantism. Images were destroyed in the churches, severe penalties for nonattendance were enforced, a more Protestant Book of Common Prayer was issued, and the Catholic Princess Mary was maliciously persecuted.

Against such rule, opposition soon gathered head. For the English people, though they were strongly anti-Papist, were by no means ready to abandon all the old doctrines and rituals; a large number, if not the majority, would have been satisfied to go on with Henry VIII's compromise, or at least with the milder Protestantism of Somerset. When Edward died in 1553, at the age of sixteen, they were glad enough to escape from Dudley's tyranny and to accept as queen the Catholic daughter of Henry VIII. Few dreamed that this step would soon mean accepting the Papacy too.

Warwick sought to stem the tide by an abortive plot. He had persuaded Edward to make a will in favor of Lady Jane Grey, grand-niece of Henry VIII and married by Warwick's contrivance to his son, Guilford Dudley. The Earl was going to be another "king-maker" forsooth! But he counted too much on Protestant support. The will, never ratified by Parliament, was invalid; though Lady Jane was actually proclaimed queen, she was never legally so and never crowned. Mary's supporters soon seized and executed Warwick. The old rascal recanted his vitriolic Protestantism on the scaffold! Poor hapless Lady Jane, an accomplished scholarly girl of fifteen, pushed against her inclinations into this miserable adventure, was put to death the following year.

MARY TUDOR

Prematurely old at thirty-seven, homely, with a rough voice, Mary was never a popular figure. But the people were ready to support a Tudor, and for the first year of her reign she moved with Tudor caution. There was no great objection to a restoration of the old Church provided it did not include Roman control. A few outspoken Protestants were imprisoned, notably Hooper, Latimer, Ridley, and Cranmer, but most of those who would not conform were eased into exile. With Stephen Gardiner, restored to the see of Winchester, as her chancellor and chief adviser, Mary set up the Church of her father, and, like her father, she took pains to secure parliamentary support. This the assembly gave her so far as authority, doctrine, and ritual went, but it would not restore the confiscated church property. In the political field Mary's government at first was equally moderate. Dudley, leader of the plot to enthrone Lady Jane, was executed, as were two of his conspirators, but only seven of the sixty accused of treason were even forced to stand trial.

Whether such promising leniency could have continued long is a question, for Mary was too ardent a Catholic to stop here. At all events, her decision to marry Philip II of Spain suggested alarming consequences to the English people: not only submission to the Pope, but control of England by a foreign prince. Plans were made for four simultaneous uprisings, but only one of them, that of Sir Thomas Wyatt, the poet's son, amounted to much. Primarily intended to prevent the Spanish marriage, it promised, as a bait to Londoners, to restore Protestantism; and Wyatt, with deserters from the Crown's forces, reached the gates of London. Mary's Council was in despair, but the Queen herself went down into the city, rallied the Londoners to support her, and soon put the rebels to rout. Here was promise of Tudor spirit and wisdom. But not for long. Mary not only wished the Roman authority; she was also infatuated with Philip. They were married the following July, and, though he was ten years her junior and found the marriage little more than a wise alliance, she continued to dote on him, fatuously imagined herself with child, and hoped for solution of all problems in a Catholic heir that was never born.

Soon after her marriage Mary abandoned her temperate attitude

towards religious government. With the help of the Papal legate, Cardinal Pole, she restored the old Church. Parliament subserviently repealed the statutes passed since 1528, even revived the Heresy Act; but it could hardly have supposed that the Queen and the church courts would push their new authority into the revolting persecutions which began in 1555 and continued throughout the reign.

The Queen's motives during this dreadful holocaust, as those of her advisers, were no doubt sincere. The executions, she felt, were in God's service; she never killed out of whim or convenience, as her father did. It must be remembered, furthermore, that she was doing the same thing that was being done on the Continent on an even grander scale. The fact is, religion all over Europe had moved into its more violent stage. Men clung to religious ideologies with all the fury with which they now cling to political creeds. Protestantism, under the uncompromising Calvinists, had become militant; Romanism, under the recently organized Jesuits, fought back with fresh vigor. In the name of Christ all western Europe subscribed to Christless codes. Mary's executions were, nevertheless, the most wholesale purge in English history, and, instead of glory and honor to the Queen's Church, they brought shame and a hatred that lasted for generations.

Among those burned at the stake, Hooper, Ridley, and Latimer have ever since been the chief names in the Protestant martyrology — as indeed Latimer, a great preacher and a heroic man, prophesied in his last words. "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley . . ." he shouted through the flames; "we shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust shall never be put out." Cranmer, pliant tool of Henry, leader of advanced Protestantism under Edward, signer of seven recantations, suddenly emerged from his vacillating past and rose to great moral stature at the end. Tied to the stake, he withdrew his recantations and thrust the hand which had signed them into the flames.

Mary, already unpopular, alienated her people still further by her loss of Calais. Childless, neglected by her husband, she had been dragged by Spain into war with France. Calais, with the passing of the Merchant Staplers, had no longer any real value, but to the English people, as to the Queen, it had great sentimental value. With its loss she died, in effect, months before her actual passing,

while the English people stood round, as it were, waiting eagerly, nervously for her death.

Nervously with good reason, for this was the only English experiment so far with a reigning queen, and another woman was the heir apparent. To her sister Elizabeth, Mary left an appalling inheritance: an apparently insoluble religious question, an impoverished country in economic confusion, a compromising alliance with Spain and danger of more war with France; and, not least, Mary of Scotland and the problem of succession. However bravely the new queen may have faced the situation, she must have felt, as did her bewildered nation, a fearful weight of "saucy doubts and fears."

LITERATURE AND EXPLORATION

That the cultural promise of the Renaissance did not find much fruition during the reigns of Edward and Mary is not surprising. But the new language was already taking shape, as shown by the prose of the time. Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer*, in addition to its significance in Church history, not only is one of the greatest pieces of English prose, but, together with the King James Bible, has been the inspiration of writers for nearly four centuries. The dignity of its rhythm and the felicity of its phrase echo again and again in great English prose—in Raleigh and Hooker, in Browne and Milton and Taylor, in Burke and Gibbon and Ruskin. So also from these years of Edward come the eloquent sermons of Coverdale and Latimer and the Greek scholarship of Sir John Cheke. Cheke, one of Edward's tutors, Provost of King's College, Cambridge, Secretary of State for Lady Jane Grey, was an ardent Protestant and was much persecuted during Mary's reign. Forced to recant in public, he died soon after overcome with shame. His friend Roger Ascham stuck more closely to his last. Also a Cambridge scholar, he was tutor to the Princess Elizabeth and to Lady Jane Grey, as well as to Prince Edward, and kept his religion so well in the background that he was able to serve as Latin Secretary under both Mary and Elizabeth. Distinguished in the educational field for his advanced theories, expounded in the *Schoolmaster*, theories unfortunately disregarded in English schools for centuries, Ascham's real greatness lay in the quality of his prose. As Chaucer had considered his own tongue "sufficient" for poetry, and Malory had done the same for prose romance, so now Ascham considered it a fitting

medium for the prose essay. In his *Schoolmaster* and his *Toxophilus*, an essay on archery, he was really the first English essayist of note, though Montaigne had not yet given the word "essai" to the world. During Mary's reign the lack of literature was indeed conspicuous, but Tottel's *Miscellany*, containing the poems of Wyatt, Surrey, and others — a landmark on the way to Spenser and Shakespeare — appeared in 1557.

Her reign, though no nurse to culture, saw an important extension of that exploring impulse which was to be so conspicuous under her successor. Already in Henry VIII's time, English voyagers had sailed down the coast of Africa, to South America, and to the Indies, among them William Hawkins, father of the famous Sir John. The Navy, it is true, declined seriously after Henry's death, from seventy ships in commission to forty-six, but with the growth of the Merchant Adventurers, the exploring voyages increased in number. By 1548 the fisheries off John Cabot's New Found Land were considered so important that an Act was passed by Parliament to regulate them. Just before this Sebastian Cabot, John's son, returned to England and put new life into maritime adventure. It was about this time, too, that the theory of a northeast passage became popular, and several important expeditions were sent out. The most famous of these, in 1553, was in command of Sir Hugh Willoughby, the first great English adventurer to perish in Arctic exploration. He was later found frozen to death in Lapland, but one of his ships, under command of Sir Richard Chancellor, the "Grand Pilot," made harbor in the White Sea, and Sir Richard, with almost as much fortitude as Pizarro marching down the cordilleras of the West, made his way overland by sled to Moscow, where at the court of "Ivan the Terrible" he arranged important trading agreements with "Muscovy." Sir Richard was wrecked and drowned off Scotland on returning from a third voyage, but the resulting Muscovy Company blazed the way for the great trading companies of the future.

Chapter VIII

TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS

THE reign of Elizabeth is too frequently viewed in the light of the concentrated glory which brightened its last twenty years. Those two decades were indeed "spacious," the particular national and cultural pride of England; "their echoes are ringing still." But the first twenty-five years represent a long period of anxiety and doubt, of confusion at home and abroad. Elizabeth had need of all the virtues of her grandfather and father, with few of their vices, to manage in such an emergency. That she did so — slowly, shrewdly, untiringly, successfully — is one of the marvels not only of the English story, but of the history of the world. The fascinating tale of Elizabeth the woman, her affairs with Leicester and Essex, her jealousy of Mary Stuart, the vanity and caprice of her declining years, are picturesque features in the tapestry of her reign, but, like Henry VIII's marital adventures, these features sometimes obscure the more fundamental design. Her will did not merely coincide with England's good, as that of the early Tudors often did; it *was* England's good. To the poets she was "Gloriana"; to the common people she was in very fact their "good Queen Bess." She earned her title to fame.

The great glory of the later years of Elizabeth's reign, in other words, was in large measure the reward of her own greatness. Prosperous at last, triumphant on the seas, the English people experienced that exuberant, youthful zest for achievement, in exploration, in music, in poetry, in the drama, which has made the "Elizabethan Age" — in reality only about twenty years — a sort of symbol not only of her whole reign, but of the entire Tudor period. The great age of Queen Anne was the work of Marlborough, Addison, Swift, and Pope, not of the Queen herself. But Raleigh or Spenser, sea-dog or poet, felt in his bones that his Queen was behind all his success. He said so in extravagant, fantastic terms, for he was a romantic youth at heart and it was a day of hyperbole in speech and action; but over three centuries of sober investigation have only tended to support the rightness of his ardor.

Splendid as the Elizabethan era was, however, it was more a

culture than a civilization. A slight touch of urbanity and gentleness is manifest here and there, but they are occasional gestures rather than fundamental characteristics. Refinement was rare. In general there was a boastfulness, a lack of reticence and modesty, a sort of envious contempt of other nations, the mark of a young and bumptious people. If a castle or fort "would not presently yield it," said Sir Humphrey Gilbert in regard to Ireland, "I would not thereafter take it of their gift, but won it perforce . . . putting man, woman, and child of them to the sword." The cruel executions which marked the earlier Tudor story persisted; heads of traitors were still set up as a gruesome warning on London Bridge; and the rack, a devilish instrument of torture, was not without its sinister uses. The populace, by the same token, enjoyed such brutal sports as bear-baiting and bull-baiting. It must be recognized, however, that the crudity and the cruelty were the results of genuine youthfulness — a joyous youth, not a grim imitation; lighthearted, never sadistic. Nor was official cruelty a reversion to barbarism; it was merely the practice of barons transferred to the State, not a repudiation of centuries of civilization. It must not be forgotten, either, that this rough, half-civilized people did have intellectual, esthetic, and spiritual quality, that they did produce a great literature. Elizabeth did not have to send abroad for *her* Voltaire.

ELIZABETH

What sort of queen would Elizabeth be? It was a vital question on everyone's lips. The economic problem, the foreign situation, the religious conflicts, even if taken separately, were at the point of combustion. Taken together, as they must inevitably be, they seemed to many men beyond control. More than this, the new monarch was a woman. Whom would she marry? Few were without apprehension over the foreign and religious issues which any royal marriage might bring forth, but still fewer supposed that a woman could rule wisely alone.

It is easy to see, in retrospect, that thrift and peace were the prime necessities; even to see that, to serve these ends, the wise course would be one of temporizing, of playing off rival against rival. It is not at all certain that Elizabeth saw this course clearly from the start, but she pursued it with success; her instinct to vacillate proved, in her particular case, to be a positive virtue. But this would not

have been enough by itself. She must constantly exercise sound judgment; she must practice thrift, an unpopular quality in a sovereign; and she must win the loyalty of her people. That she won and held her people's love through a long period of years is partly accounted for by the fact that she reciprocated their devotion in full measure. To members of Parliament just before her death she said, "This I count the glory of my crown, that I have reigned with your loves." It was no idle boast; they adored her. Even Stubbs, when his right hand was cut off for his pamphlet against the proposed Alençon marriage, held up the bleeding stump and cried, "God save the Queen!"

Elizabeth's personal charm was of no small account in winning and holding popular loyalty — especially so in the Renaissance world. Twenty-five years old when she ascended the throne, she was tall, with a fine figure and an excellent carriage, with reddish gold hair, an olive complexion, and beautiful hands, of which she was especially proud. It is of little matter that the hook-nosed old woman of seventy, with a fantastic wig, was a sorry imitation of the younger woman; the tradition had been well established when she was young and beautiful. Her charm, moreover, lay quite as much in her manner as in her appearance. Endowed with a lively wit, gifted with abundant, vivacious speech, she was one of the best educated women of her time. An untiring hunter, she continued to follow the stag-hounds almost to the day of her death; and a patron of music and literature, she was the central figure in almost every activity of her period.

Unquestionably Elizabeth was vain. She loved to display her accomplishments, whether at court or in her frequent "progresses" through the country, when she waved her beautiful hands to the acclaiming multitude. Again, she was unquestionably vulgar; she loved a broad jest; she boxed ears, spat at one courtier, and could burst into profanity or unseemly mirth on dignified public occasions, as when she tickled Dudley's neck as he stooped to receive his earldom. But it must be remembered that she lived in a world of coarse manners, when broad jests and fantastic swearing, quite as much as fantastic dressing, were among the accomplishments of a gentleman; above all, that she lived in a man's world, for the royal court was composed almost wholly of men, about fifteen hundred strong. More difficult to condone is her mendacity. But if

she was an accomplished liar, it is important to recall that the European diplomacy of her day was based on intrigue and duplicity, that, granted the practice, Elizabeth excelled her competitors at their own game. Mary Stuart, whom she accused of treachery, was no busier with deceit than Elizabeth, but Mary was foolish; Elizabeth was shrewd. Moreover, the English Queen was consistently true to her country and to her trusted ministers. Cecil might at times doubt her wisdom, but he never questioned her good faith.

The comparison with Mary of Scotland points to another characteristic, the masculine nature of Elizabeth's mind. Her coldness, her lack of feminine emotion have perhaps been stressed too much. She certainly wished to marry, and for a while during the Dudley infatuation and later during the Alençon courtship she was temperamental enough in all conscience, to the frequent distraction of her ministers. But, in the last analysis, her head controlled her heart. Mary Stuart was a passionate woman and a religious zealot, who happened unfortunately to be also a queen; Elizabeth happened to be a woman, but she was primarily a ruler, dedicated to her appointed task.

For this task circumstances had prepared the young Queen in a hard school. In her brother's reign she had seen the evils of aggressive Protestantism and the danger of too much protector. Suspected of treason, never proved, during her sister's rule — imprisoned for a time, an outcast, branded a bastard — she had had thorough schooling in what calumny and religious intemperance could do. When the bells rang her to the throne in 1558, she may have looked like a young woman, but she was old in knowledge and experience; a trifle cold and hard perhaps, but very wise.

The complications of the foreign and domestic situation at this crucial moment cannot be here discussed with any detail, but certain important features may be briefly sketched. The traditional friendship with Spain and hostility to France had been increased during Mary's reign, but any genuine support of Spain by Elizabeth was sure to mean open conflict with France, a step which England, in financial straits, could not wisely take. Nevertheless, a semblance of friendship with Spain must be maintained, not only to hold off the French, but to retain the long-standing trade with the Spanish Netherlands.

But the issue was not as simple as it had been for Henry VIII. Strong forces were now at work in both the great Continental powers to keep the restored Romanism alive in England. Elizabeth, however, though her personal inclination to Protestant doctrine was not very marked, had grown up under Protestant influences and, above all, could not risk a continuation of Romanism in a country which was in reaction from the excesses of Mary's reign. She declared for Protestantism, in 1559 Parliament passed new Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, shortly afterwards a new Prayer Book was brought out, and in 1563 the Thirty-nine Articles of Faith were issued. It was a compromise Protestantism, but it did refuse the mass, transubstantiation, and Papal control.

By these steps Elizabeth invited attacks from both the great Catholic powers. Even at home, the new, aggressive Calvinists resented her halfway Protestantism and towards the end of her reign, as Puritans, they caused her much trouble. Elizabeth's middle position was obviously the wise course at first if she was to carry the bishops and gentry with her, but her later persistence in it, even to persecution of Dissenters, revealed that it was the only course she understood. She was never "afire with faith" — far from it! To her the main question of religion was one of sovereignty, not of doctrine; and Dissenter and Romanist alike threatened that sovereignty.

Added to these problems were three other questions — economy, marriage, Scotland — which complicated the situation enormously. Elizabeth found England with an empty treasury, with a large debt, and with a country in such economic distress that heavy taxation was impracticable. One of her first steps was to call upon Sir Thomas Gresham * to restore the currency. Though this reform drove prices up faster than it did wages, it did much to restore prosperity, for it protected merchants from unfavorable exchange. In 1563 the Statute of Apprentices attempted to regulate wages, and the Poor Law required parishes to provide charities, as a substitute for the vanished help of the monasteries. Again, though the Elizabethan economy, as indeed that of all mercantile Europe, tended to make the rich richer and the poor poorer, there was a gradual increase of prosperity among the middle classes, a prosperity evidenced by

* Gresham, famous for his dictum that "bad money drives out good," was the founder of Gresham College and of the Royal Exchange.

many and widespread improvements in domestic comforts. Fire-places were being built in even unpretentious dwellings, brick was coming to be used in place of wood and plaster, and even the poor were substituting pewter plates for wooden trenchers. But all this was not accomplished by waving a wand. It required years of peace and thrift. J. E. Neale points out that "finance is the essence of Elizabeth's story." * The great glory of her reign rests traditionally on the naval prowess and on the literature. When the tumult and the shouting dies, we hear the eternal echo of Drake and Shakespeare, but it is a question whether there would have been much glory of any sort if there had not been unremitting thrift on the part of Cecil and the parsimonious Queen.

The appointment of William Cecil as Principal Secretary was a stroke of genius. He served Elizabeth with cool judgment and unwavering loyalty through practically the whole reign, and as Lord Treasurer after 1572 he made her policy of thrift a success. "This judgment I have of you," she wrote when she first appointed him, "that you will not be corrupted with any manner of gift, and that you will be faithful to the State, and that without respect of my private will you will give me that counsel that you think best." In her other early appointments, too, the Queen showed shrewd judgment for a young woman — particularly in the cases of Archbishop Parker, a moderate, of Nicholas Bacon, wise and loyal, and of Francis Walsingham, a super-detective in tracing secret plots.

But, even if the economic problem might in time be solved, there remained, at Elizabeth's accession, the questions of marriage and of Scotland. Naturally the Queen had many suitors, among them her sister's widower, Philip II; the Hapsburg Archduke Charles; Eric of Sweden; later the Duc d'Anjou and later still the ill-favored Duc d'Alençon. It is hard to see how she could have married any one of these with clear benefit to the kingdom, but she toyed with their ambassadors for years. Apparently she was really in love with Robert Dudley, but the evil memory of his forebears and the ugly rumors connected with the death of his wife, Amy Robsart, excluded him if she was to make more than a personal choice. Such finally was her decision, to marry as a queen and not as Elizabeth; but for several years she showed great favor to Dudley, unsavory gossip spread, and her ministers sat on the seat of anxiety.

* *Queen Elizabeth*, p. 282.

Yet if the Queen did not marry, if there was no heir to the throne, Mary Stuart, or her offspring, would be next in line. That implied Romanism, and it might mean alliance with the House of Guise and trouble with Spain. When Elizabeth came to the throne, Mary's mother, widow of James V, had already brought French influence into Eastern Scotland. From the English point of view this could not be tolerated, yet England was not strong enough to risk open war with France. Here, as in other cases, time came to Elizabeth's assistance. If the issue had arisen a few years earlier, England would have found no support in Scotland, but now a powerful Protestant party under John Knox had raised a formidable opposition to the French Catholic group. Though Scottish Calvinism was not the sort of Protestantism Elizabeth favored, and though she hated Knox for his recent *Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, she saw at once that she must help the anti-French group in Scotland. Soon, with her secret aid to the Scots, the French were beaten out of Scotland, and in 1560 Elizabeth's ministers brought back the Treaty of Edinburgh, which provided that, though Mary was to be Queen of Scotland, she was to abandon all claim to the English throne. But Mary, when she returned to Scotland in 1561, refused to accept the Treaty, made with no legal authority by the Protestant Scots. The Scottish situation, tied up closely with the Continental one, now developed rapidly into the dramatic story so familiar to all — a story not only of political and religious conflict, but of conflict between two jealous and intriguing queens.

Mary at first ruled Scotland with moderation. For a short time her Catholic group was gaining ground against the Calvinists; but her marriage to Darnley, his jealousy and the murder of Rizzio, above all, her relations with the Earl of Bothwell, a rough adventurer, and the blowing up of Darnley's house with him in it, alienated a large number of her supporters. Defeated in battle, she abdicated in favor of her baby son, James VI, and fled to England for sanctuary.

Apart from any personal jealousy, Elizabeth could hardly give full liberty to a visiting sovereign who had designs not only on her throne but on the religion of her people. At first, however, Mary was not closely guarded, and foreign agents as well as zealous Englishmen like the Earl of Norfolk came and went. With the exposure of the Ridolfi plot soon after the Pope's excommunication of Eliza-

both in 1570, the issue was clear to most loyal Englishmen, and a matter for immediate, drastic action to the aggressive Protestants. Elizabeth was in a difficult position. She dared not send Mary to France and she shrank from so high-handed a solution as execution. Norfolk might be executed as a traitor, and was; but there was no legal procedure for bringing Mary to trial. Again the Queen temporized. Mary remained a sort of prisoner, but still with much freedom of access, for another fifteen years. It was an awkward arrangement, but it postponed direct action by France and Spain, even if their secret agents were busy.

Meanwhile, by 1572 Elizabeth's main policy, of thrift and peace, had been bearing fruit for fourteen years. With expanding trade, the worst of the economic storms had been weathered; the Scottish situation was fairly safe, with Protestant earls in control of the regency; and the Queen's popularity was established beyond peradventure, even among those who disliked her thrift or opposed her lukewarm Protestantism. England was united, with a leader, as it had not been for a generation.

It was well for England that Elizabeth had gained this interlude, for Philip's fanatical sympathy with the Papal attempts to overthrow Protestantism meant that friendship with Spain could not be long maintained under even a fantastic pretense. Meanwhile France, to offset the Spanish machinations, had half-forgotten the old animosities and proposed the Duc d' Anjou in marriage. Elizabeth adroitly played the proposal along, while she sent secret aid to the Protestants in the Spanish Netherlands and to the Huguenots in France. Cecil, now made Lord Burghley, was for open action in the Netherlands, but the Queen's instinct, as Professor Neale puts it, "was to blur the line so thoroughly that it would be hard to say when she overstepped it." * Here was the heart of her foreign policy. She practised this "blurring of the line" for so long a time and with such success that it can hardly be credited, in the main, to luck. The various problems had been solved, partly by luck perhaps, but largely by astute temporizing. Elizabeth had been on the throne thirty years when Philip, at last and too late, made open war.

But the trend of events after 1572 pointed increasingly to conflict with Spain. More provoking to Philip than the interference in the

* *Queen Elizabeth*, p. 94.

Netherlands were the increasing attacks on his trade by the English "privateers." The bold captains of these ships, whose exploits make one of the most picturesque chapters in the English story, were high-handed pirates when they preyed on Spanish and Portuguese shipping, no whit more lawful than the buccaneers of the Barbary coasts. Yet they were respected, gallant gentlemen in their Devonshire homes, loyal to the Queen and, when the need arose, distinguished officers in her Navy. It was a convenient arrangement for Elizabeth: cheap, since they supported themselves; profitable, since she could exact her share of the plunder; safe, since she could disavow any official sanction of their deeds.

But the motive behind these exploits was far more than mere piracy. It was largely the culmination of the instinct, to explore and to seek new trade-routes, which had been growing in England ever since the days of the younger Cabot, Willoughby, and Chancellor. In fact, the gigantic fame of the naval explorers has obscured the important part played by overland voyagers to Asia. We have noted, under Queen Mary, the growth of the Merchant Adventurers and the charter to them for the Muscovy Company in 1554. Anthony Jenkinson pursued the Eastern quest still farther. Setting out in 1558, he made a six years' journey, crossing Russia into Tartary and investigating the trade possibilities on the steppes and in northern Persia. In great favor with the Czar, he made several later explorations, and his energetic efforts and those of his followers led to the founding of the Eastland Company, which traded in the Baltic, and of the Levant Company, which traded in the Eastern Mediterranean. It was not till the death of Ivan in 1584 that the overland traders met Russian opposition and turned, under Raymond and Lancaster, to the Cape route to India.

Nevertheless, the Atlantic exploits overshadow all others during Elizabeth's reign. As early as 1562 John Hawkins began his slave-trading expeditions to Africa and the West Indies, profitable ventures augmented by raids on Spanish shipping and Spanish ports. Chief among the many "chartered pirates" to follow the lead of Hawkins was Francis Drake, who won especial glory as the first English circumnavigator of the globe, in 1577-1580, and later as the "scourge of Spain." The financial return on his voyage amounted, from plunder, to 4700 per cent! Elizabeth was delighted. Risking the displeasure of Philip, she insisted on going down to Deptford

and knighting Drake on his own ship, the famous *Golden Hind*.

Already Martin Frobisher had made his three voyages in search of a Northwest Passage. But the first Englishman to attempt colonization in the New World was Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who sailed in 1583 with five ships to settle Cabot's New Found Land. The expedition was a failure; the crews grew mutinous; and "the Knight of the Ocean Sea" was drowned when the *Squirrel*, his little ship of ten tons, went down on the return voyage. But the colonization motive had begun. The following year Sir Walter Raleigh, half-brother of the three stalwart Gilberts, sent his cousin, Sir Richard Grenville, to prospect for a colony on the North Carolina coast. Staking his claim in the name of the Virgin Queen, Raleigh with a great gesture included all "remote heathen and barbarous lands"! In 1585 he actually dispatched a settlement to Roanoke under Ralph Lane, and two years later another "plantation" under John White. Both little colonies failed to endure, but the name of "Virginia" stuck, to be revived by the Jamestown settlers of 1607. Raleigh's other great exploration was made in person, when he rowed far up the Orinoco in search of a fabled city of gold. His *Voyage to Guiana*, including an account of unicorns and anthropophagi, "Or men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders," bears witness to both the imagination and the intrepidity of the Elizabethan.

For a short time yet this insatiable urge to discover possessed Englishmen. Cavendish sailed round the world in 1586-1588, and Davis, followed by Hudson and Baffin in the next century, explored the northern coasts of America. In the Eastern explorations Ralph Fitch, leaving London in 1583, returned after eight years of wandering through Arabia, Persia, Bengal, Malacca, and "all the coast of the East India." The same year that Fitch returned, Raymond and Lancaster left Plymouth, sailed round Good Hope to Malacca, plundering Portuguese and Venetian ships, and returning in 1594. As a result the East India Company was founded in 1600, and in 1601 Sir James Lancaster set sail in command of the first fleet of what was to prove England's richest overseas enterprise.*

* The Merchant Adventurers, though chartered, had been, like the earlier guilds, composed of men who merely paid a fee for the trading right and protection, and who traded in their own ships, whereas the trading Companies were joint-stock organizations, which operated their own fleets in the interest of shareholders.

After 1600, on the whole, the exploring impulse became secondary to colonization and the extension of trade. But what a roster of intrepid seafarers is crowded into that short space of forty years, an era of little ships and great men! Perhaps the most astonishing fact in the whole illustrious record is that the majority of these stout-hearted mariners came from Devon.* So Devonshire, later the home of fat cattle and the paradise of tourists, dreams of a magical past, when Plymouth, Barnstable, and Bideford were crowded ports, full of "singing seamen," piratical crews with their earrings, their parrots, and their pistoled belts; jolly

Sailormen that danced upon the quay.

Of all these men, many of whom helped to save England in the great fight with Spain, the chief credit should probably go to Sir John Hawkins. Treasurer of the Navy from 1573 to his death in 1595, he worked indefatigably to build up the ships and the coastal defenses. The English ships were not so much smaller than the Spanish as is sometimes supposed. At the time of the Armada, Spain had only seven ships larger than the English *Triumph*, a difference made up for by the fact that the English boats were much more heavily armed. The design of the English boats, moreover, lower and easier to maneuver, enabled the English to sail faster and closer to the wind, so that they could keep the windward berth, fall off, and rake the enemy with broadsides. An army of pikemen on the decks, down-wind, was powerless against this attack.

It was well that Hawkins had made these preparations, for after 1580 relations with Spain drew rapidly to a crisis. In that year Jesuit missionaries began to work in England, and within a year they had stirred up a hot Protestant opposition. To sharpen the issue came the final chapter in the long story of Mary of Scotland. In 1586 Walsingham, by intercepting Mary's letters which promised to help Philip in an attack on England and by uncovering the Babington plot to assassinate Elizabeth, brought the issue to a head. A recent Act of Parliament had made it legal to bring Mary to trial for "malicious actions and attempts" against Elizabeth, and a special commission soon found her guilty.

Much has been made of the dignity of Mary in her defense; much of the prejudice of her judges. A pathetic figure she presented, now

* Notably Hawkins, Drake, the three Gilberts, Raleigh, Grenville, and Davis.

fat, round-shouldered, double-chinned, and gray, though only forty-four; Queen of England, she firmly believed, by a better right than Elizabeth; imprisoned for eighteen years by a rival who dared neither kill her nor free her; kept to be murdered or forgotten — and now summarily condemned to death. But there is little doubt that Mary had been privy to the plot, as indeed guilty of complicity in practically every plot for eighteen years. Elizabeth hesitated to sign the death warrant, and even after she did, three months later, she made Davison, secretary of the Council, her scapegoat. He was thrown into the Tower and forced to pay a heavy fine. It is not a pretty picture of even-handed justice. The practical upshot, moreover, was that Philip laid claim to the English throne and prepared to invade England.

The invasion, planned for 1587, was delayed a year by a bold attack of Drake, already the terror of Spanish commanders — “*El Draque*,” the dragon, they called him. Sailing into Cádiz harbor, he destroyed a large part of the Spanish fleet — “singd the King’s beard,” as he playfully put it. Cecil and Elizabeth, still keeping up a show of peace, were publicly vexed, but no doubt secretly delighted. When the great Armada finally did set out in 1588, it consisted of 132 ships, largely transports, intended to bring an army from the Netherlands. The English ships numbered all told 197 craft, but only about half of this fleet was stationed at Plymouth, the chief port in the southwest. Under command of Lord Charles Howard of Effingham, the English boats harried the unwieldy Spanish galleons all the way to Calais Roads, and when the Spaniards anchored there, the English frightened them out with fireships and pursued them to the Flemish Shoals. Some were sunk, some forced aground; badly shattered, they had no choice but to run into the North Sea. There the English, now out of ammunition, did not follow them, but convenient storms destroyed more galleons than gunfire had done. After the long voyage round Scotland and Ireland, only about half of the great flotilla reached Spain.

There is no question that this victory, which broke the naval power of Spain and saved Protestantism in England, Holland, and Northern Germany, was in one sense a lucky chance. The English captains, capable as they were, did not work well together. Ammunition was insufficient. “The storm wind of the Lord” was a fortunate ally. The design of the English ships, nevertheless, and

the long preparation by Sir John Hawkins were by no means negligible factors. In the last analysis, no amount of shading can dim the glory of the hardy captains and their brave seamen, trained and tempered for years in the hazards of deep-sea warfare.

After the defeat of the Armada, some wished to follow up the success; others, to conciliate Spain. Elizabeth again took a middle ground. She refused to carry on expensive warfare, but she continued to support the Dutch, fostered the recent French friendship, and secretly encouraged privateer attacks. In a desultory way the war continued, punctuated by such daring exploits as Sir Richard Grenville's famous fight off the Azores in 1591 and the successful attack on Cádiz in 1596, when Essex, delighted with the fun of it,

tossed his bonnet in open sea
As under their guns he ran.

But a great privateering expedition to the West Indies, under Hawkins and Drake, failed when the commanders disagreed, and both men died at sea.

Of all these adventurous sea-dogs, tradition has invested Drake with the greatest glory, a positively magical fame. Buried at sea, he directed that his drum be hung on the sea-wall at Plymouth, and many sailors still believe that it sounds and calls him from the dead when England needs defense — a tradition celebrated in Sir Henry Newbolt's stirring verses: —

Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.

• • •

"Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them long ago."

THE GREAT ERA

In the later years of Elizabeth, England had her true Renaissance. Men with three generations of the new schools behind them were ready, when the hour struck, to reveal a largeness of thought and action which reached its peak in the writings of Bacon and Shakespeare, in the deeds of Raleigh and Drake. For, impinging on the new intellectual life, came the new freedom in religious thought,

the accumulating culture of the Italian Renaissance, the new explorations, the new prosperity, and, not least in the cultural sense, the new language, English revitalized by the classics, fresh, flexible, sonorous — the whole compound a conspiracy of fate, as it were, to give to men a revelation of new worlds and to fire them with boundless ambition. Vigor, boyish enthusiasm is everywhere manifest. Men were young, whatever their calendar years. They spent life gaily, gustily; and, though they wrote often of death, it was usually with the sentimental melancholy of youth rather than with the calm of philosophic years.

This zest, this youthful gaiety, is constantly revealed in the manners and customs of the time. The Queen, like her father, loved shows and pageants. She could not always afford them, but she let her courtiers vie with one another in extravagant entertainments — such as the one at Kenilworth, where Leicester had the whole place transformed — a lake built, halls and pavilions erected — for a few days of festivity. Elizabeth was fairly addicted to pleasure journeys on the Thames in her royal barge, she made much of her magnificent “progresses” through the realm, and in her later years she frequently brought the boy-actors from St. Paul’s to play before her at Hampton Court. Among courtiers and gentry the popularity of sports increased enormously — especially of court tennis, wrestling, and fencing — while the old sports of tilting, hunting, and hawking were still in vogue.

In the same spirit of unrestrained gaiety men’s costumes became extravagant, even grotesque. Much was made of hats — too much, Hamlet would seem to say, when Osric flourishes his. Dandies in fine raiment — “gulls,” they were called — sat on the stage to display their fantastic garments and equally fantastic speech. The style of Lyly’s *Euphues*, the most elaborate verbal gymnastics ever devised by man, became the fashion of courtly speech — a fashion parodied in Polonius and Osric, but used seriously, as the natural thing, by Duncan and Lady Macbeth. Often such imaginative language is pretty, as when Rosalind’s wit overflows, but whether lovely or merely fantastic, it is characteristic; imagination is at the heart of the life and the literature.

The common people still wore simple clothes, but, like the courtiers, they were merry over their sports and festivals. In fact, mumming and country-dances were their delight, while every season

had its gay festival — Twelfth Night, Shrove Tuesday, Easter Sunday, May-Day, when the Puritans were mocked, Whitsuntide, when the "Lord of Misrule" invaded the Churches with his frolic, Michaelmas, Martinmas, and Christmas. "Merrie England" was still in full career.

But there was more than exuberant festive youth to the Elizabethan. He had an intellectual vigor as well as a bodily, an instinctive love of beauty, a will to sing. The schools and universities took on new life, and the Elizabethan spirit manifested itself in the promise, if not the fact, of a new science, in a typical architecture, in a great era of music, and in a sudden flowering of poetry and poetic drama.

The growth in the schools is important. Since Colet's St. Paul's was begun in 1512, Sherbourne, Shrewsbury, and Repton had been founded under Edward VI and Mary. Now, under Elizabeth, Rugby, Harrow, and Uppingham had their birth, and the old schools at York, Winchester, Eton, and Westminster were remodeled to fit the humanistic fashion of the day. Eleven new colleges were founded at the two universities during the sixteenth century and the great Bodleian collection of books was begun in 1598. At the same time grammar schools multiplied in the towns. There was little book education for the poor as yet, but, instead of learning confined to monasteries, abbey schools, and a handful of clerks at the universities, schooling now reached most of the boys in the merchant and gentlemen groups. This growing body of educated men knew their classics, the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer; they were familiar with the recent translations of Italian writers; and they had in their own tongue an increasing number of books, such as Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, Hakluyt's *Voyages*, and the *Chronicles* of Hall, Holinshed, and Stowe, as well as the published works of contemporary poets. As audience, they had the knowledge to understand and enjoy; as creators, they had stimulating sources.

Science as such can hardly be said to have existed in Elizabethan days. Such pseudo-sciences as alchemy and astrology flourished. Medicine was based largely on astrology, and Jerome Cardan, considered the greatest physician of his day, was really a preposterous astrologer. It is significant that the belief in witchcraft grew enormously in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and along with

it a mania for witch-hunts. Nevertheless, real science made a start. Robert Norman in 1576 noticed magnetic polarity, and William Gilbert, a believer in the new Copernican views, worked out in detail the theory based on Norman's discovery. Experiment, furthermore, was beginning to be a common practice. Before Elizabeth died, Francis Bacon, in his great letter to Lord Burghley, enunciated the main principles on which any true science must rest. He hoped to free knowledge from absurd assumptions, he said, and to "bring in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries." Bacon, however, was more of a scientific philosopher than a practical scientist, and his idea of working out a complete, all-inclusive logic of science seems medieval to modern thinkers.

A strange combination of greatness and meanness, Bacon had a propitious birth — son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and a nephew by marriage of Lord Burghley. A brilliant student, he entered Cambridge at twelve, later lived at the embassy in France, and was admitted to the bar at twenty-one. When he was only twenty-three, he was elected to Parliament, where he soon became such an impressive speaker that "his hearers could not cough or look aside from him without loss." But Bacon lacked the stability to become a great statesman; neither Elizabeth nor Burghley would trust him with an important post. He was constantly scheming for advancement, wherever profit might arise, and he did not hesitate to make friend or enemy, Essex or Coke, a steppingstone to preferment. He was an able jurist, a champion of the royal prerogative, in opposition to Coke's support of the common law, and under James he rose to be Attorney-General, Chief Justice, and finally Lord Chancellor. But his enemies trapped him for taking gifts from successful suitors; he suffered an enormous fine and was forever debarred from holding office. It was then that Dr. Jekyll, the philosopher Bacon, turned with contempt on Mr. Hyde, self-seeker, and pronounced his famous sentence: "I was the justest judge that was in England these fifty years; but it was the justest censure that was in Parliament these two hundred years."

This public disgrace gave the better side of Bacon a chance. His literary fame will always rest on his *Essays*, not only compact with wisdom, but full of those striking sentences which have become

household words. Most of these were among his earlier writings,* as was his *Advancement of Learning*, a sort of preface to his great unfinished effort, the *Novum Organum*, intended to be, after the Aristotelian pattern, the complete philosophy of science. But in the few years of retirement before his death, he wrote his excellent *History of Henry VII* and his *New Atlantis*, picturing a sort of Utopia — what life might be when science had freed man from superstition and government from chance and error.

Bacon, in his grandiose schemes, was a true Elizabethan. But, though he took all knowledge to be his province, he lacked conspicuously the romantic, poetic quality so fundamental in most of his contemporaries. Raleigh, myriad-sided, was far more typical of his age. A keen student of mathematics and chemistry, such as it was in his day, an expert in naval fortifications and shipbuilding, a courtier, a politician, something of a statesman, a farmer, an explorer, a colonizer, a hardy soldier and a great sailor, a historian, Raleigh was also a poet — above all, he was the embodiment of great deeds and great gestures. His long poem, *Cynthia*, has been lost, but his shorter poems have a quality which justifies the contemporary praise of his powers. His *Voyage to Guiana* and his *Fight about the Azores* are written in lively prose. It was no idle boast of his that he could "toil terribly." An old man, in prison, he undertook to write a *History of the World* — never finished, but a monumental fragment, with its sonorous, rhythmical periods. Done to death by the trickery of James I, he was still an Elizabethan youth when he cried, on the scaffold, "So the heart be right, it is no matter which way the head lies!"

This same romantic nature inspired Elizabethan architects. The so-called Tudor architecture is frequently late Gothic; much of the later Elizabethan is more properly Jacobean, a promise of the Palladian style which flourished under Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren. But in between these two more distinct styles, the Gothic and the Renaissance, there came that somewhat haphazard combination of styles, a sort of fashion or manner without definite style, which, like the romantic plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare, was typical of the time and which, disregarding narrow rules, produced some of the loveliest domestic architecture in England. In the refashioned manor houses there was no clear attempt either to retain the old

* Published 1597, 1612, 1625.

Gothic pattern or to make a departure on a new plan. Rather, through a happy combination of chance and genius, the irregular buildings were adapted to their setting and their uses. They are essentially picturesque.

The best examples of this may be seen in such houses as Knole, at Sevenoaks, and Haddon Hall, in Derbyshire, for they represent older buildings remodeled and show conspicuously the charming blending of styles. Perhaps the most beautiful of all is Compton Wynyates, in Warwickshire, early Tudor and considered the perfect instance of a country dwelling, but, built wholly at one time, it lacks the picturesque, rambling quality of the typical Elizabethan house; graceful and somewhat stately, it suggests the later, more formal structures which appeared under the influence of John of Padua — such places as Longleat and Hardwick Hall, magnificent and beautiful buildings, but not especially picturesque.

An important feature of Tudor building, particularly of Elizabethan, was the great increase in fine interior woodwork. This feature also carries on into the Jacobean, especially in the chairs and tables. The large amount of fine church carving in the fifteenth century had called forth a school of skilled "joiners," and their heirs in the craft for several generations applied their skill to domestic work. So there was much lovely paneling and wainscoting, and there were carved rails and balusters to the new wooden staircases, which were now beginning to take the place of the old circular stone flights.

In gardens, though the Elizabethans made much of flowers, the results were not so happy. Since gardens outside the monasteries were more or less a novelty of Renaissance days, the Italian styles were followed somewhat slavishly. There were few old gardens, as it were, to foster a romantic disregard of form. There grew up artificial, geometrical vogues, with "knots" and elaborate, figure-shaped beds. Bacon calls them "toys" and says, "You may see as good signes many times in tarts."

On the panels or above the wainscot in the larger Elizabethan houses and halls were portraits. From the zeal for such decoration, one would suppose that a school of native artists must have arisen, but such was not the case, for the best portrait painting was still done by foreigners. Englishmen showed more skill in miniatures,



From "Knole and the Sackvilles" (V. Sackville-West)

KNOLE, FROM THE GARDEN

and Nicholas Hilliard and Isaac Oliver were pioneers in what came to be a special English skill in the next two centuries.

It was rather in music and poetry that the Elizabethan genius had its chief cultural expression. The whole nation sang — folksongs and ballads; while it was expected of a gentleman that he not only could sing, but could sing a part. After dinner the songbooks were brought out, and family and guests, still at table, joined in the choral festivity. It was not the best time for voice, perhaps, but this gay and lusty singing was possibly a happier method of entertainment than the modern substitutes in the drawing room. Above all, it was self-entertainment. For the "ayre," in which the solo was supported by instruments, was only just coming in; the Elizabethan Age was the great time of polyphonic music and of choral singing — of the anthem, the madrigal, and the ballet. Largely instrumental, however, was the "fantasy" and the music for court dances, among them the pavan and the galliard. In addition to the organ, household instruments were becoming popular — the virginal with its keyboard, the viol, the lute, and the recorder.

Among the great names in this flowering English music Thomas Tallys stands first in point of time, but a student of his, William Byrd, is usually accounted first in fame — perhaps next to Purcell among all English composers. Tallys, called "the father of English cathedral music," sang as a chorister in St. Paul's, was for a while organist at Waltham Abbey, and was actually a gentleman of the Chapel Royal during four reigns. He came under the Netherlands influence, but, though he was ingenious and erudite, he never degenerated into a mere maker of contrapuntal devices, as the Flemish often did. With Byrd he received from the Queen, in 1575, letters patent granting the exclusive right to print music and music paper for twenty-one years; and in this partnership they brought out their *Cantiones Sacrae*, containing sixteen motets by Tallys and eighteen by Byrd, some of which are still sung as anthems in the English service. These motets, together with his *Spem in Alium*, a motet for eight five-part choirs, are among the best of Tallys' rather voluminous compositions.

When Tallys died in 1585, Byrd was already forty-two and a well-known composer. He had been organist of Lincoln Cathedral when he was only twenty, and a few years later had become a mem-

ber of the Chapel Royal, the Mecca of English musicians. In addition to his *Cantiones Sacrae* with Tallys, he published further sacred songs of the same nature in 1589 and 1591; *Psalms, Sonets, and Songs of Sadnes and Pietie* in 1588; and *Psalmes, Songs and Sonnets; Some Solemne, Others Joyfull* in 1611. Though his church music, like that of Tallys, is his chief work, he wrote much instrumental music, especially for the virginal, and he was one of the pioneers in the writing of madrigals.

More important among the madrigal-makers was Thomas Morley, who, though he composed services, anthems, motets, and instrumental music, as nearly all did, is especially distinguished for the quantity and quality of his canzonets, madrigals, and ballets. A recluse, in poor health, Morley also contrived to write before his premature death an important treatise, his *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*. With Morley's name is associated that of Orlando Gibbons, the most illustrious member of a singularly musical family. Gibbons' short maturity, for he died of smallpox at the age of forty-two, falls wholly in the seventeenth century, but he was essentially an Elizabethan, a master of the polyphonic type. Two of his madrigals appeared in the *Triumphs of Oriana*, when he was only eighteen, and three years later he was so highly esteemed that he was made organist of the Chapel Royal. His short life was full of honor: he was made Doctor of Music by Oxford in 1622 and organist of Westminster Abbey the following year. In addition to his skillful madrigals and other vocal compositions, he had six pieces for the virginals in the *Parthenia* of William Byrd and Dr. John Bull.

Time and newer fashions in music have made these Elizabethan tunes seem elaborate, fantastic; but they were in keeping with the effervescent spirit of the time, touched, like the poetry, with the delight in conceits and prettinesses. The amazing thing, after all, is that ordinary men and women, sitting round a table, could sing them.

That a nation in such a mood should have excelled in lyric poetry, especially in love poetry, is not surprising. During the early years of Elizabeth the production of poetry was meager, though there was a good deal of prose, as we have seen — chiefly in chronicles, theological works, and translations of Italian and classical litera-

ture. In this earlier stage George Gascoigne stands somewhat alone. A soldier, a member of Parliament, a scholar, a dramatist, a poet, he is a sort of forerunner of such many-sided men as Raleigh. During the first two decades of the reign he wrote prose comedy, satires, prose tales, and lyrics, and he translated tragedy. In his continuation of the Renaissance tradition earlier manifested in Wyatt, Surrey, and Udall, he revealed the direction which the later, more famous work would take — dramatic, lyrical, using classical sources freely, but inclining instinctively to romantic style. In others, too, there were signs of the coming day: of drama in Sackville and Norton's dull *Gorboduc*, in Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet*, and in Udall's *Ezechias*, all acted before 1565; of sonnets and lyrics; and, not least, of the pastoral tradition in the pioneer *Eclogues* of Barnabe Googe. Gascoigne and Sackville wrote blank verse, an innovation essayed by Surrey; soon Spenser defended it, and later Marlowe and Shakespeare turned it into the great measure of English dramatic poetry. So far there was promise, but it was meager. Before Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* in 1579 there was no Elizabethan literature of high quality, but from then on, and particularly after 1585, England became in truth a "nest of singing birds."

The great burst of lyric poetry coincides with the rise of the madrigal and secular songs. In both we find the same features: a fondness for fantastic figures and pretty conceits and everywhere the central theme of love — a pretty, rather conventional love, with the sad true lover more lovely than pathetic in his "outcast state." * But in these songs, in spite of the somewhat artificial theme and the elaborate language, there is essentially a naturalness, a spontaneity, a freshness of springtime and outdoors, of dawn and the singing lark, that still captures the reader. The authors were not, like Shelley, writing out their deep, personal joys and sorrows; they were not so much in love with a particular person as in love with love and youth; and for that very reason they felt a strong compulsion to sing. The whole world was a Forest of Arden, where Jaques is not to be taken too seriously, where "sweet lovers love the spring." Indeed, as Edward Dowden wisely remarks: "It is almost an impertinence" to analyze these songs; "if they do not make their own way, like the

* Note a few of the titles: *Paradise of Dainty Devices*, *Passionate Century of Love*, *Handful of Pleasant Delights*.

notes in the wildwood, no words will open the dull ear to take them in."

The lyrical poets were not a particular group. The whole age was essentially lyrical, and to make a list of the poets in this particular field would include most of the dramatists, narrative poets like Spenser, and the sonneteers. But no anthology could make a beginning without including the familiar names of Breton, Nash, Lodge, Lyly, Marlowe, Raleigh, Campion, Shakespeare, Dekker, Jonson, and Beaumont.* And to these shorter lyrics must be added Drayton's stirring *Ballad of Agincourt*, Spenser's more stately poems, the *Prothalamion* and *Epithalamion*, and such narratives, essentially lyrical, as Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, and Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*. Again, in the lyric group must be included the more formal sonnet. Here many of the same names recur, but the chief are Sidney, Spenser, Daniel, and Shakespeare. In fact, Sidney raised the Petrarchan sonnet to such a high quality that it became with him one of the great forms of English verse and, except in the eighteenth century, has been the vehicle of a noble line of successors. And Shakespeare wrote the other form, three quatrains and a couplet, so surpassingly that it has endured in spite of the general failure of later poets to handle it well.

But to talk about these Elizabethan lyrics, as Dowden suggests, does not reveal their quality. Let us rather read one together — not such excellent, familiar verses as *Hark, Hark, the Lark* or Sidney's sonnet *On Sleep* (we all learned those in school), but, say, Nicholas Breton's *Phyllida and Corydon*, for *The Honorable Entertainment Given to the Queen's Majesty* in 1591 — the very quintessence of lighthearted Elizabethan song.

In the merry month of May,
 In a morn by break of day,
 With a troop of damsels playing
 Forth the wood, forsooth a Maying:
 When anon by the wood side
 There I spied all alone,
 Phyllida and Corydon.
 Much ado there was, God wot!
 He would love and she would not.
 She said, never man was true;
 He said, none was false to you.

* John Donne, included in Chapter IX, is a little apart from both the Elizabethans and the Jacobean.

He said, he had loved her long;
She said, Love should have no wrong.
Corydon would kiss her then;
She said, maids must kiss no men,
Till they did for good and all;
Then she made the shepherd call
All the heavens to witness truth
Never loved a truer youth.
Thus with many a pretty oath,
Yea and nay, and faith and troth,
Such as silly shepherds use
When they will not love abuse,
Love, which had been long deluded,
Was with kisses sweet concluded;
And Phyllida, with garlands gay,
Was made the lady of the May.

Besides these songs and sonnets, Elizabethan poets wrote many longer poems. Among the more serious and scholarly authors, there was a keen controversy over the merits of classical and romantic styles. Sir Philip Sidney, leader of the group called the "Areopagus," defended his position and the nobleness of true poetry in his famous *Apology for Poetry*; in fact, many of the men who wrote romantic poetry preached classicism, indeed a sort of pseudo-classical formalism such as later triumphed in France. In the next century we find Ben Jonson still defending this view, though the drama, under Marlowe and Shakespeare, had gone irrevocably romantic. But, though the Elizabethan outlook on life, and hence the expression of it, was fundamentally romantic, — imaginative, emotional, — the revival of the classics did have an enormous influence. It supplied subjects; it gave some sense of form and structure to the drama; and it revealed itself abundantly in allusions and in such conventions as the pastoral tradition. The blending of styles in the literature, as in the architecture, was not wholly logical, but it was picturesque, and it was true to the genius of its day.

Among the longer poems, Warner's *Albion's England* and Drayton's *Polyolbion*, a sort of geographical display, are ambitious, but dull, and Shakespeare's narrative poems are dwarfed by the superiority of his dramatic verse. Chapman's translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, however, still rank high among the renderings of Homer, as poetry. But all of the long poems take a minor place in comparison to the great unfinished work of Edmund Spenser.

Spenser, like Sidney, championed the classics; he was called the "new" poet. Nevertheless, he was essentially romantic, and in the *Faerie Queene* he recaptured the magic of romance. He made much of the Aristotelian virtues, it is true, but so did the Middle Ages; the chief purpose of the poem was to show these virtues, in a "continued allegory or dark conceit," perfected in King Arthur; the language is deliberately archaic, to give a medieval flavor; and the style, like the approach, is emotional and imaginative. Spenser does not get on with the story, but that makes little difference, for the chief virtue of the poem lies in the descriptions. The felicity of phrase and the melody of the verse as it rolls along in the magnificent stanza he invented have perhaps never been surpassed in English literature, and poets still look to him, "the soothest shepherd that e'er piped on plains," as their master and their guide.

Considerable and important as the non-dramatic literature of the time was, however, the Elizabethan Age would not outrank all others if there had been no poetic drama — its particular glory. We have seen such scholars as Udall, Gascoigne, and Sackville putting backbone into the formless dramatic entertainments of earlier Tudor days. The play, as such, — by itself, not merely as side-show to a festival or a feast, — was becoming increasingly popular, especially in London; and in 1576 James Burbage built the first playhouse, "the Theater." But for nearly a decade the drama slumbered along in about the condition in which Gascoigne had left it. It was then, just as other forms of poetry were coming into their own, that the brilliant group of young men — Greene, Peele, Kyd, Nashe, and Marlowe among them * — gathered in London and raised the drama to a much higher level in a few years. A wild and boisterous crew, they were nevertheless university-bred, with knowledge, with literary standards, and with unusual poetic power. Before many years they had added beauty to farce in comedy and dignity to bombast in tragedy; there was a beginning in vivid characterization, quite as good as in Shakespeare's earlier work; and plays began to show dramatic structure. And they wrote better verse, for an audience instinctively poetic, than their predecessors had done.

Much the ablest poet of the lot was Christopher Marlowe, who,

* John Lyly, already famous and given to more respectable associations, was not of this group, but his plays kept pace with the newer fashions.

in spite of his doubting friends, insisted on using blank verse. He used it so well, in fact, in his "mighty line" that he gradually broke down opposition, and soon the couplet, artificial for spoken verse, lingered only in the gestures at the ends of scenes, a sort of substitute for a curtain. Marlowe was a better poet than dramatist; indeed, he was primarily a dramatic poet, and we remember such magical lines as

Helen, whose beauty summoned Greece to arms
And drew a thousand ships to Tenedos . . .

rather than his characters and his plots. Nevertheless, characterization and plot begin to emerge in his last play, *Edward II*; there was a great dramatist in the making just when his life was cut short by a duel at the age of twenty-nine. Marlowe, moreover, turned the drama into the romantic channel which it followed in Shakespeare. He disregarded the classical unities, which later became such a fetish to the French, and he made the development of his tragedy depend, not on external fate, but on a weakness inherent in the chief character. The English genius has never taken kindly to a strict classicism. It is therefore worth particular notice that Marlowe liberated the English drama just when Shakespeare, a young man of his own age, was beginning to write plays.

Shakespeare is so great and so well known that it has become somewhat gratuitous to discuss him at all. It is something like appraising God — "others abide our question; thou art free." Nevertheless, "the Shakespeare of heaven" did, after all, grow out of "the Shakespeare of earth." It may be profitable to glance for a moment at his development as a dramatic artist and at his work, peculiarly Elizabethan, yet, as Ben Jonson put it, "not of an age, but for all time."

Shakespeare's work, covering roughly twenty years, extends about ten years on each side of 1600; so that when he began to write, about 1590, the new drama, with a drama-conscious public, was well established. Companies of actors under rich patrons had flourished for some time. Lord Leicester's was in existence as early as 1572, and with its successor, the Lord Chamberlain's, Shakespeare was associated as actor and playwright. Other important companies were the Queen's and the Lord Admiral's; and before the century turned, groups of boy actors, especially from St. Paul's and the

Queen's Chapel choirs, had a tremendous popularity. London by this time was so much controlled by Puritans, who considered plays godless shows, that public theaters were excluded from the City; but a number of them — the Rose, the Swan, the Globe, the Hope — grew up "without" the walls, particularly on the Southwark Bankside, where the cockpits and bear pits were established. So, by boat or by foot across London Bridge, courtier, dandy, merchant, artisan, tinker, and tailor journeyed in the afternoon to crowd the galleries or the open pit of these new buildings, adaptations of the old inns with their galleries and cobbled yards. A flag flew from the tower, a trumpet sounded, and the play began. On the undecorated, uncurtained, projecting stage, lighted only by the opening in the roof, the actor, standing in the very midst of his audience, might "speak trippingly on the tongue," instead of "shouting from an encompassed box," and he faced a gay, responsive audience. Here, if anywhere, the action must be close to the spoken word.

Among the chief actors Richard Burbage and Edward Alleyn stand out as the most famous, but Richard Tarlton and William Kempe, who took the humorous parts, had great popularity with an audience that loved "fellows of infinite jest." The acting of some women's parts (say, Gertrude or Lady Macbeth) by mere boys may be hard for us to realize, but it gave a great opportunity for such rôles as those of Rosalind, Portia, and Viola.

The intrusion of Shakespeare into the play-making fraternity was at first resented by the university men, who considered themselves a sort of unchartered guild, but his "open and free nature" and his "demeanor no lesse civill than he excelent in the qualitie [acting] he professes" soon won him his place. Whatever his somewhat obscure apprenticeship, Shakespeare by the early nineties was a recognized actor, was re-casting old plays, and was writing new ones. He was no innovator, but gave the public what it liked. Following the contemporary styles, he wrote at first chiefly comedy and chronicle plays. So far he was not a great dramatist — the characters are not notable and the plots turn on trick devices; but he was already a great poet, and such early plays as *Richard II* and *Romeo and Juliet* are more significant, as are Marlowe's, for their rich poetry than for their characterization and dramatic force. Soon, however, occasional characters of note, such as Portia and Shylock, appear in loosely made plays; and by the end of the century, with

complete mastery over the comedy form, Shakespeare had reached the point where great characters, effective situations, and superlative poetry combine to justify the name, "the three perfect comedies," given to *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*. *Henry IV* and *Henry V*, by the same token, are far above such loose, monotonous chronicles as *Henry VI*.

About the turn of the century, the fashion changed to tragedy, particularly to "tragedies of blood." It is hard to realize when we read, or even see, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, so great is the character-interest in these plays, that they are following the contemporary vogue. Even though the stage at the close of *Hamlet* is fairly littered with corpses, our minds turn rather to the high tragedy of the unhappy prince as his faithful friend speaks the sad farewell: —

. . . Good night, sweet prince:
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

Similarly, in the later comedy of *Cymbeline* we hardly notice, so engrossing is the play itself, that Shakespeare is perhaps showing the younger dramatists that he can unravel a complicated plot as well as they, for absurd complication of plot was coming into fashion.

This power of lifting the play, by interest in the characters, above the creaking machinery of the structure is one of Shakespeare's greatest skills. Even then, it seems to be more a quality inherent in his genius than a conscious innovation. Marlowe had based tragedy on the inner nature of the protagonist, not solely on the external obstacle; Shakespeare merely did the same thing better. Marlowe had written great blank verse; Shakespeare contrived, through his genius, to take the bombast and monotony out of that "high-astounding" verse and to shape it into human speech. Songs abound in nearly all the plays; Shakespeare wrote better songs. The pastoral tradition ran strong; Shakespeare followed it. All the old plays had their foolery, their quips, and their puns; Shakespeare continued this popular feature, even in his tragedies. In other words, Shakespeare was very much of an Elizabethan, not only in the type of play he produced, but in the devices he used. He was a practical, successful theater-manager. It was rather in the quality of his work — in the characters who have become more real to us than actual persons, in the humor, in the vivid scenes, and in the great dramatic verse — that he was "not of an age, but for all time."

It is not profitable to set exact limits to the great Elizabethan era in literature. But as the music, the poetry, and the plays do not take on much distinctive character till about 1585, so we may say roughly that the age extends about the same number of years on the other side of 1600. It was during the latter half of this period that the famous "wit-combats," dominated by Ben Jonson, took place at that Elysian resort of poets, the *Mermaid Tavern*. Not long after the accession of James, however, new forces were at work in both the life and the literature, and many dramatists commonly included with the Elizabethans are on the whole Jacobean. Coarseness for its own sake, an increasing failure to hold the mirror up to nature, an instinct to play up bizarre novelties, give the later plays, in spite of great technical skill, a decadent character which is certainly not Elizabethan. This holds true in general of Jonson, Fletcher, Middleton, Heywood, and Webster. Chapman, Marston, Dekker, and Beaumont belong more wholly to the older period, especially the mirthful Dekker and the young poet of passion, Francis Beaumont. But most of them, especially Jonson, were so topical, so contemporary, that, even with their dramatic and poetic skill, they do not approach in perennial appeal the "myriad-minded" Shakespeare.

ELIZABETH'S LAST YEARS

Though the great Elizabethan era was in full blaze at the turn of the century, the Queen herself had in a sense outlived her time. Her old friends and her trusted servants were gone — Burghley in 1598, and before him Bishop Parker, Leicester, Walsingham, Nicholas Bacon, Drake, and Hawkins. She saw everywhere lesser men, as she thought, struggling for her favor. It was at this time that she turned to the brilliant young Earl of Essex, a dashing officer on land and sea, a man of great personal charm, but an arrogant, undisciplined one. Much, probably too much, has been made of the favors she showered on Essex. She was a lonely old woman and he was a pretty boy. Perhaps she indulged his arrogance too easily, but she showed that she had measured it correctly when she cried, after he had been wounded in a duel, "God's death! It was fit that someone or other should take him down and teach him manners." But he did not learn his lesson. Giddy with enormous power, he deserted an Irish expedition, returned secretly, and attempted to

raise up London behind him in an effort to make the Queen prisoner and seize the throne. "A senseless ingrate," Elizabeth accurately described him. He almost succeeded, but when the insurrection failed, he was such an obvious traitor that even the Queen, however sadly, felt constrained to sign the death warrant.

The Irish situation, which Essex had been sent to control by force, was another unhappy episode in Elizabeth's declining years. The O'Neills, it is true, were leading a serious revolt, in a mixed effort to better themselves and to capitalize the discontent of the people. They were hardly the great patriots that some have imagined them. But instead of attempting to settle the confusion fairly for the Irish people, the English, beginning with Henry VIII, not only sought to settle it for English benefit, but attempted to force English government and religion on the Irish. What Henry had done on a small scale, Elizabeth did on a greater. The Irish tribes, with little natural cohesion, thus had a sort of exaggerated nationalism forced on them, and Ireland became, by mismanagement rather than by logic, a hotbed of Romanist agitation. The situation which the Tudors left needed only the more systematic seizures of land under James I and the more vigorous enforcement of Protestantism under Cromwell to harden a still soluble problem into the "Irish question."

While the Essex affair and the Irish wars were bringing sorrow and anxiety to Elizabeth's declining years, forces of disruption were developing in the nation. In religion they had already gone far, and in political affairs they were held in check only by the magic of the Queen's personality.

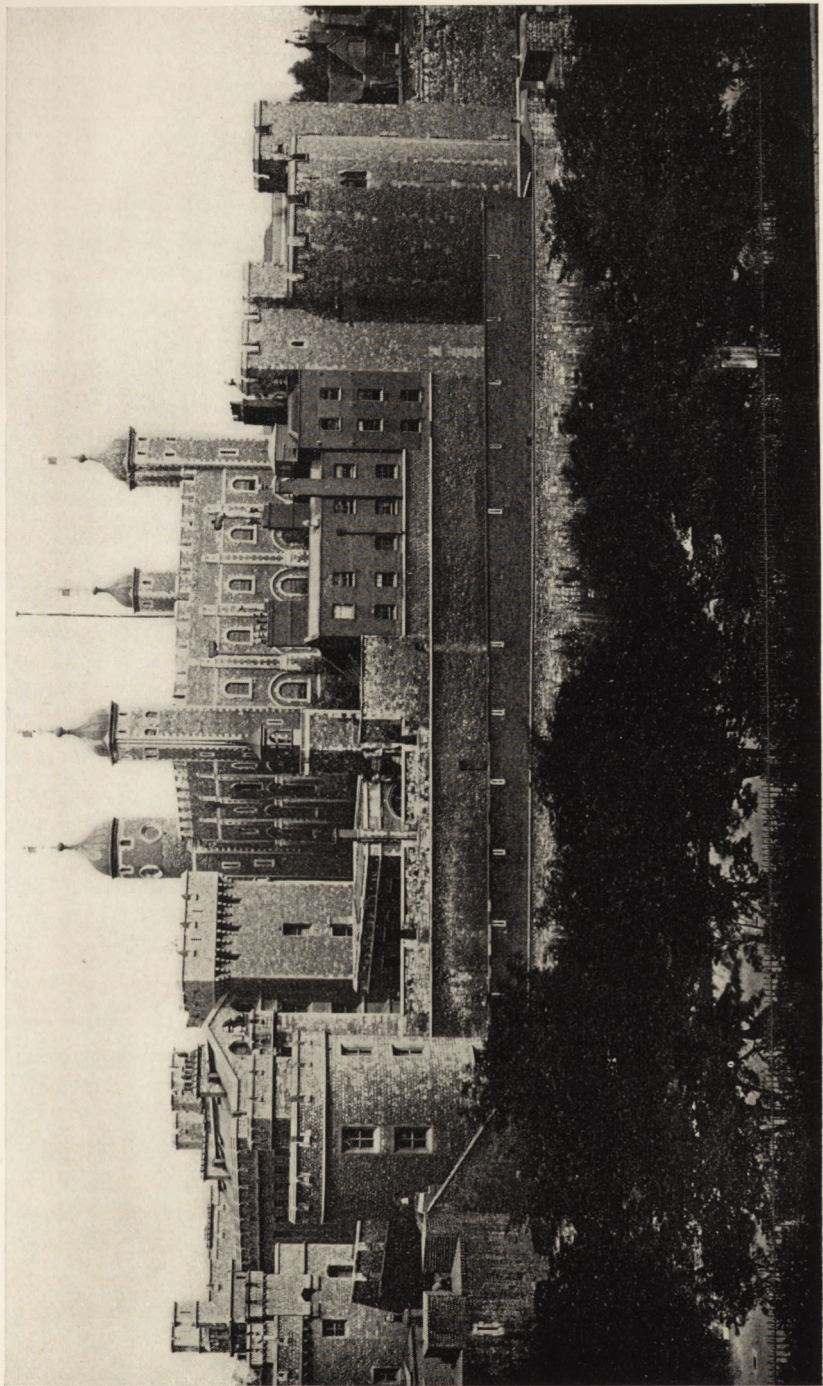
The religious question was no longer wholly one of Protestant versus Roman, but had for some time been complicated by growing conflicts between different types of Protestants. The greater mass of people now beginning to be called "Puritans" wished only to simplify and purify the Anglican Church from within. The Presbyterians, however, wished to set up another organization, a theocratic, Calvinistic Church; and the Independents sought to establish local Churches, free of State control.

Elizabeth, who still saw the question of sovereignty as the main issue, met the growing dissent by harsh measures. Unlike Archbishop Parker, John Whitgift, made primate in 1583, enforced conformity with great rigor; but Puritan members of Parliament

kept up outspoken opposition, and Thomas Cartwright preached it. Extreme Puritans, however, overplayed their part. The flood of ugly "Martin Marprelate" pamphlets, issued secretly and anonymously about 1588, aroused the loyalists in both Church and State. An Act of Parliament in 1593, to suppress disloyalty and sedition, led Whitgift and his successor, Bancroft, to increase active persecution, particularly of the Separatists, many of whom fled to Holland and became the nucleus of the Plymouth Pilgrims in 1620. It is doubtful whether Elizabeth and her officers realized the latent force of Puritanism; their suppressions merely postponed and aggravated the explosion under the Stuarts. Yet it is equally doubtful whether toleration could have produced anything but anarchy in the sixteenth century.

For the great question of State authority in religion was still fundamental, much discussed by the philosophers. Even Bancroft, a strict persecutor of heretic and schismatic, appears to have favored a Church which shared authority with the State; not, like Whitgift's Church, one which was a mere tool of the political authority. Among the thinkers, by far the chief was Richard Hooker, whose great work in eight volumes, the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, is a monument not only of philosophy, but of literature. Hooker saw this double authority, not as a sum of two powers, but as an indissoluble combination in the ideal monarch. A careful student of tradition, he marshaled the arguments of history and reason in support of his Church, but he went back of them in emphasizing divine authority as fundamental; while in his emphasis on both Church and State as means for the benefit of man, not as ends in themselves, he looked forward to the liberalism of Locke and the eighteenth-century philosophers—to a government, whether of Church or State, which rested on "social contract." Hooker's work is now read only by a few students, but its beautiful diction and its magnificent rhythm mark it as an important forerunner of the great prose of Browne, Milton, and Taylor in the following century.

The chief stronghold of the Puritans was in southeastern England, particularly in London itself. The city, with its suburbs, in spite of numerous plagues, nearly doubled during the last twenty years of Elizabeth's reign, and, though still smaller than Paris, by 1600 it counted over 200,000 people. This great growth may be explained largely by the development of mercantile pursuits. In



THE TOWER OF LONDON

fact, by the end of the Tudor period the change from the old economic order to the condition called "mercantilism" was virtually complete.

The doctrine that wealth depended on an accumulation of precious metals was at the heart of this new economy, a theory of wealth generally held till Adam Smith at the end of the eighteenth century. It was a theory which grew naturally out of the recent experience, when manufacture and trade were the profitable ventures; and England, with a long seacoast and a small interior, was in a position to take advantage of the new developments, for the only transportation for articles in bulk was by sea. Protective laws, of navigation, of fisheries, of import, helped the merchant companies, which soon became great monopolies; and, though frequent attempts were made to curb monopoly, the traders had things pretty much their own way for a long time to come.

In London, where merchant and craftsman took on special importance under such conditions, there were, too, the rich livery* companies from the medieval world. For, when Henry VIII confiscated the guild property in the smaller towns, the powerful London companies, Henry's chief moneylenders, were little molested. They had been the virtual rulers of London during the fifteenth century; and now, though their original existence had lost its validity and their control of London had decreased, they had built up a financial prestige which carried for another century — in fact, till 1694, when the Bank of England was founded. In Elizabeth's time they included many influential capitalists who, unlike the working craftsmen of the smaller towns, intermarried with gentry and were of social consequence.

The commoners, then, particularly the country gentlemen and the London capitalists, had become an important power in the general government of England. This development had begun when the early Tudors favored the commoner at the expense of the baron, but it was accelerated greatly by the increase in trade during Elizabeth's reign. She, like her father, frequently called Parliament and relied much on its support. This she usually managed to get; but that body, now constantly recognized through two generations, was growing conscious of its power, of the legislative function which

* So-called from the distinctive costumes of mercers, drapers, goldsmiths, etc.

it was more and more called upon to exercise. It did not hesitate to speak out at times, and Elizabeth had several brushes with it; but she had the sense to realize that it was her chief support and she usually handled it with tact. Nothing could be more characteristic of this than her words to Parliament when she yielded in 1601 to its opposition to monopolies: "I have more cause to thank you than you me. . . . Though you have had, and may have, many princes, more mighty and more wise, sitting in this seat, yet you never had, or ever shall have, any that will be more careful or loving." It was a formula the Stuart kings never learned.

Elizabeth remained vigorous almost to the last month of her life. She had lost her youthful charm, and the younger generation, who had not shared the trials of her earlier years, were not enthusiastic over her increasing parsimony. But she never really lost her hold on her people. As she looked back on the achievements of her reign, she may well have been proud, proud of the difficulties surmounted, of the victory over Spain, of the explorers, the poets, and the musicians; chiefly proud perhaps, for she was a thrifty Tudor, of the prosperity which her untiring efforts had made possible. On March 24, 1603, her quiet passing brought the great Tudor dynasty to an end.

It was a dynasty which had seen many changes in England. The old order had died and mercantile England had been born. The Reformation had taken place and, after many changes, a compromise Church had been established. The power of the Crown had increased, but with it, in contrast to the Continental experience, the importance of Parliament. A great naval tradition had been built up. Not least, a great culture had budded and burst into full bloom.

Chapter IX

KING OR PARLIAMENT?

WHEN James VI of Scotland became James I of England, he is reported to have said that if the English had not accepted him, he would have seized the throne. Thereat Raleigh, forthright and indiscreet, exploded, "Would God that had been put to the trial!" The incident, figuring an arrogant king and a bellicose subject, foreshadows much of the conflict which occupied the greater part of the century. But it was a far larger matter than a fight between an obstinate dynasty and a belligerent people. It meant the victory of the parliamentary prerogative over the royal prerogative, of common law over any king's law, not merely over Stuart law; and the result, in direct contrast to the tendency in most European states of the time, was the establishment of the principle on which both British and American democracy are based. This development in the seventeenth century, with religious and commercial aspects as well as political, was the result of social changes as momentous as those of the sixteenth.

When Elizabeth died, England was in fact on the threshold of a new era, and only the personality of the much-loved Queen carried the solidarity of her time past the turn of the century. Already, before she died, the Commons had become a force to be reckoned with, and the bickerings of sects and schisms had made her "middle course" in religion difficult to follow. A sagacious Tudor might have delayed the changes which began immediately under the Stuarts, but it is improbable that those changes could have been altogether stopped. For now, at the turn of the century, trade was more than an infant industry, and the labor problems which had been so acute during the dislocation of the old agricultural economy were pretty well adjusted in the new mercantile activities. The Spanish menace, moreover, had been removed, and the self-reliant Englishmen who had grown out of that conflict and the commercial expansion turned their efforts to political and religious liberties. England had come of age, and Englishmen were ready to run their own affairs.

Too little is made, perhaps, of the character of the country gentle-

men of this period. Not aloof and self-superior, like the later squires, they were active men, often related by marriage to the great London merchants; for the hostility between country Tory and city Whig was still in the future. Furthermore, they were for the most part men of great probity and intelligence, frequently well educated. In fact, there is a striking parallel between them — neither rich nor poor, living in simplicity on their “paternal acres,” yet active participants in the questions of their day — and such Americans as Washington and Jefferson under somewhat similar conditions a century and a half later. Men of the quality of Thomas Wentworth, John Eliot, John Hampden, Oliver Cromwell, Henry Vane, and Thomas Fairfax at once come to mind. It was inevitable that many of these men should share the Puritan’s concern over the profligacy of the favorites of the court and the merchant’s concern over taxes and invasion of rights. Only a minority of the gentry would go the length of taking up arms against their king, but such men as these, the backbone of Parliament before the Civil War, provided the social and moral climate which eventually made political liberty a reality in England.

The major social force was of course that peculiarly British manifestation of reform known as Puritanism. Yet in its early stages it was not so much a cause as an effect of the new outlook on life. In fact, it is no accident that Puritanism flourished conspicuously in step with the commercial growth of the towns. So long as it was merely an attitude of mind towards simplicity and liberty, it thrived naturally among men to whom these qualities appealed more than did the pomp and circumstance of an outworn order in Church and State. Later, when it became more identified with doctrine, it alienated many who at first sympathized with it, but by the same token it galvanized its main adherents, so that, under Cromwell, they swept the field. Finally, when its furious course was run and the so-called Merry Monarch was restored, it left an indelible mark on the English people. The mirthless English Sunday, for instance, lasted till the present century. “Merrie England” was forever a thing of the past; repression became a major virtue; and gaiety is still suspect.

Nevertheless, though the developments of the seventeenth century were partly and irresistibly in the nature of things, they were brought to a head by the nature of the sovereigns. The Stuarts were

almost everything that the Tudors were not. Obstinate, doctrinaire, arbitrary when conciliation would have been wise, they seem to have had a fatal instinct, in contrast to the shrewdly solvent Tudors, of asking Parliament for funds when that body was about to ask for redress of grievances. The Tudors, too, were English and understood Englishmen; the Stuarts, with the possible exception of Charles II, never learned through a bitter century to understand the people they attempted to rule.

Turning to the cultural side of the seventeenth century, the poets, with the exception of John Milton, do not compare favorably with the Elizabethans. Some of the greatest plays of Shakespeare, to be sure, were actually written in the seventeenth century, but the drama up to about 1610 was still Elizabethan, not yet much influenced by the new age, and the prolific Jacobean drama which followed it was clever rather than great. The plays of Dekker and Fletcher will still "act," but the great body of the Jacobean drama is ingenious, coarse, extravagant. The Jacobean and Caroline poets, however, had learned their trade; they knew how to make clever verses; and, if they lack the spontaneity of the Elizabethan "nest of singing birds," nevertheless Herrick, Lovelace, and others add a valuable store to the collection of English lyrics. John Donne, moreover, discarding the conceits and classical machinery of his fellow poets, wrote with great imagination and depth of meaning, though much of his poetry was written in Elizabeth's time and is singularly modern in its thought; only his odd inversions of style and "meta-physical" puzzles are characteristic of the Jacobean age.

The prose of the century, in contrast to the poetry, surpasses the Elizabethan. It was written more extensively than heretofore and includes such various and important names as Francis Bacon, Robert Burton, Sir Thomas Browne, Thomas Fuller, John Milton, the Earl of Clarendon, Jeremy Taylor, Izaak Walton, John Evelyn, and Samuel Pepys. These men, except for the anecdotal Fuller and the diarists, wrote more or less in the dignified, somewhat heavy, Latinate style of the Elizabethan Hooker, but later in the century, under the French influence, English prose began for the first time to be lucid and modern in structure. Dryden, famous for plays now rarely read and never acted, and a master of poetic satire, really paved the way for the great prose of the eighteenth century.

Furthermore, though learning was not widespread, and the

ignorance of the clergy in the reign of Charles II was a disgrace, the seventeenth century saw continued, among a few, the impetus which the Renaissance had given to scholarship. Bacon, distinctly an Elizabethan, nevertheless wrote chiefly in the reign of James. Coke and Selden in law, Harvey in medicine, Hobbes and Locke in philosophy, and Newton in mathematics are the great names on the roll of those who carried out Bacon's injunction to seek "well grounded conclusions." It is significant that in 1645, during the Civil War, a group of learned men met to discuss the founding of a society to promote scientific research, and that in 1662 their plans did actually bear fruit in the Royal Society.

The century was also notable for architecture. Since the great Gothic churches of the Middle Ages, the only important development in England had been the Tudor house. Now, in the seventeenth century, the Jacobean house, not greatly different in exterior, but a distinct development in interior decoration and in furniture, was important enough to give its name to a style; while the Renaissance, belated in England, first saw its important English architecture in the halls and churches designed by Inigo Jones and in the beautiful buildings with which Christopher Wren adorned London after the great fire.

The literature, scholarship, and architecture of the seventeenth century, however, are dwarfed by the political, commercial, and social aspects. In retrospect our attention is focused on the great struggle for "liberties," on the advance of trade and colonization, and on the appearance of a social order which prophesies the later England of democratic and industrial growth.

JAMES I

The new King, great-great-grandson of Henry VII on both sides, had the best hereditary right to the English throne,* but after four generations of Scotch ancestors and a French grandmother, he had little English blood in his veins. More than that, he made no effort,

* James I is traditionally considered the son of Mary Stuart and Darnley, but there is a fair suspicion, never disposed of, that he may have been substituted for Mary's dead child by the Countess of Mar. It is certainly hard to find characteristics of either Mary or Darnley, or of earlier Stuarts, in James and his successors. If the suspicion is warranted, the *hereditary* claim of the House of Hanover, as of the House of Windsor, which rests on descent from James, is invalidated; but the *legal* title — since the deposition of James II a more important claim in England than the hereditary one — rests securely in the Act of Settlement of 1701.

as had William the Norman before him and as did William the Dutchman after him, to understand the people he was to rule. Learned, if somewhat pedantic, more thrifty than his successors, well-intentioned, and with some experience as King of the Scots, whom he did understand, he was obstinate and opinionated; and just when England was moving towards parliamentary government, he was tactless enough to import the foreign theory of the Divine Right of Kings. It is typical of his conceit and lack of understanding that he revived the outworn title of "King of Great Britain, Ireland, and France," though the last vestige of French land, Calais, had been lost in the reign of Mary Tudor. He had an irresistible inclination to strut.

James, no question, found a difficult situation for any monarch. The English Puritans naturally looked to him, head of the Scottish church, to favor them, while the Catholics hoped that the son of Mary Stuart would befriend their cause. But James, who had seen enough of the conflict between Catholic and Presbyterian in Scotland, chose, as King of England, to be head of the Anglican Church there. Yet, inconsistently with his refusal to grant a petition of the Puritans, he made peace with Catholic Spain and sought to moderate the laws against Catholics. Both of these steps antagonized the House of Commons, increasingly Puritan in composition; and the Gunpowder Plot, in 1605, an abortive attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament with the King and his sons, started a rage against Catholics which put an end to further tolerance. As a general result, the King, never a real Anglican, found himself with few friends in any religious group.

But the King's unsuccessful gesture towards toleration had one important by-product. Though he would not grant the Puritan petition, he did call a conference at Hampton Court to settle disputes between Anglicans and Puritans. The conference itself got nowhere, but out of it grew the *King James Bible*, finally published in 1611. The work of forty-seven scholars, it was a far more accurate translation than earlier ones, and, though modern scholarship has found much to correct, no version in any language or at any time has equaled it as literature. Furthermore, since many earnest folk have been greatly concerned with its contents as well as its style, it has had more influence than any other book on the thinking and the language of English-speaking peoples.

Another result of the religious quarrels, at least in part, was the settlement of the New World, though the growing pressure to find fields for trade was also a cause. But whereas the older companies had been organized for trade, the London and the Plymouth Companies, chartered in 1606, were organized for colonization. The first English settlement in America, at Jamestown in 1607, was more of a trading venture than the second one, at Plymouth in 1620, when religious intolerance drove the little band of "Pilgrims," who had sought refuge first in Holland, to set sail for the coast of Massachusetts.

In the political field the King's problem was simpler than in the religious, but here he was more obstinate. As early as 1604 the Commons addressed an "Apology" to the King, in which they defended their right to freedom of speech, questioned by him, and in which they maintained that this right was theirs by nature, not by favor of the King. Here the main issue was clearly drawn, but the "Apology" was never presented, and the conflict did not reach a serious stage till 1610, when the King, outspending his income, called Parliament and asked for a grant. The Commons, already aroused over various impositions, particularly the revival of feudal dues, insisted on discussing the King's right to levy taxes, but the King denied their authority and dissolved Parliament early in 1611.

Except for the "Addled Parliament" of 1614, James attempted to rule without legislative assistance, or interference, till 1621, but before that time much had happened at home and abroad to increase his unpopularity with his subjects.

With the death of Robert Cecil in 1612, the King lost his soundest adviser and soon fell under the influence of Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, and of George Villiers, later Duke of Buckingham. Under this influence James approved of a proposal to marry his son Charles to the Spanish Infanta. Not only was such a Spanish alliance most unpopular in England, but James, whose daughter had just married Frederick V, head of the Protestant Union of Germany on the eve of war with the Catholic German Emperor, was likely to find himself in the ticklish position of having to support both religions in a foreign war; yet he insisted on the marriage, probably because the Infanta's rich dowry would stave off further appeals for money to a hostile Parliament. In fact, James was apparently so eager for the Spanish marriage that he sacrificed

Raleigh by an ingenious and dastardly trick. Raleigh had been condemned to death in 1604 because of his suspected, but hardly proved, connection with the Arabella Stuart conspiracy, but James, the perfect showman, had issued a last-minute reprieve for the popular old sea-dog. Finally, after fourteen years of imprisonment,* Raleigh was released to seek an alleged "city of gold" far up the Orinoco. He was expressly warned not to fight the Spaniards, but Madrid was secretly advised of the expedition and of course blocked Raleigh's advance at the mouth of the river. When Raleigh returned in 1618, he was again imprisoned, for he had disobeyed orders; the old charges were revived, and he lost his head on the block. In spite of such peace offerings, however, the Spanish marriage fell through because of the irreconcilable relations of Spain and England to the conflict in Germany as well as because of disinclination on both sides after the prince's secret visit to Madrid. So little did James really care for the Spanish alliance and so inconsistent was he on the religious question that he soon after declared war on Spain, in support of the growing clamor to defend the hard-pressed Protestants on the Continent, and arranged for his son to marry the Catholic Henrietta Maria of France.

It was during the reign of James, moreover, that the Irish situation crystallized into "The Irish Question." As early as 1608 he had dispossessed Irish landholders in Ulster and had sold the land to Protestant settlers from England. Later, with the help of "discoverers," who grew fat nosing out flaws in titles, he attempted to do the same thing in Leinster, though the project failed because of the scarcity of purchasers. These steps did not excite unpopularity in England, of course, for since Henry VIII a cruel policy towards Ireland had been common, but they brought to maturity the insoluble "Question," bequeathed by James not only to his son, but to all succeeding sovereigns and, even with eventual Home Rule, to the Irish themselves.

During this same reign the English Navy, with the feats of Hawkins, Gilbert, and Drake in the memory of men still living, fell into such disrepair that Barbary pirates raided in the Channel. In addition, the general corruption in the government extended

* "Who but my father," said Prince Henry, "would keep such a bird in a cage!"

flagrantly to the Navy. The *Bonaventure*, for example, "was broken up above seven yeares past, and yet the King hath paid £63 yearly, for keeping her, to her officers."

To the resentment over the unjust impositions, then, were added a growing hostility to the King on account of his cowardly and shifting policy in foreign affairs, the sacrifice of Raleigh, on whom many looked as a martyr, the neglect of the Navy, and the reliance on such unscrupulous adventurers as Buckingham. To this list, especially in the view of Puritans and the simpler gentry, must be added alarm and disgust at the profligacy of the Court. Immorality and drunkenness were common; and though the King and his Queen, Anne of Denmark, were themselves above suspicion, they countenanced at their court such shameless behavior as that of Frances Howard. Married at thirteen by the King's own wish to the young Earl of Essex, she was soon after divorced, also at the King's wish, so that she could marry her lover, the King's favorite, Robert Carr, who was created Earl of Somerset to match her rank. To clear opposition, the young woman, with Medicean artifice, had Carr's agent murdered, because he objected to the marriage for his patron's advancement; but on her trial, to which the notorious astrologer, Simon Forman, added obscenities, she was declared to have been led astray by "base persons" and so was pardoned by James.

The King himself seems to have been inordinately fond of cock-fighting, bear-baiting, dancing, and hunting, so fond that even his courtiers were exhausted. On one occasion, a Venetian records, when the King cried to a wearied court, "Devil take you all—dance!" Buckingham "cut a score of lofty and very minute capers with so much grace and agility that the King was delighted, and honoured the marquis by a display of extraordinary affection, patting his face." Buckingham himself was evidently something of a "perfumed popinjay." "At his going over to Paris in 1625 he had twenty-seven suits of clothes made, the richest that embroidery, lace, silk, velvet, gold, and gems could contribute, one of which was a white, uncut velvet, set all over, both suit and cloak, with diamonds, valued at 14,000 pounds."

The Queen, on her part, is said to have made court theatricals her chief occupation. During the reign of James I the masque had become enormously popular at court festivals. Arising out of Italian masqued balls, it had added gradually to the music

and dancing such elements as pastoral scenes, song, spoken lines, and elaborate scenery. In Ben Jonson's hands it became literary, but Milton later produced in *Comus* the only masque that ranks as great literature. In contrast to the plays at the public theaters, the costumes and scenery of the masques were ingenious, elaborate, fabulously expensive. In Jonson's *Masque of Blackness*, the Queen and her train, blacked as Ethiopians, appeared in a shell of mother-of-pearl, moving up and down on the waves. "There was a great engine at the lower end of the room," wrote Sir Dudley Carleton, "which had motion, and in it were the images of sea-horses, with other terrible fishes. . . . The indecorum was that there was all fish and no water." And the same writer seems to have disapproved of the appearance of the Queen and others as "rich, but too light and courtesanlike for such great ones."

In contrast to this court life of frivolity stands not only the simple life of the country gentry and yeomanry, but, more conspicuously, the increasingly austere life of the Puritans. Puritanism was passing rapidly beyond its earlier emphasis on mere simplicity of life and ritual and, though never a sect in itself, was becoming more and more identified with the strict codes and Sabbatarianism of the Calvinists. With this went a condemnation of theaters, dancing, and games and, in extreme cases, of any singing but psalm-singing. Costumes were increasingly plain; manners were increasingly restrained, except of course in those instances where under emotional stress the Puritan indulged in "convulsions, groans, and tears." But among the Puritans, or sympathetic to them, were many who without eccentricities espoused their cause for its simplicity or for its direction towards political liberty — scholars like Milton, men of action like Cromwell, moderate nobles like Lord and Lady Falkland. Even Arabella Stuart called herself a Puritan. What the King could not see, moreover, was that the tide was running strongly in the direction of both moral and political reform, that the "Christian Renaissance," as Taine aptly calls it, was in England superseding the "Pagan Renaissance," that in the making was a new social order which was to set England apart, in way of life as in commercial growth, from the other countries of Europe.

The Puritans lived largely in the towns. Besides the simple villagers, who took comfort, even under persecution, in the new religious austerity, there were many occupied with the expanding

trade of the cities. For in spite of the ravages by plague in 1603 and 1625, to say nothing of typhus and smallpox, so great was the influx from the country that the population of London increased. An overbuilt, overcrowded city, with no lighting or sewage, it was an ideal host for disease, which continued periodically to ravage it till the purge of the Great Fire; but the Thames was the way to the sea and carried the hopes of trade. For, though the manufacture of wool continued to be the most important industry in England, the manufacture of silk, linen, and cutlery was growing, and cotton was already an infant industry; coal was brought round by sea to Bristol and London; and these ports sent an increasing number of trading ships to the Mediterranean and to the Orient.

Obviously, with England in this temper, the situation confronting James in 1621, when he next called Parliament, was far different from that of 1604, when the "Apology" had been drawn up. The Parliament began by objecting to the King's hot and cold foreign policy. The King rebuked them for interference, and they thereupon revived the old issue of freedom of speech and drew up the famous "Protest" in their defense. The intractable James tore the "Protest" page out of the record and dissolved Parliament. But that body, before its dissolution, had impeached Sir Francis Bacon, the Lord Chancellor, for taking bribes and had thereby re-established its right to hold the officers of the Crown responsible. This impeachment is all the more significant in that Bacon, one of the great legal minds of the day, had steadily supported the King's authority.

In all these developments towards the authority of common law over King's law, the chief contributor in the legal aspects was Sir Edward Coke, Bacon's famous rival. A ruthless self-seeker — who virtually sold his daughter to John Villiers, brother of the King's favorite, and who indulged, as attorney general, in brutal vituperation, crying at Raleigh, on trial, "Thou hast a Spanish heart, and art thyself a spider of hell!" — Coke nevertheless grew to be the chief legal authority of his day and the champion of government based on law. Chief Justice of Common Pleas for seven years, and of the King's Bench for three, he faced the King when other judges were cringing and recanting, and though he was dismissed from office, he stuck resolutely to his insistence that "royal proclamation cannot make an offence which was not an offence before." As a

member of Parliament, he played an important part in drawing up the famous Protest of 1621 and the still more famous Petition of 1628.

James died in 1625. To his son he bequeathed a war, a triangular problem of Catholic, Anglican, and Puritan, the Irish question, a large debt, a hostile Parliament clamorous for its rights, and the Duke of Buckingham.

CHARLES I

Charles I inherited his father's stubbornness as well as unquestioning faith in his divine right. Like his father, he had a high sense of duty to his people but little understanding of that people. Again like his father, he believed that the judiciary should be an arm of the Crown, "lions under the throne," not an impartial judge of disputes between the Crown and the subjects. But, quite unlike his predecessor, he was an extremely attractive and gracious person, a cultivated gentleman; and his Queen, similarly, surpassed James's Queen in culture and taste. The King's private life was a model for rulers, and his court in large measure substituted the patronage of culture for the earlier patronage of vice and frivolity.

In another age or in another country Charles might have been a successful ruler. But James had left him a domestic and foreign situation which only the tact of an Elizabeth might have mastered. Charles not only lacked the necessary tact, but he introduced a further cause of religious discord. James, with his famous "No bishops, no crown," had sided with episcopacy, but he was never a genuine Anglican. His son, on the other hand, was a fervent Anglican and went the length of trying to force episcopacy on the people, in Scotland as well as in England. Heretofore, the religious issue had been largely concerned with questions of form and conduct; Charles made it also a matter of conscience. Anglicans like John Milton, who might have rested content in the Church if form and conduct had been the sole issue, took offense at the "forcers of conscience." Formerly much of the Puritan agitation had nothing to do with the political struggle; but this step by the King threw into close union the champions of both kinds of liberty, political and religious.

Though the King's French marriage was at first popular with a nation which still feared any alliance with Spain, Buckingham's

failure in the expeditions to Cádiz and to Holland, Charles's concessions to Catholics, against his promise when he married, and, above all, his tactless treatment of Parliament, brought the question of prerogative to a head at once.

In his father's reign the royal prerogative had been repeatedly questioned, but Charles, like his forebear, could not see that the trend in England was almost diametrically opposed to that in the great countries of the Continent. France, still largely feudal and with no national parliament now for over a century, was already far on the way towards the despotism soon to appear under the *Grand Monarque* and a century later to blossom in such countries as Prussia, Austria, and Russia. Furthermore, though something of the old feudal condition persisted in Scotland and the North of England, the growth of trade in central and southern England had made it, next to Holland, the most commercial nation in Europe. During the Tudor century, particularly in Elizabeth's reign, the English Parliament had emerged more and more from a consultative body to a legislative one, and by the end of James's reign, as we have seen, it claimed not only the right of voting public moneys, but the right of freedom of speech and of holding the king's ministers responsible for their acts. While the people of France were no longer in touch with their medieval rights and were having experience of increasing autocracy, not of incipient democracy, the people of England, in contrast, were reviving their ancient "liberties" and were on the threshold of self-government — the most important step in their political experience.

With England in this state of mind, Charles, true to Stuart form, went with empty pockets to Parliament. After allowing him the customs dues for only a year, instead of for life, it soon proceeded to impeach Buckingham. There were insufficient grounds, for the Duke,* though extravagant, could not be proved either corrupt or traitorous, but the King, maintaining that the Parliament had no rights in the matter, dissolved it. But a dissolved body could not grant money, and, though the embarrassed King turned to every means, legal and illegal, that he could devise, he was forced, in order to get sufficient funds, to call a Parliament in 1628.

This body at once drew up its grievances in a memorable docu-

* Buckingham was murdered in 1629.

ment, the Petition of Right. To the earlier issue of liberty of speech was now added the liberty of the person, for Charles, with judicial support, had practically abrogated a clause of Magna Carta — "No free man shall be taken and imprisoned unless by lawful judgement of his peers or the law of the land." Further, the behavior of pressed and lawless soldiers, billeted on the people, who had to seek redress in military courts, had recently led to another grievance. The Petition, to which the King reluctantly consented, provided, therefore, that the King should make no forced loans, put no one in prison without showing cause, billet no military or naval forces upon the people, and not use martial law in time of peace. Though the Great Charter was of course the "cradle of English liberties," it had been largely designed to protect the barons against the King, just as many grants of power to Parliament in the reigns of Edward I and Edward III had been designed to protect the King against the barons. The Petition of Right was therefore really the first great document of democracy — designed to protect the people, through their elected representatives, from despotic rulers. For sixty years the struggle to maintain it and enlarge it went on, culminating finally in the Bill of Rights and setting, in the face of the European practice of that day, the people's prerogative above the king's.

Charles evidently had no notion of keeping his agreement, for he proceeded at once to levy tonnage and poundage dues without the consent of Parliament. Technically, there was some legality to the King's right in regard to these dues, as not within the scope of parliamentary levies, but it was something of a quibble — and certainly unwise. To add fuel to the fire, moreover, he further asserted — at a most inappropriate time, the opening of Parliament in 1629 — that the people must accept as law any interpretation of the Thirty-nine Articles made by the bishops. When an uproar arose, the King ordered the house to adjourn, but John Eliot, with four others, held the speaker in the chair until a set of resolutions could be passed condemning the action of the King. To meet such defiance, Charles dissolved the Parliament and sent the five ringleaders to the Tower. In 1632 Eliot died in prison, a martyr in the minds of his countrymen. Most significant of all, the political and religious questions, which might possibly have been kept apart, were now irrevocably joined in the minds of both sides. A dozen years later, when the political quarrel might still have been settled, the re-

ligious ingredient in the mixture precipitated the First Civil War.

Of Charles's personal rule without Parliament, it is too commonly supposed that he ruled badly. His methods were certainly high-handed, and there is no question that in assenting to the Petition of Right he had forfeited authority to rule as despotically as his predecessors; but the King's will, as he saw it, was law, so he did not feel the guilt assigned to him by his enemies when he broke his word to Parliament, since he believed he was not responsible to it, or when he levied illegal taxes and enforced strict Anglican rules of worship. There has rarely, if ever, been a better-intentioned autocrat. Order was maintained, vagrancy was suppressed, the Poor Laws were enforced, work was given to the unemployed, the destitute were helped. It was in fact a sort of New Deal, supported not only by those benefited, but by the Church and by many gentlemen who felt a personal loyalty to the King. Charles, moreover, took steps to improve the Navy, though he did not make it by any means the efficient force it became under Cromwell. The Channel piracy was stopped, and new ships were built, among them the *Sovereign of the Seas*, the finest warship afloat. One hundred and seventy feet long and carrying about one hundred guns, she served in gallant actions for nearly fifty years under Blake, Monck, Penn, and Russell.

But the King was in grievous need of funds. To the desultory war with Spain, not concluded till 1630, was added a war with France, 1626-1629, in response to the English sympathy with the Huguenots of La Rochelle. It was not vigorously conducted on either side, but it swelled expenses. To meet these and domestic needs, Charles revived obsolete taxes, such as distraint of knighthood, by which every person whose income from land was forty pounds was compelled to accept knighthood or pay a fine; forest fines, by which land that had formerly been part of the royal forests but that had been sold centuries before was declared illegally sold, and therefore to be retained by its owners only on payment of heavy penalties; and ship-money, in former times levied on seaports when there was threat of invasion, but now levied when there was no such threat and on inland towns as well. Further, Charles granted new monopolies — to companies, thus getting round the recent law which prohibited the grant to individuals.

The imposition of ship-money was the most resented of these

devices. The case of John Hampden, who refused to pay it in 1637 and who lost before the King's judges by the narrow margin of five to seven, turned into a boomerang for Charles; it became a rallying cry of the opposition out of all proportion to its importance as a case. But the administration of the government caused even more resentment than the taxes. The Star Chamber took over many cases which should have been tried in the ordinary courts and during Charles's reign became a synonym for arbitrary judgments. At the same time Archbishop William Laud, attempting to regulate episcopacy, persecuted Independents and Presbyterians; and though he did much to improve the Anglican service, he contrived by his mania for strict conformity to embitter a large part of the nation. While the unjust taxes were arousing country gentlemen and rich merchants, the severe methods of Laud in remote districts were alienating from the King poor folk who had else been loyal subjects, and nearer home those Puritans who would control the Parliament should it ever meet again. Sabbatarians were exasperated, too, by the reissuance in 1633 of the Declaration of Sports, a dead letter since 1618, but now prescribing Sunday as the day for games, dancing, masques, "or other pastime." With zeal as great and as misconceived as Laud's, Thomas Wentworth conducted the government of Ireland. An honest but uncompromising man, Wentworth had been one of the authors of the Petition of Right, but, feeling that the King, in consenting to that document, had satisfied the demands of Parliament, he later accepted the position of Lord Deputy to Ireland, where his merciless rule came to be known as "Thorough."

Under such pressure, emigration to America increased enormously. In addition to malcontents who were shipped abroad, many people, on both political and religious grounds, fled from what to them seemed not only an intolerable but an incurable situation. Laud's persecutions played an important part in this exodus, particularly to Massachusetts Bay. In fact, during the period of Charles's personal rule more people emigrated to America than in any other decade of the century. The Crown's policy had an enormous, though undesigned, effect on later developments in the new colonies. For, whereas the French King encouraged the emigration to Eastern Canada of only good Catholics and loyal subjects, with

the missions as important as the trade, both James and Charles put the trade value of the Colonies first and felt that malcontents, either political or religious, were well out of the way on the other side of the Atlantic. This policy automatically moved to America, not Jesuit priests, great landholders, and peasants, as in the case of France, but sturdy, independent, resourceful yeomen farmers and small traders — men able to look after themselves, fit in the next century to secure English control of the American continent and, when occasion finally arose, to establish in the New World those "liberties" which their ancestors had established in England.

Though the political and religious strife of the seventeenth century is unquestionably the chief matter of the time for the historian to consider, England was not so wholly engrossed by it as might superficially appear. Indeed, a gentleman of culture in the fourth decade of the century, a man who was not aware of the significance of events to come, may well have dismissed the Puritans with a moment's contempt and then turned to congratulate himself on living in such a happy period. He could remember the tales of his grandfather, tales of the rough days of Elizabeth, brightened here and there by glorious deeds, but days of crude and cruel customs — people put to torture, burned at the stake, government by intrigue, theaters only just beginning, a handful of educated people, boorish manners, and a capricious if competent Queen. "But now," he seems to say, "we have things better — an accomplished and courteous sovereign, distinguished painters like Van Dyck visiting us, a wealth of plays — a trifle broad perhaps, but skillful, so much better than the 'dingy jests' of George Peele; Ben Jonson, even if forgotten in recent years, saved the theater from its extravagances, and Ford, Massinger, and Shirley are worthy successors to Beaumont and Fletcher." The masque, a splendid spectacle at court and in great private houses, was now at its height, with Inigo Jones to design the elaborate scenery and Henry Lawes to compose the music.

Jones, in fact, with the banqueting hall at Whitehall Palace and Covent Garden Piazza among his architectural feats, was just beginning the famous portico of old St. Paul's. Under the influence of Palladio, he was the first great Renaissance architect in England, and his design for a new palace at Whitehall, extending from Charing Cross to Westminster and from the Thames to St. James's

Park, would have produced the largest Palladian structure in Europe. By the outbreak of the Civil War, however, only the banqueting hall had been completed, and the remains of the old palace,* the old York House, for two centuries the residence of the Archbishop of York till Wolsey's fall, were destroyed by fire in 1697.

In this decade, moreover, English portrait painting first became notable. Hitherto foreign artists had been employed, but, succeeding Van Dyck as Court Painter, William Dobson, whom Charles called his "English Tintoret," revealed skill that warrants the term, "artistic ancestor of Sir Joshua." It was at this time too, that Herrick, at Dean Prior, sang,

. . . of May-poles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes,
Of bridegrooms, brides, and of their bridal cakes.

— that George Herbert, in the seclusion of Bemerton, dedicated his life in simplicity to the "beauty of holiness," so that the toilers in the fields were said to pause when his saint's bell rang for prayers, — that William Harvey had only just made the momentous discovery of the circulation of the blood, — that Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* appeared, and that old scholars like Sir Henry Wotton were sending young scholars like John Milton to visit the learned men of the Continent.

To the common villager and to the Puritan burgher these amenities of Caroline England were not so impressive. Torture and burning were not yet unknown; imprisonment was often unjust and usually brutal; the gruesome practice of witch-baiting flourished; country poor still lived in miserable thatched huts. But the villager, after all, did dance to "the jocund rebeck" in the chequered shade and tell his stories over "the spicy nut-brown ale." And the yeoman, though he knew nothing of the culture of his day, was in good case and enjoyed with his neighbor the gentleman the old sport of stag-hunting, not yet extinct in England. Even many burghers, with expanding trade, were no doubt content enough.

Such conditions, both good and bad, might have lasted for several years longer if the King had not suffered so acutely from the chronic

* The old palace was the chief royal residence during Tudor and Stuart times. Henry VIII died there; from the banqueting hall Charles I was led out to the scaffold; both Cromwell and Charles II lived and died there. George I converted the hall into a royal chapel. It is now the United Service Museum.

Stuart complaint — an empty purse. In 1638 the Scots met Laud's insistent episcopacy by drawing up a Covenant in support of their own Presbyterianism, and the next year they abolished episcopacy and the English Book of Common Prayer. Charles called Wentworth from Ireland, created him Earl of Strafford, and sent him to apply his "thorough" methods in the North. But the Scots, under Alexander Leslie, who had served with Gustavus Adolphus on the Continent, were more than a match for the unprepared English Army, and Charles was forced, in April, 1640, to resort again to Parliament.

That body, much to his annoyance, began exactly where it had left off in 1629 and, under the leadership of John Pym, refused to grant money till its grievances were redressed. Charles, also behaving in 1629 style, dissolved this "Short Parliament" after a three weeks' session. But Leslie and his Covenanter Army poured over the border; Charles had to act quickly. He sought an arrangement with the Scots, but they consented to peace only if it was ratified by Parliament, and in November, 1640, the King called the assembly which came to be known as the "Long Parliament." Even more determined than the Short Parliament, the new body began, before it would consider granting funds, by impeaching Strafford. Lacking proof of treason, it turned the impeachment charges to a bill of attainder; Charles, to his everlasting disgrace, signed the bill, and within a few months the King's faithful and honest servant lost his head on the block.

But the King's surrender of Strafford did not satisfy Parliament. Laud was sent to the Tower,* the Courts of High Commission and Star Chamber were abolished, the King's obnoxious taxes were stopped, and a Triennial Bill, providing that not more than three years might elapse without the summoning of a parliament, was passed. To all these acts the King reluctantly but perforce agreed. By them he was shorn of his power, and but for the "bitter-enders" in the House of Commons, the struggle might have had its solution without resort to arms. For though the immediate cause of the war was the quarrel over the Militia Bill, which Charles refused to sign, the irreconcilable issue, which more temperate or more far-seeing men would have dropped, was the religious dispute.

* Laud was not executed till 1645.

The extreme Puritans would not "let go." They would not rest till episcopacy itself had been abolished as a State Church. In November, 1641, the Grand Remonstrance, passed by a narrow margin, provided for a synod of divines to remodel the Church. Though it consolidated the extremists, it drove the Church party in Parliament definitely to the King's side. When the reformers talked of going still further, of impeaching the Queen, — for Calvinists had an incurable suspicion that Anglicanism might at any moment skid into Romanism, — Charles determined to arrest the leaders of the House. Warned in time, they escaped the fate of Eliot, but the King's action only widened the breach, so that when during the following spring the House attempted to force on Charles a bill which gave it control of the militia, and followed this up with further demands in regard to appointments throughout the civil as well as the military government, the King called out the militia and attempted coercion. Civil war was a fact.

The Parliament had now control of the nation's purse. If it had succeeded also in getting legal control of the sword, as well as of the Crown's appointments, its victory would have been complete. The Civil War decided nothing, legally; it merely showed, while it drenched England with blood, that an aroused and earnest minority could have its way with a king; but the civil powers which the Parliament of 1642 sought were eventually realized, when the religious fury had subsided, in the Bill of Rights of 1689.

When Charles raised his standard at Nottingham, many loyal Englishmen rallied to his cause. His followers, the Cavaliers, numbered most of the men with military experience, and he had an unusually competent and dashing cavalry leader in Prince Rupert. No one has caught the fine first enthusiasm of these Cavaliers better than Browning* in his famous lines: —

Kentish Sir Byng stood for his King,
 Bidding the crop-headed Parliament swing:
 And, pressing a troop unable to stoop,
 And see the rogues flourish and honest folk droop,
 Marched them along, fifty-score strong,
 Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

* Unless, perhaps, Lovelace with his
 I could not love thee, dear, so much
 Loved I not honor more.

But their opponents were on fire. To the zeal for liberty of such gentlemen as Hampden was added the religious intensity of the men who had pushed the Grand Remonstrance through the House. To them the battle was the Lord's; they were fighting the powers of darkness. Against the fine loyalty of the Cavaliers we must set the earnest fanaticism of the Roundheads, of men "praying under the void of heaven" before the battle joined. Macaulay, who understood them better than their opponents, in a vivid paragraph has shown how they could combine such emotional fervor with cool efficiency: —

The Puritan was made up of two different men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker; but he set his foot on the neck of his King. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. . . . But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or on the field of battle. . . . The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. . . . Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world.

In other words, though they did watch and fast and pray, they kept their powder dry. Carlyle tells how Cromwell, after the victory at Dunbar, stopped his men to sing a psalm, to "roll it strong and great against the sky" — but, the narrative continues, "*Then to the chase again.*"

When matters came to actual war, the majority of Anglicans, especially in the High Church, sided with the King, but a good many Anglicans, as well as Presbyterians, Independents, and all sorts of dissenters,* sided with Parliament. Similarly, the Royalists were drawn largely from the North and West, while the Parliament side was recruited chiefly from the East and South, particularly from the towns. But the divisions, both religious and geographical, were not so simple as this would imply. Every county, practically

* Strange new sects sprang up like mushrooms.

every village, had adherents of both sides; with neutrality impossible, the choice was difficult for many honest men. Izaak Walton had the good sense to go fishing; Nicholas Farrar shut himself up in seclusion at Little Gidding, to escape "the furie of Protestantism"; John Milton soon saw that "new Presbyter was but old Priest writ large," but, "church-outed by the prelates," as he put it, and passionately devoted to the cause of liberty, he threw in his lot with the insurgents. Of course he soon found that one kind of tyranny was to be substituted for another; his choice, as Macaulay phrases it, lay "not between Cromwell and liberty, but between Cromwell and the Stuarts."

The advantage lay at first with the Royalists, but the Parliamentarians had the greater resources. The King's effort, therefore, was to capture London as soon as possible, and success in the first major engagement, at Edgehill, was a promising beginning. The Roundheads, in spite of a Solemn League and Covenant with Scotland in 1643, which brought them the help of Leslie and his army in the North, were hard pressed for the first two years of the war, and things looked blacker than ever for them when Montrose, who had begun on their side, was provoked by the overbearing Presbyterians to switch to the Stuart cause. A great victory was won by the Parliamentary Army under Fairfax at Marston Moor in July, 1644, but the brilliant successes of Montrose forced the withdrawal of the Scottish Army, which did not succeed in overcoming him till September, 1645, at Philiphaugh.

Marston Moor, however, had marked the turning of the tide. For that battle had really been won by Cromwell's Cavalry, his "Ironsides," who broke the magic of Rupert's dashing charges and gave heart to the Parliament side. Cromwell, with no military experience before 1642, but with sure military instinct, organized a troop of horse at the outbreak of the war, took an active part in the campaign of the Eastern Association, a group organized to push the Parliamentary cause in the Eastern counties, and was in fact its most energetic leader. After Marston Moor he was made lieutenant general and given the task of organizing the New Model Army, a task which he performed with such efficiency and dispatch that in less than a year (June, 1645) he routed the King's forces at Naseby. A year later (June, 1646) Oxford, the headquarters of the Royalists, surrendered, and the First Civil War was over.

Oliver Cromwell was of course the great genius of the war, as he later proved to be a great statesman. Capitalizing the religious zeal of the Puritans, he based the strict discipline of his "God-fearing" army on an incredibly severe code for both officers and men, and to this he coupled a shrewd understanding of military tactics, so that he made his whole army, like his old cavalry, into an irresistible force. Foreshadowing Marlborough and Napoleon, he stressed mobility in military tactics, and particularly the art of breaking through with concentrated attack at an unexpected point.

By 1646, then, the Army was in control. But Parliament was still largely Presbyterian, and, true to its bargain with the Scots in the Solemn League and Covenant, it attempted to abolish episcopacy and set up Presbyterianism as the State religion in England. Of this bargain Cromwell and other Independents had never approved, so now the Army not only refused to disband but occupied London. Soon after, the King escaped to the Isle of Wight, royalist uprisings took place at various points, and even the Scots, angered by the Army's behavior, sent a force to help the Royalists in Wales. Cromwell, however, swept the field at Preston in 1648 and drove the Scots out of England. The various uprisings were crushed, the King was captured, and the Second Civil War was over, but with nothing more settled by it than by the first. Who were now the insurgents? The Parliament, which had risen against the King? Or the Army, which had usurped the authority of Parliament? Or perhaps those little groups of Royalists, in Wales, Essex, and Kent, who had the audacity to rise in defense of a legitimate sovereign? The struggle had gone a long way beyond the effort at civil liberty which prompted the Protest and the Petition of Right, which even animated the Long Parliament in its early stages. To the shadow of the Grand Remonstrance had been added the shadow of the Solemn League and Covenant, and now spread over England the still more ominous shadow of the Army.

Enraged by this second war and by Parliament's disposition still to treat with the King, the Army took matters into its own hands. Colonel Pride, stationed at the door of the House, excluded the Presbyterian majority, one hundred and forty-three members; and the "purged" House, dominated by the Independents, at once proceeded to set up a court of justice to try the King. Many of those appointed to the court after "Pride's Purge" refused to serve, but

the remainder found the King guilty, and on January 30, 1649, he was executed in front of Whitehall.

Much has been written concerning the injustice of the trial and the King's noble behavior on the scaffold. Obviously, the trial was not only a travesty of justice; it had no legal warrant. Milton's defense of it in *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* amounts to little more than a defense of lynching. On the other hand, the King's tyranny during many years amply justified his being held responsible. Insistent that no court had a right to try him, Charles refused to plead. He comported himself throughout with fine dignity, so that many hearts were touched at the shameless proceedings; and, even if one must remember his wanton desertion of Wentworth a few years before, one must recognize that he was not only one of the most picturesque, but also one of the most engaging of English monarchs.

But the practical fact was that the English people, with whatever actual legal warrant, had shown themselves capable of overthrowing and killing a tyrannical king. A regicide peace was of course no peace at all, but from now on, dearly as Englishmen might love their king, it was clear that they loved their "liberties" more. That things had come to such a pass — this is the significant fact; and James II, as Carlyle would say, were well, later on, to take note of that!

Chapter X

FROM DESPOTISM TO LIBERTY

EVERY SECT saith, 'Oh, give me liberty,' but give it to him and to his power he will not yield it to anybody else." That sentence of Cromwell's largely explains the new despotism in England. For the political liberty which England had almost reached by 1640, and which was finally to prove itself the chief development of the century, was now lost in religious dissension, a dissension suppressed rather than resolved by the despotism of the Army. Yet it is a question whether, with the religious conflict so hot, a representative government could have been set up till a lapse of years had allowed passions to cool. The amazing thing, really, is that England escaped anarchy. That such was the case, that the government, though quite as absolute as that of Charles, was a far juster and more efficient one, was largely due to Oliver Cromwell. More than this, England re-established her prestige among the nations of Europe. Most of Cromwell's measures, good and bad, were annulled with the Restoration, but his vigorous colonial policy, his insistence on a powerful Navy, his emphasis on education, and his efforts towards religious toleration all bore fruit in succeeding generations.

THE COMMONWEALTH

During his lifetime Cromwell's rule was feared and admired, but loved by few; and after the Restoration such a clamor rose against him that his remains were disinterred from Westminster Abbey and hanged without public protest. Yet Cromwell, a country gentleman of the elder type, was no narrow bigot, but was genuinely tolerant towards religious dissent. "I had rather that Mahometanism were permitted amongst us, than that one of God's children should be persecuted." With the limitations of most Puritans who had experienced the rule of Laud, he could never extend such toleration to Anglicans, but it was against the episcopal organization, which prompted men "to take up the carnal sword," not against the belief, that he set his face. A practical man, he was a good deal of an opportunist, but he developed

extraordinary executive ability and revealed, on the whole, both wisdom and moderation in his efforts to solve the problem of English government.

Born at Huntingdon in 1599, Cromwell had distinguished forebears in Sir Richard and Sir Henry, and was first cousin of John Hampden. Sent to Parliament in 1628, he did not become prominent, but by 1638 he was a confirmed Puritan Independent, and in 1641 he was one of the radical "root and branch" group bent on crushing episcopacy. We have seen him, in the preceding chapter, as captain of a troop of horse in the Parliamentary army of 1642, as the leading spirit, with rank of Colonel, in the Eastern Association of 1643, and rising rapidly thereafter to his successes at Marston Moor and Naseby. When Fairfax balked at the Army's insistence on the trial of the King, Cromwell, at first reluctant but switching to support of the Army, was in virtual control of England.

The Rump Parliament, confronted by insurrections in Virginia, Ireland, and Scotland, and by attacks from Royalist privateers, created Cromwell Captain-general and Commander-in-chief. With extraordinary vigor he broke resistance and restored order. In the summer of 1649 he subdued Ireland, the following autumn he defeated a superior Scottish army at Dunbar, and in September, 1651, he finally crushed the insurrection by routing the invading Scots at Worcester. Carlyle gives us a picture of Cromwell's God-fearing army in his *Battle of Dunbar*: —

Major Hodgson riding along heard, he says, 'a cornet praying in the night.' . . . Major Hodgson, giving his charge to a brother Officer, turned aside to listen for a minute, and to pray and worship along with them. . . . The Lord gives us courage, and we storm home again, horse and foot, upon them, with a shock like tornado tempests; break them, beat them, drive them all adrift.

This was the God of the Old Testament! Clearly, order was maintained in the British Isles, but with a fanatical sword.

While Cromwell was suppressing revolt on land, Robert Blake, by defeating Rupert's fleet of privateers, began his career as one of England's great naval commanders. A West Countryman, like so many of England's famous admirals, Blake went to Oxford, sat in the Parliament of 1640, and served in the Parliamentary Army during the Civil Wars. Later, though he was defeated once by the Dutch admiral Van Tromp, in 1652, he reversed the situa-

tion with a refitted fleet in February, 1653, and the following June drove the Dutch Navy off the seas. His most famous exploit, however, was his attack in 1657 on the forts at Teneriffe, when he destroyed sixteen Spanish ships. Here was Drake reincarnate. "The Spaniards," Clarendon says, "comforted themselves with the belief that they were devils and not men who had destroyed them in such a manner."

But the successful suppression of revolt and a vigorous foreign policy did not solve the problem of government. For Cromwell's order was military, not constitutional. In Ireland his rule was harsh, as had been that of his predecessors; in brief, the Irish Question merely moved on another step. But in Scotland the effort was promising. There was no general confiscation and no proscription of religion, and, under the able command of General Monk, order and justice were maintained, even in the Highlands. But the Scots were generally against it; it was not a Presbyterian, nor yet a Parliamentary rule, but one by the English Army of Independents. Again, in England the reprisals against Royalists, though severe in the confiscation of estates, were remarkably lenient in regard to imprisonment and execution. The religious ingredient was once more the chief cause of discontent; and when the suppression of episcopacy, together with the enforcement of Sunday laws, was put in the hands of bigoted major generals, each step led to more military despotism and to less constitutional liberty.

There appears to be little question, nevertheless, that Cromwell wished to base the government of all the British Isles on a constitutional authority. But the remainder Parliament was not representative, and, finding it intractable, Cromwell expelled it in 1653 with his cheap if famous jest about the speaker's mace. And to the departing members he shouted, "It is you that have forced me to this, for I have sought the Lord night and day, that He would rather slay me than put upon me the doing of this work." In that sentence lies the clue to most of Cromwell's efforts at government. Religion guided his policies. Determined to have a State Church which should include Baptists and Independents as well as Presbyterians, and to show toleration to Quakers and other dissenting sects, he would not have the old Parliament, with its Presbyterianism, back.

Nevertheless, he still sought a constitutional rule. He tried vest-

ing power in a Congregational Assembly, but with no success, and in 1653 the army officers, led by Lambert, appointed Cromwell Lord Protector and proposed a written constitution, the "Instrument of Government." It was an honest attempt, singularly liberal in military despots, to return the government to constitutional authority. It reiterated most of the "liberties" of the bills passed in the reign of Charles I, and it combined the government of England, Ireland, and Scotland under a single-chamber legislature; but it barred Anglicans and Romanists, and it narrowed the franchise by raising the qualification. The Instrument was trying to go in two directions at once, and such an effort in a country edging towards liberalism was bound to fail.

The reform ordinances of the Protector and of the new Parliament elected under the Instrument show more wisdom than is usually ascribed to them. In contrast to the strict Sunday laws, which were, after all, more oppressive from their manner of enforcement than from their content, and to the ordinances against swearing and cockfighting, the attempts to mitigate the incredibly severe penalties for petty offenses predict reforms delayed for two centuries. The new government made much of education and provided revenue for the extension of schools. Cromwell himself was particularly interested in the universities and sought to improve them. He became Chancellor of Oxford in 1651 and appointed the competent John Owen Vice-chancellor. Even Clarendon admits that Oxford in those days "yielded a harvest of extraordinary good and sound learning."

Yet in spite of intentions on the whole good, the despotism of Cromwell and the Army was increasingly unpopular. This high-handed rule Oliver held to be forced on him by necessity. When told that nine in ten of the nation were against him, he replied, "Very well, but what if I should disarm the nine and put a sword in the tenth man's hands?" It was an insufficient reply, of course, the answer of a man weary with the quarrels of sectaries. By 1657 there was a strong reaction towards the old order, and in that year a new constitutional scheme, with two houses and a king, was brought forward. It was accepted by Cromwell when "protector" was substituted for "king." He now had real constitutional authority, but when the two houses soon quarreled, he told Parliament that it was "playing of the King of Scots' game" and dissolved it

in February, 1658. During the few months till his death, in September, he continued his personal rule.

Cromwell's contemporaries disagreed violently about him. Ludlow, a die-hard Republican, said "he designed nothing but to advance himself." Baxter said he "meant honestly in the main . . . till prosperity and success corrupted him." Yet Clarendon, the Royalist historian, admitted that Cromwell was not "a man of blood" and that he had "a great spirit." Historians for a long time continued to take partisan views, but, since Carlyle's great life of him, they have generally credited him with honest intentions, and of course with abilities amounting to genius. Whatever may be said, he at least held England together till the violent centrifugal forces had somewhat abated.

It is for Cromwell's foreign policy, primarily, that even hostile critics praise him. Clarendon says that his "greatness at home was a mere shadow of his greatness abroad," and Pepys in 1667, when the Dutch Navy sailed up the Thames and burned English ships in the Medway, writes wistfully: "It is strange how everybody do nowadays reflect upon Oliver and commend him."

Cromwell's practical and energetic effort was to promote trade and colonial growth, and to this end he made much of the Navy; but his great dream was through a Protestant league "to spread liberty and true religion" in other lands. He attempted co-operation with Sweden, Denmark, and Holland, but he never was able to reconcile their private conflicts sufficiently to make a united Protestant front. Trade rivalry with Holland, moreover, was the practical concern of the moment; so, in spite of his dream, the practical Oliver prosecuted against the Dutch the naval war in which Blake won great glory. In addition, Cromwell did not hesitate to make an alliance with France against Spain, though in so doing he helped to destroy England's traditional championship of the balance of power. If this step helped France to become the most powerful nation in Europe, to the later discomfiture of England, it also helped England to dispose of the lingering Spanish menace, and that, to Oliver, was the immediate, practical consideration.

Confused as Cromwell's policy may seem, the upshot of his energetic measures was that the English flag was once again respected on the high seas and that English prestige throughout Europe was greater than ever before. In his colonial efforts, more-

over, he inaugurated a policy by which his successors built the British Empire. Though an expedition to the West Indies was in many respects a failure, England did secure, with the capture and development of Jamaica, English control of the Caribbean. Cromwell took an active interest in colonial trade, and his Navy, by enforcing the Navigation Act, saw to it that goods were carried in English bottoms.

In spite of the Protector's personal enjoyment of music, Puritanism was generally hostile to all the arts. The theaters were closed in 1642, and all that gay delight in secular art, literature, and music which had animated Elizabethan England, even the more sedate culture of Caroline times, was condemned by the Puritans as "carnal." Milton, who could still cherish his "vehement love of the beautiful," was the exception rather than the rule, and even he wrote little poetry during the Cromwellian period. Herrick's pastoral volume, *The Hesperides*, appeared, it is true, in the dark days of 1649, but it also was miraculous rather than typical; and Edmund Waller, though he was popular under the Commonwealth, belongs in style and spirit with the Restoration poets. Abraham Cowley, after his return from exile in 1656, became the most famous poet of his day. Incredibly precocious, he had been well thought of over twenty years before, when he was only fifteen! But nowadays it is Cowley as an essayist rather than as a poet who holds the regard of judicious readers.

The great literary contribution of Cromwell's time was, in fact, the prose. Old-fashioned, Latinate, formless in comparison with the more thrifty, compact expression that began with Dryden, the style of Milton, Browne, Taylor, and Baxter has a felicity of expression and an amplitude of rhythm which has never been surpassed in English. It was bred in minds nurtured on the classics, the Bible, and the Book of Common Prayer. Sir Thomas Browne in his *Urn-Burial* stands apart from the controversial prose, as does Jeremy Taylor, "the Shakespeare of divines," in his *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying*. Milton's more quarrelsome matter is saved, especially in his *Areopagitica*, by the magnificence of his images and periods, and Baxter, though he was a narrow and obstinate man, wrote in *The Saint's Everlasting Rest* a book which has been called, with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, "the greatest prose of the

Puritan period." Nor do these names complete the roll, which should include at least Thomas Fuller, from whom "men learned that the Church was a larger home than Puritanism"; * and James Ussher, the great Biblical scholar.

Most of these authors, in fact, were accomplished scholars, especially Browne, Milton, and Ussher, but the most penetrating mind of the time was that of Thomas Hobbes. He was an important link in the development of empirical, rationalistic thinking since Bacon, and, in the matter of free will, was the first of the determinists. His monarchical bias somewhat confused the logic of his political thinking, and he could never get clear of the quarrels of his own time, but his fundamental thesis, expounded in his *Leviathan* (1651), that natural law leads to anarchy and that reasoning men must therefore submit to a sovereign power, the State with a capital S, is a preface to much political philosophy of the eighteenth century.

The Puritan discouragement of arts and letters was even more conspicuous in the blight it cast on the amenities of living. It is significant that the Government did not hesitate to sell Hyde Park to three purchasers for £17,000 cash.** The restrictions on amusements, moreover, and the sour solemnity which was mistaken for piety, left little room for any fun, innocent or other. This state of mind, which dominated England for only a few intense years, colored English ways to such an extent that it left an indelible stamp on the nation. It is easy, however, to exaggerate the gloom of Puritan days. Among the majority of people life was not a succession of agonies and ecstasies. It was hardly zealots who followed up such advertisements as one of 1657 that "*In Queen's Head Alley, at a Frenchman's house, is an excellent West India drink, called chocolate, to be sold,*" or another of 1658 reporting, "*That excellent . . . China Drink, called by the Chineans Tcha, by other nations Tay, alias Tee, is sold at the Sultanness Head, a coffee-house in Sweeting's Rents.*" The first coffeehouse had been opened in 1652 by a Greek, in St. Michael's Alley, Cornhill.

Nor were such beverages the only innovations. Newspapers had begun as early as 1622 with Butter's *Weekly Newes*, but they first

* W. H. Hutton, in *Trails and Mann*, IV, p. 404.

** Hyde Park was reclaimed, without compensation, at the Restoration.

became popular in the decade of the rebellion. At least one hundred and seventy were started between 1642 and 1649, the most important of which was the government paper, *Mercurius Politicus*. Further, stagecoaches, soon to revolutionize travel, were introduced in 1658, providing a journey from London to Salisbury in two days for one pound. Hackney coaches also became common in London, and the carmen, as their drivers were called, pushed their employment so eagerly that they sometimes attacked and overthrew the private coaches of the rich.

Puritan England, in short, bequeathed to the next generation not only political and religious problems, not only disapproval of arts and graces, but also many innovations which indicated growing trade and a London about to become a great city, with the bustle, the active intercourse, and the conveniences of metropolitan life.

THE RESTORATION

After Cromwell's death the Restoration was almost a foregone conclusion, for the few months' rule of his son Richard never showed signs of permanence. It was a miracle, however, performed by General Monk, that the Restoration was accomplished without another civil war. Monk's method was high-handed. He simply occupied London and forced the Rump Parliament to dissolve itself and to provide for a Convention Assembly, which promptly recalled the King. Monk had at least the good sense to realize that the great majority in the country were now strongly for a constitutional restoration, not for another military tyranny. He did not seize the power for himself, even if he did accept high rank under the new King, and when the Restoration was accomplished, he withdrew his army. Charles, on his part, was wise enough to pay it off.

Little is more obvious than the contrast between Puritan gloom and Restoration debauchery. Yet it is a contrast too often given exaggerated significance because it is conspicuous. It was natural, of course, that there should be violent reaction after so much restraint. It was true that the young exiles who came back from an undisciplined life abroad provided a new profligacy along continental lines with unfortunately little of the Gallic grace which lends it a seeming virtue; it is true, too, that the ringleader of the

whole show was that accomplished *farceur*, the "Merry Monarch" himself. The blind old poet sitting black-suited at his door did indeed hear, even if he could not see, Satanic Pandemonium rise. But the really significant thing about the Restoration period, in the long view of English experience, is that in it continued the cumulative, if intermittent, trend towards the Parliamentary prerogative and the steady growth of English trade and colonial power. Interesting and important phases of this period, moreover, were the re-establishment of the Anglican Church as a sort of social caste, the appearance of a new and dominant squirarchy, the development of party politics, with a deal of bribery and corruption, and the tendency to ape French ways in art, literature, and manners — in almost everything but government. Not least, in the long view, was the architecture of Christopher Wren and the wisdom of Isaac Newton and John Locke.

When the King "came to his own again" in May, 1660, the bells were rung and butts of wine were broached in the streets. Obviously the great majority, even in London, were glad that the question was at last settled in favor of monarchy. But not of the old monarchy of Charles I. The King soon found that the Cavalier Parliament, elected in 1661, though it was ready to support him, not only stood on the constitutional rights wrested from his father, but was resolutely Anglican. Herein lay grounds of discord, for the King, unlike his father, was outwardly Anglican, but Catholic at heart. The old question of prerogative, especially with respect to the militia, was still to be decided, but the religious question, as heretofore, was the disturbing factor. The new King, however, found his plans thwarted, not by Puritans, as his father's had been, but by the very Anglican gentry who gave him political support. A true Stuart, he intended to have his way, but he was at once too pleasure-loving and too shrewd to force the issue. Whatever may be said of Charles II, he was the ablest politician of his time.

The men who managed the Restoration — Monk, the Earl of Clarendon, who became Charles's first Chancellor, and the Convention Parliament — counseled moderation. Confiscated lands of Royalists and of the Church were restored, but the lands of "malignants," who had been forced to sell, were allowed to remain in

the possession of their Puritan purchasers, and all feudal tenures were abolished. Furthermore, though thirteen of the regicide judges were executed and Cromwell's body was exhumed and hanged, there was at first no general revenge on Puritans. But the Cavalier Parliament began in 1661 to pass a group of cruel laws, known as the Clarendon Code,* which put an end to toleration. Dissenters and Nonconformists were persecuted, arrested, and crowded into jails. Men like George Fox and John Bunyan openly defied the laws; others met secretly and in fear of their lives.

This persecution produced a considerable and fairly permanent change in the country districts. Anglicanism became almost a social necessity there, and a rush of conversions to the State Church followed. Many Romanists conformed, if only outwardly, and the English Presbyterians, whose faith had been more political than religious, avoided ostracism on their newly acquired estates by joining the procession. Puritan gentlemen of the elder type, men like Hampden and Eliot, had largely disappeared; the dissenting sects were therefore now largely confined to the middle classes and the poor of the towns; and thus began that peculiar tradition which set Anglicanism up as a social caste, which enshrined the belief, even into the nineteenth century, that a 'stupid vicar was socially more precious, more of a "gentleman," than the brilliant minister of a dissenting meetinghouse or chapel.

Nor was this the only change in the country gentleman. Not only was the former type fast vanishing; in his place too often appeared an heir who had spent his impressionable youth abroad or in a disorganized and poverty-stricken home — in either case without education or moral discipline. In addition, there was a considerable group of *nouveaux riches*, who had bought up country estates. The business of government was now growing so incessant, moreover, particularly the lobbying and constant attendance at Whitehall, that many representatives spent virtually their whole time in London. The result was that gentlemen who remained at home were increasingly out of touch with the national temper, so that there grew up the type of narrow, ignorant, fox-hunting squire who was later so vividly portrayed in Fielding's Squire Western and who, almost to this day, has rested his case

* Clarendon, though an ardent Anglican, was not responsible for these laws.

on an agricultural economy, monarchy, Anglicanism, and the superiority of his caste.

But a special characteristic of English country life at this time, a distinctly redeeming feature, was the large number of yeoman freeholders and craftsmen — for the crafts of spinning and weaving were still carried on in rural cottages. The yeomen made up about one sixth of the whole population and, though they generally went along with the neighboring squires in politics, they had shown under the Commonwealth, as they showed later under James II, that they held sturdily to their rights and would fight for them. The rent farmer, almost as numerous, was in poorer case, more ignorant, and largely the economic chattel of his landlord, but the agricultural laborer, who was also sometimes a craftsman, was happy with a shilling a day and plenty of work to do. These various groups of simple folk, making up altogether more than three fifths of the population, gave to English country life, especially among the yeomen and craftsmen, a quality of self-reliance and contentment which was soon to disappear as the gentleman class enlarged their estates and city factories depopulated village and farm. Such subjects, ignorant, often poor, but decent and industrious, were the backbone of England. Too often "the noiseless tenor of their way" passes undenoted while the historian dwells on the ignoble strife of London politicians and still more ignoble debauchery of Court circles.

The debauchery was ignoble, no question. Probably individual instances were not worse than some at the Court of James I, though one would seek far, in any country at any time, to match the elegant bestiality of the Earl of Rochester, who, something of a scholar and French stylist, not only wrote filth, but relieved the tedium of his drunken amours by an escapade in which he rented an inn where he made husbands drunk while he seduced their wives. What gives the Restoration Period an unsavory singularity in this respect is that debauchery was more widespread and more flagrant than at any other time and that it was almost never relieved by the youthful gusto of Elizabethan roisterers or by the grace and urbanity of Parisian epicures.

It is made especially conspicuous, furthermore, by the fact that the King, unlike his grandfather, not only permitted, but participated in the frolic. Not a sot, like many of his courtiers, nor con-

spicuously profane (it is reported that his favorite oath was "Odd's fish"), he nevertheless led the field in the matter of mistresses. The chief were Mrs. Stewart, Lady Castlemaine, and the Duchess of Portsmouth, and he had the impudence to appoint the Castlemaine lady-in-waiting to his Queen, the hapless Catherine of Braganza. Dearer to posterity is Nell Gwyn, the little actress who had such a fascinating way of screwing up her eyes and stamping her feet; and possibly as dear to the King also, for one of his famous deathbed sentences was "Let not poor Nelly starve." But there are unsavory stories too; Pepys reports that, when a lady while dancing gave birth to a child, "the King had it in his closet a week after and did dissect it, making great sport of it." Apologists for Charles, when they have made all they can of his grace and humor, when they have shown how he was perhaps seeking escape from a political impasse, have still to record the frivolous leader of an ill-smelling Court.

The laxity of morals at the Court did not extend widely to the populace, though of course it had an influence, especially among the gentry living in town. In general, the inclination of the ordinary citizen was the natural one of reviving the amusements released from the Puritan ban. Certain changes, however, are noticeable: not only the rise and fall of various entertainments, but the addition of new ones, and particularly the demand, at least in London, for more shows of all sorts. Together with the revival of old dances, new French steps became popular, as well as new card games, particularly the Spanish ombre and the French basset, a gambling game something like baccarat. Among the older amusements, cockfighting was now the sport of the city bloods; but, though bull- and bear-baiting were considered fit only for the vulgar, Evelyn describes brutal horse-baiting attended by people of quality, and the deer-hunting in Hampton Park practically amounted to baiting. In the country, stag-hunting had almost disappeared except in the North, and the fox, heretofore hunted as "vermin," now provided the beginnings of a pastime soon to become famous. About the same time the practice of shooting birds on the wing became common, as shooting for sport gradually supplanted shooting for food. The country villagers had football as their chief sport, but in London the common folk were not participants so much as spectators, particularly at the new shows of boxing and sword-

fighting. To satisfy a public bent on pleasure, the famous Spring Gardens at Vauxhall were opened in 1660 and were for a short time the rendezvous of the elite. By 1668 Vauxhall was no longer respectable — perhaps on that account! As might be expected, eating and drinking received much attention during the Restoration. Foreign wines as well as the native mead and ale were drunk by the well-to-do; beer, by the poorer classes. Brandy was drunk, but expensive, and gin was yet to make its hideous debut.

The literature of the Restoration Period, especially the drama, dependent as it was on the favor of the Court, took its color in large part from its patronage. When the theaters were opened again in 1660, with French innovations, such as actresses instead of boys, there was some attempt to revive Elizabethan plays, but the taste of the Court, though not exactly French, was Frenchified, and the tendency was to produce pale reflections of Racine and Molière. With regard to the older plays, Dryden reveals the contemporary attitude in preferring Beaumont and Fletcher to Shakespeare: "They understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much better; whose wild debaucheries, and quickness of wit in repartees, no poet before them could paint as they have done." Dryden, though he knew better, catered to the Court taste, with its flair for the salacious, and Wycherley, perhaps the most representative playwright and a clever maker of plots, "deprived man of his ill-fitting French cloak," as Taine puts it, "and displayed him in his naked shamelessness." A certain elegance and neatness of expression came from the French influence, but the grandeur of Corneille and Racine and the sparkling wit of Molière are nowhere in evidence.

Much the same comment applies to most of the poetry — elegant, superficial, often coarse. The poets all aim at elegance, pretend a sort of delicacy; if they write obscenities, it is "in the able and exact manner of Boileau." Waller and Sedley were among the most accomplished of the lighter poets. Sir John Denham's *Cooper Hill* has more substance, but it often mistakes dullness for dignity; and Cowley, whose contemporary fame was enormous, wrote amatory verses as a sort of "literary calisthenics." In serious verse of good quality, Dryden, of course, leads the field with his *Song for St. Cecilia's Day* and his *Alexander's Feast*.

It is in the field of satire, though, that Dryden is pre-eminent. Perfecting the closed couplet of Waller, the best medium for satire, he paved the way for Pope and the great satirists of the next century, and in his *Absalom and Achitophel* and *MacFlecknoe* he wrote as well as his famous successor. The world will not soon forget his skillful couplet: —

The rest to some faint meaning make pretense;
But Shadwell never deviates into sense.

Among other satires Butler's *Hudibras* had an enormous vogue, when Puritan-baiting was popular, and it is sometimes called "the English Don Quixote," but Butler was no nearer to the quality of Cervantes than Wycherley was to that of Molière.

Dryden, furthermore, was a pioneer in another field. Though he did not write much prose, his prefaces and his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* reveal a new direction, in favor of simplicity and lucidity — perhaps the best fruits of the French influence. Modern prose style begins with Dryden, who seems nearer to Galsworthy than to Milton.

Some of the greatest Restoration literature, however, was not produced by the followers of the Court. Bunyan did most of his writing after 1660, Sir Thomas Browne, Jeremy Taylor, Izaak Walton, and Thomas Hobbes were still writing in the earlier part of the period; and, towards the end, Newton's *Principia* and Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding* raised England to a distinguished place in science and philosophy. *Paradise Lost*, moreover, appeared in 1667, and Milton's two other long poems, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, written in his retirement after the "dust and heat" of his public life, appeared in 1671.

Milton, of course, except in his controversial pamphlets, is greater than any age, but his three types of writing stand out in clearer relief when viewed against the three periods in which he lived. Born in Bread Street, London, early enough to have seen Shakespeare pass on his way to the Mermaid Tavern, well educated at St. Paul's and Cambridge, with a father whose chief diversion was music, the young Milton inherited the best of the Elizabethan and Jacobean tradition; and his *Minor Poems*, in addition to their peculiar excellence, reveal the lyric quality of an elder time. But the young Milton was at the parting of the ways. "Church-outed by the prelates" in Laud's time, he took to writing pamphlets on

public questions and, as Cromwell's secretary, wrote himself blind in defense of the Puritan polity. Then, when at the Restoration the now stern old Puritan saw his temple of truth scattered in ruins, when all that he had fought for was gone, when *his* Paradise was literally lost, he turned again to poetry and wrote out of sad experience the greatest epic that has come from an English pen. Primarily a poet, a champion of truth and liberty, never a narrow sectary, he rose finally above the petty animosities of his day and fittingly closed his *Samson* with a line descriptive of himself: —

And calm of mind, all passion spent.

Art, even more than the theater, depended on the patronage of the Court. The King, familiar with Versailles, understood the part of royal patron and, like his father, employed many foreign painters, chiefly Dutch and Flemish. But he lacked his father's taste; and the work of Sir Peter Lely,* the chief Court painter, was a sorry contrast to the portraits by Van Dyck and Dobson. In point of fact, the monarch and his group liked plump, red-lipped ladies in negligee, and Lely gave them what they admired — the voluptuous half-draped figures which provoked hostile criticism in the *Just and Reasonable Reprehensions of Naked Breasts and Shoulders*. The only notable English artist of the time was Grinling Gibbons, the great wood-carver. He developed talent as a sculptor and later did much fine carving for Wren.

In music the royal patronage produced more worthy efforts than in painting. The Choir of the Chapel Royal not only developed a high order of performance, but led to the Restoration School of music with several able composers, among them Pelham Humfrey and Henry Purcell. Purcell is frequently counted the greatest composer of English birth. Said to have composed well at nine years of age, he was actually appointed organist of Westminster Abbey at twenty-two and two years later, in 1682, organist of the Chapel Royal, both of which positions he held till his premature death in 1695. His best early work was the composition of music for plays, some of the songs of which are still popular, notably "In these delightful pleasant groves." Ten years later he turned again to dramatic music, and the recitative dialogue as well as the

* A Dutchman by birth, but naturalized.

melody of his operatic version of *Dido and Aeneas* predicts stage music of a much later date. In this field his score for Dryden's *King Arthur* is sometimes considered his ablest effort. But Purcell's chief fame rests, of course, on his anthems, particularly his *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, which were performed annually at St. Paul's till 1712 and alternately with Handel's till 1743.

The greatest glory of the period, however, was the architecture of Sir Christopher Wren. Interested chiefly in mathematics, Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, Wren turned to architecture almost by chance. The Great Plague* of 1665 — "great" partly because it was the last, and because it is so graphically pictured by Pepys and Defoe — was wiped out partly by the Great Fire, and the fire called Wren to his important work. The conflagration, which began September 3, 1666, in Pudding Lane, Eastcheap, burned furiously on a high wind for three days and was not checked till it almost reached the Temple Church and Smithfield. The King, more competent as executive than as saint, refused to leave Whitehall and directed the operations which, by blowing up houses, finally stopped the advance of the fire. But in the City, 436 acres out of 511 had been burned over.

Wren, who had recently been developing an interest in architecture, was appointed Surveyor-General in 1668. It was largely due to his skill that the London of Queen Anne, a city of almost magical beauty, rose from the ashes of the fire.** His plan for the whole city was too costly to be carried out, but he rebuilt many of the churches; and though St. Bride's, Fleet Street, and St. Mary-le-Bow, with their distinctive Wren steeples, are perhaps his finest work, by far his most famous is St. Paul's. The old church had been in sad need of repair, for the spire was gone and the Puritans had used the nave as a stable, but now it was completely destroyed. Wren contrived a church of noble proportions in the classical style, then popular, with dome and portico, and with the "coupled columns" for which he is famous. There has been much criticism of some of the details, but the impressive whole bears out his

* About one fifth of the London population died of this plague, roughly the same proportion as in the plague of 1603, and probably a lower percentage than during the Black Death.

** See the great pictures by Canaletto. This was substantially the same London which Wordsworth viewed in 1802 from Westminster Bridge when he wrote, "Earth has not anything to show more fair."

belief that "architecture is proportion." Hardly less important in securing Sir Christopher's fame is a long list of other buildings of distinction: at Oxford, the Sheldonian Theatre, the Tom Tower of Christ Church, the Ashmolean Museum; at Cambridge, Pembroke Chapel and the library of Trinity; in London, Temple Bar, one of the western towers of Westminster Abbey, and the Greenwich Hospital. He extended the Palladian style begun by Inigo Jones, and was the chief figure of English Renaissance architecture.

Charles II was also a worthy patron of science. He encouraged the Royal Society, which had its inception in 1645, when there met "divers worthy persons, inquisitive into natural philosophy," he gave it a charter in 1662, and since then it has been the most famous promoter of disinterested scientific inquiry in the world. Robert Boyle, who discovered the law of the elasticity of air, and Sir Christopher Wren were early members, while John Evelyn, Samuel Pepys, Isaac Newton, and John Locke were among the distinguished men soon added to the group.

John Locke, who lived for a time with the Whig leader, Shaftesbury, was as important in shaping subsequent political philosophy in England as in founding the so-called philosophy of "sensation." Prominent for his common sense and his championship of toleration and of liberalism, he was for a while forced to live in Holland; he never tempered his thinking to political or personal convenience. Unclouded by acrimonious controversy, he was able to draw up, in his famous *Essay on the Human Understanding* (1690) one of the greatest English books in the field of philosophy. Locke opposed the rationalistic theories, which held that reason is in itself a source of knowledge, superior to sense perceptions, and developed his theory of "empiricism," or knowledge by experience, which held that there are no innate ideas, but that knowledge comes wholly from "sensation" and "reflection." Some critics have found fault with him for his tendency to cautious reservation, for not pushing his reasoning to its logical conclusion. Nevertheless, this refusal to be wholly doctrinaire was not only rather English, but, in a prophetic sense probably never realized by Locke himself, it was the only scientific approach to a problem where the evidence was not all in.

Isaac Newton, though he lived to a great age and may reasonably



From "Churches of London" (Geo. Godwin)

ST. MARY-LE-BOW, LONDON

be associated with the times of Queen Anne and George I, was a professor at Cambridge as early as 1669, was active in the Royal Society as early as 1672, and was its distinguished president during the last twenty-four years of his life. He sat several times in Parliament and, appointed Master of the Mint in 1699, he reformed the coinage; but of course his mathematical and astronomical researches, first published in the famous *Principia* (1687), are what give him an international eminence in his field greater even than that of Locke, Milton, and Wren in theirs.

Though many people, when Newton's name is mentioned, think of gravitation only, his famous principle was merely part of his distinguished formulation of the laws of motion. He was the first man to put the astronomical discoveries of Copernicus, Brahe, and Galileo on a firm mathematical foundation. In addition, he worked out the binomial theorem and the important principles of the calculus, or what he called "Method of Fluxions."* Newton spent much time in astronomical observations and calculations. He overcame the difficulty of chromatic aberration by constructing a reflecting telescope, and he did pioneer work on the spectrum and the problem of the rainbow. His theory of light, as consisting of minute particles, has been largely discredited in favor of the undulatory theory, but it was generally accepted for a century. What Newton accomplished, especially in the field of astronomical mathematics, is not only magnificent; it is almost incredible. Leibnitz, his friend and rival, told the Queen of Prussia that Newton had done more of value than all mathematicians "from the beginning of the world." But Newton, a modest man, said of himself: "I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me. . . . If I have seen farther than Descartes, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

When one looks at the whole cultural product of the period, the rather unmeritorious gestures of the literary specialists associated with the Court bulk very small. It was by no means, as Macaulay would have us believe, "the golden age of the coward, the bigot,

* The question of priority in invention of the calculus is answered, as well as it can be, by the fact that Newton, though he did not publish till 1687, invented it with incomplete notation as early as 1665, whereas Leibnitz was the first to publish with complete notation, in 1684.

and the slave." One is impressed by the scholarship of Newton and Locke, by the architecture of Wren, by the music of Purcell. One remembers not only Rochester, but William Penn, Richard Busby, the great headmaster of Westminster for fifty-five years, and John Evelyn, devoted gardener, scholar, and gentleman, who found favor at Court but was not of it, and whose delightful diary gives us a picture of English life for over sixty years.

That England, in the main, was not decadent, in spite of the Court, is borne out emphatically by the trade expansion and the colonial growth. The rapid development of the stagecoach business and of coffeehouses bears witness to the fact that people were getting about and meeting far more than formerly. Newspapers, though not yet daily, found an increasing circle of readers, and an Act of 1660 provided for a twopenny post for letters carried less than eighty miles, while in 1680 a penny post was introduced in London. Such activities, whether social or commercial, do not indicate a static society.

The trade rivalry with Holland led to a second Dutch War, in 1664. The fighting was rather indecisive, but Holland, harassed by the French, was ready to make peace in 1667. Samuel Pepys was indignant at the decline of the Navy* and people generally were not enthusiastic over the treaty, but it ceded New York, New Jersey, and Delaware to England and thus gave her control of the whole seaboard from Maine to Georgia. At the same time the country was expanding her African and East Indian trade. Though England was still largely agricultural, an increasing number of people were beginning to see that the country's future depended on commerce.

Domestic politics, however, did not turn on this question, as they did in the next century, but were still occupied with the problems of toleration and royal prerogative. Charles found himself between the devil and the deep sea, with the royalist Parliament insisting on no toleration, of either Catholic or Dissenter, and with the Roundheads, who would have given him toleration, inclined to question the royal prerogative. Too shrewd to push

* Able captains and admirals were hampered by corruption in the government, which diverted huge sums intended for naval maintenance; but on the whole the Navy was an efficient force, and the Duke of York, later James II, was an energetic and competent Lord High Admiral.

his case, he intrigued secretly with France. Parliament, conveniently for the King, had blamed the Dutch disasters as well as financial corruption on Clarendon, the Chancellor, old-fashioned, upright, and uncompromisingly Anglican; so the King, not loath to dismiss him in 1667, ruled for a while with an inner group of the Council, the first letters of whose names spelled the word "Cabal," * and of whom Baron Ashley (Anthony Ashley Cooper, later Earl of Shaftesbury) was the most prominent.

Here the foreign relations played an important part in the domestic situation. In spite of the recent Dutch war, Charles flattered the English Protestant sympathies by entering into a triple alliance with Holland and Sweden, to resist the French designs on the Spanish Netherlands. This gave the King a "talking point" with Louis XIV, with whom he made the secret Treaty of Dover, by which Charles agreed to help Louis against the Dutch in return for cash and for French aid when the time was ripe to force Catholicism and the old Stuart despotism on England. Thus fortified, he proceeded in 1672 to issue an Act of Indulgence, suspending laws against Dissenters as well as Catholics. The Anglican squires at once sniffed danger and passed the Test Act, with more severe restrictions than the Clarendon Code. Charles, sensible enough to abandon his Catholic schemes, found next that the Third Dutch War, inevitable after he had sold out to Louis, was unpopular. Why should England help France, whose growing power and Jesuit Catholicism, unsupported by the Pope himself, were more to be feared than the trade rivalry of the Dutch? Shaftesbury, who led the attack, was dismissed from office, and the Earl of Danby became the King's chief minister.

During the next decade, the conflict between the King and Parliament was adroitly turned by Charles into a conflict between two parties. Shaftesbury, leader of the opposition, was on the right track, as later events proved, but his unscrupulous methods of stirring up Dissenters and exciting mob violence drove the Anglican squires into vigorous support of the King's prerogative.

It was in this conflict, particularly over the Exclusion Bill, intended to prevent the succession of the Duke of York, who was

* The Cabal was a sort of beginning of Cabinet government, but it was of course not responsible to the controlling party in the House, as later Cabinets were. The members were: Clifford, Ashley, Buckingham, Arlington, Lauderdale.

openly Catholic, that the terms Whig* and Tory came to be applied to the two sides. Neither was pro-Roman, though any support of the King was so considered by the Whigs, who were rapidly gaining power, especially after the popish fabrication of Titus Oates. Oates's lies were cleverly based on enough fact to make the King and his ministers fearful of exposure, and Shaftesbury used them devilishly to fan the flame of popular hostility to Rome. At his Green Ribbon Club, the first political organization of the kind, the Earl gathered all sorts of political adventurers, and Oates was paraded on the gallery above the street, to excite the crowd below.

Meanwhile the King put off dissolving Parliament, for that would mean the election of an even more hostile one. With admirable good humor he went often to the House of Lords, where he earned the nickname of "Fireside," as he amused himself by listening to the violent attacks upon himself. But at this juncture (1678) his secret arrangement with Louis was discovered, Danby's impeachment was voted, and the King dissolved Parliament to save him. In the elections of 1679 Shaftesbury's party swept the country. Though this Parliament was almost immediately dissolved by the King when it revived the question of Exclusion, it passed before its dissolution the famous Habeas Corpus Act, one of the great steps in the advance of justice. The courts were still brutally unfair to persons suspected of treachery, but the judges were now answerable to Parliament, not to the King, and by the new act a prisoner could no longer be indefinitely held without trial—a striking contrast to the French practice for another century.

Again the Whigs were elected, but Charles prorogued Parliament and so kept it from meeting for nearly a year. Shaftesbury had overplayed his hand. The old fears of rebellion were revived, and the King astutely let those fears "cook" till the Whig dish was ready to serve. In 1681 he called the legislative body at Oxford, to avoid the pressure of the London mob, and, financially secure with help from Louis, he dissolved Parliament. The bold champions of liberty fled in disorder. Some plotted to assassinate the King and his brother, others to start an insurrection, but there was

* The term *Whig* came from *Whiggamore*, a Scottish Presbyterian; *Tory* from the name of Irish Catholic outlaws.

no unanimity; in general, they just scattered. Shaftesbury, outcast by his own party, fled to Holland, where he died. Other Whig leaders were convicted of treason. It was a dark hour for the Whigs, but the party of liberty and toleration, though misled into disaster, was by no means dead.

Suddenly the power of the King was virtually absolute. He revoked the town charters, and so abolished the time-honored right of local self-government. Free speech was also denied, and Charles now realized his Stuart ambition during the last four years of his reign. But with his power went no concession to Romanism, and Charles was too wise and too tired to force the issue. He died in 1685 with a whimsical jest on his lips — that he had been “an unconscionable time a-dying.”

REVOLUTION

The Tories and the King, in turn, had now overplayed their hand. For, though the fear of rebellion had crushed the Whigs with their Exclusion Bill and had thus made it possible for Charles's Catholic brother to ascend the throne in 1685, the temporary victory of the royal prerogative led the new King to misjudge the attitude of his people. He found ready support against rebellion, to be sure; the uprising of Monmouth, the candidate of the discredited Shaftesbury, was easily put down, and Judge Jeffreys, “that immortal butcher,” wreaked terrific vengeance in the so-called Bloody Assizes. But James did not realize that his Tory supporters, who pursued rebel and dissenter with incredible ferocity, were as hostile to Romanism as to Dissent and, at bottom, as fearful of Stuart despotism as of rebellion.

To the defection among his natural supporters, moreover, was added the weight of widespread hostility in the middle and lower classes. For the moral force of Puritanism had outlived the extravagant fanaticism of its short-lived triumph. Driven from political power, harried out of their meetinghouses, crowded into jails, men, or the sons of men, who had fought for their liberties under Cromwell were not easy to extinguish. The victory of political liberty in 1689 was not a miracle, as it might seem, but the result of an irresistible tendency, rather peculiarly English, working through the whole Stuart century. It is significant that the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, putting a brutal end to toleration

in France, took place in 1685, less than four years before the English Bill of Rights.

The new King's first blunder was to maintain a standing army of 13,000 men just outside of London, at Hounslow Heath. The stubborn, unlaidd ghost of the militia question rose once more, but James II acted as if he had never heard of the Petition of Right, the Militia Bill, and certain bitter experiences of his father. When Parliament objected, he prorogued it and ruled without it. Here was the old issue again.

The King's second blunder was to rush his Catholic schemes. A Declaration of Indulgence, in 1687, abrogating the Test Act, aroused Anglicans, even if it had some popularity with Nonconformists and Dissenters. But though it brought toleration to Romanists, too, it did not go far enough for James, who in 1688 issued a second Declaration with special favor to Catholics and ordered clergymen to read it on an appointed Sunday. Seven bishops at once protested — on good grounds, for such Declarations had been declared illegal by Parliament in 1672 — but the King refused to withdraw the order and, heedless of the gathering tempest, had the bishops tried for sedition. Judges and jury, though they were King's men, had a livelier sense of fact than James; the bishops were acquitted, and the outbursts of joy left no doubt as to the popular feeling.

This popular feeling against James, uniting Tory and Whig, Anglican and Dissenter, was increased in 1688 by the birth of a son to the King and his Catholic Queen, Mary of Modena. With continued Catholic succession now a real danger, Englishmen turned to Mary, Protestant daughter of James by his first marriage, and wife of the Protestant champion of Europe, William of Orange.

A group led by the Earl of Danby invited William to invade England. On November 5, 1688, he landed at Torbay; Louis XIV, James's powerful supporter, was occupied with Rhenish wars; and James, deserted by a mutinous army, fled to France. William thereupon called a Convention Parliament. Its first step, to declare that James had abdicated, was heartily supported; but the next move, to declare William and Mary rulers, met with opposition from the die-hard Tories. Yet, if they stuck to their Divine Right theory, they would have to recall James or his Catholic son; most of them had therefore the sense to agree to the choice of a sov-

ereign by Parliament, though in so doing they yielded the last trench of absolute monarchy. The few who would not agree formed the group of Jacobites, active for another fifty years. On January 22, 1689, the Convention offered William and Mary the Crown, and with it a Declaration of Rights, accepted by them and later enacted as the Bill of Rights.

The Bill of Rights, the chief document in English constitutional history, concluded the long battle between the Crown and Parliament. For the most part it reiterated the list of rights which the Stuarts had ignored or violated — such as the rights of petition, of free election, of freedom of speech, and of frequent meeting, the denial of the King's power to suspend or dispense with the laws and to levy money without consent of Parliament, and the condemnation of excessive fines and cruel punishments. The only novel features were the definite provision against Catholic succession to the throne, and the abolition of a standing army answerable to the King. The great value of the Bill of Rights, therefore, was not its novelty, but its precipitation into documentary form of rights which were now considered inalienable. With the abolition of the King's Army, furthermore, Parliament had at last control of the sword as well as of the purse.

The right of the legislature to appoint or dethrone a sovereign was not included in the Bill of Rights. Yet, coming as the action did with the presentation of the crown to William and Mary, it was virtually implicit in the Bill. Never since questioned, except by Jacobites, it was the final act in the great conflict of the seventeenth century. The monarch henceforth held his throne itself, as well as his power, by grant of the people through their elected representatives.

Such government, of course, was by no means representative of the whole people. Extension of the suffrage, reforms in the methods of election, reforms in the judiciary, and many details in the mechanics of government were yet to be worked out. It was, moreover, only a political revolution, and many problems in the social, industrial, and economic fields were still ahead; but it concluded the main structure of English "liberties."

This way of government, hard won through four centuries since the Charter and subsequently bred in English thinking and prac-

tice for two centuries more, is the most characteristic feature of the whole English experience. People from time to time fall into the error of treating it as one of the ideologies, right or wrong; but its vitality lies fundamentally in the fact that it is not an invention or a fashion, but an adaptable practice. It has contrived a union of monarchy and democracy, of conservative and liberal principles, illogical to the doctrinaire mind, but based on the deeper logic of human nature. It has lately worked out improved relations between labor and capital, while the rest of the world is harassed by strikes or by regimentation, and it has even managed to reconcile some of the supposedly irreconcilable features of capitalism and socialism. Perhaps the most markedly English thing about it, after all, is that it is just this — a practice, an experience, not a bright-eyed theory.

Chapter XI

FRENCH WARS AND CITY WITS

TO A good many people the eighteenth century means coffee-houses, sedan chairs, comfortable brick dwellings; and, moving about in this *milieu*, sedate, polished gentlemen in periwigs. Or, turning to the country, they think of boisterous, fox-hunting squires and dashing highwaymen. The explanation of the first general impression lies no doubt in the fact that the century represents the flowering of a distinctive culture in English history — a culture, more conspicuous in France, which made much of manners, of style, of reason as opposed to emotion and imagination; a culture of urbanity and precision. The second impression is perhaps more veracious, for the century was, *par excellence*, the period of the country squire.

But both impressions, even taken together, do not give a true picture of eighteenth-century England. In the first place, the urbanity amounted to little more than a veneer in the first half of the century, a rather feeble replica of French elegance; while the more widespread culture in the latter half had a sturdy English quality, with a corresponding contempt of French manners. More important yet, the really significant feature of the period was colonial expansion and commercial growth. Finally, though the French influence was dominant in social life and in literary style, the political experience in England continued to run counter to the autocratic ways on the Continent.

In any case, royalty, except for George III, was strangely insignificant. The time usually called the Age of Queen Anne, by no means coterminous with her short reign, might be more accurately called the Age of Pope or of Marlborough; the second quarter of the century is not really the Age of George II, but of Walpole, and the third quarter is dominated in large measure by the burly figure of Dr. Johnson.

This period of ninety-five years, from 1689 to 1784, breaks rather clearly into two parts about the year 1742, the year when Walpole's long ministry ended and only a short time before the deaths of Pope and Swift. The intermittent conflicts with France continued

throughout both of these arbitrary subdivisions, as did the colonial expansion and commercial growth, and both were periods of city culture and the rule of reason. But the first is conspicuous for its development of cabinet government, the second for its temporary development of George III's oligarchy; the first for loose morals and religious apathy, the second for evangelical and moral reform; the first for the periodical essay, the second for the birth of the novel. The present chapter is intended to cover, roughly, the first half — from 1689 to 1742.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND PRIVATE BUSINESS

During the fifty-odd years represented by this chapter four sovereigns sat on the English throne. William III was an able man, but, concerned with foreign wars, he was not popular except with Whig traders. Many citizens were lukewarm; country squires were hostile; a considerable group called him a Dutchman and questioned his claim to the throne.* But he was no despot determined to restore Stuart authority. The old issue of King *versus* Parliament passed during his reign into virtual oblivion; and the growing colonial trade, together with the checking of Louis XIV, meant, on the whole, a prosperous and contented England. Anne was a good woman, but a weak one, worn out with child-bearing,** moved by whim, and controlled by favorites, chiefly by Sarah Jennings, later Duchess of Marlborough — “Mrs. Freeman” to Anne, who, in this great intimacy, liked to have the Duchess call her “Mrs. Morley.” George I, who could not speak English and who did not understand English ways, brought a stuffy little German Court and two little mistresses to England and left the government, perforce, in the hands of his ministers. His son, George II, attempted at first to assert himself, but soon found that he must rely on Walpole and cabinet government. With his Queen Caroline he made much of Court gatherings, but he was a man given to petty detail and punctilio — a “snuffy old drone” in truth. His Queen understood England far better than he did. A woman of tact and education, she had great influence over her husband, frankly humored

* It was this aspect which gave rise to Defoe's defense of William in doggerel satire, *The True-born Englishman*.

** None of her many children lived to maturity. Her amiable consort, George of Denmark, was a devoted husband, but more a patron of the pantry than a statesman.

his propensity for unlovely mistresses, and kept Walpole in power, but she did little to redeem the barrack-room manners which seem to have been the vogue at court.

In view of the relative insignificance of these four monarchs, it may be more intelligible to abandon the conventional pattern, reign by reign, and to follow each of the important aspects — public and private affairs (government, foreign affairs, trade) and social ways (life and the arts and sciences) — through the whole period from 1689 to 1742.

PARTY AND CABINET GOVERNMENT

William III's election to the throne, it will be recalled, was based on his acceptance of the Declaration of Rights. He did not like parliaments and he did not get along very well with his assemblies, but he had now to rely on Parliament for his moneys, even for his right to maintain troops. He tried to unite the Parties, but he found that he could accomplish little if he did not restrict his Privy Council to representatives of one Party; and he naturally leaned generally upon the Whigs, the war Party. His ministers, however, were in no sense responsible to Parliament; they were not yet a cabinet. The Bill of Rights, though it gave Parliament authority over the King, provided no machinery for parliamentary government.

In Parliament itself, indeed, there was much confusion, much bickering and dickering for party control. William's assemblies, nevertheless, passed several important laws. In addition, they provided for a Civil List, to take care of the public expenses of the Crown, as against the King's personal expenses; a Board of Trade; and, most important of all, in 1694 the Bank of England. Hitherto, government loans had been from individuals and private banks. The new institution was not very popular at first, but it soon came to be the financial Gibraltar of the country.

Parliament was gradually learning its job. Queen Anne kept so much to herself and her judgments were so much a matter of whim that her ministers developed the habit of meeting and of formulating plans before consulting her. They were still responsible to the Crown, not to Parliament; but it became increasingly obvious that the executive branch of the government could not secure adequate funds unless the leader of the Privy Council, or embryo

Cabinet, was also leader of the majority party. As this unforeseen but inevitable tendency grew, the House of Commons became more important than the House of Lords. The creation of peers to break a deadlock between the Houses in 1711, that is, to suit the party of the upper House to that of the lower, began a practice followed for two centuries. Not till our own twentieth century were the Commons given statutory authority to override the Lords after the third vote on a bill.

As the importance of parties increased, political strife and corruption grew. In general the Whig party represented trade, manufacture, and support of the wars; the Tory stood for the old agricultural economy and isolation from Continental quarrels. The first was on the whole the liberal party in politics and the Low Church party in religion; the second, the conservative, High Church party. But, though party feelings ran high, party principles were confused and conflicting, so that there was a large group of men like Defoe, who could shift party allegiance five times with an easy conscience. Above all, there was a constant scramble for offices at the disposal of ministers in power. We now think of English government, with its model Civil Service, as particularly free from corruption, but shady practices more conspicuous in other countries today flourished like the green bay-tree in the England of the eighteenth century, and men who, like Harley and Walpole, did not deal in cash bribes knew how to distribute coveted positions.

It must not be thought from the foregoing that Anne's government was wholly inefficient. It was rather that the Parliament, which had gradually learned to check the Crown's extravagance, had not yet learned to check the new type of officeholder. Anne's government did conduct an expensive war and, with the new bank, did manage well an increasing debt. In addition, it accomplished the important Union with Scotland in 1707. The fundamental cause of this union was the desire on both sides for trading privileges in common. If something of the sort could have been accomplished in Ireland or in America before it was too late, the British story might be far different. With the Union, Scotland and England had one parliament, one debt, one system of taxation, but the Scots kept their own Church and their own law and administration of justice. England, Scotland, and Wales thus became Great



DEFOE IN THE PILLORY (TEMPLE BAR IN BACKGROUND)

Britain, with one flag, the "Union Jack." Many Scots, to be sure, distrusted the Union for years, and Scotland was the home of Jacobite conspiracies, but the favorable trading conditions saved the situation. Gradually the thrifty Scots, as they like to put it, contented themselves with managing England.*

George I owed his throne to the support of the Whigs, for many Tories were ready to join with the Jacobites in favor of the Stuart pretender. George therefore appointed Whig ministers, and that Party remained in power for over forty years. It was during those years, especially during the long ministry of Robert Walpole, that English government through a cabinet representing the majority in the Commons crystallized into a practice.

The ethics of government at this time were not high. Not only were members of Parliament kept in line with remunerative offices, but elections were corrupt and not representative. Many boroughs were in the control, in the "pocket," of powerful landholders; others which had ceased to have any inhabitants still sent members to Parliament.** But government was increasingly a matter of finance, and Walpole, whose genius lay in that direction, proved a competent leader of his Party at a critical moment. For, though Stanhope's ministry managed foreign affairs well, the scandal of the South Sea Bubble in 1720 would have wrecked the Whig Party had not Walpole saved the day.

The South Sea Bubble was only the most spectacular of many speculative enterprises. As the credit theory began to replace the mercantile theory, get-rich-quick schemes became a craze. When the "Bubble" broke, Walpole was called in to cure the headache. He contrived to arrange an equitable settlement, saw to it that guilty directors of the company were punished, and so became virtual leader of the Whig Party. He at once turned to common-sense methods of handling the public debt.

Robert Walpole was a coarse country squire, a very patron of ribaldry, but he was also a city capitalist; and this double rôle gave him great power with gentry of all kinds as well as with

* Hence the story of the returning Scot who replied, when asked how he liked the English, "I didna see any English; I saw only heids of departments." As a matter of fact, many prime ministers, as well as doctors, scientists, engineers, and officers in the English services, have been Scottish or of Scottish derivation.

** The rural vote was fairer than the borough vote, but only about one tenth of the male population of voting age had the franchise.

merchants. Moreover, in spite of government by corruption and patronage, he steadily attempted to secure fairer taxation. England was prosperous under his rule. But his most forward-looking measure, a bill to provide for an internal tax on commodities, in order to reduce customs and land taxes, carried the hated name of "excise." Its defeat, together with the failure of a Caribbean war and the continued attempts of insurgent Whigs to break his tyranny, led to his downfall in 1742.

During his long ministry, Walpole had not only managed finances well, but had almost made a tradition of the system of cabinet government. Not that the system was at once adopted *in toto*. Many people mistrusted what appeared to be a dictatorship; they did not realize that the tyranny lay in the electorate, the ruling squires, not in the principle. Nor was it yet understood clearly that, if the King was subservient to Parliament, he must then, by irrefutable logic, rely on the leader of that body. For some years, therefore, ministers and King at times disregarded Walpole's system, but when they did Government was at a standstill. In course of time cabinet government thus became a necessity. True to English habit, it was not promulgated by royal decree or by parliamentary statute, but just grew, without much premeditation or design, into a workable practice.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

When William came to the throne in 1689, he had to secure his position against the deposed James II, supported by Louis XIV. Attack threatened from five quarters: Scotland, Ireland, the Channel, the Colonies, and the Dutch frontier. Claverhouse defeated William's Covenanter Scots at Killiecrankie in July, but Claverhouse was killed, the clans quarreled among themselves, and William succeeded in buying them off.* The Irish had already revolted in favor of James, but William, crossing to Ireland before James was ready, won a significant victory at the Boyne in July, 1690. Loss here would have broken William on all fronts, but he now took the initiative and by October forced Ireland to accept the Peace of Limerick. The treaty itself was fairly lenient, allowing Catholicism in Ireland, but Parliament later made so many

* The remembered feature of this campaign, though it was not at William's instigation and was really an aftermath, was the foul trick played when his allies, the Campbells, murdered the Macdonalds at Glencoe in 1692.

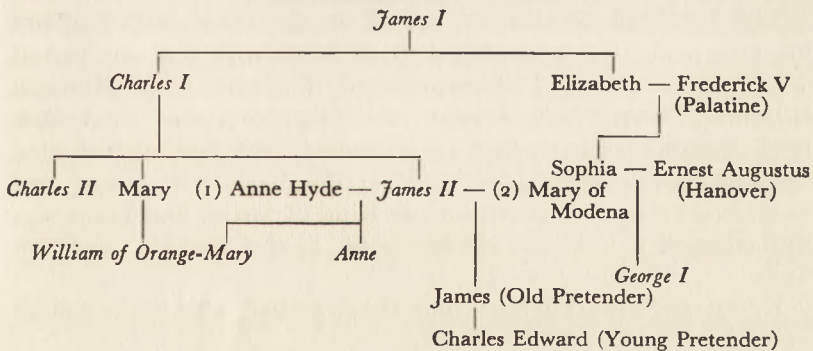
restrictions in regard to Catholic landholding and Catholic trading that the "Irish situation," already bad enough, grew intolerable.

William was at last free to fight the French, but only just in time; for his armies were hard pressed in the Netherlands, and the French Fleet had beaten the English off Beachy Head. Jacobites were growing in favor; and Churchill was in defection, ready to support the old Stuart regime if James should succeed. It was a dark hour, but Russell, more hostile to France than to his King, was left in command of the English Fleet and contrived in May, 1692, to win the Battle of La Hogue. It proved the turning point of the war, for, from an Englishman's point of view, control of the Channel and promotion of trade was the real object. Louis, continental-minded, failed to see this clearly and kept driving at the Netherlands and his Mediterranean objectives. After five years more he signed the Treaty of Ryswick, in which he acknowledged William as the English King and Anne as William's successor. A somewhat inconclusive struggle, it at least saved Protestantism in England and Holland and strengthened England's trading power.

Before the death of William, Louis found occasion to break the Peace of Ryswick. Claiming the vacant Spanish throne for his grandson, Philip of Anjou, he aroused the opposition of Austria, Savoy, and the Rhenish and Dutch states. England, to maintain the balance among the European powers, must sooner or later have opposed him, but he precipitated the struggle in 1701 by renewing his support of the old Stuart claim, now in the person of the Catholic son of James II.* This war, of "the Spanish Succession,"

* Parliament, by the Act of Settlement in 1701, had provided, if Anne should die without an heir, for the succession of Sophia, Electress of Hanover, or of her son George.

Stuarts and the Hanover Succession



involved most of Western Europe and dragged on for twelve years. It proved exhausting for Louis XIV, too much for his finances and his magnificent armies. At the end, France, though still the strongest single power in Europe, no longer dominated the Continent.

The pretexts of the war were the two old ones: throne and religion. But from the English point of view the fundamental question was economic: the control of trade and the American colonies.

At her accession Anne favored Marlborough, then a Tory, and Godolphin, a moderate Tory in favor of the war. But as the chief support of the war came from the Whigs, those champions of war, after Marlborough's brilliant success at Blenheim, became so strong that the Queen was forced to favor a Whig ministry. Marlborough switched to the Whig group; his wife, who did Anne's thinking for her, carried the Queen along; and the Whigs pushed the prosecution of the war. A succession of victories in the Low Countries — Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet — completed the work made possible by Blenheim. Gibraltar, captured by Sir George Rooke in 1704, successfully withstood recapture. From an English point of view the war was won; but complications on the Continent and the unwillingness of the warmongers to let go dragged it along. By 1710, however, people were tiring of it, and Anne, coming under the influence of "Mrs. Masham," was tiring of Marlborough and the Duchess. In 1710 the Whigs were dismissed in favor of Robert Harley, a rising Tory leader, and of Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, a dilettante philosopher and a potential Jacobite. In 1711 Marlborough was deprived of his command, and in 1713 the war came to an end.

The Treaty of Utrecht was one of the shrewdest pacts England has ever made, for, while it surprised Louis with few continental demands, it provided colony-minded England with Minorca, Gibraltar, Nova Scotia, Hudson Bay Territory, and Newfoundland, together with trading concessions in the Spanish colonies. England's allies were strengthened at the expense of France and Italy, but Philip was recognized as King of Spain, and Louis was thus allowed a technical victory so far as the Spanish succession went.

It was well for England that the war had been won before

Marlborough was deprived of his command. For, although he was an unreliable statesman, he was perhaps England's greatest general. Born in 1650, John Churchill early showed ability in service under the great French commander Turenne, when Charles II perfidiously sent troops to help Louis XIV against the Dutch. Later, his generalship turned the tide at Sedgemoor, when Monmouth's rebellion was crushed; and the same year he was raised to the peerage. But, though he had served the Stuarts for sixteen years, he deserted to William when James II sent him against the invader; yet within a few years he was twice suspected of treasonous plots to restore the deposed Stuart. Acquitted, partly because the evidence was slight, but largely because he was too valuable to lose, he was restored to favor towards the end of William's reign. About all that can be said in extenuation of his double-faced loyalty is that practically all of his contemporaries played the same game. Queen Anne, already for a quarter of a century the doting friend of Churchill's gifted wife, made him, at her accession, the most influential man in England — Duke of Marlborough and captain-general of the forces at home and abroad.

Marlborough, even more than Cromwell, was a master of quick movement and surprise. Yet he did not have a "God-fearing army," dedicated to the cause, but a miscellaneous force, many of them pressed vagabonds and criminals. He was a great organizer; he worked hard; and he developed gradually a disciplined force of veterans with able officers. Lord Chesterfield credits him with "plain understanding and sound judgement," rather than with military genius, but he was an inspiring leader and often rode at the head of his cavalry charges. In a military sense he combined the best qualities of both Cromwell and Rupert.

Englishmen who could not see the value of spending English pounds and blood on the fields of Flanders had approved still less of carrying the war into Central Europe, but Marlborough's victory turned the ebbing tide to a flood of acclaim. Addison celebrated it in his famous *Campaign*, with its happy comparison of the great general to an angel who

Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm.

A large sum was voted to build the Duke a residence, Blenheim Palace, at Woodstock, in Oxfordshire, and here, after his removal

from the command in 1711, he spent the last ten years of his life. His loyal and aggressive wife, an incredibly vigorous old lady, survived him for twenty-two years, most of which she spent in untiring defense of her husband's reputation and fame.

During the thirty years after the War of the Spanish Succession England enjoyed long periods of peace. On the accession of George I, it is true, there was a serious threat in favor of the "Old Pretender," the son of James II. Had he managed with judgment and dispatch, he might have succeeded with a nation that had little stomach for the Hanoverian succession. But on the defeat of the Earl of Mar at Sheriffmuir in 1715 and the impeachment of Bolingbroke, turned Jacobite, the Stuart claims were silenced till the "forty-five," when the "Young Pretender" made the last Stuart attempt to regain the throne. Stanhope, the chief minister, now set about securing a settled balance of power in Europe. He first made alliances with both sides of the old war, Austria and France, and later a quadruple alliance to check Sweden and Spain. The result was a brief war, with English naval successes in the Baltic and the Mediterranean. The Hanoverian dynasty was saved in England, the Bourbon in France, and Stanhope had maneuvered his country into the key position in Europe. It was a typical English diplomacy, begun under the early Tudors and followed successfully to the twentieth century. Walpole, on his rise to power, pursued the same policy of peace and promotion of trade. Only towards the end of his long ministry did the nation get out of hand, in its excitement over Jenkins' Ear.* Walpole attempted to negotiate, but was forced into a West Indian war; and, when it went badly, the excited nation turned against the neutrality alliances and pressed support of Austria against both France and Spain. In the elections of 1741 Walpole's party won by only one seat and the following year he resigned.

While Marlborough was making an Army, the Navy, under William and Anne, was somewhat improved. Pay was more regular, larger ships were built, and harbors and rivers were deepened. Other results of the attention to naval affairs were the conversion

* Jenkins was a trader who claimed that his ear had been lopped off by a Spanish pirate.

of Greenwich Palace into a naval hospital* in 1694 — one of Wren's masterpieces — and the construction of Eddystone Light in the same year. There are many stories of poor discipline and corruption in the Navy, and the superior French force in William's day might, with better management, have controlled the Channel, perhaps have changed the whole course of colonial history. But the English Navy, for all its poor discipline, was a much more efficient arm than in the time of Charles II, and under the Georges it became the powerful force, with a tradition of bull-dog valor, which enabled Rodney and Nelson to give England command of the seas. A noteworthy feature of the changes early in the century is that the total tonnage was not greatly increased, but rather the tonnage of individual ships. A "first rate" of Charles II was only a "third rate" by the time of George II, and the *Royal George*, of 2047 tons, was about as large and powerful as Nelson's *Victory*.

THE GROWTH OF TRADE

In spite of the fact that the bulk of the eighteenth-century population was occupied with agriculture, trade was the striking feature. It was conspicuous partly because private enterprise, which had begun in Tudor days to displace the corporate enterprise of the Middle Ages, was now the rule; partly because the Government, which had overtaxed land, was forced to look to revenues from trade. Navigation Acts and other trade laws were the most frequent legislation of the century. The long intermittent conflict with France was at bottom a trader's war. Many country squires were heavily invested in trading ventures. Trade was the chief interest, if not numerically the chief occupation, of eighteenth-century England.

Compared to the phenomenal expansion which came later, the growth of trade in the first half of the century may not seem impressive, but England had experienced nothing like it before. In the fifty years following the accession of William III exports and imports increased about threefold. This increase was due partly to extended markets, but also to the rapid expansion of manufacturing — again, only a prelude to the later growth, but significant for the introduction of new industries.

* Greenwich Hospital was changed in 1873 to a naval college.

In spite of the still prevalent mercantile theory, which stressed commerce rather than manufacture, new trades grew up. Therefore when Huguenot refugees, after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, began to pour into England, many new industries, hitherto French, were introduced. At the same time there was much hostility to calico-printing, for the idea lingered that English prosperity had been, and therefore must always be, based on wool. Though some of the infant industries never rose to really great importance, the significant thing is that England, already mercantile-minded, was now growing industry-minded. Some manufactures, moreover, did increase enormously, especially steel and iron works.

These "heavy" industries presented new transportation problems, for coal, as well as the manufactured products, must be moved. In the time of William nearly all such traffic was sea-borne, but rivers were gradually deepened and dammed so that a good many inland towns could be reached. Most of the roads were impassable for wagons during a large part of the year, but during the reign of George II the main highways were improved, and soon afterwards canals began the transformation of interior England.

England's prosperity, then, depended largely on the sea. We must never lose sight of the fact that the manufacturing England of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, like the more purely mercantile England of Tudor days, was essentially a maritime England. In fact, the old Elizabethan tradition of privateer exploring still flourished in the days of William, Anne, and the Georges. The most notorious figure was Captain Kidd, who made a pretense of suppressing pirates, then turned freebooter himself; but the most important of these "explorers" was William Dampier, the first Englishman to investigate "New Holland," or Australia. He made many voyages, more or less piratical, but his careful observations were of real help to later navigators. Incidentally, on his last voyage, he rescued the marooned Alexander Selkirk, whose story was the source of *Robinson Crusoe*.

From a commercial point of view, the East India Company was the chief figure in overseas adventures, and its methods were not less questionable than those of the individual "explorers." It maintained its own armed fleet and, without waiting for official sanction, fought the French in India and seized advantageous

trading posts — a practice which reached its culmination in the days of Robert Clive. At the same time the Hudson's Bay Company, in conflict with French traders in Canada, was supplying another instance of the commonplace that the French wars were at bottom trade wars.

It is noteworthy, however, that while trade increased, agriculture, the occupation of the majority, made great advances. The improvement resulted partly because many enclosed acres were again given to the plow. More important, methods were greatly improved. Jethro Tull experimented with soil and seed and demonstrated the value of frequent cultivation, and Lord Townshend, in retirement, tried crop rotation and the growing of roots with such success that he earned the name of "Turnip Townshend." But the agricultural prosperity went largely into the pockets of rich landowners, who often invested their gains in commercial enterprises. Thus, while trade and manufacture during Walpole's time brought prosperity to a large group of artisans and shopkeepers, agricultural prosperity reached only a few, the well-to-do squires.

SOCIAL LIFE AND THE ARTS

In the half-century under discussion, honors are about even, from the point of view of significant experiences, between changes in methods of government and in ways of living. By the reign of George II commerce and manufacture had become so important that a number of small towns, such as Manchester, Sheffield, Newcastle, were growing into considerable cities. Squires still ruled England, but, just as the medieval economy had been upset by the mercantile developments under the Tudors, so now agricultural England was on the threshold of industrial England.

SOCIAL LIFE

Two results of this change, even in the eighteenth century, were significant. We have already noted, in Chapter X, the passing of the older type of gentry, the men who were the backbone of culture as well as of government between the Tudors and the Restoration. After the Restoration, the gentry began to split into two groups: those who spent most of their time in London, for political or social or commercial reasons, and those who remained

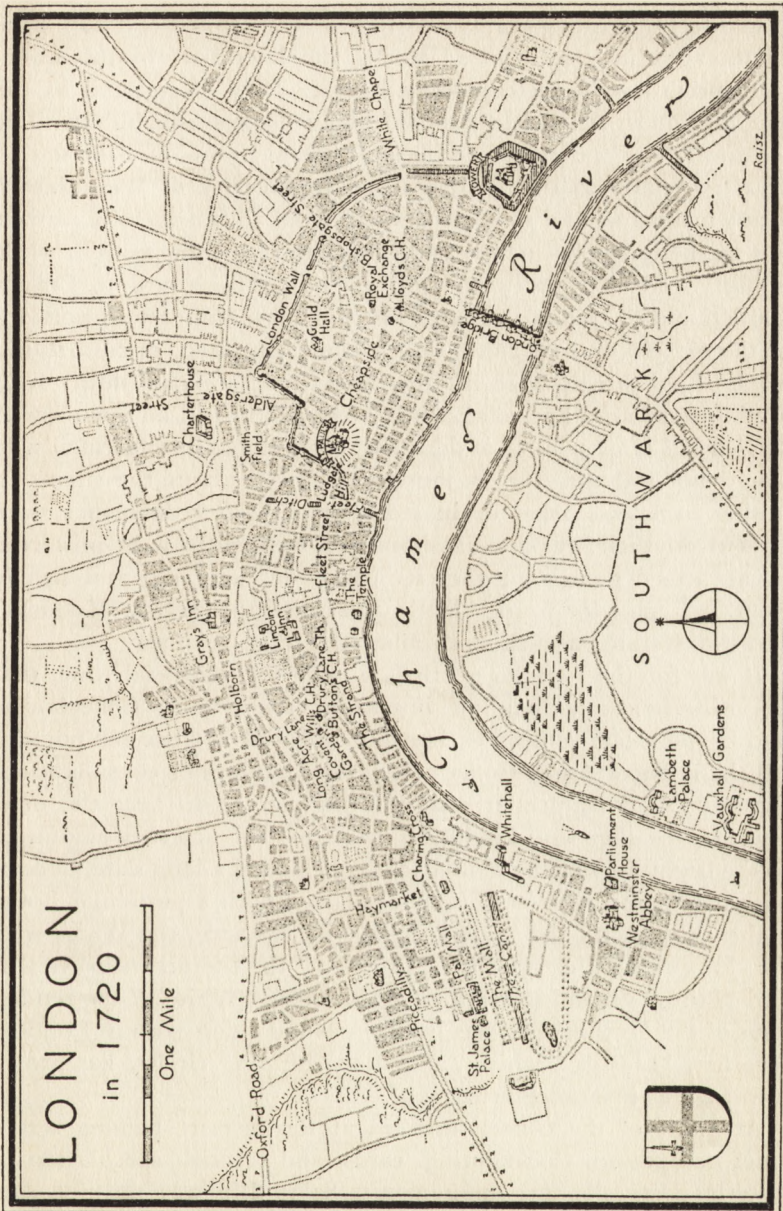
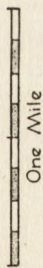
isolated on their country estates. The importance of trade in the eighteenth century tended to accelerate this division. Not only did rich squires buy up impoverished neighbors and combine small estates into large ones, but successful merchants often purchased country places and were accepted in a generation or two as proper "county" people. The whole process tended, on the one hand, to prevent such sharp social cleavages, based on heredity, as were becoming a menace in France; but, on the other, by turning the independent yeoman into a rent farmer, it tended to throw the ruling power into the hands of small groups of rich men.

The other conspicuous result was the growth of city manners among the makers of fashion and the patrons of art. Here the French provided the model; and the city gentleman of Anne's day, however gross he may have seemed to a Parisian, made much of elegance, of precision, of form. He smiled a disdainful smile at the rude or antiquated manners of the country. He became a creature of the drawing room and the coffeehouse, as urbane a gentleman as an Englishman was capable of becoming.

But the London gentleman, though he set the tune, made up only a small part of the population. Tenant farmers, agricultural laborers, workers in the new trades, soldiers, seamen, and servants enjoyed in some measure the benefits of the commercial prosperity, but there was a considerable body of unemployed, another of vagrants, and still another of criminals. Society as a whole was far from urbane. Nor was there religious zeal and moral fervor to lift up the heart of the common man, as there had been in the heyday of Puritanism. That "one-horse shay" had run its century, and the Great Revival was still in the future. In the time of George I, after the superficial decency of Anne's reign, coarse manners and moral apathy were the rule, while unprecedented squalor marked the growing slums of London.

One has only to glance across the Channel, however, to realize how much worse the situation might have been. For, besides the extension of prosperity to a large number of people, there was far greater liberty and justice under the parliamentary rule than under the despotism of the Bourbons. Religious toleration was growing, just when it was being suppressed abroad; the Press was free; and Voltaire, haunted by *lettres de cachet*, was amazed at the liberty, prosperity, and happiness which he found in London.

LONDON in 1720



Eighteenth-century culture, as well as the growth of trade, gave London special importance. During the later part of the seventeenth century the metropolis had passed Paris in size and by the time of Queen Anne it numbered about 600,000 inhabitants. The technical "city" now stretched beyond the old gates, and the settled area, especially to the west, reached to the city of Westminster. Many merchants and shopkeepers still lived within the city proper, but the better-off frequently had suburban residences as well, while nobility and city gentry had already moved westward to Covent Garden and St. James's Square. The northern and eastern portions of the old city were turning rapidly into congested, squalid slums. Most of the streets were narrow, unlighted, ill-paved, filthy with a mixture of mud and offal; while Fleet Ditch, still an open sewer, carried "its large tribute of dead dogs to Thames." Gentlemen who would not soil their finery must perforce go about the streets in jolting hackney-coaches or in sedan chairs. After dark they were lighted on their way by link-boys and frequently were protected by an armed guard, for the city constables were old and insufficient, fair game for young bloods who called themselves "Mohocks" and who counted assault and robbery a pretty pastime.

It was for the London gentlemen, who set the social tune, that the coffeehouse became an important rendezvous. Coffeehouses had begun a half-century earlier, but they did not become popular till the reign of Anne. Coffee was evidently a minor consideration; the houses served primarily as meeting-places — to hear the news and to foregather with kindred spirits — and as such they amounted to the beginnings of the more exclusive clubs of a later date. Groups with a common interest became associated with a particular house — the Tories with the "Cocoa Tree," for instance, the Whigs with "St. James's," the clergy with "Trueby's," the literati with "Will's" and "Button's," and so forth.* One of them, "White's," the rendezvous of the *beau monde*, has lived on as the oldest club in London. Another, "Lloyd's," which catered to shipping circles, has grown into a great insurance firm.

At many of the coffeehouses, as at the taverns, gaming was a chief occupation. Cockfighting, cards, and feverish speculation in lotteries were popular amusements. Salon life was not yet con-

* The famous "October" club of the Tories and "Kitcat" of the Whigs met at Taverns.

spicuous, but fashionable ladies as well as gentlemen frequented the gardens and spas which grew up in the reign of George II. Already in Anne's reign, Bath had become the resort of the elite; and Beau Nash, its social dictator, did much to bring into fashion the decorum which replaced the free manners of Restoration days. Punctilious etiquette became a major virtue. Nearer London, Sadler's Wells was a rendezvous for citizens of moderate means; Epsom for the *beau monde*; while among the famous gardens, Ranelagh was opened in 1733 and Vauxhall, with recovered respectability, was reopened in 1736. It was essentially a social world, but it was especially a man's world. Ladies went out to dine, attended the opera, visited the resorts; but Queen Anne, who had no social or intellectual ambitions, made domesticity a fashion. Except for unusual ladies like Lady Mary Montagu, such educated women as frequently graced Tudor households or adorned the drawing rooms of late Georgian days were few indeed. The coquetish use of the fan, as Addison satirically suggests, was a far more important accomplishment than the use of the mind. The poor girls had little choice, with only domestic arts to occupy them. The boys had at least a thorough dose of the classics interspersed with their floggings.

This man's world of the city, then, spent much time at coffee-houses and taverns or watching the popular spectacles of horse-racing, sword-fighting, and fist-fighting. It was a dueling, hard-drinking world, and it continued for a while the licentious manners of the Restoration; but under the leadership of kindly satirists like Addison and Steele, or of social dictators like Nash, decency came somewhat suddenly into fashion. As Macaulay puts it, "they reconciled wit and virtue, divorced since the Restoration." But morality became a fashion, a social grace of the urban gentleman, rather than a fundamental principle. As such it persisted somewhat beyond the reign of Queen Anne, but rather as a veneer; and under the first two Georges manners on the whole relapsed into the license of the time of Charles II, unrelieved by the sparkling wit of that day.

Among the city poor, moreover, a new departure in drinking did much to increase the squalor and crime of the congested districts. Gin, nowadays used in divers concoctions by the fashionable world, began to replace beer as the poor man's drink. Rum

and whisky, cheap and nasty, played their part, but raw gin, drunk neat, was the chief of the sinister triumvirate. The Government under George II took alarm and placed a heavy duty on spirits, but that only provoked smuggling. There were 17,000 gin shops in London. A much-quoted advertisement tells the story: "Drunk for 1*d.*; dead drunk for 2*d.*; and straw for nothing."

To add to the squalor, poor laws were generally oppressive and badly administered. Parishes jealously protected their own poor by treating most migrants as vagrants. Workhouses relieved the condition somewhat, but they were often just houses of correction, for it was generally assumed that a man out of work was a rascal. Prisons were especially bad, not only because they were overcrowded and insanitary, but because they were let out to private gaolers, who ran them for profit. Many prisoners were held long after their sentences were served if they could not pay exorbitant "garnish money" for release. There was some agitation for reform, but little was accomplished for nearly a century. It was rather in hospitals and in homes for the aged and infirm that notable advances were made. Besides the Greenwich Naval Hospital and St. Bartholomew's and St. Thomas's, Westminster Hospital was established in 1719 and Grey's in 1725. Inoculation for smallpox began gradually to reduce one of England's periodical scourges. In spite of the squalor of London slums, English crossroads were not crowded, as were the French, with a dreadful display of limping, starving beggars in rags.

The evidence that early eighteenth-century England was a man's world is even more conspicuous in the country than in the city. There woman was little more than housekeeper and breeder, shut off as she was from the entertainments of town, dominated often by a hard-drinking, fox-hunting squire who read few books and had little patience with arts and graces. Squire Westerns, sound at heart, but boisterous, rough, profane, were far more common than quaint old gentlemen like Sir Roger. But it is easy to exaggerate. The improvement in country houses, which show both dignity and good taste, the extension of neat, hedged gardens,* the addition of well-kept orchards, the beautiful paneling, the intro-

* The formal French garden, a sort of miniature Versailles, was now the vogue, as the Italian had once been, but it was more common in the neighborhood of London than throughout the country.

duction of china from the East — all reveal that some of the country gentlemen were very much alive to the amenities of living. These graces, however, were more conspicuous in the next generation. Country estates only a short distance from London were singularly isolated; and the culture which passed like a gracious air over Anne's London scarcely touched the country houses.

The main post-roads, however, were kept open and gradually extended, especially under George II. Increasing travel is evidenced by the many packet boats across the Channel and by the greater number of stagecoaches on the highroads; evidenced, too, by the great increase in highway robbery. Besides the "gentlemen of the road," there were dangerous organized bands — "Owlers" along the coast and "Blacks" in the western counties — bands often in league with the justices and the gentry. The dashing highwayman, like the London "Mohock," made something of a pastime of his profession, at least in the popular imagination; and glamorous tales were told, even in their own day, of the gallantry and daring of Jack Sheppard, Dick Turpin, and Jonathan Wild.

Such a man's world as we have been picturing, especially in England, would naturally make much of sport. We have already referred to the fox-hunting squire, but most people in rural England got their chief exercise in agriculture, in necessary riding, or in fishing, shooting, and trapping for livelihood. There was as yet no organized sport in the modern sense. The old game of football was popular in villages, as well as bowling on the green, and, nearer town, two other sports were becoming popular, croquet and cricket; one of which, at least, was eventually to influence English ways of life so profoundly that it came to be called "not a game, but an institution." The origin of these games is somewhat obscure, but probably croquet was an adaptation of the old French game "paille maille," the sport which amused the courtiers of Charles II and which gave its name to a well-known London street. As for cricket, there are old pictures which indicate some primitive form of it as early as the thirteenth century; but under the names of "creag" and "Hand in and Hand out" it was frequently condemned, even by statute, as "*ludos inhonestos*" and as detrimental to the more manly sport of archery. By Elizabeth's time the word "cricket" was in use, but the game does not appear to have had more than occasional devotees till the eighteenth century. Even then, it was

a very simple pastime compared to the specialized, organized sport of the later nineteenth century.

ARTS AND SCIENCES

As might be expected, the artistic expression of the early eighteenth century reflects largely the culture of the town. A society given to gossip and chat, however elegant — or, in more serious moments, to reason rather than to emotion — did not make a poetic world. It is significant that, with one conspicuous exception, there were no great poets. Addison's *Campaign* and *Spacious Firmament* are the only good verses from the pen of a man who was a chief figure in English literature. Dryden's admonition to "Cousin Swift" that he would never be a poet was borne out by the mediocrity of the great Dean's verses. Prior and Gay penned occasional felicities; Thomson and Young started a revival of the long-neglected blank verse; Defoe and others wrote clever doggerel. Alexander Pope, alone, was the great poetic genius of the time.

"Genius" here should be taken in its original as well as its derived meaning. For Pope, by nature as by assiduous practice, was peculiarly fitted to be the soul of an age which worshiped precise form and which thought instinctively in satire. The closed couplet, which he perfected and handled brilliantly, was the ideal vehicle for satirical shafts or for the pinchbeck philosophy which delighted his reading public. He wrote it so well, indeed, that, in spite of the revolt in favor of freer forms, it dominated poets for nearly a century. "A thousand years may elapse," said Dr. Johnson, "before there shall appear another man with a power of versification equal to that of Pope." In point of fact, over a hundred years did elapse — if Tennyson be granted the honor.

As for the satire, the man who "scarcely drank tea without a stratagem" was in his natural element. He fairly earned Lady Mary's name for him — "the wicked wasp of Twickenham." But though Pope nurtured grudges and sometimes missed his mark, as when he set up the clever Colley Cibber as a dunce, his attacks usually had the restraint, the neat insinuations, the rapier thrust rather than the bludgeon blow, so necessary to good satire. His lines on the self-assured Addison in the *Epistle to Arbuthnot* — Addison who could

Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer —

may be a slight overstatement; they must be, to be satire; but they do perfectly what they set out to do. The satires of such a man were naturally personal, just as Addison's, in contrast, attacked a general condition and Swift's a particular condition; and so Pope gathered up all his long-nurtured grudges and paid the venal scribblers off in his long and incomparable *Dunciad*. But he did write one satire which had no personal animus. His sparkling, witty *Rape of the Lock*, with its humorous picture of social trivialities, is the best thing of its kind in the language.

Pope came early to fame. When he was only twenty-three, his *Essay on Criticism* showed that he could write better heroic couplets than any of his contemporaries. He imagined himself the heir of Dryden and for a short space tried to lord it over the wits at Will's, but his weak constitution forced him to withdraw. Of his other poems, *Eloisa to Abelard*, a romantic love story, seems too confined by the stereotyped couplet, but the *Essay on Man* — "a string of pearls without the string" — includes many lines that are now familiar quotations. His *Homer*, which brought him both wealth and fame, was long held to be a great poem in a time when people liked to call birds "the feathered choir" and fishes "the finny brood." But Homer did not write in euphemisms, and the world now realizes that Bentley was right when he said, "It is a pretty poem, Mr. Pope, but you must not call it *Homer*."

If this were all, Pope might be passed over as a clever versifier and nimble satirist; but, though the modern world does not see it clearly, Pope was a great poet. In the closing lines of the *Dunciad*, he speaks of light as dying before the "uncreating word" of Dullness. He understood, as few poets have done, the fundamental importance of the *creating* word in kindling the light of true poetry.

Apart from Pope, the great literature of the early eighteenth century was the prose essay. English prose, impressive but formless and diffuse in the writings of Taylor and Milton, now took on, as a result of French models, the compactness and lucidity which made it as much of an art as poetry. Like poetry, it was chiefly a vehicle for satire. Dean Swift so used it in his delightful *Battle of the Books*, a championship of the ancients against the moderns; in his *Tale of a Tub*, a satire on church formalisms; and again in the famous parts of his *Gulliver*. A lonely and unhappy man, Swift was savage in the later parts of *Gulliver*, as well as in his attack on the English treatment of Ireland, the *Modest Proposal*,

in which he solemnly suggested that the surplus children be fattened and eaten, and in which he calculated with revolting nicety that "a young healthy child, well nursed, is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout." Even in his savage satires, however, Swift wrote with the urbanity and restraint which is necessary to all good satire. Wild as he felt within, his prose style itself never went wild.

Poor Swift, proud and melancholy, had a tragic life. Born and educated in Ireland and later a passionate champion of the Irish, he was of English parentage; he called Ireland "a dirty dog-hole and prison"; and his style, as Thackeray points out, is marked by a "thrift and economy" peculiarly English. Secretary to Sir William Temple for years, then a "hedge-parson" when men of less ability were holding rich positions; violent, morbid, insulting two women to whom he had protested affection, falling in love with another * whom he adored but did not marry, unless secretly, Swift was already middle-aged and bitter when in 1710 he rode into power as the leading Tory writer under Harley. His *Examiner*, in opposition to Addison's *Whig Examiner*, was for a short time the chief tool of his party, in a day when politicians, with no radio or telegraphic reports of their speeches, depended on pamphlets to reach their constituents. Hoping for a great position, not less than St. Paul's, Swift had to be content with the Deanery of St. Patrick's. With no further chance under the Whigs, he retired to Ireland, nurtured his bitter hatreds, and loved Stella with that strange mixture of devotion and self-denial which, even as a young man, he had assumed as a bitter pledge. Gradually he went mad. He saw it coming, many years in advance, and passed gradually, pathetically into his last sad years. A third of his fortune went to the Irish poor, who loved him. When Walpole threatened to arrest him for his *Drapier Letters*, against depreciated Irish currency, the minister was advised not to attempt it "unless you have ten thousand men behind the warrant."

Joseph Addison stands in great contrast to both Pope and Swift. After ten scholarly years at Oxford, he was selected by Halifax and

* Esther Johnson, Swift's pupil "Stella," the ward of Sir William Temple.

trained abroad to serve the Whig cause. With his *Campaign*, in 1704, he became a prominent figure in both literature and politics and thereafter rose swiftly and surely to eminence — to the dictatorship of letters among the wits at Button's, to the post of Chief Secretary for Ireland, to a seat on the Board of Trade, and to the portfolio of Secretary of State. Already prosperous, he became affluent on his marriage in 1716 to the Dowager Countess of Warwick. Always right, always successful, Addison must have been rather annoying to people like the envious Pope or the kaleidoscopic Steele; but he was a quiet, retiring, kindly man, who owed his eminence to genuine merit. In a day of bitter rivalries, he had no enemies but Pope, and that hostility was all on one side. He died in 1719 when only forty-seven and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

In his political capacity Addison edited the *Whig Examiner* in 1710 and the *Freeholder* in 1715. In the literary field his opera *Rosamund* was a failure, but his play *Cato*, after the fashion set by Corneille and Racine, had a great success. His permanent fame, however, rests almost wholly on his contributions to the *Tatler* and *Spectator*.

Newspapers, we have seen, began in the seventeenth century, and by 1702 a daily, *The Courant*, was established. The political periodicals of the same decade, such as the *Examiner*, were merely organized, recurrent forms of the pamphleteering already common. They indicated, however, a new development — a considerable reading public. That such a public might read periodicals for entertainment occurred to Addison's old schoolmate, Sir Richard Steele, the editor of the official *London Gazette*. In 1709, he began the *Tatler* and started * a revolution in the publishing field. The periodical familiar essay had begun.

But though Steele was the pioneer, and a worthy one, some of the best contributions to the *Tatler* were Addison's. In 1711 Steele initiated the *Spectator*, and the ablest, as well as the greater part, of these papers were also Addison's. He drew the character of the *Spectator* largely from himself, — quiet, tolerant, observant, — and the issues which dealt from time to time with the doings of Sir Roger and his club were largely the product of his pen. Since Shakespeare, no English author had created a character so real,

* Defoe's "Scandalous Club" in his *Review* has actual priority.

so alive as Sir Roger. No one, furthermore, has written pleasanter English prose — “familiar, but not coarse,” as Dr. Johnson puts it, “and elegant but not ostentatious.”

Daniel Defoe stands apart from most of the literary men of his day. A dissenter, a jack-of-all-trades, frequently a debtor, a political turncoat, he does not appear much among the coffeehouse wits, and Swift referred to him contemptuously as “an ignorant fellow, whose name I forget.” But as a clever political journalist and historian of contemporary affairs, he was distinctly characteristic of his day. Even in his famous *Journal of the Plague*, which he wrote fifty-seven years after the event, he is as circumstantial, as much of a reporter, as Pepys. He had an omnivorous mind and great energy. His collection of papers on business affairs called the *Essay on Projects*, in 1697, reveals knowledge and understanding of many fields, and his *Tour*, written thirty years later, shows the same inquiring, reporting instinct. It was not till he was sixty years old that he hit upon the idea of writing the story he had picked up from Alexander Selkirk eight years before and of so giving the world in 1719 his great piece of transfigured reporting — *Robinson Crusoe*. His other tales of adventure were not so successful, but they are still readable. Indeed, Defoe is always readable. If his style lacks the correctness and dignity of the literary caste represented by Swift and Addison, it goes a step beyond them in breaking down the barrier between author and general reader.

The drama in the reign of Anne was not so popular as it had been under the Restoration, but it had at least the merit of cleaning house. During the last ten years of the seventeenth century the chief dramatists, Congreve,* Vanbrugh, and Farquhar, had carried on the Restoration tradition of indecency to such an extent that the public, stirred by Jeremy Collier's attack on the stage, had a revulsion of feeling. In the days of Anne, Cibber and Steele made a definite and fairly successful effort to improve the moral tone of plays. At the same time, Shakespeare was coming again into popularity, and there were such able actors as Betterton, Mrs. Bracegirdle, and the young Nance Oldfield. The new plays, however, though they were less vulgar, less cynical than the Restoration

* Congreve should be somewhat elevated above this group. He was frivolous, rather than indecent, but hardly so great as Swinburne insists.

drama, inclined to sentimentality and fulsome morality — a quality which persisted till Fielding, Sheridan, and Goldsmith ridiculed it out of fashion in the next generation.

It was not the poor quality of the plays, though, so much as the sudden vogue of Italian opera which accounted for the decline in theatergoing. The King's House in the Haymarket and Drury Lane were the only theaters used for plays in Anne's reign. Betterton's at Lincoln's Inn Fields and the new Haymarket Theatre were used for opera. This condition lasted well towards the middle of the century. Covent Garden, built in 1731, was not successful for years, and the drama continued to languish, but Fielding's plays had considerable success in the reign of George II, and Garrick was then making the revival of Shakespeare more than a promise.

With the introduction of Italian music, the old English styles went out of fashion. Gay, to be sure, in his *Beggar's Opera*, in 1728, made a start in a truly English comic opera, but the style did not really live again till the time of Gilbert and Sullivan. It is regretted by some that the English tradition of Byrd and Purcell was so wholly wiped out, for England, till the eighteenth century in the first musical rank, has only recently begun to produce music of quality. But the Continental music which derives from Bach and Handel is so much greater than the earlier music of any country that the regret has a tinge of narrow nationalism. Handel, furthermore, like Conrad in our own day, became so much an Englishman that some record of his work belongs in the English story.

George Frederick Handel, born at Halle in 1685, had already given brilliant promise in Berlin, Hamburg, and Hanover before he came to England in 1710. For some time he followed the Italian fashion, and his opera *Rinaldo* had great success. A prolific writer, he turned out forty-two operas in about twenty-five years. In 1721 he became conductor and manager of the Haymarket, but he quarreled with his temperamental staff both there and later at the King's House, and yet again in a third effort at Covent Garden. Broken in health and wealth, he withdrew in 1737, but, after two years in retirement, he turned to oratorios and, though he was over fifty, wrote the compositions which made his lasting fame. As he had given his operas more dramatic life than the Italian

models possessed, so now he invested the oratorio, also of Italian origin, with a warmth and color which sacred music, especially on the Continent, had never known — qualities long recognized the world over in such famous pieces as the "Dead March" in *Saul* and in his unquestioned masterpiece, the *Messiah*. Like Milton, Handel was a noble man, whose character permeated his work. He not only gave music the serious, devotional quality necessary to the anthem type, but he added a sort of simple grandeur, which placed music on a new level throughout the civilized world. It was highly fitting that he was buried among the great dead in Westminster Abbey.

Other arts in England were not so notable as the literature and, thanks to Handel, the music. But there was the beginning of a great domestic architecture; and in painting there was one great figure, Hogarth.

The influence of Christopher Wren dominated the architects of the early eighteenth century, but most of them lacked his unerring sense of proportion. An excellent tradition was thus at times perverted into size and show. In Blenheim Palace, for instance, Sir John Vanbrugh relied too much on bulk for impressiveness; and the same is in less degree true of his great Castle Howard in Yorkshire. His contemporary, William Kent, who is responsible for the fine Horse Guards building and Devonshire House, was a better follower of Wren. The significant work of these men, however, and still more of their successors, was the development of the special English style of domestic architecture known as Georgian. Instead of a few great nobles demanding palaces, there were now many well-to-do squires demanding smaller houses. The response was the Georgian dwelling, with its well-proportioned sash windows and its stately, restful façade. Not so picturesque as the Elizabethan manor house, it nevertheless combined simplicity with dignity and was satisfactory both as a dwelling house and as a work of art.

Painting, until the reign of George II, continued the artificiality and affectation of the Restoration period. The best portrait painter of Anne's time was Kneller, of German birth, but his work, like that of the Englishmen, Jervas, Richardson, and Hudson, was of low quality. There was much sculpture, too, but nearly all of it



"MARRIAGE À LA MODE," BY HOGARTH

bad, with pastoral absurdities. Then, during the reign of George II, William Hogarth, pupil and son-in-law of the court painter, Sir James Thornhill, broke violently with the insipid tradition. He untiringly attacked the "Black Masters," as he called them, in word and work, and he strove to make English painting honest in both subject and method. Though his own world thought of him as primarily a draughtsman and engraver, and this estimate lasted through the nineteenth century, he is now recognized as the first great English painter, a sound craftsman, a skillful technician, and an able colorist.* But Hogarth was essentially a satirist — "on the verge of caricature," as Hazlitt put it — and he is still known chiefly for such pictures as *Gin Lane* and the incomparable series, *The Harlot's Progress*, *The Rake's Progress*, and *Marriage à la Mode*. In these pictures he had a moral motive — he was out to reform manners as well as art — but they live primarily for their sincerity and humor. Hogarth's art, dramatic rather than picturesque, is peculiarly suited to such satirical scenes. They are as alive as the spoken drama.

In the field of learning, the scholar fared better than his pupil. In general, education consisted of routine classics and flogging; but among the learned there were substantial advances in physics, mathematics, and astronomy. Few individuals except Newton have left great names, but he lived till 1727 and was the inspiration of them all; and Edmund Halley, the discoverer of the comet, became Astronomer Royal in 1720. An age, furthermore, which called itself "Augustan" was keen in its study of the classics. In this field of research Richard Bentley towers above the rest. Bentley was a quarrelsome man, but he was a great scholar, particularly of Greek metrics, and was the pioneer in the "critical" school of classical scholarship. Unfortunately he had little poetic sense; he doctored Horace and murdered Milton to make their verses "logical." He had a typical eighteenth-century mind — fact-finding, encyclopedic.

Philosophy was, on the whole, an important part of eighteenth-century learning. A good deal of it, to be sure, was occupied with

* Perhaps the modern critics, noting the poor craftsmanship of Reynolds and irritated by the perennial praise of that great artist, have slightly overstated the case for Hogarth.

the Deist-Theist controversy, which in its fine-spun arguments over the issue between rational and revealed religion reminds us somewhat of a similar controversy and similar verbal jugglery among the medieval schoolmen. Much depended in both cases on the meaning you gave to the magical word "Nature." To the detached observer, both sides were more or less barking up the same tree. Bishop Butler saw this and pointed out, in his famous *Analogy*, that if Nature proceeds from God, as the Deists asserted, then revealed Christianity may also proceed from God. If one argument falls to the ground, the other must fall too.

This controversy has importance, however, as being significant of the general trend of thought at the time. A scientific, reasoned approach to ideas had been growing ever since Bacon, Descartes, and Hobbes. This led, in the theological field, to a reasoned theory of truth and ethics or to scientific skepticism. Again, in the philosophical field it led to rationalism or to Locke's "empiricism." Without discussing various shades of distinction, we may at least generalize that both rationalist and empiricist were essentially logical, fact-finding, as opposed to intuitive, mystical.

Among Locke's successors before Hume, the most important was George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne. As a defender of revealed religion, he argued himself into a sort of Platonic idealism, which attracted much attention, both *pro* and *con*, in his own day. But his metaphysics had no such permanent influence on English thought as did his psychology. In his famous *Theory of Vision* he went a step beyond Locke and denied the existence of "primary" qualities, such as solidity, extension, outside the mind. By the eye, for example, we get only ideas of color, not of extension; by touch we get ideas of extension; and we combine the two experiences into an assumed idea of visual extension. This theory was Berkeley's chief contribution; this and his graceful, lucid style.

But the philosophy of the early eighteenth century, unlike the literature, gave little new direction to thought; it was merely a bridge between Locke and Hume. In retrospect, one remembers rather the French wars and the colonial developments; the growth of Cabinet government; the elegant city wits and the boisterous country squires.

Chapter XII

THE AGE OF JOHNSON

IT IS commonly reported that the third quarter of the eighteenth century was noted for English success in the French wars, for colonial expansion, and for an unprecedented growth of industry. This is of course true, but the stressing of these points, especially with political emphasis, tends to lose sight of the number of great men in all sorts of activities during that remarkable period. In the long retrospect this feature is perhaps the most striking characteristic. A list of the names of men at the top, or near the top, in a variety of fields, represents an imposing section of any dictionary of national biography. In the more cultural aspects, as in sheer bulk of encyclopedic learning, the French bore the palm, and some of the English excellence was an echo from across the Channel; but the names of Johnson, Garrick, Gibbon, Fielding, Hume, Reynolds, Cook, Priestley, Adam Smith, Robert Adam, Chippendale, Arkwright, Watt, Wedgwood, Harrison, Bakewell suggest no borrowed virtue. And to these must be added a list of men eminent in public affairs — Chatham, Burke, Fox, Clive, Wolfe, and Rodney.

It was a time when men indulged in few rhapsodies, when, imbued with a strong sense of fact and great intellectual vigor, they sought practical accomplishments. It was the least poetic period in English history, but, though it lacks charm except in the last amenities of the salon, there is a refreshing vitality and genuineness about it. Men indulged in solid conversation; they planned and executed gigantic histories and encyclopedias; they took all knowledge to be their province. Burke, as Augustine Birrell puts it, had a "catholicity about his gaze; he knew how the whole world lived." It is not without significance that the awkward scholar who by sheer force of mind and personality dominated the intellectual circle of his day gave, as his prime advice to Boswell, no such visionary formula as "Hitch your wagon to a star," but simply: "Clear your mind of cant."

GOVERNMENT AT HOME

After the fall of Walpole, Cabinet government continued to control England till the accession of George III in 1760. During these years, moreover, the power behind the ministers was still the country squire in alliance with the merchant. The Tories, in the main, still opposed the House of Hanover, even though the old Jacobite cause was virtually dead after the Young Pretender had been defeated at Culloden in 1746. The Tories, it is true, had helped the opposition Whigs to break the power of Walpole and were rewarded with a few Cabinet positions, but under Carteret, Pelham, and Newcastle, from 1742 to 1757, the Government was still a Whig government, about as corrupt as Walpole's and rather less efficient. It was not till the threat of disaster in the French War that William Pitt rose to eminence.

Pitt's virtues were honesty, vigor, eloquence. With the confidence of the people behind him, the "Great Commoner" proved in 1757 to be the man of the hour. But he was a difficult, headstrong man, somewhat of a poseur and egotist, with little practical knowledge of domestic affairs. Disliked by George II and by many of his colleagues, he secured control of Parliament only with the help of such dubious and influential men as Newcastle. Before the war he was inconspicuous, and later, as the Earl of Chatham, he cut a rather sorry figure. Yet more than any other man he saved England during a dark hour. In his untiring and successful service through five difficult years he won deservedly an illustrious name in English annals.

In 1760, after forty years of Cabinet government, George III attempted to reassert the royal authority. Only twenty-two when he ascended the throne, vigorous, accomplished, he had no notion of being such a puppet-king as his Hanoverian predecessors had been. He was a good man, conspicuous for domestic virtues and for a strong feeling of obligation to his people, but he was narrow and stubborn, incapable of compromise, and apparently devoid of a sense of humor. Trained in the traditions of Continental royalty, the new monarch was determined to destroy the curious English system, in which, though the King had a good deal of technical authority, government was in practice controlled by a Cabinet representing the majority in the national assembly. The

great autocracies of the Continent, and the little principalities which aped them, brooked no meddling of that sort.

Obviously Parliament was too old and powerful an institution to be disposed of summarily, as the Stuarts had attempted to do. The easier way was to break up the two-party system and to appoint Cabinets which should represent no one powerful group. In the first of these efforts the King was aided by a natural development. The Whig Party was already broken in two by the issue between the Old Whigs, the heirs of the Walpole system, and the New Whigs, a liberal opposition within the Party — the “Progressives” of the time. Again, the Tories, with an English-born ruler to support, departed now from their old hostility to the House of Hanover and soon were identified with the support of the royal prerogative. Here was dissension enough, but within each party there were small conflicting groups, so that for two decades English parties threatened to break down into *blocs*, a dangerous disease in constitutional governments.

George III promoted both of these developments — the disintegration of parties and the new loyalty of the Tories. By enlisting the support of ministers who controlled many seats from the rotten and pocket boroughs, he built up in the House the powerful group known as the “King’s Friends” — grateful beneficiaries sure to yield subservient support. At the same time he fostered a veneration for royalty which went beyond any king-worship since the days of Charles I. If we think back a few years — say, to the men who accepted William III as King only when he signed the Declaration of Rights — it seems almost incredible now that a man of Dr. Johnson’s independent mind should have replied, when asked what he had said at an audience with the King, “Sir, it was not for me to bandy civilities with my sovereign.”

For a few years George III nearly realized his ambition of absolute monarchy, but he was thwarted by his own inflexibility, the difficult foreign situations, and, above all, the persistent English instinct for self-government. Perhaps the most significant phase of the whole conflict is that it drove Englishmen to realize that the “liberties” won under the Stuarts were not enough; that, if Parliament was to govern successfully through a Cabinet, the system of elections must be reformed and the corrupt practices of patronage must be rooted out. Many of these reforms were not accomplished till long after

the reign of George III, but the agitation towards reform in 1780 marks the beginning of a growth which bore fruit in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

It is not surprising that there were many Cabinet shifts before the King established his control. When the elder Pitt was forced to resign in 1761, he was succeeded, during only five years, by the ministries of Bute, Grenville, and Rockingham, only to be recalled in 1766 as a member of a hodge-podge, no-party Cabinet, nominally under Grafton. But in 1768 Pitt, now the Earl of Chatham, was again forced to withdraw, and Lord North, a man after the King's heart, gradually brought both Cabinet and Commons into support of the King's wishes. The parties were hopelessly at loggerheads; the "King's Friends" were in the majority; and for twelve years after 1770 the Lord North Government remained in office. But under North, Cabinet government was only a name; it was in fact the King's Government.

This royal supremacy had not been secured without opposition. The long skirmish with John Wilkes, publisher of the *North Briton*, which had attacked the King's policy in 1763, led eventually to the outlawry of Wilkes, but the methods of the King's followers were so high-handed that popular support carried Wilkes back into Parliament in 1768. Thereupon the King managed to have his subservient House expel Wilkes. George had his way, but he lost a large measure of his popularity; and the opposition among the people, though it was not effective in the packed assembly, meant that the new royal power rested on a precarious, temporary foundation. He must keep his "Friends" or fail.

In the House itself there was an eloquent minority, even during George's decade of triumph. In fact, a noteworthy feature of the time was the extraordinary amount of great oratory. Burke, Charles James Fox, Sheridan, Clive, and, later, the younger Pitt made speeches which have outlived many of the lost causes they defended. Burke towers above them all for the breadth of his knowledge and the depth of his political wisdom; but he was more of a philosopher than a politician and at once too honest and too idealistic to succeed among the venal officeseekers of his day. Fox, an ardent advocate of political liberty, was a more adroit politician. He realized that the movement for parliamentary reform, which gathered head in 1780, could be coupled with the championship of liberty

in the American Colonies; and, during the next few years, though he was not a great leader, he engineered the opposition, first against North, then against Shelburne, so successfully that George found himself, in 1783, deserted by many of his old "Friends" — now in alliance with his old enemies. In desperation he turned to the young William Pitt, son of the Earl of Chatham. At first opposed by both North and Fox, Pitt nevertheless secured support in the elections of 1784. The King appeared to have won again, for he had ousted North, to him now a renegade, and Fox, whom he detested; but Pitt during his long ministry gradually restored the authority of the Cabinet system.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Save for the issue between Cabinet and King, domestic questions during these years were overshadowed by foreign affairs. Indeed, after the fall of Walpole, England was almost constantly at war for forty years, usually with France.

The first of these conflicts, the War of the Austrian Succession, from 1740 to 1748, was an inconclusive struggle in which the English people had little interest, but it was a major concern of George II, Elector of Hanover, who dragged England in to save Austria from France and Prussia. The important aspect, so far as England was concerned, throughout all these eighteenth-century conflicts, was the struggle for mastery in India and America.

In India the contest had been largely a trader's struggle. The East India Company, maintaining its own forces, seized land and made treaties with native princes, but England, when convenient, supported these exploits and eventually took over direct control in place of the chartered company.*

* In view of a good deal of recent criticism of England's possession of India and, further, in view of the German argument that English predatory methods in the eighteenth century justify the German seizure of settled property in the heart of Europe, it should be realized that the English practice two hundred years ago was the common practice of Spain, Portugal, Holland, France, and that it was carried out among peoples who, according to the prejudice of that time, were inferior, heathen races. India then, furthermore, was in anarchy, with local princes far more cruel and predatory than their European conquerors. Under English rule the people of India have experienced peace and prosperity for nearly two centuries. It is nevertheless contended by some that England should withdraw now or grant such autonomy as she has in several of her other dominions. Of course there is always the ugly question of vested interests; but, apart from that, informed opinion on the whole seems to be that India, if England withdrew, would fly into a thousand pieces — only to be gobbled up by another great power. See Chapter XVI, p. 378.

In 1751 wars between native princes revived the conflict between the French and the East India Company. At this point Robert Clive, a young clerk of the company at Madras, suddenly revealed great military genius, as he later revealed executive ability. Only twenty-six years old, with a handful of men and almost no provisions, he conducted the defense of Arcot for fifty days with such courage and skill that Pitt called him a "heaven-born general." After a brief sojourn in England, he was sent out again. On his way out, he took Bombay; then, after the dreadful suffocation of English prisoners in the "Black Hole" at Calcutta, he fought his way through the Bengal jungles and with a mixed force of 2000 routed a native army of 34,000. As France and England were now officially at war again, Clive continued the fight up the Ganges valley, won an even more signal victory at Plassey (1757), and soon brought the country as far as Delhi under British control. Then, in 1760, he returned to England and, with great energy and a large measure of success, struggled to reform the organization of his company and to stop the corruption in the government of India. Made Baron Clive and sent out to Bengal in 1765 as governor and commander-in-chief, he consolidated his work to such an extent that he is commonly called the founder of the British Empire.

Clive's last years were darkened by attacks of conspiring enemies. The House of Commons, ready enough to accept his successes, dragged him through a long investigation for financial irregularities. As a matter of fact, except for one incident, not only was Clive's conduct above reproach, but he reformed the system of wanton plunder by Indian civil servants. Though he grew rich in India, he took far less than he might have done. The Commons eventually commended his "great and meritorious services," but Clive said that he had been examined "more like a sheep-stealer than a member of this House." Saddened, in poor health, he took his own life in 1774, when he was only forty-nine.

Though both French and English, semi-officially, had provoked and helped the native princes in India, actual war between the two nations, the "Seven Years' War" in Europe, the "French and Indian" in America, did not begin till 1756. At first things did not go so well in Europe and America as they did under Clive in India. England, recently the champion of Austria, now made an

alliance with Prussia against France and Austria.* Frederick the Great eventually proved to be the military genius of the war, but his lack of funds, coupled with gross mismanagement in the English Government, led to serious reverses at first.

It was then, in 1757, that popular clamor brought Pitt to the fore; and, soon afterwards, his vigorous prosecution of the war turned the tide. Amherst captured Louisburg in 1758 and Wolfe Quebec the following year. Meanwhile the English Navy had captured or destroyed most of the French Fleet. France, defeated overseas and held at the Rhine by Frederick, was as good as beaten. But the Prussian King had been forced to give ground against Austria, now backed by Russia, and the war on the Continent was a losing conflict till 1761. Then Frederick, with the withdrawal of Russia and with the help of Pitt's subsidies, quickly disposed of Austria. But before this success was achieved, Pitt's eagerness to attack Spain, too friendly to France, found no support at home. Not only was the nation tiring of the war, but George III and his Friends, eager to break the Cabinet authority, forced Pitt's resignation. The anticipated war with Spain came, nevertheless, and it was two years before Lord Bute, the new minister, could negotiate the Peace of Paris, in 1763.

So well had Pitt organized the war effort, however, that successes continued, and Bute, many thought, might have made a more advantageous peace. As a matter of fact, the treaty was enormously favorable to England, especially in colonial acquisitions. These included Canada and the American Continent from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, several West Indian Islands, control of eastern and central India, and a foothold in Africa — indeed, a far greater empire than that of any European power.

But the King's Government soon antagonized the inhabitants of the most important of all these domains. To repeat the rather commonly accepted statement that the Americans objected to taxation without representation is to put the case crudely. Most Englishmen were taxed without representation. What the Colonists did resent was, not the principle of import taxes, but internal taxes

* The cynical switching of alliances in Europe has been for centuries a common practice of *real-politik*. It has been conspicuous in England, not because of its singularity, but because the leaders, to gain popular support, have had to dress it up with professions of noble motives.

levied by the Crown, as well as taxation by two legislatures. Especially they resented the methods employed by the English Government to collect taxes and to enforce navigation acts. Even then, the taxation question might have been worked out, if the King's Government had understood what Burke called "the temper and character" of the Colonists; or if the Government had sought to conciliate, rather than to mix conciliation with coercion. It was only after a succession of colossal blunders on the part of the home Government — from the Stamp Tax through the Tea Tax to the "Intolerable Acts" — that the people of Massachusetts "found anarchy tolerable." By March, 1775, Burke was still urging conciliation, but a month later, at Lexington and Concord, hostilities had begun.

In these initial skirmishes, as at Bunker Hill, the Colonists discovered that farmers with muskets, at least if they were "armed in the holy cause of liberty," could stand up to British regulars. Nevertheless, it was not till the following year, when the British would not withdraw from their policy of coercion, that the Colonies found themselves united in opposition and made their famous Declaration of Independence. But they had no properly armed forces and little discipline. Only the skill and devotion of a few leaders, coupled with British blunders, carried them through the first difficult years till the genius of Washington and the help of Lafayette turned the tide.

At best all Washington could do for a while was to conduct masterly retreats, punctuated by such audacious battles as those at Trenton and Princeton, at the Brandywine and Germantown. Even after the defeat of Burgoyne at Saratoga, and the consequent rise of American prestige abroad, Washington had to carry his little force, now less than three thousand men, through the bitter winter at Valley Forge. But with the elimination of Burgoyne and the checking of Howe and Cornwallis, the Americans had staved off disaster. In February, 1778, Lafayette brought troops and D'Estaing a French fleet. Lord North made new gestures of conciliation, but the Colonists, enheartened, fought on. The following year Spain came in, and soon afterwards other nations of Europe formed a Neutrality League, to resist Britain's methods of search and seizure. Burke had maintained that coercion could never succeed with the Colonies. If it might have once, it certainly

could not now, with virtually all Europe arrayed against England. By October 19, 1781, Cornwallis was forced into surrender at Yorktown, and the American Colonies were lost. In the treaty at Paris, just twenty years after the Peace of Paris, when England had secured control of the American Continent, she now lost the better part of it, though she retained Canada and most of her other possessions.

Perhaps the most important result of the American war, apart from the loss of a great area rich in resources, was that it not only liberated the Americans from the tyranny of George III, but liberated Englishmen as well. The elections of 1780 brought in a powerful opposition. The King and his "Friends" no longer had their way; Lord North was forced to resign in 1782; and, as we have seen, the King himself practically abandoned his pretensions to personal rule when he called in the younger Pitt in 1783.

The extent of the British Empire, furthermore, was not greatly diminished by the loss in America, for new possessions in the Pacific were acquired at about the same time. In fact, English exploration was especially active during the last half of the century. English ships, in trade, in warfare, or simply in quest of plunder, were all over the seas. Among many notable explorers, such as Anson, Byron, and Carteret, by far the greatest was James Cook. Sent out in 1768 by the Royal Society to make astronomical observations, he went on to New Zealand and Australia, exploring for three years. A man of humble origin, with no formal education, Cook was a good, self-trained mathematician and an excellent navigator, with a genius for exploration and careful observation. A second voyage in 1772 found him again in the southern Pacific and Antarctic Seas, while a third in 1776 took him up the west coast of America to Alaska and Behring Sea. In 1779 he was treacherously killed by natives at Hawaii. Not long afterwards, largely as the result of Cook's journeys, Australia and New Zealand, as well as numerous small islands, were added to the British Empire.

During these times the English Navy lived up to its traditions. The Army, in contrast, was generally ineffective. In fact, a favorite jest on the Continent was that it was "an army of lions led by asses," — a jest with much truth to it, for, outside of Clive and Wolfe, and of Elliott, the gallant defender of Gibraltar against a long French-Spanish attack, there were no distinguished English officers and

there were many bunglers. But the Navy was better led. Admiral Hawke in the earlier years, and then Rodney, through the Seven Years' War and later, were the greatest admirals between Benbow and Nelson. In fact, Rodney's defeat of De Grasse off Dominica in 1782 is counted one of the chief English victories. The ships, too, were improved, with the innovation of copper bottoms. But conditions before the mast were not improved. The crews were a rough lot; "in a man-of-war," it was said, "you have the collected filth of the jails." But their commanders were rough men, too, who handled them without gloves; and these disciplined jailbirds were a formidable set when they stripped to the waist and went into action.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

By the end of the eighteenth century the changes in industry amounted to a revolution. The expansion of trade and manufacture in the earlier half had already pointed the way, and with the invention of new machines, particularly in textiles and smelting, factory labor rapidly took the place of hand labor. Cotton and iron, with the mining of coal, now became the chief industries. If the little factories of that day seem remote from our modern high-pressure, quantity production, they were still more remote from the handwork they displaced. In essentials, the modern era had begun.

These changes could not have taken place without the inventions and without a change in economic ideas. In the textile field, the "flying shuttle" of John Kay, in 1733, and the roller spinning of Paul and Wyatt, in 1738, were enormously improved by the "spinning-jenny" of James Hargreaves, in 1764. At his death, fourteen years later, there were twenty thousand jennies at work. But these machines could supply cotton yarn only for the weft. Till Arkwright's "frame" in 1769, which gave strength to the cotton yarn, linen had to be used for the warp. Soon afterwards came Samuel Crompton's famous "mule," which combined the ideas of Hargreaves and Arkwright. For a short time spinning ran ahead of the capacity of the looms, but in 1785 Edmund Cartwright invented the power loom, which soon brought the industry into balance.

But the use of the machines was limited till they could be served by steam power. Steam engines had been used for pumping ever

since the inventions of Savery and Newcomen, about 1700, but the growth of iron smelting, with the use of coke, stimulated further inventions. Soon after John Wilkinson began his energetic promotion of iron, James Watt devised his great improvement. The old engines had been partly "atmospheric," but Watt developed a separate condenser and, using steam, not air pressure, to drive the piston down, created the "steam" engine. He began his experiments as early as 1763, but he had great difficulty in raising funds and in finding competent workmen. It was not till 1776 that, in partnership with Matthew Boulton, he brought out good engines; but only five years later Boulton wrote, "The people in London, Manchester are all steam-mill mad." Watt soon devised other improvements—a steam-hammer and the governor. Mills of all sorts now turned to the use of steam.

The changes in economic ideas were equally important in producing the Industrial Revolution. The Mercantile Theory was already beginning to die when the credit idea became popular in the early eighteenth century. Walpole at least saw the foolishness of taxing the Colonies to make England prosperous. But the old theory did not receive its knockout till Adam Smith's famous *Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776. A philosopher, somewhat addicted, like his contemporaries, to a reliance on the magical word "Nature," Smith nevertheless was a shrewd observer of facts. Further, he did not expect, as he says, "that an Oceana or Utopia should be established," and he favored certain measures, such as the Navigation Act and an export tax on wool, which ran counter to his general theory. In the main, he insisted that wealth did not depend on cash, but on expanding agriculture, manufacture, trade. Believing that every man has a "natural" instinct to better himself, he championed the freedom of the individual, whose profit, viewed in terms of production rather than of hoarded cash, was the nation's profit. The obvious corollary was the doctrine of *laissez-faire*. Though it was about fifty years before public and private practices wholly abandoned the mercantile system, Smith's theories led rapidly to the investment of capital in the expanding industries, and thus to an industrial evolution which amounted to a revolution.

Though cotton and iron were the most significant industries at this time, England was distinguished for excellence in other fields of manufacture. Sheffield cutlery had long been well known, but in

1742 Thomas Bolsover, accidentally fusing some silver and copper, went on to invent Sheffield plate, and soon, with the improvements of Hancock and Cadman and with the use of power to roll the metal, the industry grew into a great and famous business. So also, though silver-working was an old industry, the silversmiths in the time of George III did exceptionally fine work. The greatest distinction, however, was in pottery and watchmaking. The name of Josiah Wedgwood at once comes to mind, but the famous Derby Works were opened in 1750, and the Worcester Porcelain Company was organized in 1751, while later in the century Lowestoft, Spode, and Bristol ware contributed to the English reputation in ceramics. English china was known all over Europe.

The Wedgwood family had been an old family of potters at Burslem, in Staffordshire, but Josiah, who set up for himself in 1759, soon won distinction by the high quality of his work. Before long he introduced new varieties, especially a cream-colored ware, and in 1774 his fine white terra cotta known as "Jasper." Before this the finest pottery had been Italian, but, though the English work was perhaps no finer than some of the German, Dutch, and French, it had the merit of simplicity and dignity of design; it avoided the elaborate, fanciful decoration which disfigured much of the ingenious products of Meissen and Sèvres.

So also the Italians had been pioneers in the relatively new craft of watchmaking. But in the eighteenth century, with the development of the chronometer, England led the field. George Graham, in the early part of the century, had improved on Tompion's "dead-beat" escapement and had also devised the horizontal escapement, and Thomas Mudge, about 1760, developed the lever escapement now in common use. But the great difficulty, especially for chronometers, lay in the influence of temperature on the rate of variations. So important was this problem of chronometers to the English maritime mind that as early as 1713 the Government offered a reward of £20,000 for an instrument which should determine the longitude within 30 m. John Harrison, after working for years on his "compensation curb," based on the unequal expansion of two metals, produced in 1761 a chronometer which lost only 1 minute 54½ seconds during a long voyage to Jamaica and which determined the longitude within 18 m. Though he won the prize, which a niggardly Government did not pay till 1773, his instrument was not com-

mercially practicable. Improvements were first proposed by a Frenchman, Pierre LeRoy, but John Arnold developed the first English chronometer in general use, and a little later Thomas Earnshaw devised the escapement still in use throughout the world. But English watchmakers did not long continue their supremacy. Soon after 1800 the chief manufacture passed to France and Switzerland.

In addition to these advances in various fields of manufacture, agriculture took a great stride towards efficiency. The improved methods of men like Tull and Townsend now began to be generally adopted, thanks largely to the energetic work of Arthur Young, who felt a mission to spread the agricultural gospel and whose efforts led to the institution of a Board of Agriculture. But the greatest new development was the stock-breeding of John Bakewell. His experiments in cross-breeding and feeding began the efforts which have changed the bony cattle and sheep to those sleek creatures which have made English beef and mutton famous. Bakewell became not only well-to-do — for he hired out his prize rams at a high figure — but a famous character, visited by royalty and rich gentlemen. A simple Leicestershire farmer, stout, red-faced, a good model for the familiar figure of John Bull, he kept to his country ways, served simple meals to his distinguished guests, and, no matter who the visitor might be, at his accustomed hour knocked out his pipe and went to bed.

The extension of manufacturing, the improvement of agriculture, and the great growth of colonial trade meant considerable prosperity, especially among manufacturers, country gentlemen, and merchants. With the growth of steam, coal-mining became a major industry, and, to serve the interior, canals provided an important means of transportation. The acceleration of commerce and industrial activity is apparent from the sudden growth in the value of export and import trade, which, after barely trebling in the first eighty years of the century, trebled again in the last twenty.

To some extent this prosperity reached the working classes; at least it provided a great deal of new employment; but wages were low and did not rise so fast as prices. It also brought about a dislocation as drastic as that which attended the breakdown of the feudal system. Large shifts of population, especially from the South and East to the new manufacturing towns, produced in itself an

unsettled condition; while the old handworkers in the villages, now largely deprived of their livelihood, experienced a new destitution. In certain areas there was much discomfort, which led to a good deal of rioting. Prosperity was by no means evenly or widely distributed. Nevertheless, compared to the laborer across the Channel, where a great revolution was brewing, the English workingman was in fairly good case.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Social life experienced several important changes during the second half of the eighteenth century. The Court morals under George II, it is true, were about as gross as they had been, perhaps a little worse after the death of the Queen; and the country squire still went his boisterous, three-bottle way. In London the sparkle of the city wits had pretty well died out; across the political and social scene the figure of Chesterfield, urbane, worldly, rather ineffective except in his Irish administration, moved like a belated ghost. Nevertheless, long before George III came in with his dull propriety at Court, Addison's gospel of "wit and virtue" reached an increasing number of educated people. It was given a new turn; it became a sort of intellectual morality, encouraged by a Church which had little religion to offer, but much philosophical wisdom about conduct and "Nature."

These new champions of intellectual morality, however, did not greatly frequent the Court, even after George III reformed manners there. The Court was too formal and forbidding. Men and women of culture found their outlet in groups of their own, which gave a special character to the intellectual and social life of the time.

The most important of these gatherings was of course Johnson's famous "club" — not strictly a club, but a meeting of congenial spirits, usually at the Turk's Head Tavern; nor yet Johnson's, except in so far as he dominated it by his sturdy sense and stout voice. That he did so is the best proof of his quality, for around the table were gathered such accomplished men as Gibbon, Hume, Burke, Reynolds, and Garrick. Ungainly, snorting, with convulsive gesticulations, Johnson had struggled for many years as a bookseller's hack in London; he had written "slow rises worth by poverty depressed" out of bitter experience. But he *had* risen, and after finishing his

Dictionary in 1755 he was well enough established to pen his famous letter in reply to Chesterfield's tardy patronage: —

Seven years, my lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door. . . . The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it.

By the sixties Johnson was the undisputed dictator of letters in London. Thanks to his faithful Achates, Boswell, there comes alive for us, perhaps more than any other figure of his time, the great, honest scholar of the eighteenth century, the man who liked to stretch his legs under the table and talk it out. Whether he is insisting that a good dinner must have been prepared by a "synod of cooks" or ejaculating his famous "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel" or his "Hell is paved with good intentions," he is always human, interesting; it is easy to understand why London waited on his word. For though Johnson's writings, ponderous and stilted, are no longer read, his lively talk is still as fresh as it was nearly two centuries ago.

But gatherings of the elite were not only among men. The man's world of George II lived on, undisturbed and stupid, in the rural districts, but after 1760 women came into prominence in London circles. To some extent the drawing-room life took on the cultured vivacity of the French salon, particularly at the houses of the Duchess of Portland, and of the great beauty, Georgiana Spencer, the Duchess of Devonshire. Mrs. Delaney, who lived with the Duchess of Portland for the last twenty years of her life, was the particular genius of these occasions, for she knew everyone worth knowing. But this aspect of brilliant society gatherings, when the court was no magnet, was more conspicuous later under the Regency, in the famous days of Holland House. It was rather the gatherings of "bluestockings," less brilliant, more resolutely intellectual, more self-consciously cultured, that marked the emergence of women in the early years of George III. The chief goddess of bluestocking occasions was Elizabeth Robinson Montagu, daughter-in-law of the famous Lady Mary. Other ladies whose circles had a great vogue were Mrs. Vesey, Mrs. Chapone, Mrs. Thrale, and Hannah More. Such men as Horace Walpole, Johnson, and Burke frequented these

gatherings, but Johnson, the great and terrible dictator of letters, the *ursa major*, was their particular pet, and the *conversaciones* of the bluestockings languished soon after his death.

While this intellectual, if somewhat affected, renaissance was going on in London social circles, Edinburgh had its worthy counterpart. In fact, Scotland and Ireland supplied many of the greatest names in the English story of the eighteenth century.* But whereas Ireland developed little intellectual life of its own, Scotland, especially in its capital, provided the brilliant gatherings which included such distinguished persons as Professor Dugald Stewart; Dr. Hugh Blair, the famous divine; Robertson, the historian; the gifted John Francis Erskine, Earl of Mar; and, not least, the accomplished Mrs. Dunlop and the witty Duchess of Gordon. It was to the tables of these notables that a few years later the fascinating plowboy, Robert Burns, came "with manners direct from God."

But it must not be imagined that the world of edifying conversation dominated all of society. The *beau monde*, untouched by the bluestockings or by the frigid politeness of the Court, still went its frolicsome way, much as it had in earlier Georgian days. The Prince of Wales, to his father's disgust, and Charles James Fox, as capable at the bottle as on the floor of the House,** were the leaders of this coterie — of the "macaronis," as the young bloods of the day were called.

To supply the needs of these young men, "clubs" sprang up like mushrooms. Most of them, privately owned and operated for profit, were much like the night clubs of the present day, but generally frequented only by men. Some were descendants of the old coffee-houses, such as White's, — called "the most fashionable hell in London," — but among the newer ones Almack's, opened in 1765 and famous for its balls, and Brooks's, started in 1778 and ancestor of the present club in St. James's Street, were the chief names. At the majority, frenzied gambling was the prime amusement. So great was the mania for gambling that Horace Walpole tells that once, when a man had a fit outside of White's, the patrons laid bets as to whether he was dead, and that, when a surgeon wished to save

* Such, for instance, as Goldsmith, Burke, and Sheridan from Ireland; Hume, Adam Smith, Watt, and Robert Adam from Scotland.

** A famous comment of Gibbon's is that Fox once delivered a speech on a religious question after preparing himself "by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard."

his life by bleeding him, the gamblers cried they would have no foul play of that kind!

During this time many new spas and gardens sprang up, but Vauxhall and Ranelagh still bore the palm near London, and Bath was easily first among the more distant ones. Not so decorous as in the days of Beau Nash, Bath became a lively social center, with its fair quota of escapades and duels, the most famous of which is perhaps Sheridan's, after he had rescued the charming Miss Linley from a blackguard.

The journey to Bath, as indeed on other main routes, was much easier than it had been. Not only were the roads improved, but the number of coaches increased, the post chaise became a popular conveyance, and new vehicles, such as the phaeton, the two-wheeled gig, and the landau, began to appear. The moving life of the roads is attested by the great increase in the number of roadside inns. In fact, this highway life of the next half-century, with its bustle at the inns, its good cheer, its chance meetings, its runaway matches, its highwaymen, its hurrying mail-coaches, is one of the most characteristic phases of English life before the railways. Most of the old inns, which, revived, now serve the motorist, date from the days when coaches went by such jolly names as "Quicksilver" and "Defiance." The fare at these inns was frequently bad, if we may judge from the notes of travelers; the coaches no doubt jolted horribly on the rough roads, or got mired altogether in the deep mud; and the company was often far from nice; but over inn and coach, as over highwayman, legend has cast its glamor of romance. At least the life of the roads is picturesque in retrospect, and was intensely human in reality.

By Johnson's time one rarely saw, dismounting from these coaches or walking the streets of London, men in the powdered wigs of the earlier day. Pigtailed had become almost universal, or tie-wigs, among gentlemen as well as common folk; and it was not much later that London gentlemen began to give up wearing swords and to carry umbrellas. The most conspicuous feature of a lady's appearance was the new preposterous headgear, the "pompom," sometimes a yard high, constructed of horsehair, pomatum, and meal, and elaborately decorated with ostrich feathers. At the same time, hoops were giving place to long loose skirts, rather well nicknamed the "Caroline wrapper."

Gentlemen and ladies, thus adorned, we may picture as voracious

drinkers of tea, at last come into its own as the Englishman's beverage. "Sir," retorted Johnson to Sir Joshua, "I did not count your glasses of wine; why should you number up my cups of tea? . . . But you have reminded me that I lack one of the dozen, and I must request Mrs. Cumberland to round up my number." At another time, he said, he "swallowed five and twenty cups." But it was an expensive drink on account of the heavy duty, and there was much smuggling of it. The situation was not unlike that during Prohibition in America a century and a half later; highly respectable people, like Adam Smith and Hannah More, who would not have broken any other law, had no compunctions about laying in a little stock of smuggled spirits or tea.

It is interesting, too, that English gardening, like English manners, was now less an imitation of the French. Styles were still rather geometrical, but with a scope and a sort of studied wildness that contrasted favorably with the little French plots. Kew Gardens, though begun a century before, largely took their present form in the reign of George III. Mrs. Thrale, after her visit to France in 1775, wrote with contempt, not only of the dingy salons there, of the inferior horse-racing, and of the lamentable tea, but also of the poor state of the gardens. The servile imitation of French manners and modes was clearly going out.

The new manners and modes, however, were among the well-to-do, as was the intellectual emphasis on propriety. The poor — the city toilers, the Welsh colliers, and the cottage folk of the villages — had been singularly neglected, as we have seen, during the reign of George II. A great increase in toleration had produced a corresponding decline in dissent, but the Anglican Church did little to supply the inspiration and solace which the old dissenting sects had given to the common man. The brutality and squalor among the gin-drinking dwellers of the London slums were appalling. They stoned wretches exposed in the pillory — sometimes to death; they wrecked theaters and bullied decent citizens — sometimes in honest protest against unfair wages; often out of pure deviltry. It was at this point that the Wesleys and Whitefield began to go about with their new evangelistic preaching and to work a transformation much like that accomplished by the Friars in the thirteenth century, the Lollards in the fourteenth, and the Quakers in the seventeenth.



From Painting by James E. Doyle

JOHNSON'S CLUB — AT SIR JOSHUA'S

Of the Wesley brothers, John was the chief leader, and organizer of the Great Revival, or Great Awakening, as it was called in America. The movement began at Oxford, where both brothers were active in the gatherings of the Holy Club, which prescribed so methodical a life that the name "Methodists" arose. Not long after, in 1738, at a great meeting in London, John Wesley had an "experience"; from then on he realized that faith in Christ was the single essential and he spent the rest of his life in itinerant preaching and in organizing his "conferences." A strict Anglican, he always opposed separation, but, as the need arose with the phenomenal increase in members, he provided for the ordination of preachers in 1784. The following year he said, "I firmly believe that I am *episcopos* as much as any man in England." As has often been pointed out, ordination was in fact separation. Nevertheless, it was not till 1795, after his death, that the separate Methodist Church was set up.

But the matter of organization was a technical, perhaps unfortunate, result. The real contribution of John Wesley was in serving devotedly as the inspired leader of a movement which in his day brought new hope and faith to thousands, eventually to millions. A scholar, with a "gay and sprightly" manner, a man of steady, convincing personality, a great organizer, a dedicated preacher, he transformed the moral and religious life of his time. His brother, Charles, though he was also an effective and assiduous preacher, was notable chiefly for his hymns, of which he wrote about 6500 in the space of fifty years — in quantity as well as in quality England's greatest writer of congregational hymns.

George Whitefield, the most eloquent preacher of this revival, was at first associated with the Wesleys. But the Puritan Adam in him still stuck to the doctrine of "election" and he later went his own way. How he did preach! At twenty-two he spoke in the open air to 20,000 colliers at Bristol till the tears ran down their cheeks. For a while he preached as much as sixty hours a week and, when his health forced him to reduce the schedule, spoke only once daily and three times on Sunday! Whitefield made many trips to America and was the genius of the "Awakening" there. But, though worn out with his hard work, he kept on — with the famous comment, "I had rather *wear* out than *rust* out."

ARTS AND SCIENCES

If the importance of eighteenth-century culture, during the third quarter of the century, depended on poetry, the page would be almost a blank. Plenty of verse was written, usually in the now traditional couplet, but the flair for skillful satire had passed. Noble sentiments expressed in sententious language were tedious, and the so-called graveyard poetry was often lugubrious to the point of absurdity. Already, it is true, there was some promise of new forms and new interests, but with two conspicuous exceptions the poetry of the period had little life. It was attempting to run on the motive power of Dryden and Pope.

Goldsmith, though the happy scene of the earlier part of *The Deserted Village* is not an authentic Irish picture, provided one of the exceptions. His great poem abounds in vivid description, not only of village scenes, but of persons, especially of the schoolteacher and of the village parson, "Whose pity gave ere charity began."

Thomas Gray, whose great *Elegy* is the other obvious exception, was a retiring Cambridge scholar, who refused the laureateship in favor of a quiet life. He published very little and polished carefully what he did let the public see; in fact, he had a happy combination of the classical tradition and the new romantic interests. The result was that his *Elegy*, worked over with Horatian care for the effect of every sound and rhythm, comes perhaps nearer than any other English poem to accomplishing what it sets out to do. It is graveyard poetry, and some may regret the sentimental ending, but it is too sublime, stanza after stanza, to be lugubrious; and, even though the general theme may grow a trifle wearisome, the perfect, "inevitable" phrases can never pall — a justly familiar quotation in every stanza, almost in every line!

The same charge that is made against most of the poetry — that of noble sentiments rendered dull by a pompous style — may be leveled against the short essays of the period. Here again there is the Goldsmith exception; as Coleridge puts it, "Goldsmith did everything happily." His essays in the *Citizen of the World*, particularly his papers on *Beau Tibbs*, have much of the light humor and grace of Steele and Addison; but his greatest contemporary, Johnson, lacked the simplicity and charm of style so necessary to that type of essay. For the best of this kind of writing at this time we

must turn to letters, such as those of Horace Walpole and Gray, delightful, easy, humorous — writing in which the author's style was not overdressed for an elegant audience.

With the growth of an urban reading public, periodical literature flourished as it had never done before. Newspapers, many short-lived, came and went, but the *Morning Chronicle*, which began in 1769, ran for nearly a century, and the *Morning Post*, born in 1772, is still alive. Most of these papers had a political purpose, pushed with such partisan zeal that recrimination and libel suits were often provoked. We have already noted the *North Briton* of John Wilkes. Equally popular for a short time, when it brought out the famous *Letters of Junius*, was the *Public Advertiser*.

Among more substantial periodicals, the *Gentleman's Magazine* led the field. Begun in 1731 by Edward Cave, who for a while had Johnson on his staff, it ran with various ups and downs to 1866 and was the ancestor of the literary weeklies and monthlies which became legion in the nineteenth century. Then there were the reviews, ostensibly critical, but, like the news sheets, colored with political bias, for, as in the days of Queen Anne, literature and politics were inevitably connected; in fact, the reading public was too small as yet to support independent authorship. The rich patron of letters had practically disappeared; unless an essayist found a political appointment or a political outlet for his pen, he was likely to remain, as Johnson and Goldsmith did for years, a "poor-devil author" living in a garret at the top of "breakneck stairs."

All this periodical literature, though it is important if we would understand the mind of the eighteenth century, reveals only a part, and the less distinguished part, of that mind. It was primarily an encyclopedic mind. Like the great French minds of the same type, it sought to survey the whole field of knowledge, to classify, to codify, to record, and to philosophize. It was too serious and too comprehensive to be at its best in brief *brochures*. Indeed, it is worth noting that the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, by "a society of gentlemen in Scotland," first appeared in three volumes in 1771; while a much enlarged edition of ten volumes came out in 1784. So also there was the large edition of English poets, with prefaces by Johnson, a sort of encyclopedia of literature, and scholars were busy annotating the works of such individual poets as Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope.

This encyclopedic state of mind led to a good many extensive treatises, historical and philosophical, and it is here that we find the best prose of the later eighteenth century. Sir William Blackstone's famous *Commentaries on the Laws of England* are a familiar example. Blackstone, it is now realized, had little understanding of the fundamental principles underlying English law, but for a century his book, with its clear exposition of details, became the guidebook of both layman and lawyer. Burke, now remembered chiefly for his great speech on *Conciliation*, was read in his own day for his elaborate *Essay on the Sublime and the Beautiful* and his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Hume, now recognized as the great philosopher of his time, was more famous among his contemporaries for his monumental *History of England*. Robertson's *History of Scotland* was another instance of the effort to put a large subject into an exhaustive, definitive compendium. Towering above them all in scope and in execution, the most nearly "definitive" work of its kind, is Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Fact-finders through the years have naturally altered the picture somewhat, but in grasp of the whole subject and in dignity and grace of style no English historian has approached Gibbon.

With the possible exception of Gibbon's great work, the critical and comprehensive mind of the eighteenth century had its most distinguished and most characteristic expression in the philosophical writings of David Hume. The inquiries set in motion by Locke and Berkeley reached their logical conclusion in him. There were other men of contemporary importance, such as Hartley, one of the first associational psychologists, and Priestley, though he is of more note as a scientist. Richard Price is important, too, in that, in spite of the theories of Locke and Hume, he insisted that right and wrong were perceived by reason, not by "sense," and that they are therefore fundamental, not relative. In this he was largely an echo of the earlier rationalists, but to some extent he anticipated Kant's solution of the problem posed by Hume. But Hume was the great thinker of his day, perhaps the greatest in the whole English story. His *Treatise of Human Nature*, written in 1740, was revised and enlarged in three later works: the *Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, a *Dissertation on the Passions*,

and an *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1748-1751). In addition he wrote a *Natural History of Religion* in 1755.

Here only an insufficient summary of Hume's philosophy can be given. In brief, his work touched three fields. Carrying on the criticism of Locke and Berkeley, he showed that a rational construction of our world by way of metaphysics or natural theology is impossible. He thus came in the main to a negative, skeptical conclusion; but he is not absolutely skeptical so much as insistent on "criticism" in place of "metaphysical jargon." He applied the same critical direction to his inquiries concerning politics and morals, but in this field he was more positive. He insisted on an historical basis, and disposed of such assumptions as "original contract" and "natural" monotheism. Ethics, in this historical view, must therefore be based on utility rather than on the magical "Nature" of the philosophers. In the psychological field he further extended the work of Locke and Berkeley. Reasoning must be based on experience derived from "sensation"; apparent intuitions are unfounded; and knowledge is thus never really *a priori*.

This philosophy of Hume's, if it seems to lead into a vacuum, was a necessary antidote to the wishful thinking of his predecessors. Never dogmatic, willing to admit speculation provided it followed critical lines, Hume really cleared the ground for the more constructive work of Kant. If Kant provides a way out of Hume's vacuum by showing that experience is too fragmentary of itself to give us a scientific basis for knowledge, that we must therefore "transcend" both sensational and intellectual explanations, the *method* of Kant nevertheless derives from Hume, the great pioneer of the critical school of philosophy.

In the field of fiction this remarkable half-century made another conspicuous contribution. To the grown-up minds of the time the old romantic tales had lost their charm. There was now a demand for stories which should deal with the kind of men and women people knew, not with magical heroes in endless contests with fabulous monsters. There was a demand, too, for some sort of structure, a semblance of plot, not merely a succession of incidents such as occur in *Robinson Crusoe*. The character element had already appeared in such figures as the De Coverley group; and the picaresque stories of continental authors, tales of vagabonds rather

than heroes, had had their English counterpart in Defoe's *Colonel Jack* and *Moll Flanders*. It remained for Richardson and Fielding to extend this tendency into the first real novels.

Samuel Richardson's first novel, *Pamela*, though the heroine is a smug goody-goody, is an important milestone — 1740 — in the history of fiction. His second work, the voluminous *Clarissa Harlowe*, is a great advance in characterization and is a masterpiece in sustaining interest through minute, accumulating details; but the characters are too good or too bad, and the morality, as Taine puts it, is "inflicted" rather than "insinuated." Henry Fielding, dramatist, justice of the peace, a vigorous fellow with little delicacy, but with an uproarious zest for life and a hatred of sham, was disgusted with the smug virtue of Pamela. In *Joseph Andrews* he started out to write a parody, but after a few chapters he forgot Pamela and made a real novel. His favorite type was the young man sound at heart, but often misled into serious indiscretions by his wild blood or the situations in which he found himself. This type lives again, more notably, in *Tom Jones*, and is set off, for contrast, against such rascals and shams as the philosopher Square. But though Fielding created characters, especially Jones and Squire Western, which entitle him to a very high place among English novelists, the French critic has picked his weak spot too. "We tire," he says, of the endless "fisticuffs and tavern bills. . . . You are only aware of the impetuosity of the senses. . . . You are unacquainted with nervous exaltation and poetic rapture."

Richardson and Fielding set the character of the English novel in the direction of realism — a direction which, with few exceptions, it has since followed when it is at its best. Not long afterwards came Goldsmith, with his delightful *Vicar of Wakefield*; Smollett, with such tales of vagabonds and the sea as *Roderick Random* and *Humphrey Clinker* — the best of the English picaresque novels: adventurous, coarse, realistic; the Rabelaisian Sterne, with his loosely knit *Tristram Shandy*, immortal for the humorous figure of Uncle Toby; and Fanny Burney, the delightful diarist, the friend of Johnson and the Thrals, and the author of *Cecilia* and *Evelina*. The novel was fairly started, but, barring Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott, its heyday did not come till Victorian times.

The chief glory of the drama during this period was the acting of Garrick and Mrs. Siddons. The Shakespeare revival, beginning slowly in the theater of Queen Anne's day, came into its own with Garrick. Apparently he was not remarkable for his voice, but he was particularly successful in mimicry, in sprightliness, and in the subtle gesture of the eye. For the stilted declamation of his predecessors he substituted naturalness, vivacity. No English actor has better suited the action to the word or has shown greater versatility.

Under Garrick's management for over twenty years Drury Lane became the popular London theater, where he was supported by such able actresses as Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Clive. But all of them were later surpassed by Sarah Kemble, the great Mrs. Siddons. She made her fame chiefly after Garrick's day, — in fact, she was acting as late as 1819, — but she made her first London hit at Drury Lane in 1778, a year before Garrick's death. Unlike him, she depended largely on tone of voice. At her best in tragic rôles, she gave a new distinction to Shakespearean women, especially to Lady Macbeth, and ambitious actresses still study and imitate her interpretations.

So far as contemporary plays went, it was not a period of great composition except for one play by Goldsmith and the brilliant work of Sheridan. Goldsmith, the butt of Johnson's club, the fellow who nearly always said the wrong thing when he talked, seemed able always to say the right thing with his pen. He wrote the best familiar essays of his time; he wrote one of the best poems and one of the best novels; and in *She Stoops to Conquer*, among a wilderness of dead plays by others, he wrote a comedy that will still act.

That other astonishing Irishman, Sheridan, wrote all but one of his plays before he was twenty-nine. In *The Critic* he ridiculed out of fashion the sentimental drama which Fielding had already made fun of, while the clever plots, characterization, and sparkling dialogue of such plays as *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal* distinguish him as the greatest dramatist of his century, perhaps the chief, in comedy, between Shakespeare and Barrie. In 1776, when he was only twenty-five, Sheridan bought a large share in Drury Lane, and for a few years directed the theater, but after his entrance to Parliament in 1780 he gave most of his energy to

political and social life, where his brilliance made him one of the conspicuous figures of his time. But it is his plays, not his eloquence or his dashing life in the company of Fox and the Prince Regent, that account for his lasting fame.

One rarely thinks of Mrs. Siddons without recalling Sir Joshua Reynolds' portrait of her as the tragic muse. In the preceding chapter we have noted the liberation of English painting, under Hogarth, from a servile imitation of continental artists. Now, in the time of George III, it reached, at least in portraiture, the highest point in its history. Outside of portraits, there were some worthy beginnings in landscape painting, and "Poor Dick" Wilson, though rather an imitator of Claude and Poussin, was really the founder of the English landscape school. Gainsborough, also, though his landscapes were not so popular as his portraits, did much excellent work, more truly English than Wilson's.

Of the portrait painters none seems to modern critics so true as Hogarth, but, in spite of the exaggerated fame of Reynolds and Gainsborough in their own day, they still are the great figures of English art.* Reynolds, after breaking with the dead tradition of Kneller and Hudson, studied in Italy for several years; then, settling in London in 1753, he proceeded rapidly to the popularity which he kept for another forty years. By 1760 he was charging 100 guineas for a full-length; by 1780, 200 guineas — fabulous prices in that day. More realistic than the older school, more human, — if less so than Hogarth, — he was primarily a great colorist. It is often objected that he painted too much, too many portraits of rich patrons hardly worth memorial, but that was the popular and remunerative thing to do; while against such pictures must be set his animated likenesses of men like Dr. Johnson. He worked very hard — "passed no day without a line" — and though careless with the composition of his pigments, he was not careless in brushwork. The central figure among artists of his day, Sir Joshua was the chief promoter and first president of the Royal Academy, founded in 1768.

* That they themselves often mistook their popularity for fame is borne out by the cheerful complacency of Gainsborough on his deathbed: "We are all going to heaven, and Van Dyck is of the party." Page an indignant Hogarth — or a wistful Romney!

Thomas Gainsborough at first divided his energies between the violin and the brush, but by 1774 rivaled Reynolds as a popular portrait-painter. A rather weak draughtsman, but a magnificent colorist, — both of which qualities are conspicuous in his most famous picture, *The Blue Boy*, — Gainsborough had particular skill in setting off his portraits by the rare handling of some strategic bit of detail. Thus, if the whole piece was often inferior to a similar one by Reynolds, it was frequently more striking; and in coloring alone it was usually superior.

In contrast to these men, with their easy fame, stands the wayward figure of George Romney. A poor, unlettered man, shy, excluded from the Royal Academy, Romney nevertheless comes close to them in skill. An impulsive artist rather than a painstaking craftsman, he is sometimes brilliant, always charming. He had a particular knack, like Andrea del Sarto, for capturing the beauty of flesh. Dizzy with the bewitchments of Lady Hamilton, he painted many portraits of her — imaginary ones when he could not get the lady to sit. Poor erratic Romney, after deserting his wife for nearly forty years, returned, a broken man, to the faithful woman who had nursed him before their marriage and who at the end nursed him in his paralyzed old age.

In a kindred field, that of architecture, the England of Johnson's day produced work which, if not so great as Wren's, gave a distinctive direction to domestic building. Sir William Chambers, whose chief contribution was Somerset House, the rebuilt palace of the sixteenth century, followed the tradition of Wren, but other architects for a while, losing all sense of utility, were inclined to sacrifice everything to the symmetry of the external design.

It was then that the Adam brothers saved — indeed, created — the harmonious interior. There were four brothers, and they emphasized their fraternity in the name of their chief large building, the "Adelphi"; but Robert Adam was the great figure of the four. Banishing the rococo absurdities, he designed every detail — in plaster, in woodwork, in mantelpieces, in doorways, in railings — with an eye to the general effect. The result was grace rather than display, a combination of refined and harmonious detail. The English drawing room at its best, with a Romney over the fireplace, derives from Robert Adam.

Adam gave much attention to furniture, and it was under him that painted and inlaid furniture took the place of carved work. He did so much in conjunction with Thomas Chippendale, especially at Harewood House, in Yorkshire, that one is not always sure where Chippendale leaves off and Adam begins. At all events, Chippendale, a cabinetmaker established in London as early as 1749, is chiefly known by his chairs, with their ribbon-backs, or Gothic tracery backs, and their claw-and-ball feet; chairs of excellent workmanship and in general characterized by solidity. It was a great period for furniture. As the fashions changed, the more dainty furniture of George Hepplewhite somewhat superseded the Chippendale. Now we find the inlay work, promoted by Adam, the shield-back, and the fluted, tapering legs so characteristic of Hepplewhite. Soon after Hepplewhite, Thomas Sheraton, a strange jack-of-all-trades, but primarily an artist and designer, turned the popular taste almost wholly away from the sturdier and generally better work of Chippendale. At first he copied Adam and Hepplewhite a good deal, but he surpassed them all in the grace and charm of his satinwood furniture. Later his designs became ingenious and grotesque; and his successors, perverting the style, moved onward and downward to the production of Victorian atrocities. But these three names, especially Chippendale, gave England for a short period as illustrious a position in furniture as she held in the making of watches and porcelain.

Hardly less than the accomplishments in the arts and the crafts were the advances in science. In fact, since Boyle and Newton, the scientists were particularly busy in this practical century. Among the many names, five stand out conspicuously. James Bradley, who had discovered the aberration of light in 1727, figured out the nutation of the earth's axis in 1747 and extended the work of Newton. Joseph Black, the great professor at Edinburgh, discovered carbonic acid, or what he called "fixed air," in 1754, and by 1763 he had worked out the theory of latent heat. Henry Cavendish, brother of the Duke of Devonshire and a curiously precise recluse, spent all his life in a wide range of experiments, but his chief fame rests on his discovery in 1766 of hydrogen ("inflammable air"). Chief of them all, perhaps, was Joseph Priestley, philosopher as well as scientist, the discoverer in 1774 of oxygen, or "dephlogis-

ticated air." Priestley's theories, based on the assumption of a fictitious substance, "phlogiston," have since been refuted, but his discovery of oxygen soon led to great steps in chemical science. Finally, Sir William Watson suggested the theory of positive and negative electricity, which the American Franklin proved and John Canton verified. Indeed, whichever way you turn, unless it be in the direction of poets, musicians, and generals, the England of Samuel Johnson was an England of great men.

Chapter XIII

ROMANCE, REACTION, AND REFORM

VIEWED close-up, the course of events during the half century from 1784 to 1832 is full of conflicting currents. Seen at a distance, it reveals a conspicuous, if uneven, advance of liberalism. "Romance" is an inadequate word to describe the new tendencies, but if we bear in mind Victor Hugo's definition of Romanticism as "Liberalism in Literature" and remind ourselves that, as opposed to Realism and Classicism, it implies a preponderance of emotion and imagination, we realize that the new movement was at heart what it has been generally called — romantic. In essence it was a protest against a world from which aspiration, passion, natural impulse were banished in theory, if not in fact; a world of a static society and of a complacent materialism. If the new humanitarianism overstepped moderation, if in its sentimental course it frequently forgot that man was a thinking as well as a feeling animal, it was nevertheless an inevitable revolt against the tyranny of dead formalism in Church, in State, in society. Eventually, after its excesses, it led to specific and beneficent reforms.

Manifestations of this familiar movement reach far back into the early eighteenth century. In fact, in a political and philosophical sense it derives largely from such liberals as Locke and Voltaire; in a large and general way, indeed, from certain humanistic tendencies of the Renaissance; but it does not take on its emotional force till the followers of Rousseau. It was with them that a new kind of Reason, sublimated into Divinity, bred a sort of heady idealism in poets and reformers. They hoped to put Liberty, Equality, Fraternity into immediate, unqualified practice; man, returned to Nature, was to become suddenly perfect — Utopia was at hand! But there were other, more practical aspirations — towards toleration of Dissenter and Catholic, towards reform of prisons, towards abolition of slavery, towards economic and political adjustments — and most of these aspirations bore fruit in important legislative measures during the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

That this stream of reform did not sweep forward evenly and triumphantly was due largely to the violence of the current. In France it got wholly out of hand. In England the ruling class, fearing similar floods, dammed and diverted it. Politically, at least, the matter of paramount importance to those in control, especially while England was engaged in a life-and-death struggle with Napoleon, was to suppress liberal movements. The liberals, on their part, inclined to a fierce and dangerous radicalism; mobs were persuaded that their economic ills could be cured by political magic; and men like Pitt, who had been liberal in principle, turned reactionary in practice. Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* was considered far more subversive than it actually was; Burke, the old champion of liberty, became ultra-conservative in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*; even Coleridge, arch-apostle of the new ideas, recanted when he saw "mobs mix with kings in the low lust of sway." The Government, with an excited majority behind it, suspended laws and liberties and moved rapidly from mere reaction to tyranny, a tyranny which persisted long after the Napoleonic menace. For thirty years, with one or two minor exceptions, all efforts to realize the vision of a brave new world were choked.

If this had been merely a temporary interruption of liberal and enlightened government, the situation would not have been so serious. But there was little liberal and enlightened government to return to. The Cabinet rule of Pitt was essentially the rule of Walpole, government by an aristocratic oligarchy. More serious yet, on account of the great shifts of population and the rapid growth of industrial centers like Manchester, the House of Commons, which for some time had been largely unrepresentative, was now positively misrepresentative. Together with the social reforms, then, a major political operation was necessary, but it was not actually performed till 1832.

So conspicuous is this conflict between reform and reaction, in the long view, that it is easy to exaggerate. A good deal of what was going on in England during those momentous years bore little relation to the great issues at home and abroad. It is true that England, even in the days of the Armada, had never gone "all out" to the extent that she did in the Napoleonic wars. But behind the cliffs of Dover physicists still made their researches undisturbed;

Jane Austen's novels reveal a Bath indifferent to matters of great moment; the gay and busy life of the roads rarely reminds us that Nelson was saving England at the Nile or at Trafalgar. In fact, apart from the political and economic questions, the so-called "reaction" of the Regency period was not so much an opposition to innovation as a living-on of eighteenth-century ways. The two streams, one of which predicts the future and the other of which carries much of the past, run often side by side, unmixed and unconflicting, during the early days of the nineteenth century.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

William Pitt was only twenty-five when he found himself at the head of the British Government in 1784. Biographers picture him as almost a wise old man at fourteen — of delicate physique, but of extraordinary intellectual power even in his teens. Like his father, he was an eloquent orator. Surpassed possibly by Fox in debate and by Sheridan in brilliant wit, he spoke so well in his maiden speech at twenty-one that Burke cried, "It is not a chip of the old block; it is the old block itself." But, unlike his father, the younger Pitt was an extremely successful politician. He soon won a large following from both Parties, and held it through a long ministry. Again unlike his father, he was not successful as a war minister. He had the support of the people as well as of the Parliament, but he lacked the aggressive, undaunted enthusiasm of his parent. Against a triumphant Napoleon, it must be recognized, he had a far more difficult task than his father; but during his later years he was a disheartened leader, conspicuous for what Wilberforce called his "Austerlitz look."

The phrase "both Parties" requires a word of explanation. The old alignments of Whigs and Tories had been pretty well broken up, as evidenced by the brief, unholy alliance between North and Fox. In general, there emerged during the eighties a large group of so-called "Tories" who, with the support of many Whigs, held the balance of power. But, unlike the Tory group of George III's earlier years, it was not essentially the King's party, so much as Pitt's party. The authority of cabinet government was never again seriously questioned; and the King himself, who liked Pitt, who felt that the young minister had saved him at once from North and Fox, supported rather than fought Pitt's authority.

Pitt maintained his power, in large measure, as Walpole had, by control of "rotten" and "pocket" boroughs. But his political morals were far higher. Burke's Reform Bill of 1782 had reduced the number of sinecures which had formerly been used as bribes, and Pitt himself steadily opposed "pork barrel" politics. Indeed, he even brought forward a bill to reform the electoral system as early as 1785, a premature effort which did not bear fruit till 1832. In other ways, too, he revealed that he was at heart a liberal reformer. He was sympathetic to social and educational reforms, and he sought to improve the government of Ireland. In addition, he was particularly successful in his financial measures: he put taxation on a broader, fairer base; he reformed customs levies; he reduced the public debt; and he made favorable trade agreements with other nations.

But the turn of events after 1792 put an end, for decades, to what promised to be an enlightened, liberal government. The first fruits of the French Revolution, constitutional monarchy, were hailed with delight by many Englishmen; but when the Revolution passed into Jacobinism, when "Celtic Demos rose a Demon," opinion in England changed rapidly. Pitt soon fell in with the general viewpoint and, as leader of the Government, became the chief agent of the regulations necessary in the stress of war, even of the tyrannies which public hysteria confused with necessary controls. But apparently Pitt did not lead the nation into this state of mind; he was rather pushed by the people into his reactionary position. Indeed, he did not at first realize the vital issue — that Europe, as Macaulay puts it, had to contend, not with a *state*, but with a fanatical *sect*. For a year he hoped to keep out of war, sought to make arrangements — "appeasements," in the modern phrase. It was not till 1793 that England joined Holland, Austria, and Prussia in the First Coalition against Republican France.

Pitt's prosecution of the war was sincere, but not aggressive. It consisted largely of subsidies to his Allies and of leaving salvation, otherwise, to the English Navy. The British Army was of little value, but the Navy, under Howe and Duncan, gave a good account of itself. France, however, was winning on land. When France made peace with Holland in 1795, Prussia withdrew, and two years later Austria was forced into a treaty of peace. England stood alone.

The war, moreover, now entered its second and far more serious phase; for it was no longer Republican France, except as a rallying cry, that composed the enemy, but the disciplined armies of Napoleon. Instead of an attempt merely to dominate the Continent, Napoleon took the aggressive against England. His first effort, to control the Mediterranean, was balked by Nelson's great victory off the mouth of the Nile on August 1, 1798; and when, the next year, Russia and Austria joined Great Britain in the Second Coalition, the war seemed to be taking a promising turn for the Allies. But Napoleon, who had seized dictatorial powers and made himself the First Consul, smashed Austria in a series of brilliant victories; Russia withdrew; and in 1801 England again found herself alone. The resourceful Corsican at once turned to attack *via* Denmark; but again England, in the great victory off Copenhagen, kept the Baltic open and maintained her control of the seas.

Meanwhile, conditions at home had been far from happy. The prosperity of the eighties had continued to some extent, but had been largely offset by the huge war expenses of the nineties — gold hopelessly sunk, it was felt, in support of countries now dominated by Napoleon. A depression in 1793 had been followed by a crisis in 1797; bank payments were stopped, and the paper currency fell in value. Prices rose faster than wages, and poverty in industrial areas led to rioting. Not least, Irish discontent, flaming up after two centuries of misgovernment and oppressive taxes, burst into open rebellion. Pitt, who had long attempted to improve conditions in Ireland, thought that the solution lay in union, as it had in the case of Scotland, and the "Union," with Irish representatives sitting in the assembly at Westminster, was accomplished in 1801. But Pitt saw that this Union would not work unless the civil disabilities of Roman Catholics were removed. To this step George III, fondly imagining that his coronation oath forbade it, would not consent. The Minister insisted; the King, with a flash of his old stubbornness, would not yield. Pitt resigned.

It was a bad moment for England, with Napoleon everywhere successful except at sea and with their trusted leader gone. Addington, whom George III appointed to succeed Pitt, made a rather ignominious peace in 1802. No wonder that Wordsworth felt, in this dark hour, that England was

. . . a fen
 Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men.

Nor was this Peace of Amiens a real peace, for Napoleon, though not openly belligerent, embarked on a large colonial policy intended to embarrass England. But he soon found that, without an adequate Navy, he could not win in America and India. In 1803 he sold Louisiana to the United States and concentrated on preparing for direct invasion of England. In alarm the King recalled Pitt, and war was declared on May 20. It was no longer a contest between Monarchy and Republicanism, but a struggle for world mastery between a nation which believed that defeat meant slavery and a megalomaniac who happened to be the greatest military genius since Caesar.

Once again sea power saved England, for the threat of invasion was finally removed by Nelson's great victory off Trafalgar on October 21, 1805. The French Fleet feinted towards the West Indies, to lead the English off, then doubled back in the hope of protecting Napoleon's Channel crossing. Nelson followed it, but he followed it back and with Collingwood cornered the enemy off the Spanish coast. As at the Nile and at Copenhagen, the little admiral was in the thick of the conflict, and his death wound at Trafalgar brought a tragic but glorious end to the aggressive fighter who always challenged rather than accepted engagement, who invariably led rather than directed the battle.

Horatio Nelson is commonly counted the greatest name in England's naval history. This is no doubt a just estimate, but the magic of his name, like Drake's, has tended to obscure the valiant services of other men. The English Navy had for years been a great fighting force, and the distinguished leadership of Hawke and Howe and Rodney was ably carried on by such men as Duncan, Jervis, and Collingwood. Nelson was not alone, but rather the greatest of the great.

Entering the Navy at the age of twelve, he had little other education than what he learned on shipboard, but his natural ability and his likeable personality carried him forward quickly to a post captaincy in 1779, when he was only twenty. After miscellaneous

service in the West Indies, he was sent on the outbreak of the French wars to the Mediterranean, in command of the *Agamemnon*. Fretting at inaction, he was always in the fight if he could manage it. In 1794 he lost an eye and three years later an arm. After his recovery he returned as Rear Admiral to the Mediterranean, where he pursued the French fleet up and down till he brought it to bay off the mouth of the Nile. With this victory he became a national hero.

Then came the discreditable interlude of Nelson's career. Puffed with pride, he attempted to manage the political intrigues of the Neapolitans. At the same time he became infatuated with the beautiful adventuress, Lady Hamilton; he even had the audacity to bring her to England with her cuckold husband and to separate brutally from his own wife. Nervous and irritable in those days, Nelson showed his worst side, and, though the populace idolized him, King and ministers received him coldly. Fortunately for him, he was soon sent on the Baltic expedition.

Still irritable and headstrong, he disobeyed orders when the Admiral's signal told him to withdraw —

He clapped the glass to his sightless eye,
And "I'm damned if I see it," he said.

But Nelson's impatience was largely due to his consuming ardor, the impetuous dash which carried him and his devoted men through great victories. Unlike most of the other admirals, he was friendly with his subordinates and tenderly solicitous in the care of his men. Now, after Copenhagen, he was the nation's darling.

When war broke out again in 1803, he was inevitably put in command of the Fleet, which two years later destroyed the last of Napoleon's maritime hopes. The great triumph off Trafalgar was in a sense no more important than the victories of the Nile and the Baltic, but it has won a special place in the hearts of Englishmen because of the Admiral's heroic death. There, in his last "high hour" on the *Victory*, it is always the ardor and devotion that stand out — whether in his famous message, "England expects that every man will do his duty," or in his pathetic faith in Lady Hamilton as he wrote a codicil to his will. His eager conduct of the battle; his generous admiration of Collingwood; his refusal to yield the command after he had been wounded — "Not while



“THE FIGHTING TÊMÉRAIRE,” BY TURNER

I live!" he cried to Captain Hardy; his tender "Kiss me, Hardy," and his simple "I have done my duty" as he died, rise always in the mind at the thought of those last moments on the flag-ship.

But Napoleon was far from beaten yet. The Third Coalition, between Austria, Russia, and England, was broken by the defeat of Austria and Russia at Austerlitz. England was again alone. Pitt's death in 1806 was a further blow, but the nation was now solidly out to defeat Napoleon, as Fox's brief efforts to secure peace revealed, and Perceval and Castlereagh carried on the prosecution of foreign affairs with ability. Furthermore, Napoleon's new blow at Britain, a blockade, proved a boomerang, for England's retaliatory blockade was more effective. The dictator, moreover, had extended his authority too far. In 1808 Spain and Portugal were in revolt, and Arthur Wellesley, who had done good service in India, led an English army in their support. Poor Wellesley got niggardly help from home at first, but he conducted a masterly campaign in his Peninsular War, and by 1814 had driven the French out of Spain.

England's blockade, however, and her high-handed methods of search and seizure, brought on the War of 1812 with the United States. At first the daring American seamen had the better of individual encounters, but the British burned Washington and set up a blockade disastrous to American trade. By 1814, the defeat of Napoleon freed England for a more vigorous attack, but the end of the French war had removed the real cause of the American conflict, and both sides were ready to make peace.

Meanwhile, the successes in Spain had prompted other revolts against Napoleon's empire. Uprisings in Austria, Russia, and Prussia had led to the fatal march of the French Army to Moscow in 1812, and to the crushing defeat of the French at Leipzig in 1813. Attacked from the east and the south, Napoleon was forced to abdicate on April 16, 1814. Thereupon the Congress of Vienna set up a new map of Europe, a Europe based on nice balances of power, a Europe which would explode when unforeseen political ambitions and economic stresses developed in the next century.

But the rejoicing in Europe was short-lived, for the following year Napoleon escaped from Elba and again seized the power.

The great victory of the Allies at Waterloo depended in the crucial moment on Blücher's timely aid, but Wellesley, now Duke of Wellington, who had proved himself in Spain, was the dominating figure of the victory, as of the Bourbon restoration. More specifically with regard to France and England, the long period of wars, a century and a quarter, came to a close.

This recent war, fought first to save constitutional monarchy from Jacobin fury, then to save Europe from a dictator, turned out to be a victory for autocracies and oligarchies. The whole English people rejoiced, it is true; De Quincey's phrase, 'Waterloo and recovered Christendom,' was an accurate description of the sense of liberation all over Europe; but it was the House of Commons and English wealth which finally prevailed, and that House and that wealth were controlled by the ruling class of squires. Theirs was the victory, theirs the peace; for years they looked with disfavor, if not apprehension, on suggestions of change.

The conditions of repression, therefore, which had at least some measure of justification during the Napoleonic wars, continued, without justification, for a long time afterwards. On Pitt's death, the "cabinet of all talents," under Grenville and Fox, had made a brief liberal interlude. Thanks largely to the efforts of Wilberforce and of Fox himself, the slave trade had been abolished. But Fox had died less than a year after Pitt, Grenville and his dissident Whigs had made a poor war ministry, the task had soon reverted to the Tory group, first under Perceval and Castlereagh, then under Lord Liverpool and Wellington. With them the old order persisted. George III, whose first attack of insanity occurred in 1788, had permanently to leave the royal authority to his dissolute and incompetent son after 1811; and from him, whether as Regent or as George IV after 1820, liberal government got no support. True, powerful voices were in the air — Bentham, Cobbett, Canning, Grey, and less aggressively Lord Holland and Sydney Smith — but the ruling class in general treated the rising clamor, whether radical or liberal, with fear or contempt. In 1817 the *Habeas Corpus* Act was suspended, and several coercive acts were passed, while the "Peterloo" massacre in Manchester, when soldiers charged a crowd gathered to hear a speech on reform, led in 1819 to the "gag laws." It was not till 1822 that efforts towards reform began

to win the ear of the Government. For thirty years the lamp of liberty had been little more than a flicker.

The logical procedure would have been to readjust the electoral districts first, and so to find out what a representative parliament wished. But for over a century the squires, whose ancestors had won the "liberties" from the Stuarts, had held the power. England had prospered under their rule; most of them had a high sense of responsibility; they could see no reason why they should experiment with changes in the suffrage. At first they were more ready to listen to other reforms than to revision of the suffrage.

The first successful efforts were made in 1822 by George Canning, Robert Peel, and William Huskisson. Canning, who was described as a "furious Jacobin" at Oxford, became a follower of Pitt, and, after Pitt's death, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, he was vigorous in his prosecution of the war; but he quarreled with Castlereagh and after 1809 was for many years a minority man. He made many enemies, for his able speeches were colored with ungenerous personal remarks, but on the whole, in this minority capacity, he became a supporter of liberal movements. In 1822, on the death of Castlereagh, he became Leader of the House and in 1827, just before his death, Prime Minister. Robert Peel, the son of a successful cotton manufacturer, followed his father's support of Pitt into the Tory party, but he was a practical man, who thought for himself; and though he was often in opposition to Canning, who represented the liberal Tories and depended largely on help from the Whigs, he frequently supported forward-looking reforms. William Huskisson, an able financier, did much to rid the country of antiquated economic theories.

Among the important reforms in the next ten years were a humane revision of the criminal code, largely through the work of Bentham and the support of Peel; revision of the Navigation Acts, a great step towards free trade, under Huskisson's leadership; acts which permitted trade-unionism, so far as regulation of wages and hours of employment went; alteration of the oppressive Corn Law of 1815; the repeal of the Test Act in 1828; and the Catholic Emancipation Bill in 1829. This is an impressive list when one realizes that, except for Canning's short ministry in 1827, the Government was in the hands of the conservative Tories till 1830. But the Whigs took heart after these successes. Abandoning their

older, more radical agitations, they joined with the more liberal Tories in an effort to secure the fundamental reform of Parliamentary representation. Wellington, who supported the old order, was forced to resign in 1830, after the elections on the accession of William IV. For the first time in nearly fifty years, barring the short ministry of Grenville and Fox, the Whig party controlled the Cabinet, under the leadership of Earl Grey. The first Reform Bill, brought forward by Lord John Russell, was defeated, as was the second, but, after a long and bitter fight in the Parliament and riots in Bristol, the third bill was passed on March 23, 1832.

The Reform Bill was the most important legislation in the growth of English government since the Bill of Rights. It extended the suffrage somewhat, but its chief feature was the abolition of fifty-six "rotten" and "pocket" boroughs and an extensive redistribution of seats. With this measure government in England passed, in general, from the squires to the middle class, and the reform bills of later times were only necessary to broaden the suffrage base into democratic government.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

The stiff decorum of George III's Court continued throughout his active years, but the coarse frivolity during his son's Regency recalled the manners of the Restoration. The extravagant display of it, when as a young man he had gambled with Fox and Sheridan or had entertained lavishly with gay hostesses at Carlton House, was somewhat curtailed by the financial rigors after 1793; but the elegant debauchery, now less sprightly, more besotted, was revived after Waterloo. It was the day when continence among ladies of this circle was a joke, the day of that picturesque dandy, Beau Brummel, who dictated dress even to the Prince Regent, who expanded at White's under the royal aegis, contracted at the gaming table, and died in a madhouse. This is in large measure what "the Regency" means; but fortunately it means, too, some lovely architecture, furniture, and painting, which lend it a sort of minor grace.

Fortunately, too, the manners of the Prince and his group did not seriously corrupt the intellectual life which marked many literary and social gatherings. In fact, the first quarter of the century was the time of the brilliant assemblages at Holland House, when

the third Lord Holland and his erratic but magnetic Lady entertained with such grace that, as Macaulay puts it, they "relieved all embarrassment of the youngest and most timid writer or artist, who found himself for the first time among ambassadors and earls." The conversation and the enlightened hospitality at Holland House set a pattern which has been at once the model and the despair of great entertainment ever since. Besides these illustrious assemblages, there were other memorable gatherings, frequent or occasional. The house of Samuel Rogers, banker and poet, became a rendezvous for such literary figures as Campbell, Byron, Moore, and Scott, and, later, Southey, Wordsworth, and Dickens. Then there were the *soirées* of Harriet Martineau and the famous "Thursday" evenings at Gillman's, where Coleridge, the sage of Highgate, — or, as Lamb put it, "an archangel slightly damaged," — talked his mysterious philosophy to a group of ardent disciples.

A sublime man [says Carlyle] who alone in those dark days had saved his crown of spiritual manhood, escaping from the black materialism and revolutionary deluges with "God, Freedom, Immortality" still his; a king of men. The practical intellects of the world did not much heed him, or carelessly reckoned him a metaphysical dreamer; but to the rising spirits of the young generation he had this dusky sublime character, and sat there as a kind of Magus, girt in mystery and enigma.

The name of Charles Lamb suggests still another aspect. First of all, the theater, for Lamb was an eager theatergoer; and it was a time of great actors. Few new plays of importance were written, but the Shakespeare vogue started by Garrick and Mrs. Siddons was at its height. Besides Mrs. Siddons, John Philip Kemble, her brother, was a distinguished actor, while another brother, Charles, though not so great, was still acting with his daughter Fanny when she drew crowds to American playhouses. The chief Shakespearean actor of the time, however, perhaps of all time, was Edmund Kean, small of stature, but without a peer in every shade of facial expression and in rich and delicate modulation of his voice. He first appeared at Drury Lane in Shylock, but his greatest parts were Lear and Richard III.

But Lamb's London suggests other things: the street vendors with their cries; the flower-stalls; the bookstalls; crowded Fleet Street and Cheapside; the Temple, where he spent his boyhood; Christ's Hospital, the charity school where he learned to admire

Coleridge and to fear James Boyer, the headmaster with a birch; the India House, where he "served the Philistines" for thirty-three years — indeed, all the busy life of a great city. Though London did not increase so rapidly in the eighteenth century as in the seventeenth or nineteenth, by 1801 Greater London had already over a million inhabitants and during the next twenty years its population increased by forty per cent. Since early Georgian days four new bridges had been built — Westminster, Blackfriars, Waterloo, and Southwark — and now there were raised sidewalks on the main streets, and gas-lights. Architecturally, the old London of Wren was still conspicuous, especially in the churches; and the North Bank, with Somerset House and Adelphi Terrace and the buildings of Westminster beyond, presented a pleasing prospect; while to the northwest Regent Street, with its arcades and graceful curve, revealed Regency architecture at its best. But the central and eastern sections of London were more congested than ever, with deplorable conditions in the slums, and the overcrowded prisons were dens of misery and pestilence.

Something had already been attempted to relieve the horrors of the jails. John Howard, a pioneer in this work, had investigated prisons in England and other lands and had quietly, insistently presented schemes for reform. Most of his ideas, however, especially his "penitentiary plan," were not carried out till later. The same must be said for Jeremy Bentham's "panopticon" prison, in which the owner was to provide good conditions and to find work for discharged prisoners, even to insure their old age; it was never completed. But agitation had begun, and, soon afterwards, the efforts of Quakers, especially of Elizabeth Fry, led to substantial reforms.

In the cities outside of London, conditions were rarely better, sometimes worse. Through the war the mill-owners had managed well enough, but the workers had had a bad time of it. In many cases they ascribed the evils to the machines and indulged in mob destruction of frames, as in the Luddite riots at Nottingham. At the same time, in aggravation of the unemployment of adults, small children were put to work, not only on the farms but in the factories. Among the early efforts to ameliorate the social condition of operatives, the most interesting was that of Robert Owen, a successful cotton-manufacturer, who for a short time

accomplished a great deal in the community at New Lanark, Scotland, and who founded the first infant schools in Great Britain. His *New View of Society* in 1813 won him a considerable following, but soon he left philanthropy for extreme socialistic experiments, lost his fortune and his following, and continued for years as an active, but unheeded, propagandist.

Agriculture had run a more even course than manufacture, at least for the proprietors, but after Waterloo there was distress in that quarter too. Farming methods had been much improved, especially by Thomas Coke, a Norfolk proprietor—an obvious and beneficial result of private ownership on a large scale. The scanty production on the unenclosed land of a bygone era could not have fed the growing population. The disappearance of yeomen farmers, nevertheless, and the practically universal establishment of capitalistic farming meant a larger proportion of small tenants and laborers who, in bad times, added enormously to the pauper problem. The need for immediate reforms was pressing enough in all conscience; but the reactionary government could not, or would not, disentangle the economic problem from the political one.

Dark as the picture was, especially from the point of view of the laborer, there was enough prosperity to support a busy social life in both town and country. John Macadam's new roads, first begun in 1815, greatly improved coach-travel, and the picturesque life of the highways and of the inns that served them had its heyday in the first forty years of the century. Gentlemen on business or on pleasure bent traveled more than ever—gentlemen in pantaloons at first, for the old knee-breeches had gone out; then in long trousers and Wellington boots, and with top hats above their own hair. They may have worried at times about their purses and the problems of the poor; but they found much opportunity for careless amusement—at the resorts, such as Bath, and the recently fashionable Brighton and Cheltenham; or in dancing the new steps, the waltz, the quadrille, and the polka.

INDUSTRY, INVENTION, AND EXPLORATION

By the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century the ideas of Adam Smith, now pretty widely accepted, had been extended by the investigations of Malthus, Ricardo, and James Mill in the field of economics. Despite natural differences of opinion, in general

their views in regard to rent, wages, and taxation encouraged capitalist expansion and *laissez faire* in industry. Malthus was too hypothetical; Ricardo was of greater service in questions of banking than in those economic problems which involve human values; Mill was more distinguished in his own day for his excellent *History of India* and his utilitarian philosophy than for his economics. So also Jeremy Bentham was, and is, chiefly distinguished for his searching investigations of legal abuses. But the influence of all these men in the economic field bears witness to the widespread and growing interest in the subject. It is a striking contrast to the endless philosophical and moral controversies of a century before. In fact, even the theologian William Paley, the author of *Evidences of Christianity*, sought to establish a practical, logical case for older theories of revelation. There was no other important philosophical work in England. The new German thought had stirred "metaphysical dreamers" like Coleridge, but was not widely known. By 1830 the English mind was essentially practical and utilitarian.

With the English mind turned in this direction, it is not surprising that important inventions were made. Cort's new methods of rolling and puddling increased the output of ironworks from fifteen to twenty times; Murray's spinning and carding engine did as much for the growth of linen manufacture; and machinery to some extent recovered for wool the place usurped by cotton. In the agricultural field capitalist proprietors experimented with new machines for mowing and raking. But by far the greatest inventions, though their practical applications were made some years later, were the steamboat and the locomotive. The Americans Fitch and Fulton were the pioneers; but by 1812 Bell's *Comet* ran on the Clyde; and in 1838 the *Great Western* made her first trip from Bristol to New York. In locomotives the actual pioneer was a Frenchman, Cugnot, but Englishmen first put the railway to practical use. A Cornishman, Trevithick, made a locomotive which worked as early as 1804, and George Stephenson, of Newcastle, produced in 1814 an improved engine. The little Stockton and Darlington Railway, of which he was the first engineer, carried goods and passengers as early as 1825. But his *Rocket*, built with the help of his son Robert in 1829, was the first really successful locomotive, and in essential features it remained the model for many years.

During the Napoleonic wars Britain's command of the sea gave her a virtual monopoly of maritime trade, and for years afterwards shipbuilding and shipping prospered, with little competition except from the Yankees. Exploration, as in earlier days, was again stimulated by the overseas expansion. Though Sir John Franklin's last and most famous expedition was not made till the middle of the century, he started on his first, to explore northern Canada, as early as 1820. In 1818 John Ross and Edward Parry had set out to discover a Northwest Passage, and for another fifteen years these two, as well as half a dozen others, made extensive explorations in northern Canada and the Arctic Sea. In 1831 James Ross, nephew of John, set up the British flag on the north magnetic pole.

SCIENCES AND ARTS

The inventions and discoveries in the first thirty years of the nineteenth century were stimulated frequently as much by science as by trade. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the heirs of Boyle and Newton and Priestley making new advances in purely scientific realms. The astronomical researches continued, particularly in the work of Sir William Herschel and his sister Caroline, and of Sir John Herschel, his son. Sir William, who ran away from Germany in 1757, became a great friend of George III, who made him Court Astronomer in 1782. He constructed improved telescopes and was a pioneer in sidereal astronomy. Possibly his chief claim to fame is his discovery, in 1781, of Uranus, which he fatuously wished to name after his King; but he lived to a great old age, and his greatest, if least spectacular, service was his systematic exploration of the heavens. He was equaled, if not surpassed, by his son, whose thorough German mind continued the painstaking study of double stars and nebulae — an inexhaustible labor still going on.

The greatest scientific advances at this time, however, were in the fields of chemistry and geology. There was much work in the biological field, especially in the classification of plants and animals, but nothing that could compare with the distinguished contributions of the Frenchman Lamarck. It is worth noting, however, that Erasmus Darwin, in his *Zoönomia*, put forward as early as 1796 an evolutionary theory; but his views, like Lamarck's, were based on "appetency," or evolution through the use or disuse of different

organs, and so were hardly an anticipation of the theory of his famous grandson. The physicists were busy, too, and Thomas Young, who worked out the wave theory of light, as opposed to the pulsation or "emission" theory of Newton, made an important departure towards modern physics; but he got little hearing in his own day, so strong was the Newton tradition. It was rather in chemistry and geology that revolutions actually took place.

Here again a Frenchman, the famous Lavoisier, who exploded the "phlogistic" theory of Priestley and others and who developed a reasonable nomenclature in chemistry, is the chief figure in that science. But John Dalton, the son of a poor Cumberland weaver, was the first to work out a systematic formulation of the laws of equivalence for the atomic theory. His *New System of Chemical Philosophy*, in 1808, was a cornerstone in the building of modern chemistry. Hardly less important was the work of Sir Humphry Davy. Best known to the general public for his useful invention of the miner's safety-lamp, in 1815, his greatest scientific contribution was in his electro-chemical researches, which paved the way for Faraday. Davy was a versatile man, who also did valuable work on the theory of heat, and in this was closely associated with his equally versatile friend, the astonishing Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford. Thompson, born in Colonial Massachusetts, joined the British forces in 1776 after he had been refused a commission in the Continental Army, was sent to England, and there became a distinguished statesman and scientist. Married to the widow of Lavoisier, reorganizer of the Bavarian army, frequent guest at Holland House, he is an interesting person in any case; but his work on heat, his association with Davy, and his major part in founding the Royal Institution, in 1800, make him a conspicuous figure in the history of British science.

In the geological revolution James Hutton, a Scot, was the pioneer. His *Theory of the Earth*, published as early as 1785, made geology a science in itself, instead of conjectures based on a somewhat hypothetical cosmogony. This interpretation, called by the horrible name of "uniformitarianism" and later successfully pushed by another Scot, Sir Charles Lyell, eventually won the day against the old "catastrophic" theory of geology. Between Hutton and Lyell, however, William Smith did a great deal of valuable work on fossils and produced in 1815 a map of the *Strata of England and Wales*,

which has won for him the name of the "Founder of Modern Geology." Lyell, chiefly famous in Victorian times, for he lived till 1875, was nevertheless already a professor in King's College, London, by 1831, and his *Principles of Geology*, published in 1830-1833, gave the final blow to the "catastrophists" and "Neptunists." Carrying on Smith's work, based largely on Secondary fossils, he made an exhaustive study of Tertiary deposits, and this clinched the apparently sensible conclusions of Hutton and Smith.

Curiously enough, science and poetry were the chief cultural expression of the fifty years from the death of Johnson to the death of Scott. But it is only superficially curious, for the one expressed the practical as well as the imaginative mind stimulated by the advance of science in the eighteenth century and liberated from superstitions and hypotheses by the hard-headed philosophy of that period; while the other revealed emotional and imaginative man liberated from dead conventions of life and literary form. Of the other arts besides literature, painting alone is worthy of much attention. Music, in particular, suffered eclipse. The old English style, as we have seen, had passed when Handel became popular; and for a century people had been content with foreign styles. More and more, too, they had come to rely on foreign performers; in so far as they gave any heed to music, it was in the uncreative rôle of audience. The curious notion became prevalent and persisted for nearly a century that anything so esthetic as music was no fit activity for virile English youth. Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton; leave music, along with embroidery, to the ladies, or to effeminate foreigners! Englishmen were becoming more insular than they had ever been — and were apparently proud of it.

The architecture of this half-century is interesting rather than great, but some consideration of it is necessary if we are to understand the hodge-podge atrocities of the Victorian Era which followed. The so-called Regency style, characterized by its arched arcades, was really an extension of the Adam style. John Nash, who designed Regent Street, would have done well if he had stopped there, but he became a victim of "the Gothic revival." This revival, starting about 1760 with Walpole's artificial Strawberry Hill, was for some time an absurd affectation, but it was indicative, like the

poetry, of a return to the Middle Ages, an escape from the eighteenth century. Instead of being confined to churches, where it had a legitimate application, it was applied without taste or purpose — to villas and even to sheds. Wyatt was the chief architect of this Gothic mania. In the restoration of churches the intention was good, and some of the work was good; but it was often ill-advised, sometimes positively ruthless, and by no means so good as the more careful, less wholesale work of the younger Pugin.

About the same time as the Gothic revival, which at least had some justification in the English landscape, there began the Greek revival, with no justification whatever. Early in the nineteenth century, after Lord Elgin brought the famous Parthenon Marbles to London, it took on new life. Greek façades with columns and pediment became a common style, not only in large public halls, where they were frequently effective if exotic, but in shop fronts and private houses. So universal was it that many well-known, and by no means lovely, instances survive, such as the National Gallery, the Bank of England, and the British Museum. Perhaps the handsomest examples are St. George's Hall, Liverpool, and the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, really beautiful buildings.

By the middle of the century these styles had passed: Gothic was usually confined to churches, and Renaissance styles were revived for public buildings; but a general confusion of styles, without purpose or any feeling for use, soon resulted in the worst conglomeration of buildings known to man.

The mere list of competent painters in the early part of the nineteenth century is impressive. Portrait-painting, to be sure, had no representatives comparable to the four great figures of the eighteenth century, and after Raeburn and Lawrence that branch of the art suffered a conspicuous decline in quality. Historical painting was as popular and generally as inferior as it had been, but at least one man, John Singleton Copley, the Bostonian who moved to London when he was about forty, did distinguished work. *Genre* painting began to find a place; caricature became more humorous than satirical; at least one able sculptor, William Flaxman, represented an art not usually well handled by Englishmen; and that strange engraver-artist-poet, William Blake, produced the great work so little valued in his day. But it is in landscape painting that the period has special distinction.

Besides Copley, John Hoppner, who was an able imitator of Reynolds, John Opie, called the "Cornish wonder," and Sir William Beechey, who had the sense to avoid the historical field, did some of the best portraits, but the only two important names are Lawrence and Raeburn. Younger than Raeburn, Sir Thomas Lawrence came earlier into fame, for he was an infant prodigy, well known at twelve, and famous at twenty. This enormous popularity made him the obvious successor of West as President of the Academy, in 1820, but the modern world, granting his skill as a draughtsman, does not rank him so high as Raeburn. He painted notables chiefly, always flattered them, and was incapable of giving much tone or spirit to his portraits. Even his famous *Pinkie*, feminine counterpart to Gainsborough's *Blue Boy*, seems insipid. Sir Henry Raeburn, a Scot, is more robust. Beginning with miniatures, he turned to portrait work and won the name of the "Sir Joshua of the North." Not greatly appreciated in London, he spent most of his life in Edinburgh and there painted the well-known pictures of Lord Newton, Admiral Duncan, and others, which have more vitality, more sincerity, than the work of his contemporaries.

The caricature element in Hogarth's work was continued in the satirical, political drawings of James Gillray, with his famous figure of George III as "Farmer George." * Coming under this influence, Thomas Rowlandson, who had begun as a promising painter of portraits and of landscapes, but who had gambled away a small fortune, took to making caricatures for a living. Less satirical than Gillray, his pictures depend primarily on humor, and his famous "Tours" of *Dr. Syntax*, the first in 1812, mark him as one of the chief of the humorous English artists. Next in this line, which was to continue so charmingly through the Victorian era, was George Cruikshank. He began as an illustrator of children's books, but soon turned to caricature, first in the Gillray manner, but soon in his own inimitable style. His name, however, suggests always his great sketches for Dickens' *Boz*, in 1836, and that takes us into a later period. Cruikshank, in fact, lived till 1878.

The Hogarth tradition, moreover, gave the first impetus to George Morland, another infant prodigy. He began by painting moral satires, but soon he took to imitating and surpassing Wilkie,

* The King, who made much of his farms, was proud of the title, but he probably didn't like Gillray's satire.

the pioneer in *genre* painting. Morland, particularly famous for his pictures of farm animals and of rustic scenes, was a hasty and careless worker, but an able colorist and refreshingly realistic. He made much money, but lost more; was often hiding from creditors; and killed himself off at forty-one by an erratic and profligate life.

All this represents a quantity of work, but inferior, except for Raeburn and Morland, to the eighteenth-century painting. But the landscape field, neglected in spite of Wilson and Gainsborough, came into its own under Constable and Turner. John Constable, the son of a Suffolk miller, painted genuine English landscape, and he had, fortunately, that most paintable of regions as his subject, the Eastern Counties, with their stretches of meadows and marsh, their old villages, and their shifting atmosphere. He was particularly good at water and clouds, and his dripping trees were so realistic that Fuseli said, "Give me mine umbrella; I am going to see a picture of Mr. Gonstable's." Fuseli meant to jeer, but he was unconsciously praising; for Constable's great contribution to landscape work was his insistence that nature should be copied, that cattle and rivers and dripping trees should look like cattle and rivers and dripping trees. Constable rose slowly to fame and was more appreciated in France than at home during his lifetime. Indeed, he was forced for a long time to paint portraits for a living. But though critics till recently have probably exaggerated his influence on French artists, he was the real founder of the English landscape school and has not been surpassed in his kind.

Joseph M. W. Turner, though he was a pioneer in water colors and had much influence on that branch of painting, was not the founder of a school in his most famous type of work — perhaps because his style was inimitable. The son of a barber, he had little general education, and at fourteen entered the school at the Royal Academy. He was soon well thought of, and was made an Academician before he was thirty, but he was never socially of the crowd that milled about West and Lawrence. Shy to a degree which in later years became an obsession, brusque at times, accused of meanness, but often kindly in an impulsive way, he kept to himself. Most of his early work was in water colors, at first imitative, then distinctly his own, and in this field he shares with his master, Girtin, the importance of giving life to the new school of water-colorists. But soon after he was forty, Turner gave his attention more and more

to oils, and from then on produced the works which have chiefly made his fame. Whether in illustrations for the romantic poems of Byron and Scott, for *The Rivers of England and Italy*, or in such famous single pieces as *The Fighting Téméraire* and *The Slave Ship*, his familiar power of capturing the effect of light on mountains or on water and his marvelous feeling for distance are everywhere his special merit. No one has so happily combined the romantic, the almost magical, with the realistic — the dream with the fact; and it was Turner's ability to paint light that accomplished the miracle.

Some of the painting discussed reveals impulses of the prevalent Romanticism. But a characteristic common in the romantic poetry, preponderant imagination, appears in the painting concentrated in one man, William Blake. In him poet and painter were one, and both were dominated by imagination.

The son of a small tradesman, Blake was born in London in 1757. He had little regular education, but he studied drawing till he was twenty, then served seven years as apprentice to an engraver, and after a short period of study at the Royal Academy, went into engraving as a business. This sounds normal enough, and during the day Blake appears to have worked hard and skillfully at his engraving; but another personality possessed him at night, the Blake of wild visions and revelations, the Blake to whom the setting sun was a choir of angels. It was this Blake who wrote and drew for posterity. His first book, *Political Sketches* in 1783, was in the form which he followed in his later work; the text as well as the marginal decoration was engraved by him. Some of his poetry is intelligible enough, particularly the delightful *Songs of Innocence* and a few of his most famous lyrics, such as "The Tiger," in the *Songs of Experience*; but many poems, like many of his pictures, are so visionary that they cannot be understood any more than a dream, or a flash of light, or the sound of water. To some he seems mad — and he was very nearly so; to devotees he speaks in symbols of great beauty. It is perhaps idle to try to strike a critical balance. His lyrical power is sometimes great, and his designs are always interesting, but his drawing, in sweep and imagination, far surpasses his poetry as such. Yet the pictures are in essence *poetical*; that must be realized if they are to be appreciated — let alone understood; and, by the same token, his poems reveal much more if the reader looks

at them always as *pictures*. In short, poet, painter, and engraver are indissolubly one in Blake.

Blake's visionary side grew stronger as he approached middle life, and appears most conspicuously in *The Book of Thel* and *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Later, just before his death in 1827, he produced his famous illustrations for the *Book of Job*, unquestionably his greatest work as an artist. Few thought much of him in his own time, and he never even approached popularity. Nowadays he is counted a great genius—strange overturn, when few remember West and Opie and Hoppner!

Though the poetry of this period was the greatest literature, there was an astonishing amount of creditable prose. The trend towards periodical literature, begun a century before, accelerated. *The Times*, founded as *The London Register* in 1785 and renamed in 1788, began its illustrious career. *The Edinburgh Review* was started in 1802, with Francis Jeffrey as its distinguished editor from 1803 to 1829. In 1809 the Tory *Quarterly* had its birth. Besides these, five well-known periodicals were founded between 1817 and 1832: *Blackwood's*, *The Westminster Review*, the *Athenaeum*, the *Spectator*, and *Chambers' Journal*.

These magazines provided vehicles for a quantity of political and historical writing, as well as for the critical reviews which were soon to become, in Macaulay's hands, one of the great types of essay. In addition to such publications, moreover, political and literary essays appeared in other, shortlived periodicals or independently in pamphlet and book form. Such were William Godwin's *Political Justice*, for a brief time the handbook of ardent Revolutionists, and the varied writings of Leigh Hunt. Of more enduring literary quality were the lively essays of William Hazlitt, the incomparable *Elia* of Lamb, and the impassioned, "headlong" prose of De Quincey; in fact, passages from De Quincey's *The English Mail-Coach* and *Suspiria* are among the finest poetic prose in the language. Further, a number of well-written biographies and histories enriched the store. If Scott had not stolen his own thunder with his poetry and novels, he would still be remembered for his excellent lives of Dryden and Swift. Hazlitt's *Life of Napoleon* and Southey's *Life of Nelson* are perhaps the two best additional instances, while Southey wrote also a good *History of the Peninsular*

War — very good indeed when one considers the short perspective possible in 1823. Incomparably the best pieces of historical work at this time, however, were Hallam's *Middle Ages*, in 1818, and *Constitutional History of England*, in 1827. These two books, in spite of a Whig bias, are in the main singularly well balanced; they are veritable monuments of scholarship; and in their style they continue the great prose tradition of Hume and Gibbon.

The novel did not fare so well during the first quarter of the century. Its normal, realistic current almost disappeared for a while in favor of such "Gothic revival" fiction as Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolfo*. It was not till Scott's *Waverley Novels* set the emphasis on adventure and the heroic past, rather than on fantastic, incredible mystery, that romantic novels found a permanent place in literature. The very definition of the novel, at least by its origin, was that characters must seem true to life, and Scott caught the secret, as Stevenson did after him, of making his characters and their setting credible, however remote the time and place. But there was one novelist who relied on no glamorous past or romantic enchantments to support her stories. In *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, and *Persuasion* Jane Austen captured indelibly her contemporary scene; her characters are interesting, not because they storm castles and rescue forlorn damsels, but simply because they talk and act like human beings. She bridged the gap between the eighteenth-century novelists and the Victorians.

It was rather in poetry that romance had its opportunity. De Quincey's prose style, which has been compared to flamboyant Gothic, and Lamb's, which suggests rather the quaint humor of miserere and gargoyles, are of course romantic; but Romanticism with a capital R was in the poetry.

The so-called period of Romanticism has been sometimes too exclusively treated as a product of the French Revolution, especially in the emphasis on the lowly poor and in the theories of political emancipation. Unquestionably that great upheaval had its influence on poets, particularly on Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, and Shelley, but their revolutionary ideas are not always their most poetical. The significant characteristic, of which the French Revolution was a social and political instance, was the emancipation of man from the cold logic of the eighteenth century, a logic which

begets lucid prose, and the liberation of emotional and imaginative man, a feature which has always been apparent in England during periods of great poetry.

We have already noted signs of this escape from the urban conventions in Goldsmith and Gray. James Thomson, with blank verse and Spenserian stanza, was a pioneer as early as 1726 in breaking away from the stiff pattern of the heroic couplet. Others followed his lead; and, after Bishop Percy's publication of old ballads in 1765, the ballad stanza became a popular form. At the same time, with the return to nature and the new interest in the simple annals of the poor, there developed gradually the emotional and imaginative outlook necessary to lyric poetry. Blake is of course an exaggerated instance — imagination run mad; but the same impulse, curbed only a little, is apparent in Coleridge's specter-ship and in the whole of his meaningless but magnificent *Kubla Khan*; while a necessary quantity of it, brought into balance with fact and form, is conspicuous in Keats's great odes.

It was another characteristic, however, that gave the name to the period. About the middle of the eighteenth century there were many signs of a new interest in the Middle Ages, the time of the Romances — an interest evidenced by the Celtic and Gothic revivals. But Scott, "the great Romancer," goes more often to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries than to the Middle Ages for his material. The return was not specifically to the Middle Ages so much as to any time before Dryden and the pseudo-classical period — that is, to Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton as well as to Chaucer and Malory. Some poets, such as Shelley, abhorred the Middle Ages; and the term "Romantic," in spite of the revival which accounts for it, is far more accurately applied when used to describe the imaginative feature which is at the heart of romance.

After Gray, William Cowper and Robert Burns were the chief poets who lived wholly within the eighteenth century. Cowper, a gentle recluse, had much of the dignity and restraint which characterizes the formal poetry of his predecessors, but he had also the quiet love of nature and the interest in the lowly poor indicative of the new age, some lyric power, and great skill in the use of blank verse as a medium for personal, poetical philosophy. *The Task*, his long poem in this measure, is his best work, but his translation of Homer, also in blank verse, far surpasses Pope's.

The Ayrshire plowboy who made a failure of everything but

poetry had the advantage of not having to escape to nature. He was there to begin with. So, about a generation before his time, he was a full-blown Romanticist — a champion of nature, of revolution, and of the lowly poor. But great as *The Cotter's Saturday Night* and *A man's a man for a' that* are, it was not primarily the revolutionary Burns so much as the maker of songs who has won a permanent place in the hearts of men. The best of these songs are in his native dialect — whenever he breaks into plain English, he is a bit commonplace; and the same may be said for his other great poems, such as *To a Mouse*, *Address to the Deil*, and *Tam o' Shanter*. The sentiment, the pathos, the humor are one with his living, homespun language.

The other great Scottish poet, Sir Walter Scott, began as a collector of ballads when he was deputy sheriff of Selkirk and soon took to making ballads of his own, then to writing those stirring narratives, *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*, so immediately popular that the Trossachs became an object of literary pilgrimage. Scott had developed a new form of narrative, which Byron was soon to do somewhat better; but Byron did not really write Scott out of fashion; rather, Scott wrote himself out of fashion by his own novels. In other words, the new vein of heroic romance in prose which he began to work in his *Waverley* in 1814 reached a larger reading public than his poems could have done; and he worked this vein with prodigious success for fifteen years in that great list of volumes which have a perennial audience. As Chesterton puts it, we can only say "that the wind bloweth where it listeth, and that here the wind blows strong."

Somewhat discredited today in favor of Keats, Wordsworth was nevertheless in a sense the most important of the Romantic poets. The modern estimate is based partly on the fact that the critics seem to think more of esthetics and technique than of "high seriousness"; for them Wordsworth preaches too much in versified prose. But it must be recognized that this moral quality, this view that the poet is *vates*, not merely *poeta*, is peculiarly characteristic of some of the greatest English poetry; indeed, of an English poetical tradition from Cynewulf through Milton, Cowper, and Wordsworth to Tennyson, Arnold, and Browning. Wordsworth's "message" had a profound influence, not only on writers, but on the outlook of ordinary people, for nearly a century.

This message, that man and nature are one in a divinely ordered

universe — the heart of the Transcendentalist philosophy — was the result of his experience. After a boyhood in the then quite isolated Lake District, where nature was to him no mere background, as it had been for Burns, but a passion, "all in all," his eyes were opened to human problems by the French Revolution. Then, after a period of disillusion and dismay, he returned to nature, — first in Dorset, finally in his beloved Lake District, — but not to the nature of his "thoughtless youth"; rather, to a nature which included also "the still, sad music of humanity," a nature which caused him to feel "a presence,"

Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man.

These lines from *Tintern Abbey*, written in 1798, amounted to a declaration of faith; and for the next sixteen years he continued to express these "impulses of deeper birth" in his best poetry, particularly in some of his lyrics, in parts of his *Excursion*, in such sonnets as *The world is too much with us*, and especially in his great *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*. The more extreme phase of this message, it is true, can be absurd, and Irving Babbitt and modern humanists are on solid enough ground when they object to Wordsworth's assertion that

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

But at his best he was what Arnold called "an aider to those who would live in the spirit," perhaps more so than any other English poet. Nor was his poetry versified preaching, in spite of many tedious passages. He had great skill in the faithful description of nature, and he was a master, especially in his sonnets, of significant phrases, of the creating word.

Unfortunately, Wordsworth did not know when to stop. Without an iota of humor, he kept on writing rather voluminously for over thirty years, mouthing his message, so that as an old man he gave Carlyle the not wholly unwarranted impression that he was like "an honest rustic fiddle, good, and well-handled, but wanting two or more of the strings."

Coleridge was even more of a revolutionist than Wordsworth.

He hoped to set up an ideal community, called "Pantisocracy," in America, and he extended his benevolent sympathy to all creation with such ardor that he provoked Byron's "Coleridge soars to elegize an ass." But this was youthful exuberance. In addition to his powerful intellect, which later revealed itself in his *Lectures on Shakespeare*, and in his *Biographia Literaria*, he had extraordinary poetic gifts; he was, *par excellence*, the "inspired charity boy" whom Lamb had known in school. His imagination needed no stimulant; he had always fed on the honey-dew of the spirit and had drunk the milk of paradise; like Thomas Rhymer of old, he had lived in Faery. His sense of rhythm was unerring, but it is the mystery and magic which his imagination had always at command that have given *The Ancient Mariner* and those two broken pieces, *Kubla Khan* and *Christabel*, their excellence and their charm.

But poor Coleridge did have "recourse to an anodyne." The habit got hold of him; and he never wholly escaped the opium curse. As a result he wrote relatively little after 1802, though fourteen years later he emerged as the "Sage of Highgate." But to those who knew him he was always a "great spirit"; and Wordsworth wrote after the death of his two friends, Coleridge and Lamb: —

The rapt one, of the godlike forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth:
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Besides these early Romanticists, there were many poets who, chiefly because of the surrounding giants, seem insignificant — such men as Campbell, Tom Moore, and Landor. Among the younger ones, three stand out conspicuously: Byron, Shelley, and Keats.

Lord Byron was born into that social group which, except for a few bright exceptions, made more of escapades than of ideas. Heir to Newstead Abbey at nine, he soon developed into the attractive, reckless figure of whom Lady Caroline Lamb wrote "mad, bad, and dangerous to know." * On the publication of *Childe Harold*, in 1812, he "awoke and found himself famous." For a short time he was society's pet; then, after the disgraceful treatment of his wife, he was its outcast. This Byron, and the Byron of a last splendid gesture in the cause of Greek liberty, is the figure so recently familiar in the lurid, "novelized" biographies of the poet; they make little

* Lady Caroline, it is fair to add, was all these things without the genius.

enough of his poetry, the sole excuse, after all, for digging up an ill-smelling skeleton.

For, though Byron's poetry had the defects of his nature — reckless, careless — it had also a vitality, a fullness of song, and a magnificence which has caused such critics as Taine and Arnold to rank him among the first of his century; the quality which inspired Swinburne to speak of his "splendid and imperishable excellence of sincerity and strength." He frequently mistook sentimental melancholy for deep emotion, and mere rhetoric for eloquence — what his cousin called his "blare of brass and big bow-wowishness." But he had a positive genius, in descriptive verse, for casting a glamour over the monuments of antiquity, or for giving life and dignity to great incidents of history; he was a lyric poet of strong feeling; not excepting Scott, he was the ablest narrative poet between Chaucer and Masfield; and in his later years he developed a vein of satiric humor which has made his *Don Juan*, also full of fine descriptive passages, his most characteristic work. As in the case of Scott's novels, there is hardly need to list the familiar names. Everyone knows Byron's poetry — and then makes the mistake of examining his skeleton.

Shelley was in many ways the opposite of Byron — ethereal where Byron was earthly; a revolutionist with elaborate theories where his friend understood only destruction; erratic enough, in all conscience, but never dissolute. Shelley was hardly human; Byron was intensely human. In fact, Shelley's own phrase, "A pardlike spirit, beautiful and swift" describes him best; and his finest poetry is what Stopford Brooke calls his "lyrical cry." He seems most at home when he is with the skylark, the cloud, the west wind; he is rarely in touch, as John Morley puts it, with "The earth and the civil animal who dwells upon it." His long revolutionary poem, *Queen Mab*, he himself described as "villanous trash," and even his more famous long poems, such as *Alastor* and *Prometheus Unbound*, have a vagueness which at times amounts to a defect — they seem uniformly great only to the initiated, to poets. It is to the point, perhaps, that the best parts of *Prometheus* are the lyrics. When Shelley gives himself up to singing, lyric verse, particularly when his "coursers" are "fed with the lightning," or when he soars with the skylark into the "pale purple even," he is without a peer. Yet Shelley had more than this, a sense of intellectual beauty, "inexpressible" one would

have said if he had not expressed it; and, just before his death by drowning when he was only thirty, he revealed in *Adonais*, his great elegy on Keats, a dignity of rhythm and a beauty of phrase which were of great promise. English poetry contains few finer lines than the last stanza of *Adonais*.

Keats himself hoped to be among the English poets after his death, and Matthew Arnold comments, "He is with Shakespeare." In fact, though he was little known in his own day, he is nowadays so well known that it is almost an impertinence, as in the case of Shakespeare, to give information about him. But one fact is frequently overlooked. Keats was not born till 1795, the same year as Carlyle, who was a Victorian; and, if Keats had lived to middle age, we should no doubt be associating him with Tennyson. His sense of form and his exquisite felicity of phrase suggest a time in which the emotional ferment of the Romanticists had settled. He had no revolutionary ardor; his love of nature and his feeling for the Gothic past are his only distinctively romantic characteristics, and these indeed are conspicuous in later poets. The revolution had come and gone; nature had come to stay.

In short, it is the balance of emotion and imagination with form and sense of fact, not an excess of them, which makes Keats the perfect poet. *Endymion*, which he called "a feverish attempt rather than a deed accomplished," is his most romantic, and perhaps his poorest, poem. In *The Eve of St. Agnes*, the Odes, and *Hyperion*, the full-grown Keats appears, the Keats who could fuse emotion and thought with form till he makes us feel and understand, as no Wordsworthian argument could, the timelessness of Beauty. Sometimes he loses his balance a little, out of his delight in mere color and sound; there are touches of virtuosity; but Kipling was not far from the truth when he said that the next to the last stanza of the *Ode to a Nightingale* was "the high-water mark of English poetry."

Chapter XIV

THE VICTORIANS: ENLIGHTENMENT

THE term "Victorian" is frequently used to describe the whole period of sixty-four years when Victoria was on the throne; and to that long period, as if it were a unit, the modern world is often wont, with a sweeping gesture, to assign the characteristics of comfortable opulence, complacency, even smugness. Little could confuse the picture of Victorian England more than this inaccurate generalization. The ninety years from 1822, when Canning and Peel began to break the Tory crust, to 1911, when the Parliament Bill became law, represent really two periods with many striking differences.

Three conspicuous facts, it is true, give a superficial warrant to the generalization. The years in question were a time of great industrial expansion; in general, they were marked by unprecedented peace and prosperity; and, not least, the personality of the great Queen came more and more to symbolize the large stretch of time from 1837 to 1901. But the active spirit of reform and the eager intellectual life of the first part of her reign had been in motion for fifteen years when she ascended the throne, and they continued for many years on their own motive power, not hers. The greatest "Victorians" were of the earlier part of her reign. Many of them, like Tennyson, Darwin, Millais, lived into the later years of the century, or, like Spencer, into the twentieth century; but the conspicuous, creative work of the so-called "Victorians" had its origin and in large measure its fulfillment before 1875. In addition, the political direction of "retrenchment and reform" falls within the earlier period; the last quarter of the century was marked by expansion abroad and conservative government at home. Even the Liberals seemed to forget what they were made for; they became virtually conservative in their defense of what had once been almost radical but was now established as the good way of life. It was not till 1905 that Liberal government again proved worthy of its name. Nor was the earlier period comfortable and complacent. It was the later Victorian who developed the calm self-

assurance, the complacency which impatient young moderns father on the whole stretch of sixty-four years.

The first part of the earlier period we have already followed through the passage of the Reform Bill in 1832. An appropriate date for the close of this period is 1874, when Gladstone's most significant ministry came to an end, when men like Mill, Faraday, Dickens, Thackeray were already dead, and when others, such as Darwin, Browning, Carlyle, had made their chief contributions.*

The period of about forty years after the Reform Bill was in large measure the culmination of the great Liberal Movement which characterized the eighteenth century. Delayed by the violence of the French Revolution and by the reaction after the Napoleonic Wars, it now came to political fulfillment. For nearly thirty-three years out of forty-two, the Liberal Party was in control, and Peel, called Conservative, was often more genuinely liberal than his technical opponents. There were many blind sides, particularly with regard to Ireland, and some of the "reforms" were merely political maneuvers; but in general the men who controlled affairs were actively, even aggressively, liberal. They could remember years when the light of freedom had burned very low; they had seen it die out several times on the Continent. To them liberty was a precious and perilous trust, not, as to their grandchildren, an established fact, to be taken for granted.

This political state of mind, moreover, was largely a reflection of the general state of mind. The scholars and authors of the second quarter of the nineteenth century were the intellectual heirs of Locke and Voltaire, of Mirabeau and Rousseau and Goethe. It was the great period of new vigor, particularly in philosophy and in scientific thought, in the German universities; of a science not yet divorced from human values. Scholarship meant more than mere learning; it meant enlightenment. It was often personal, not always accurate, rarely coldly objective; but it was part of man's life. Those were the golden days of which Arnold wrote in his famous passage: "Forty years ago, when I was an undergraduate at Oxford, voices were in the air there which haunt my memory still." Liberalism was the keynote. Mill wrote in his *Essay on Liberty*: "If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and

* Chapter XV, from 1874 to 1911, will deal with the later, more imperialistic, more civilized, but more complacent Victorians and Edwardians.

only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind." Here he was saying, with a cloud of witnesses, what Voltaire had said alone a century before.

So great seems the promise of that day, in contrast to the mechanistic perversions of our own, that it is easy to paint it in false colors. Much prejudice and intolerance lingered; liberal statesmen often turned into self-seeking politicians; the new rich of the industrial prosperity became crassly materialistic; taste and graciousness were not conspicuous virtues; the condition of the poor in the overcrowded cities was deplorable. Nevertheless, through these forty years unprecedented steps were taken to relieve many of the worst conditions in the political and social structure; and the liberal-minded scholarship, even if it reached comparatively few, was a great civilizing influence. More than this, men were actively creative; their enlightenment found significant expression.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

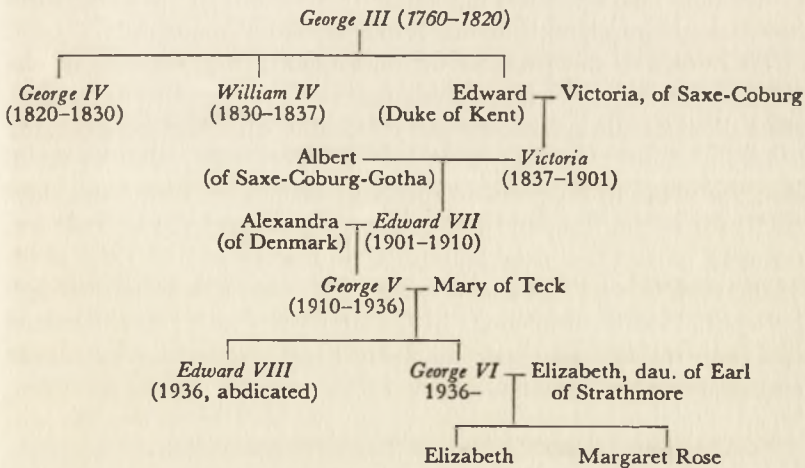
With the new voters behind them, the Whigs, now coming to be called "Liberals," swept into power in 1832.* In the course of the next fifteen years their legislation changed the whole character of England — not in essential structure, but in methods and in ways of life. A few of the more significant steps will indicate the trends. In 1833 the abolition of slaveholding completed the work begun by the abolition of slave-trading in 1807. The Factory Act of the same year, insufficient as it seems to us now, was a beginning towards the humane treatment of children. The following year there was a new Poor Law, which provided for workhouses in place of a system of doles; and at the same time the administration of this law, under elected boards, improved enormously. These measures, moreover, were only the more conspicuous ones in the legislative realization of the reforming impulse of the early nineteenth century. Added to this impressive list was the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, which provided for a uniform system of borough government in place of varied, antiquated, and corrupt

* "Conservative" soon began to be the name applied to the Tories, but the heirs of Tories like Canning frequently supported the Liberals, and the party itself, under Peel, was responsible for some important reforms.

practices, and which, by giving town government back to the towns themselves, abolished the control of boroughs by outside political jobbers. The postal service also took an important step when, in 1840, Rowland Hill introduced the penny post.

While English legislators were thus evincing the ability to put their own house in order, there came to the throne a sovereign who was destined to have a great influence on her people. Queen Victoria * was only eighteen when she ascended the throne in 1837, but she soon learned to practice that combination of virtues which has now for a century been characteristic of English monarchs. She was the ruler of her country, and in that sense she was the head of her government; but she did not attempt, as her grandfather had, to dictate to it or to be the head of a faction of it. Yet she did not withdraw, in spite of her domestic instincts, into puppet monarchy. She insisted on being informed by her ministers; she expressed her opinions with positiveness, sometimes with willfulness; but after 1839 she always yielded. In her hands, as in those of her grandson, George V, this practice, instead of weakening the position of monarchy, greatly strengthened it. The English people, secure in their control of their government, with no fear of a despot, do not merely accept, but rejoice in, a person rather than an abstraction as sovereign.

* *British Royal House since George III*



This contribution of Victoria, not to government itself, but towards giving a special character to constitutional monarchy, was the chief mark of her greatness. She is more often thought of, perhaps, as the pattern of a good wife and mother, and in that capacity she did have an enormous influence on the manners of her people. Literal-minded, devoid of intellectual interests, never magnetic or magnificent, she came to be a sort of model for the middle-class housewife — rather dull, rather pious, but essentially worthy, respectable. If we recall the loose manners in the reign of Victoria's uncle, the transformation accomplished by her example is little short of a miracle. But this is almost to damn with faint praise. Victoria was a truly great queen; for, in addition to her model private life, she showed consistently, through the longest reign in English history, devotion to her people, high courage, and common sense — qualities which in turn won their respect and their devotion.

In both of these contributions Victoria had able coöperation from her consort, Prince Albert. In fact, he understood public affairs far better than she, often guided her by wise counsel, and, on the whole, was quite as much England's ruler as she was. Well educated, with a positive worship of hard study and strict household regimen,* he became the pattern, as well as the patron, of that solid, meritorious culture which marks the middle of the century in England. The Queen, who was devoted to him, a fine if rather rigid character, was desolated by his death in 1861 and withdrew largely into herself during a long period of mourning.

To return to the progress of government: The reforms of the Whigs were largely social and administrative. Like other reformers, they did not always count the cost; and this neglect gave the Tories a chance. To Peel, leader of the Tory Party, and to Gladstone, who began his political career in that Party, is due the chief credit for setting England's financial house in order. But Peel was no mere tool of the Tory landlords; he understood well the needs of the middle class and had a mind of his own. Gladstone, though he was far more conspicuous in his later years as a Liberal leader, was from the first an expert in finance and a champion of honest and economic government. Back in the days of Burke and Pitt,

* So strict and so bookish that his son Edward rebelled against it.

English government had taken its first steps forward out of the corrupt practices of Walpole's day. Peel, and after him Gladstone, advanced these reforms to the point where English government established the reputation for honesty and economy which now has become a tradition.

Peel's great ministry began in 1841, when he was converted to Free Trade and stole the thunder of the Liberals. Already, as early as 1834, there had been a strong movement among the workers, when the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union was formed. Its aims, to get better conditions by a general strike, soon bogged down in the socialist schemes of its sponsor, Robert Owen. But discontent was widespread; many felt that the Reform Bill had not gone far enough; and in 1836 the Workingmen's Association made its first petition for a charter. This so-called "Chartist agitation" for extension of the suffrage and electoral reforms continued for a dozen years, violently at times; but three petitions were refused and the movement died down as prosperity developed.

The prosperity was in large measure promoted by Robert Peel. Besides the reduction of the tariff on many goods, his government passed the Bank Charter Act, which stopped the indiscriminate issue of notes and resulted soon in issue solely by the Bank of England, and then only of notes backed by coin or bullion. The other great service was the repeal of the Corn Laws. Agitation for this repeal had begun during the 1837 crisis and was steadily pushed by the "Manchester School," led by John Bright and Richard Cobden. England, as the chief manufacturing nation, would gain, they argued, by the free importation of corn. Cheaper food would mean more money for manufactured goods, and thus more manufacture and more employment. The railroad panic of 1845, together with the Irish famine, brought the question sharply to the fore again. The Corn Laws were repealed in 1846, and England moved definitely into its policy of Free Trade.

But Peel's support of Free Trade split the Tory party. Disraeli denounced him as a traitor and eloquently led the old Conservatives in support of "the gentlemen of England." The Liberals, profiting by this division, came back into power and, except for a few short periods under Derby and Disraeli, kept control for eighteen years. But the prosperity which set in during the late

forties largely silenced the agitation for reform. The two chief occupations of the Government for the next ten years were the "Irish Question" and foreign affairs.

The Irish ferment, never quiet, broke out afresh with the serious famine during the forties. The population, which had increased rapidly in recent years, was cut in half in a short space of time — partly by actual starvation, partly by large emigration to America. Daniel O'Connell, the leader of the Irish Nationalists, had opposed the use of force, but after his death in 1847, the Young Ireland Party, led by O'Brien, provoked conflicts, and a serious insurrection flared up in Tipperary. If the land question could have been settled at once, some permanent solution of the whole question might have been possible, but a long period of suffering and much agitation for Home Rule led to such ingrained discontent that Gladstone's well-meant efforts in 1870 proved belated. O'Brien's rebellion was suppressed, but conditions continued intolerable.

Foreign affairs since Waterloo had been largely concerned with a rather haphazard extension of British trading interests in the East. In Europe itself there was no single power or coalition strong enough to threaten England as she had been threatened for two-and-a-half centuries. The Army, except for an excellent force in India, sank into insignificance; but the Navy, though sharply reduced in size since Nelson's day, had active work to do in policing the trade routes, and on the whole it maintained its traditional quality. In India, ever since Warren Hastings, the administration had been improving under an able line of governors, and in 1858 the government took over all authority from the East India Company. When the Mogul Empire was abolished in 1862, competent viceroys continued the orderly work of the governors. But, though the Indian situation was generally marked by peaceful improvement of conditions, together with enormous expansion of the rich trade from the Bengal side, the most spectacular feature was the bloody Mutiny, in 1857 — stupidly provoked by giving the native soldiers cartridges greased with the fat of the "sacred" cow and the "unclean" pig. The rising spread like prairie-fire, and was suppressed only after serious conflicts, particularly at Cawnpore, Lucknow, and Delhi. But the Mutiny, serious as it was, was not symptomatic, and after its suppression the only warfare in India consisted

of occasional skirmishes in the northwest, as England pushed its influence to the Afghan border.

Meanwhile, trade had been carrying English interests to the China coasts, and a discreditable attempt to force China to admit Indian opium led to the Opium War in 1839. China, in virtual anarchy, could offer little effective opposition, and England acquired Hong Kong, together with certain "concessions" in other ports — a type of foothold which later became the model for other powers in the scramble for Chinese trade.

On the other side of the world, in Canada, conflict between the Governor and the popular assemblies, particularly in the French sections, provoked rebellion in 1837; but Lord Durham's wise *Report* led Parliament to a succession of measures which in course of time made Canada a self-governing Dominion and one of the most loyal members of the Empire. By 1867 Dominion status was established, with federal and provincial governments; while two years later the purchase of the Northwest Territories from the Hudson's Bay Company completed the control by Canada of its own land from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Meanwhile, Newfoundland had been granted responsible government in 1855; and five years earlier the Australian colonies had been given the right of self-government.*

England's treatment of her colonies during the nineteenth century was unique. Before that, European powers had used colonies for exploitation; and England during the eighteenth century, when she more or less stumbled into a great empire through her expanding trade and her defeat of France, had been no exception to the rule. At the time of the American rebellion, it is true, some men, like Burke and Fox, favored a wiser course, but it was not till early Victorian times that England began the practice of educating her Colonials to look after themselves and of granting autonomy as soon as practicable. Instead of impoverishing and antagonizing them thereby, she has promoted their phenomenal growth and their independence. She has "bought golden opinions"; and she has reaped a far greater revenue than ever could be "squeezed," as Burke put it long ago, "from the dry husks of oppressed indigence."

* The federated Commonwealth of Australia was not established till 1900.

While these colonial developments were going on, the powers of the European Continent were gradually developing new frictions. England and France feared that Russia would soon control the Balkans and the Bosphorus, and so embarked in 1854 on the Crimean War. Russia was checked; the Turk, the "sick man of Europe," was saved his control of the Balkans; and the Balkan problem was merely postponed. In spite of great displays of bravery by the little British army that was dumped without adequate supplies on the Crimea, the outstanding feature of the campaign was the heroic nursing of Florence Nightingale, and, due to her, the beginning of sanitation, hospital units, and Red Cross errands of mercy in time of warfare.

The English Government began its Crimean effort under the weak, compromise ministry of Aberdeen, but popular discontent soon led to the appointment of Palmerston, who conducted the war with vigor. Lord Palmerston, leader of the Liberal Party for the next ten years, was not a true liberal, but rather one of the old-line aristocrats, who began his public career under Liverpool and Wellington. He had a high sense of public duty and supported good government measures, but he had no faith in the extension of democracy. A gay, engaging figure, he caught the popular fancy. In the lull between reform movements, he was just the sort of gentleman premier the people wished: they admired his masterful diplomacy; they felt that he was another Pitt. Yet Palmerston was great only in his own time. His mixture of debonair and cocksure treatment of foreign nations was well enough in 1860, but it might have been disastrous at an earlier or a later date.

On the death of Palmerston, in 1865, Lord John Russell became Prime Minister; but though he had proposed the First Reform Bill, he neglected now, when the clamor for a second one was strong, to push the question. Disraeli saw his chance and, to the horror of his Tory friends, won the election on this issue. The Second Reform Bill, of 1867, was therefore, against all logic, a Tory triumph. It extended the suffrage so that now one out of every three adult males possessed the vote. Labor still had little voice, but, with the proportion of voters double that of 1832, the middle class was firmly entrenched. The Tories, however, were in no mood

to support further reforms, and the Liberals won easily in the elections of 1868.

It was at this time that Victorian England experienced its second great wave of reform. The particular genius of the movement was Gladstone. He not only sponsored a long list of liberal measures, but he virtually remade the Liberal Party, so that it took on a definite character indicative of its name.

Gladstone, born in that miraculous year, 1809, when so many great men were born, came of a prosperous merchant family and entered public life with the conservative traditions of Eton, Oxford, and the Church behind him. A scholar, a financial expert, a devout Anglican, he showed at first few signs of the later Liberal except in his strong, almost belligerent humanitarianism. He opposed many measures which he came later to sponsor. The fact is, he was always conservative at heart, by instinct as well as by inheritance. He disliked revolutionary changes and rather learned liberalism gradually than made sudden shifts. Nevertheless, in course of time there were many reversals in his opinions, and his righteous indignation, together with his assumption that the opposition was base, laid him open to the shafts of Disraeli's wit.

Gladstone's first liberal move came when he followed Peel out of the old Tory group in 1841. A few years later he sensed that he could no longer hold with the Conservatives, and by 1860 he was the real leader of the Liberals in the House of Commons. A vigorous orator, in eloquence as in muscular appearance much like the American "Parliamentary Hercules," Webster, he became the natural antagonist of Disraeli. Till the latter's death the rivalry continued — dignity and rugged strength against brilliant wit. But in the years before 1860, though Gladstone already had a reputation as a speaker, he gave his chief attention to finance and was one of the ablest Chancellors of the Exchequer England has had.

When the Liberals won in 1868, Gladstone's main "mission," he said, was "to pacify Ireland." He reversed his old position on Disestablishment, and the Act abolishing the Irish Episcopal State Church was passed in 1869. A year later he carried the passage of his first Irish Land Act. The necessity of doing something about Ireland, shamefully neglected by both Parties, was obvious, espe-

cially since the Fenian Brotherhood, founded in New York, had extended its revolutionary practices to London as well as to Ireland. The distress did, in fact, spring largely from the evil system of land tenure, and Gladstone's intentions were good; but the Act did not protect the tenant sufficiently, while it antagonized the landlords. Furthermore, the Irish would not now be satisfied with anything short of Home Rule.

The Irish Question was the issue of the day, but the great contribution of Gladstone's ministry during the next six years was the passing of a phenomenal number of good measures. Perhaps the most important one was the Order reforming the Civil Service. All of the departments except the Foreign Office soon adopted the Order, and genuine Civil Service resulted. Government by patronage had long been dying; it was now dead. Akin to this measure was the new Army Regulation, by which commissions were henceforth awarded on merit, thus abolishing the evil practice of purchase. An Education Bill, in 1870, provided for undenominational Board Schools, but permitted, as well, the old so-called "voluntary" schools, usually denominational. Hitherto, only about half of the children of school age had received any schooling whatever. The expensive public schools,* in spite of their curious compound of the classics and muscular Christianity — "absurd cockpits," Matthew Arnold called them — had long provided a good education for gentlemen's sons; and they experienced a great renewal of energy in early Victorian days; but, in general, English education was far behind that of other civilized countries. It was narrow, stereotyped, Church-ridden, for the few. This bill, therefore, together with the University Tests Act of 1871, which abolished all religious tests as necessary for degrees, brought English education into line with the liberal trend in other fields. Finally, the Ballot Act of 1872 provided for secret balloting, and the Judicature Act of 1873 revised and consolidated the loose structure of the courts.

But with these significant reforms, the Liberals had played out their hand — had become, in Disraeli's phrase, "exhausted vol-

* "Public School," in England, means merely an incorporated school, controlled by governors (trustees). "Private School" means a privately-owned school. The American "public," or free, school is equivalent to the English "Board" school.

canoes." Nearly every one of Gladstone's measures had made new enemies in one direction or another. At the same time, the recent rise of Prussia and the increasing competition for trade concessions in Africa and Asia called for competent attention to foreign affairs. This phase of government was Gladstone's weakest side. His foreign policy so far had consisted largely of sympathy for oppressed minorities and indignation over what he called Turkish "atrocities." With the elections of 1874 the Conservatives were returned to power, and Disraeli began his most illustrious ministry.

STEAM AND PROSPERITY

The prosperity of Victorian days was due partly to the stimulus of Free Trade, partly to the discovery of gold, but largely to the industrial expansion on account of the growth of steam locomotion. It was by no means a steady prosperity; about every ten years there were financial crashes — caused in the earlier cases by famine and insecure currency, but increasingly by the familiar cycle of capitalistic economy, with its recurring inflation and deflation. But recovery was usually quick, as new industries, with new demands for labor, rapidly took up the slack, in spite of a growing population. Indeed, the national income increased faster than the population.

The locomotive, viewed at first as a convenient adjunct of the coal mines, soon came to be used for passenger and general freight traffic. The little Liverpool and Manchester railway of 1830 was followed in 1833 by the London and Birmingham, and two years later by the Great Western. Opposition at first was strong — not only from the stagecoach companies, but from all sorts of citizens, who looked on an occasional "puffing Billy," with its "devil's reek," as the incarnation of dirt and noise. Many towns, like Oxford, forbade entrance within their precincts. But the trend was inevitable, and by the forties the rails were stealing the business of the canals as well as of the coaches. Investors began to plunge wildly in railway shares; the boom outran the business; and the bubble burst in 1845. It was then that the Government began to regulate this industry "concerned with a public use"; and the policy of regulation through commissions, rather than of socialistic experiments, has continued to be the English practice. Investment after this was more cautious, but soon more considerable; for

growing trade called for further expansion, and within a few years a network of lines moved goods and people as they had never before been moved.

The use of steam at sea lagged behind its use on land, except in coastwise commerce, for the simple reason that the early steamships, especially the paddle-steamers, could not compete with the clipper ships on important routes in the "trades." But the westward voyage to America often took the windjammers four or five weeks; and by 1870, as American commerce increased, as the Suez Canal opened a short route to the East, and as screw-propelled ships were improved, the old square-rigged vessels became as archaic as the stagecoaches. Long before this, moreover, steam-driven ships began to ply under companies which in course of time became famous in a great mercantile marine. The Great Western Company, which had sent its paddle-steamer across the Atlantic in 1838, launched the first iron screw-steamer, the *Great Britain*, in 1843. Already the Royal Mail Packet Company had been formed in 1839, the P and O in 1840, and the Cunard the same year. But most of the earlier ships were half-paddle, half-sail. Screw and iron did not come into general use till the sixties, and steel not till the eighties. The Navy, in fact, with its armament problem, ran ahead of the commercial companies in experimenting with iron and steel; and to F. P. Smith, working in conjunction with the famous Ericsson, goes the credit for pioneer work on propellers. Nor were the new ships, except for the unprofitable *Great Eastern*, much increased in size till the present century. Even as late as 1881 the *City of Rome*, of 8453 tons gross, was considered a "mammoth" ship.

The influence of these developments on all sorts of business was enormous. Greater velocity as well as greater bulk of goods meant greater velocity of money. The industries which used iron created a demand for extended coal-mining. Furnaces were improved, and the production of pig iron increased fourfold in the first twenty years of Victoria's reign. Nor was the change only one of quantity. Sir Henry Bessemer in 1856 invented the process of making steel more cheaply than the old processes and more durable than wrought iron, of which rails had hitherto been made. In the next decade the Siemens * brothers developed the open-hearth process, suitable

* Germans. Sir William Siemens became a naturalized Englishman.

for the softer, or "ductile," steels. Cotton continued to be a major industry, but the Victorian Age was primarily one of steam and iron. Meanwhile various artisan crafts, such as the making of small arms, reached a high state of perfection, and Birmingham, the center of iron industries, began to experience the growth Manchester had known two generations before. In general, most of the cities of the North Midlands, such as Leeds and Sheffield, shared in this industrial expansion, while the increased import of raw materials and export of finished products brought Liverpool and Glasgow into rivalry with Bristol. London doubled its numbers in the first forty years of the century, and more than doubled them again in the next forty.

In this general expansion various articles came into common use. Gas, recently an innovation, transformed the lighting of private houses. Kerosene oil was introduced; and matches, better soap, and better candles were available for all. Perhaps the most significant innovation was the humble can, for a city as large as London simply could not have been supplied without tinned goods. But many of the older craft industries lost their distinction. Furniture, for instance, was beginning to be merely elaborate or merely substantial, turned out to satisfy new householders with more money than taste. But English pottery continued to be among the best in the world, and Sheffield plate and cutlery kept up their high quality.

Agriculture was still fairly important in early Victorian days. The rapidly growing cities, it is true, already depended to a considerable extent on imported food, especially wheat; but farming made many improvements, particularly in the breeding of cattle, and shared considerably in the prosperity of the times. At the same time horticulture, a sign rather than a cause of the prosperity, became a special English art. Its characteristics were already evident in the time of George III, when English gardeners began to desert French models; but the majority of "old" English gardens, with their lovely lawns and their informal but dignified planting, date from Victorian days. The beauty of rural England depends in large part on the quaint villages and the stately houses of an earlier day, but it depends, too, on the widespread instinct for horticulture during the past hundred years.

In the social structure, moreover, though the gentleman was still an important figure, the middle-class prosperity and the new political power which came with the Reform Bills worked a considerable change. In the course of time, when most Englishmen learned to be gentlemen in the best sense of the word, this change was all to the good; but for a while the new rich, augmented by a considerable flock of bounders and toadies, advertised their superiority in their braggadocio as they invaded the watering-places of the Continent. Thackeray no doubt laid it on a bit, for he was writing in *Punch*, but his words recall a type now largely extinct in England, unhappily alive in some other nations: —

That brutal, ignorant, peevish bully of an Englishman is showing himself in every city of Europe. . . . A thousand delightful sights pass before his bloodshot eyes, and don't affect him. . . . He goes to church, and calls the practices there degrading and superstitious; as if *his* altar was the only one that was acceptable. He goes to picture-galleries, and is more ignorant about Art than a French shoeblack. . . . Nothing moves him, except when a great man comes his way, and then the rigid, proud, self-confident, inflexible British Snob can be as humble as a funkey and as supple as a harlequin.

But there are two other important sides to the picture. In the first place, there was a growing number of boys, educated at the public schools and the universities, who represented a peculiarly enlightened section of society. In the musty old libraries of their homes they were exposed to the best that had been thought and said in the history of Europe, and many of them caught the fire and passed it on, in deeds or print, to succeeding generations. To them, moreover, must be added a large group from humbler homes, men like Faraday, who compressed generations of cultural inheritance into a few years and joined the company of scholars and gentlemen.

Even before legislation promoted education for the poor, there was renewed vigor in the public schools and the universities. Several of the larger schools were founded during Victoria's reign, and most of the others, following the lead of Dr. Arnold's Rugby, took on a new character. For the individual, brilliant scholar this change was possibly a disadvantage; at least, in the less uniform schools of bygone days, an astonishing number of great men had formed the basis and direction of their culture. But the rank and file who attended those schools had found more hardship and drudgery



Painting by J. Pollard in the "Connoisseur"

"APPROACH TO CHRISTMAS"

than inspiration; and they had learned more about fighting with their bare fists than they had from books. Arnold's motive, and in great measure his success, was to make the school a builder of character — through disciplined study, through religious exercises, through a system of prefects, through rugged sports. It was the Rugby of Tom Brown — "Don't fight unless you have to; but if you must fight, fight till you can't stand or see." It was still a somewhat narrow and muscular type of education; and as it became stereotyped in other schools, as certain things came to be "done" or "not done," it tended to produce a caste virtue, symbolized by a necktie. It has, nevertheless, turned out a great number of capable, self-reliant men — men of a pattern, but on the whole of a fine pattern.

A saving grace in these schools has been the tendency to give special attention and quick promotion to promising scholars. With this tendency, moreover, has been kept alive the notion that a schoolmaster may himself be a scholar; and some of the men, especially at Eton and Winchester, have been as distinguished in learning as the university men. The universities themselves during Victoria's day nurtured a host of great scholars. Benjamin Jowett, at Oxford, and J. F. D. Maurice, at King's College, London, particularly stand out among those who directed and influenced education. The old universities still preserved their distinctive, inimitable character, but London University, founded in 1828, soon became important, especially in fields of graduate study; Durham was founded in 1832; and Owens college, Manchester, later part of Victoria University, was started in 1851. It was largely due to the influence of Maurice that much-needed attention was given to women's education. With the opening of Queen's College, London, in 1848, genuine secondary education for girls began. By 1867 women were admitted to the University of London, and the founding of Girton College, at Cambridge, in 1872, was the first provision for women at the two older institutions.

The other important social aspect of early Victorian England is the squalor in the poorer sections of the cities. Much has been written of the degradation and misery of wretches without decent homes, living like beasts in cellars or in makeshift sheds. The pictures in the novels of Dickens are no doubt sentimentalized and exaggerated, but by no means invented; there were probably

plenty of Jo's, hustled along by Sir Robert Peel's new, efficient force of "Bobbies." "I'm always a-moving on," cries poor Jo. "Oh, my eye! Where can I move to?" But these conditions were not the result of a new heartlessness on the part of the well-to-do. Indeed, humane reforms had already begun, and the general treatment of the poor, of prisoners, of the sick was far better than it had been before the pioneer efforts of Howard, Bentham, and Elizabeth Fry. The plain fact was that the population of the cities, particularly of London, grew faster than the number of houses, and that sanitation, in any modern sense, had not begun. London stood on a pestilential congregation of cesspools, and water-borne bacilli enjoyed a horrible scope in polluted wells.

Perhaps the equally significant thing is that, in spite of these conditions, there was a considerable decline in drunkenness and immorality. Much may be credited to the influence of the Queen and Prince Albert. Decency, sobriety were not merely an external show; they were virtues honestly believed in. If there was a good deal of hypocrisy, if a man hushed up his misdemeanors, he did so often because he really believed that he had done those things which he ought not to have done. He could find no warrant, either in the social climate or in his own heart, for the easy doctrine that he was merely expressing his nature. Among the poor, these improved morals were no doubt somewhat caused by repercussions from the manners of those more fortunately placed; but they were brought about chiefly by the earnest endeavors of the evangelical sects. The Methodists were the most active, but others, such as the Quakers, busied themselves with good works; the Anglican Church itself took on a new vigor, with a strong evangelical turn; and William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, began the combination of street-corner service and good works which has made his organization famous on both sides of the Atlantic. All this meant a good deal of mere emotional release and temporary ecstasy, no doubt, but it accomplished much practical, substantial good. It was not aimed at the dilettante cynic; it was aimed at the suffering poor — and it reached them.

The evangelical trend within the Anglican Church itself, as well as a tendency towards the breaking-down of old doctrines and rituals, alarmed a small group of earnest men at Oxford. They were alarmed, too, by the growth of Unitarians and Rationalists.

John Keble, in a famous sermon in 1833, fired the first gun. Soon the "Oxford Movement" was under way, in support of traditional, apostolic Anglicanism. The chief figures, who pressed their arguments in a famous series of tracts, were Keble, Pusey, and Newman, but many others, notably Gladstone, Samuel Wilberforce, and Manning, gave it their active support. The Latitudinarians, as the defenders of the "Broad Church" were called, responded with vigor; and among them were men no less conspicuous than the Tractarians — Dr. Arnold, Dean Stanley, Jowett, Maurice. Newman turned Romanist, as did Manning in the end, and some of the "Broad" group deserted to Unitarianism; but the general upshot was the creation of new energy in the Church, with a greater toleration for minor differences and a new sense of social obligations. This Victorian controversy, moreover, is as much a mirror of its day as the Reformation, Puritan, and Deist controversies were of theirs.

SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY, AND HISTORY

The political thinking of the eighteenth century led to the results we have noted in the first part of the Victorian Era. The same general statement may be made for the inheritance of science and philosophy — of Faraday and Tyndall as heirs of Priestley, Dalton, and Davy, of Mill and Spencer as heirs of David Hume. It may be said to some extent, too, of the historians.

English science has never had such a distinguished record as in the middle years of the nineteenth century. Lyell had only just begun his great geological work; a large number advanced the study of chemistry and physics; and Darwin, followed by Huxley and Wallace, revolutionized biology and, by implication, man's view of the whole creation.

Michael Faraday, born in 1791, the son of a poor blacksmith and himself a journeyman bookbinder, was inspired to take up scientific work by hearing some of Davy's lectures. Davy soon made him his assistant, and Faraday progressed rapidly to a professorship at the Royal Institution. His first work had been valuable experiments with gases. He also produced a new type of optical glass, which led later to his study of the polarization of light. But his most signal achievements were in electromagnetism. In 1821, working from the discoveries of Oersted and Ampère, he found that a charged wire

and a magnet not only act on each other, but rotate. Studies in this field led him, in 1831, to discover the principle of induction. In addition, he continued for over thirty years with important researches — working out the laws of electrolysis, discovering what he called “diamagnetism,” or the tendency of some substances to turn at right angles to lines of force, and formulating the relation of electromagnetism to light; but his great contribution was his work on induction. The subsequent developments of modern lighting and of the dynamo derive in large measure from Faraday.

As a man Faraday was of a singularly quiet, industrious, unassuming nature. Undismayed by the slowness with which his ideas were accepted even by scientists, he did not engage in acrimonious controversy, but simply kept working. A deeply religious man, he refused to mix science and religion at the time, in his later life, when Huxley and Tyndall were making an issue of the conflict.

One reason why Faraday's ideas were slow in winning physicists was that he was not a trained mathematician. His “tubes of force” expression was not convincing to the successors of Newton till James Clerk Maxwell, a much younger man, worked out the mathematics of the principle in a paper in 1855, expanded in 1873 into his famous treatise, *Electricity and Magnetism*. Maxwell, who was a professor at King's College, London, and later at Cambridge, modestly considered himself merely a follower of Faraday. But he made a distinctly original contribution in his electromagnetic theory of light — that is, that the fact behind both electricity and light is vibrating ether. Here, like Faraday, he found few in agreement; but soon after his death in 1879, foreign physicists verified and applauded his theory. Incidentally, also like Faraday, he was a quiet, devout Christian, with no sympathy for the controversialists who would make science the be-all and the end-all of life.

Another man who was a devoted follower of Faraday was John Tyndall. A professor at the Royal Institution in 1854, he carried on Faraday's work in magnetism and diamagnetism. But the versatile Tyndall did many other things, too. An eloquent Irishman, he was a great lecturer on popular science, and later, in association with Huxley, he sought to put science at the center of philosophy and education. Again in association with Huxley, he took an important part in the controversy over the motion of glaciers. His greatest work, however, was in his studies of gases in relation to radiant heat

and, in this connection, his investigations of light beams and polarization. While engaged in this work, he propounded the germ-theory of diseases and pointed the way to improved methods of sterilization.

In so brief a book as this, the inclusion of many others would amount to a tedious list of names, but any record must include Sir Charles Wheatstone, a pioneer in telegraphy, and Sir John William Lubbock, the astronomer who made important studies of the moon.

Though the discoveries of Faraday and other physicists have actually transformed modern life to an almost incredible extent, the scientific work which most affected contemporary thought was done by Charles Darwin. A modest, retiring scholar, who felt himself unqualified to argue the religious and philosophical merits of Evolution, Darwin must have suffered a good deal from the noisy controversy which followed the publication of his *Origin of Species* in 1859. But he must have been somewhat amused, too, when popular jargon simplified his whole theory into the bald, erroneous statement that Darwin thought man was descended from a monkey!

Born in 1809, Darwin attended both Edinburgh and Cambridge Universities, but he seems to have been more interested in sport and beetles than in conventional studies. Soon, however, he had a chance to go on the famous five-year voyage of the *Beagle*, visiting tropical and oriental islands. His already quickening interest in biology led him to make, on this voyage, voluminous notes on his observations; and by 1837 he had begun his systematic study of "selection" as the "keystone" of changes in animal and plant life. It was not till more than twenty years later that he felt qualified to publish his great book on Evolution.* His contention, briefly, was that just as man varies domestic breeds by selection, so "natural selection" provides for the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence. It was inescapable that the same sort of selection and variation was behind the long development of the human animal. Darwin did not wholly abandon older theories of Evolution — that of the direct influence of environment and that of use and disuse of organs. In fact, it was not so much that he propounded a new, subversive idea, as many laymen have supposed, but rather that he made the most complete, scientific exposition of the evolutionary process.

* Alfred Russel Wallace had developed the same theory, and their ideas were published, before the *Origin of Species*, in a joint essay in 1858.

Always in precarious health, Darwin spent most of his life in seclusion at Downe, in Kent, but he continued his painstaking studies. The *Descent of Man*, in 1871, added fuel to the scientific bonfire of the "Special Creation" theory, but he wrote as well a great many papers on his botanical researches. He died in 1882. His permanent contribution was his long, painstaking study of variations in plants and animals, but the Evolution Theory made the greater noise.

To the biologist, the main question, of course, is the validity of Darwin's theory of natural selection. Weismann's later heredity theory overruled it for a time, but apparently the scientists are now again giving heed to the importance of environment.* But to the world at large the main questions were far different. The Fundamentalists, as they came later to be called in America, saw their whole faith in collapse if they doubted a word of the Adam and Eve story, and the teaching of Evolution is still forbidden in some States of the Union. Among educated people, theologians who supported revelation, and philosophers who insisted on an "idealistic," rather than a "materialistic" basis, opposed the purely scientific explanation of life. It was this second by-product of Evolution which aroused the interest and support of Huxley, Tyndall, and Spencer. But there was still a third by-product, and to it Darwin himself seems to have given some support. He recognized that the survival of the fittest might not be the survival of the best, but he appears to have felt that in the long run it would be. Spencer certainly did. Pushing this idea to its beautiful absurdity, indulging the natural desire of man for a final formula, the wishful Victorian came generally to identify Evolution with Progress—"Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good." It was a comfortable doctrine. It might be rational; it might be mystical; but it was not scientific.

Thomas H. Huxley, the center of the evolutionary contentions, was far more than a controversialist. He early showed a variety of scientific interests and as surgeon on H. M. S. *Rattlesnake* in a four-year voyage to tropical seas he began his serious study of zoology and was able in course of time to make important corrections in the classification of animals. He was as well a keen student of geology,

* The author, an arrant amateur, is here giving only a general impression of what seems to be in the scientific air. The whole subject has now become very technical and complicated with the discoveries in bio-chemistry.

particularly of palaeontology. The basis of his whole approach to his work, and to his conception of life, religion, and education, was scientific. His *Classification of Animals* was one of his important scientific works, but the general public has been more interested in *Lay Sermons* and in *Man's Place in Nature*, which inspired Carlyle's phrase, the "monkey damnification" of human beings. Huxley himself felt that citizenship came before science and philosophy, and during his later years he served on many important commissions, chiefly educational.

In other fields besides the scientific there was a great harvest of scholarship in Victorian days. Ever since the exceptional work of Richard Porson, the great Cambridge scholar in the later eighteenth century, thoroughness had been conspicuous in the study of Greek. Other languages received much attention, too, such as Hebrew, Arabic, Sanscrit. If one lists the many names of scholars, it is difficult to choose. Jowett of Balliol has been already mentioned, and Arnold of Rugby; also, in the theological field, Maurice, Newman, and Pusey. Certainly the shortest list must include Sir Henry Rawlinson, who deciphered cuneiform inscriptions, and Max Müller, the German Sanskrit scholar who, like Handel and Herschel and Siemens, settled in England. It should be recalled, too, that Karl Marx, expelled from his native land, was able to pursue his studies undisturbed in liberal England.

The approach of the linguistic scholars had now taken an "historical" turn, in place of the older "critical" direction. It was the natural complement of the scientific attitude in other fields. In philosophy, it numbered two famous English exponents, John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. To Mill this aspect was of central importance, but his name is commonly associated with another phase of philosophy — "materialism" as opposed to the "idealism" of the German philosophers. This German influence never gained much footing in England except among the poets, though Sir William Hamilton and, later, Thomas Green defended it. The main trend in England since Locke and Hume had been based on experience philosophy and led inevitably in a scientific age to the materialistic utilitarianism of Mill.

Mill's first work was on logic. In his *System of Logic*, 1843, he attempts to reduce the inductive process to exact rules, as Aristotle

had the deductive; and this book is in a sense his most important, for it is at the heart of all his thinking. It is science applied to philosophy. Thus, in his political thinking he condemns all abstract, universal precepts, such as "the Rights of Man," and insists on working out "principles" by an inductive examination of history. To the philosophers, his writings on Utilitarianism and Positivism are very important, but to the ordinary person his *Essay on Liberty*, in 1859, is his most significant work. To the modern reader, confronted by the absolute State and by a new crop of "universal precepts," or ideologies, two things stand out in Mill: his honest thinking, his Hume-like refusal to subscribe to ideological jargon; and his splendid defense of the integrity of the individual. Yet his coldly scientific explanation, though a wholesome antidote to rhapsody, can never wholly satisfy the human mind.

Herbert Spencer, also a sturdy utilitarian, saw this to some extent, and admitted the insoluble mystery of religion: science, which deals with the Knowable, cannot ever explain the Unknowable. But this is only negative. In general his method followed the scientific, inductive direction indicated by Mill. His interest covered a variety of subjects — education, the State, society, justice, ethics — embraced in his two most voluminous works, the *Principles of Sociology* and the *Principles of Ethics*. Herein lay his weakness; it has been pointed out that his attempt to make a philosophical synthesis of all scientific knowledge was too grandiose to succeed. Nor was he a trained scientist. In fact, it was not properly scientific to attempt such a work — not till the millenium. It suggests Bacon, even Thomas Aquinas; the motive was medieval. Spencer was, however, the chief exponent of scientific Evolution, and his views were widely accepted in his own day.

Something of this scientific attitude affected the historians. Researches were more accurate and painstaking than they had been. But the truly scientific, impersonal view of history was still in the future. The historians, heirs of Gibbon and Hallam, were in large part essayists on the grand scale; and in the case of Carlyle the personal viewpoint, the interpretation, was everything. In the middle of the nineteenth century, English prose had reached a state peculiarly suited to historical writing; it had outgrown the tedious, somewhat pompous manner of the eighteenth century, but it had not lost the old dignity and rhythm of the best English prose. Here

again Carlyle is a special case, a literary genius with his own style; but if one turns to the pages of Macaulay, Grote, Froude, or to the essays and treatises of Newman, Matthew Arnold, Ruskin, Mill, Huxley, Tyndall, one encounters everywhere this mastery of the prose form: of the sentence that is a vehicle for consecutive ideas, not merely for pictures or emotional gasps.

Of all these historians and essayists, one in particular gave a new direction to prose. Thomas Babington Macaulay developed a picturesqueness of phrase and a skillful use of parallel structure which lent a new and necessary sparkle to his type of history, history consisting largely of brilliant pictures and lively anecdotes. He frequently overplays his tricks; the short, balanced clauses sometimes pound on the ear; but he is always arresting, readable. Editorial writers and essayists in magazines have ever since taken a leaf from Macaulay.

In many ways Macaulay was one of the most versatile and distinguished of the early Victorians. An extrovert, if there ever was one, he seems to have had no doubts and fears or spiritual yearnings; but he himself had, as he said of Johnson, a memory that would convict any author of plagiarism, and at the same time one of the quickest minds and greatest gifts of speech in his time. As a young man he could more than hold his own with the accomplished conversationalists at Holland House;* and in the House of Commons members hurried in from the terrace to fill the benches when the word went round that "Macaulay was up." A stanch Whig, he took an active part in support of the Reform Bill of 1832. Before this, with prodigious energy, he had begun, with his "Milton," the brilliant series of essays which gave new life to the *Edinburgh Review* for upwards of twenty years — not pretty little papers, remember, but those spacious essays which began innocently as book reviews and ended by dramatizing dull biographies into lively reading. Turn, for instance, to his "Pitt" or his "Johnson" or his "Goldsmith," still reprinted in edition after edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*; you suddenly feel, as you read them, "This isn't an encyclopedia; this is life!"

Macaulay filled public offices with distinction — first, for four years, on the Supreme Council of India, then, as Secretary of War

* Sidney Smith thought him a bore and left the room. He would.

under Lord Melbourne, and later as Paymaster-General under Russell. But before he was fifty he withdrew largely from public life. In failing health, he devoted his last few years almost wholly to work on his *History of England*. Conceived on a gigantic scale, to cover the period from James II to George IV, the five volumes written get no farther than William III. Objections have been raised that it is Whig propaganda rather than history; but where it fails as history, it succeeds as literature.

This characteristic, of erecting great literature on an historical base, is even more true of Carlyle. In his *French Revolution* he disregards anything that does not fit his interpretation and he magnifies certain features if they happen to tickle his imagination; but he contrives to give an inimitable succession of pictures — of the Paris crowd “simmering after its vague wont,” of Mirabeau, Robespierre, Marat, and Charlotte Corday. In his *Cromwell* and his *Frederick the Great*, where he uses a great many letters, he comes nearer to history. But in all of them it is the literary quality that redeems them. His style, grotesque, full of strange inversions and unusual words, is not so lucid as Macaulay’s, but it is equally picturesque and far more stimulating. A sort of prose poet, Carlyle had a message to deliver; and the prophet is rarely absent even in his historical writings.

Put simply, this message was in essence the same as that expressed in the poetry of Tennyson and Browning and Arnold and in the essays of Ruskin and Emerson: Keep up heart, push forward, have faith in God and the universe — above all, have faith in yourself. But just as all these writers approached the question in different ways and with different styles, — Arnold in cultured contempt for the “Barbarians” and “Philistines,” Ruskin in the artist’s contempt for materialism and its “deforming mechanisms,” — Carlyle, like Emerson, was the ardent champion of self-confidence and honest work. It is on this account that *Sartor Resartus* and *Past and Present* are really his most characteristic books. “All true Work is Religion: and whatsoever Religion is not Work may go and dwell among the Brahmins, Antinomians, Spinning Dervishes, or where it will; with me it shall have no harbor.” In that sentence you have the heart of Carlyle’s “gospel” and of his typical, vigorous style.

Carlyle has been called the English Isaiah; John Ruskin, the

Jeremiah. But Ruskin's Jeremiads did not begin till his later years. He was primarily an artist; he did some skillful drawing, if not great; he was closely associated with the Pre-Raphaelites, more as a defender than a practitioner; and he held the Slade Professorship of Art at Oxford for ten years. But his special skill lay in the handling of words, and his fame rests chiefly on his great books on art — *Modern Painters*, *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, *Stones of Venice*, and *Mornings in Florence*. Sensitive, idealistic, theoretical, he propounded some views with which artists have violently disagreed, but at least he taught a world which had confused and rather cheap standards to realize the importance of simplicity and sincerity in art. Above all, with his felicitous phrase and his graceful rhythm he could describe as no one else ever has such things as a gray English cathedral or a Venetian *calla* with its shops or the Roman Campagna by evening light. The same sort of comment applies to his ethical essays, though in them, except for *Sesame and Lilies* and *Crown of Wild Olive*, the style is not so magnificent. In his social views, as in his artistic, he was an uncompromising idealist, who propounded all sorts of millennial schemes. Few of these schemes found fruition, but it should be noted that many of the more practical social reforms of a later day derive in large measure from the inspiration of Ruskin. "No other man in England that I meet," wrote Carlyle to Emerson, "has in him the divine rage against iniquity, falsity, and baseness that Ruskin has." But Ruskin's Saint George, out to "slay the dragon of Industrialism," was fighting, not a mere dragon, but an overwhelming tide. Discouraged, he wrote sadly to Charles Eliot Norton, "The peace in which I am at present is only as if I had buried myself in a tuft of grass on a battlefield wet with blood." It was only in his last years, in retirement in the Lake District, that he found peace of mind.

LITERATURE AND ART

Much of the best literature of the Victorian Age, as the foregoing pages indicate, consisted of long prose treatises on history, science, philosophy. It was a time of solid things. People ate solid food, indulged in solid conversation, built solid houses — rather ugly but, unfortunately, rather durable. Few periods have been less captivated by the arts and graces of life. Nevertheless, though it was not fundamentally a poetic or an artistic age, it included two great poets and

several important painters. During these years, moreover, some of the greatest English novels were written.

Nor was the lighter side wholly lacking. It is significant that *Punch* started its happy career in 1841. Solemn historians have made too little of *Punch*, for it is one of the most typical, most revealing of English publications. "Sweet plenty or grim war," *Mr. Punch* rarely forgets Thackeray's hope, in one of the early numbers, that he would "laugh honestly, hit no foul blow, and tell the truth when at his very broadest grin." One gets the feeling that he will go on forever, with or without editors, on his own momentum; he is an institution, like cricket and Parliament. *Punch* can therefore hardly be called a special Victorian product; but it did come to birth in Victorian days, to lighten the solemnity of that time. For they were not, in general, days of mirth.*

Most of the periodical literature, therefore, expressed the solidity and seriousness of the time. With cheaper printing and a larger reading public, this field expanded enormously. The newspaper had already taken the place of the pamphlet. After the introduction of telegraphy, it suddenly became timely and, in the hands of competent editors, worldwide in its scope. Though chains and syndicates and "features" were still to be devised, to all intents and purposes the modern newspaper had begun; and the *Times*, especially after William Russell's pioneer despatches from the Crimea, took the chief place among London dailies. It was particularly fortunate in two famous editors for a long period of sixty years — Thomas Barnes and John T. Delane.

A generation ago Victorian novelists were read with delight and admiration. The fashion has recently changed, and only Dickens seems to be quite perennial. Some have a revival vogue, as Trollope and Meredith a few decades ago, and the Brontës recently; *Vanity Fair* is possibly an exception, but not the rest of Thackeray — on the whole as unread nowadays as Eliot, Disraeli, Bulwer-Lytton, Lever, Marryat, Reade, Trollope, and the Kingsleys. Yet these were the great novelists of early and middle Victorian days; and most of them had a secret which later novelists have too frequently disregarded —

* We must not forget, though, that Edward Lear and "Lewis Carroll" were Victorians, or that the cartoonists, Cruikshank, John Leech, and Hablot Browne ("Phiz") turned the satirical tradition of Gillray into unadulterated humor.

the realization that a great novel depends fundamentally, as does a great play, on what Henry James called the "emotion of recognition." The characters seem real, interesting, just because we recognize in them fundamental human characteristics. The validity of this indispensable condition comes home to a reader sharply if, after enduring some psychological or sociological clinic masquerading as a novel, he turns suddenly to another modern novel, *The Forsyte Saga*, and finds the secret realized by Galsworthy. It is not that the Victorians had no ulterior motives — of reform, of social criticism; there was plenty of that. But no one would read Dickens nowadays, if that were all. It is the characters that carry the story beyond its immediate day.

The modern critic is on fairer ground when he objects to the sweet sentiment and happy ending so common in the Victorian novel. Not that this quality is always there, especially in the Brontës and George Eliot, but, in general, there are far too many Amelia Sedleys and Doras for the Becky Sharps and Maggie Tullivers.* Still, that was the Victorian viewpoint; and the Victorian might well retort that all life does not begin with the unhappy marriages of psychopathic introverts. In any case, as you finish one of these old books, you feel that you have been among real people in a recognizable world; and that is the first and chief condition of a good novel.

The Victorian novels carried on somewhat the romantic type established by Scott; adventure is the keynote of Reade's *Cloister and the Hearth* and of Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* But the novel could never have lived on this diet, and the realistic type came again to life early in the period. *Pickwick*, for instance, first began to appear in 1836. Captain Marryat's sea tales, as early as any, recall Smollett rather than Scott; and Bulwer-Lytton, though some of his early work, such as *The Last Days of Pompeii*, is romantic, turned realistic in his later novels, such as *The Caxtons*. The Brontës, writing in the forties, used a wild and romantic background, but not as an escape so much as the very stuff of which their strange and lonely characters were made. Although the romantic type had a recrudescence later, in the days of Stevenson, the main course of the greatest Victorian fiction was solidly realistic.

Of the three chief names, Dickens, the greatest, is so well known

* Thomas Hardy, in this respect, was no Victorian, and he did not find his audience till the twentieth century.

that he needs little comment. But it may be well to remind the reader that the young Dickens was not the rather stolid-looking figure of the later photographs, but the gay, sprightly "little fellow" of the early Maclise portrait. The merriment, the bubbling fun of his books is in the Dickens of that portrait. Again, though the sentiment too often slops over into sentimentality, no reader will regret the large amount of genuine feeling, especially when it is touched with humor, in such books as *Nicholas Nickleby*, *David Copperfield*, and the *Christmas Carol*. But it is primarily the fun and the unending list of characters that make the books perennial, — such scenes as Mr. Pickwick on the ice, the Fezziwigs' ball, or Aunt Betsy Trotwood with her "Janet, donkeys!" — such characters as Sam Weller, Dick Swiveller, Captain Cuttle, Mr. Micawber, or Mr. Snagsby confiding to the sparrows in Cursitor Street that his "little woman likes to have her religion rather sharp." In fact, if all the characters in English literature which have become household names were drawn up in a list, it is a fair venture that Shakespeare and Dickens would account for eighty per cent.

Thackeray painted with a finer brush than Dickens, — a necessary implement in the satirical treatment of the upper classes which is common to many of his books, — but he lacked the exuberant mirth and the fecundity of Dickens. When we have subtracted the reform agitation from Dickens, the temporary features, we still have an abundance left; but when we have subtracted the delicate social satire from Thackeray, the remainder is not so great. Nevertheless, at least three of his characters — Becky Sharp, Beatrix Esmond, and Colonel Newcome — are among the immortals, and quantities of others, such as Dobbin, Rawdon Crawley, Major Pendennis, Fred Bayham, Clive Newcome, come alive in their setting. More than this, Thackeray had such a felicitous style that he is often able, where a cruder touch would fail, to raise his sentimental scenes above sentimentality. Perhaps the best example of this is the death scene of Colonel Newcome, a truly great piece of literature. After writing it, Thackeray, it is said, sat with his head in his hands, crying, "I've killed the Colonel!"

"George Eliot" (Mary Ann Evans), more than any of the middle Victorians, was aware of the influence of environment and incident on character and of the subtle changes which work out in human relations from what people are rather than from what they say.

Godfrey Cass and Nancy Lammeter are the hackneyed examples; Romola and Tito Milema, Dorothea Brooke and Mr. Casaubon are more interesting ones. In this respect she foreshadows, to some extent, the psychological turn which the novel was to take later in such different forms as the books of Hardy, Henry James, and Virginia Woolf. But she was in the main a true Victorian, much concerned with the moral implications of her story, and capable of giving her characters objective reality. A good deal of a scholar, she was inclined to be somewhat pedantic, especially in *Romola*, less so in *Adam Bede* and *Mill on the Floss*. *Silas Marner*, in spite of its being ridden to death in school classes, is in fact a model of composition, of neat fitting together of background, plot, and characters.

Poetry in the Victorian Age, though two of the poets are among the greatest in English history, does not bulk so large as the novel and the great quantity of prose essays and treatises. This may be ascribed in part to the fact that it was a practical, prose-minded age. Except for Browning, it had no particular poetic innovations to offer; in large part its poetry was a living-on, both in form and in type of subject, of the Romantic period. It did have a new message, — the spiritual implications of Evolution and Progress, — and that was of special importance to Tennyson and Browning. Primarily, however, its distinction lies in its mastery of technique. The “*élan vital*” of the Romanticists had been somewhat curbed by the “*frein vital*” of Landor and Keats; Tennyson, Arnold, and Swinburne, with this inheritance, as well as with Shakespeare, Milton, and the Classics for guardian angels, were great masters of form.

If space were available, more than passing reference should be given to several Victorian poets — to Dante Gabriel Rossetti, for instance, chiefly for his sonnets; to Elizabeth Barrett, also for her sonnets; to William Morris, author of the long, unearthly *Earthly Paradise* and of *The Haystack in the Floods*; to Edward FitzGerald, the odd derelict, great translator of the *Rubáiyát*; and to A. C. Swinburne, with his magical* rhythm, author of *Atalanta in Calydon*, *Tristram of Lyonesse*, and the well-known lyrics in *Laus Veneris*. What modern poet would not gladly give his head to have written *The Haystack* or the *Rubáiyát* or the choruses of *Atalanta*!

* Rather too magical at times, singing, as Bayard Taylor puts it, “in rare and rhythmic redundancy, the viciousness of virtue!”

Of all the Victorian poets Tennyson was the most representative. Not only did he continue the Romantic tradition worthily, especially in *The Revenge*, *The Lady of Shalott*, and *Idylls of the King*, as well as in his appreciation of natural beauty, but he reflected the revived attention to the Classics in a score of poems, especially in *The Lotus Eaters* and *Ulysses*. He reflected his contemporary world in other ways, too — the Crimean War, at the end of *Maud* and in *The Charge of the Light Brigade*; women's education in *The Princess*; the dream of universal brotherhood in *Locksley Hall*; the industrial capacity —

Chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for bread;
— the new wonders of science and Evolution, especially the idealistic interpretation, as at the end of *In Memoriam* or in the little poem, *The Making of Man*: —

Where is one that, born of woman, altogether can escape
From the lower world within him, moods of tiger or of ape?
Man as yet is being made, and ere the crowning Age of ages,
Shall not aeon after aeon pass and touch him into shape?

All about him shadow still, but, while the races flower and fade,
Prophet-eyes may catch a glory slowly gaining on the shade,
Till the peoples all are one, and all their voices blend in choric
Hallelujah to the Maker — "It is finished. Man is made."

Tennyson was easily understood, therefore popular. He did not excoriate or ridicule mankind, but gave them pleasant pictures and noble thoughts. His first important volume appeared in 1832 and he wrote almost to the day of his death, in 1892. In every best sense of the word, he was a representative Victorian. Essentially, he was a reflective, pictorial poet. He wrote several plays, but he had little dramatic skill. In his lyrics it is the happy phrase and the perfect rhythm that enchant, rather than the feeling or the tone of voice. Few English poets surpass him in felicity of phrase and none except Milton, and possibly Pope, is his peer in the handling of rhythm.

Browning, in contrast, brings you broad awake with his swift thoughts and incisive phrases. Not without lyric power, as in *Home Thoughts from the Sea*, *Memorabilia*, or *The Last Ride Together*, and capable of vivid descriptive phrases for a line or two, he is fundamentally dramatic. Even his lyrics are primarily dramatic, as he himself realized in the title *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics*. He not only wrote several successful plays, with William Macready

and Helen Faucit, the chief actors of his day, in the leading parts, but he gave a tone of voice, a sense of action to almost everything that he wrote — even to his sonnets. His best work, taken as a whole, is in the interesting form which he invented, the dramatic monologue. It may be semi-lyrical, as the *Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister* or *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, or in couplets, as *My Last Duchess*, or in blank verse, as his long "Roman murder story," *The Ring and the Book* — in any case, it is *dramatic*. And it involves one person speaking, with the listener implicit.

Browning, unlike Tennyson, was not readily intelligible, and his popularity grew slowly. Concerning *Sordello* Tennyson remarked, "There were only two lines in it that I understood, and they were both lies." Unquestionably Browning's meaning was often obscure, partly because he loved grotesque phrases, partly because his quick-coming fancies kept interrupting him. Towards the end of his life this characteristic became a mannerism; his titles seem almost designed to put the reader off. Another defect was his indifference to form. If he was often too brief, he was often too long. In *Childe Roland*, for instance, he wanders in a bog figuratively as well as literally before he gets to the magnificent close. But the originality of his ideas, the incisiveness of his phrases, and the complete honesty of his expression, without any lip-service to literary convention, make him one of the most stimulating of English poets.

As Tennyson to a large extent carried on the Romantic tradition, Matthew Arnold echoed the Oxford tradition. Not that he was a cloistered scholar — far from it; but the dignity and restraint and the classical associations gave his poetry an academic gown. In fact, Arnold was as much of a critic as a poet; he became Professor of Poetry at Oxford in 1857; and his later work was signalized either by his excellent critical essays, such as *On Translating Homer* and *Essays in Criticism*, or by his comment on English society, such as *Culture and Anarchy*. His poetic store was meager; he had pretty well written himself out by his thirty-first year; but in his verse, as in his prose, he had a consummate sense of form. The world will not soon forget the best passages of *Sohrab and Rustum*, *Tristram and Iseult*, and *The Scholar Gipsy*, while *Philomela* and *The Forsaken Merman* are unquestionably fine lyrics, and *Dover Beach*, with its sad dignity and perfect rhythm, is among the greatest poems in the language.

Turning to the other arts, architecture, as we have noted, fell on evil days in the Victorian era. There was a quantity of building, public as well as private, and nearly all of it bears the mark of solidity and ornament without taste. The two most famous buildings come in the early part of the period, and one of them, the Houses of Parliament, in 1840, though it is an illogical compound of Renaissance structure and Gothic decoration, takes on an impressive dignity through its symmetry and its happy location on the banks of the Thames. The other, Buckingham Palace, more important for its use than for its beauty, has a certain unity of design and sufficient dignity in its great façade. Built originally as Buckingham House in 1703, it was bought by George III and remodeled by Nash in 1825. The great eastern façade was added by Blore in 1846. From Victoria's accession to the present day it has been the town residence of British sovereigns. Nevertheless, as one considers the hideous hodge-podge of most Victorian building and the positive desecration of stately old streets and squares, one can understand Ruskin's pious wish "to destroy and rebuild the Houses of Parliament, the National Gallery, and the East End of London; and to destroy, without rebuilding, the new town of Edinburgh, the north suburb of Geneva, and the city of New York." *

But painting fared better than architecture. Some of the older styles, particularly in portrait and historical work, persisted for a time in dead tradition, but this very characteristic, of lifeless imitation, led to the famous revolt of the Pre-Raphaelites. There were newer influences, moreover, not yet crystallized into dead tradition — in water colors, landscape, animals, genre. Of the older painters Turner was still active; William Mulready, in colors rather too violent, continued the landscape and genre work; Sir Edwin Landseer won distinction in the painting of animals; and David Cox was the ablest and one of the earliest in the fine English water-color school. English landscape and atmosphere are particularly suited to this medium; possibly it should be grouped with portraiture and illustration as one of the most distinctively English types of art. Illustration, particularly, came into its own in Victorian days. Some of the best work of Turner and of Millais was in this field; in fact, most of the English painters of the time worked in *the*

* This was before the skyscraper had transformed New York into a sort of commercial Camelot.

illustrative manner, even when not illustrating, rather than in the French fashion of painting as an end in itself, for painting's sake. Furthermore, in addition to such great artists who were also illustrators, the direction given by Rowlandson and Cruikshank to humorous drawing was ably continued by John Leech and Hablot Browne ("Phiz"); and Sir John Tenniel, for fifty years on the staff of *Punch*, made the famous pictures for *Alice in Wonderland*.

Early and late in this Victorian Era one figure is conspicuous for a great quantity of fairly good work. George Frederick Watts did historical, subject, and portrait painting; and with his left hand, as it were, he was something of a sculptor. Among his historical works, *The First Naval Victory of the English*, now in the House of Lords, and *St. George and the Dragon*, a fresco in Parliament House, are probably the most famous. He is also well known for allegorical and subject paintings, such as *Time, Death, and Judgment*, *Paolo and Francesca*, *Sir Galahad*, and *Orpheus and Eurydice*; but his long list of portraits, some of them mediocre, contain a few that are really his most satisfactory work. The famous portraits of Russell Gurney, William Morris, and Algernon Swinburne are particularly fine.

In contrast to the prolific and successful Watts stands the rather solitary figure of Alfred Stevens. Yet he was one of England's greatest sculptors and is considered by some the greatest English artist of his time. After studying under Thorwaldsen at Rome, he spent most of his life teaching drawing and architectural design in London, and much of what he left is in the form of sketches and designs. When he won the competition for the monument to the Duke of Wellington, in 1856, he revealed his true quality as a sculptor. Most of the rest of his short life was spent on this colossal undertaking. He never entirely finished it, but the parts executed, especially the figures of Truth and Valor, show his genius; while other work, such as the caryatids of the mantel at Dorchester House, confirm the high rating he deserves. Stevens, much influenced by Michelangelo, designed and worked in the "grand" style, entirely free from the insipid imitation of the artificial tradition in monuments, as well as from the photographic realism of some of his contemporaries. He attempted the larger approach, more suitable in symbolizing grand conceptions; and he handled it with great skill and understanding.

The most conspicuous feature of Victorian art was of course the movement known as Pre-Raphaelitism. Ford Madox Brown, though he was not of it, was a sort of precursor or inspirer of it, especially to Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who worked in his studio. Brown himself is best known for his historical paintings, particularly *Christ Washing Peter's Feet*; and his greatest work was his twelve large murals in the Manchester Town Hall. Much esteemed in his own day, his overcrowded canvasses are not so popular with later critics. Together with Rossetti, six other young painters formed the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848. Of these the chief were John Everett Millais and William Holman Hunt. The purpose of these earnest young men was to break with the dead conventions of English art and to substitute sincerity, both in idea and execution; to paint, as they put it, "according to nature." The name "Pre-Raphaelite" was adopted, one of them says, to express their "admiration for the *motive* which guided the great painters preceding Raphael" rather than for fantastic and primitive styles. Critics at first made fun of it, naturally, but when Ruskin came to its defense, it won a considerable following. The purpose, moreover, was sound enough; and at least one of the group did work of very high quality. Millais, with Watts and Stevens, was one of the three greatest artists of Victorian times. But many of the followers, and indeed the over-romantic Rossetti himself, did provoke the charge of an affected medievalism. Imaginative, emotional, Rossetti's painting was strikingly rich and expressive, but he was a careless technician, and his very virtue of expressiveness had the defect of being more poetical than pictorial; he tried to *talk* in paint too much. It should be noted that he did some of his best work in water colors, a medium also popular with Holman Hunt. Hunt is best remembered, though, for his *Light of the World*, as well as for his portrait of Rossetti and his *Isabella and the Pot of Basil*. But Hunt had a hard time of it. His pictures were much discussed, but they seem to have provoked more controversy than admiration.

John Everett Millais, the chief of the Brotherhood, has a firmer place among English painters. Perhaps it is because he was bigger than the movement which he helped to inaugurate. He was an ardent Pre-Raphaelite, but he was essentially a capable, forceful artist, not merely the adherent of a set of dogmas.

The work of Millais was varied, but in all of it the instinctive

illustrator shines through. One of his first important paintings, *Christ in the House of His Parents*, forms, with Hunt's *Light of the World* and Rossetti's *Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, the group commonly called the "Pre-Raphaelite trilogy." Also of this type were his *Lorenzo and Isabella*, done with great attention to detail and to the "natural" expressions of the characters, and his *Huguenot* and his *Ophelia*. After 1860, however, Millais turned more directly to illustration, particularly of Trollope's novels and Tennyson's poems. From now on for about a decade most of his pictures were illustrative, either of books, or of scenes and subjects from history or contemporary life. So we get *The Boyhood of Raleigh*, *Rosalind and Celia*, *The First Minuet*, and many others well known, while in his later years *Cherry Ripe*, one of his most famous pictures, *The North-West Passage*, and *A Yeoman of the Guard* continue this type of work. But soon after 1870 Millais began to exhibit landscapes which met with great praise, among them such familiar pictures as *Autumn Leaves*, *Scotch Firs*, and *Over the Hills and Far Away*. Finally, in his old age he excelled in portraits, notably of Gladstone and Tennyson. As the years recede, his fame seems more and more to rest on these portraits, but, fine as they are, they are by no means so characteristic as the illustrative work. Made a baronet in 1885, and surrounded by a great circle of friends and admirers, Millais died full of honor in 1896 and was buried in St. Paul's.

Chapter XV

THE VICTORIANS AND EDWARDIANS: EMPIRE AND EASE

IN a sense the cultural impetus of the earlier Victorian days carried on through the century, even into the next. Much the same sort of work in scholarship, science, and history continued, and many of the older poets and painters were still living. Some new voices were in the air, but they were scarcely heard as yet. There was, nevertheless, a rather fundamental difference. Later Victorian England was not making a great culture, so much as consolidating a culture. Industrial England was not inventing new activities, so much as expanding those already invented. The social difference was also conspicuous. With increasing prosperity, extended education, and the comforts and amenities which these frequently imply, the middle classes became identified with the culture and amusements hitherto possible to a comparatively small number. Sport, and with it a healthy, outdoor way of life and a sense of fair play, became a common experience. "Philistines" and "Barbarians," in spite of Matthew Arnold's strictures, were beginning to develop a sense of values beyond mere money or pleasure — even though their culture may not have been quite as Oxonian as Arnold desired. Later Victorian days were more civilized than the earlier; more comfortable — and, by the same token, somewhat self-satisfied.

The changes in the political outlook were not less conspicuous. The growing frictions on the Continent, with repercussions in the Near East and Far East, and in Africa, turned men's minds to foreign affairs. In addition, prosperity meant funds to invest; and that in turn meant an interest in rich areas just being opened to development. Englishmen, though they had dimly sensed their empire for a century, quite suddenly became empire-conscious. There were occasional movements towards further domestic reforms and towards some solution of the Irish question, but the major concern was Imperialism.

These conditions lasted roughly through the first ten years of the twentieth century. That is, the way of life in the Edwardian decade,

though considerably freer, was essentially the comfortable, civilized way of the late Victorians. There were, however, at least two rather striking changes. Literature, especially the drama and the novel, took new directions; and in the political field about the same time a new sort of liberalism was beginning to take shape. But the imperialist psychology, though somewhat abated, continued. Above all, the ordinary citizen, living contentedly in his comfortable, traditional England, was almost wholly unaware of the catastrophe ahead.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

With the elections of 1874, Benjamin Disraeli, already seventy years old, entered upon his great period. He sensed the growing British instinct for imperialism as no other man in England did and, though his successes were hardly commensurate with his designs, he fostered the state of mind which eagerly supported the extension and consolidation of empire during the following thirty years.

Disraeli is one of the most fascinating, puzzling figures in English history. The ordinary, forthright Anglo-Saxon did not understand him and therefore did not wholly trust him. The most brilliant mind among the Tories, he saved the Party after Sir Robert Peel wrecked it, himself split it wide open again by his advocacy of the Second Reform Bill, and finally left it divided on his retirement in 1880. He seemed on the surface an unreliable opportunist. But, below the surface, Disraeli was more consistent than Gladstone. In his early political campaigns he had made a good deal of "democratic Toryism." His ground, not without warrant, was that the ruling oligarchy of squires had usurped the authority of both Crown and People. He paid lip-service to regular Toryism — that is, opposition to the reform measures of the Liberals and to the Free Trade of Peel; but his support of the Second Reform Bill, though it was a "right-about" on the surface, was consistent with what seems to have been his dominant political faith; and during his great ministry he did much to restore the prestige of the Crown.

His father, Isaac D'Israeli, a man of means and cultivation and the author of *Curiosities of Literature*, left the Jewish faith in 1817, and the son, baptized at that time, was no longer subject to the legal disabilities attached to Judaism. But his racial inheritance, from Spanish Jews of the high-caste, Sephardic type, provided him with

a mind which Englishmen could not readily follow or fathom and which led him for a long time to disregard principles and prepossessions dear to the English heart. When he was only twenty-two, his first novel, *Vivian Grey*, was such a success that he had immediate *entrée* into the fashionable and literary worlds. It was then that he indulged in those peculiarities of dress and manner which most people considered affectation and which never quite left him. Apparently this sort of thing was essential to his nature; he behaved as he did quite as much to satisfy himself as to impress others. It is not surprising, however, that such an "enigma" made slow political headway. His first speech in the House, in 1837, was laughed down, and he was nearly fifty before he was of much consequence in Parliament. Meanwhile, he gave a great deal of his time to writing, and his novels, still entertaining for their clever dialogue, found a large contemporary audience.

But all the while the real Disraeli, the man of extraordinary powers of intellect and of genuine devotion to his country, kept watching and learning. As Chancellor of the Exchequer under Derby in 1852 he was a failure; but he became the dominant leader of the Opposition during the long ministries of Palmerston and Gladstone. When he became Prime Minister in 1874, he at once gave vigorous attention to foreign affairs.

His quick action in 1875 in purchasing a large block of the shares in the Suez Canal secured for England control of that vital link in her Empire. In fact, one of Disraeli's great qualities was his power of prophecy. An astonishing number of his political predictions have come true. With his cosmopolitan mind, he could see, as Lord Derby and the Foreign Office could not, the imperial course towards which England was heading. When he made the Queen Empress of India in 1876, he met a good deal of opposition. Emperors were cropping up again on the Continent; Englishmen weren't going to stand that sort of thing in England; but, though they insisted on simple "Queen" for England, they accepted and soon came to applaud the title of "Empress of India" as a symbol of their growing Empire. Under Disraeli the British extended their control in South Africa and, after a war with the Afghans, consolidated their Indian domains as far as the Khyber Pass. In 1878 the Premier annexed the strategic island of Cyprus, but he could not find support for aggressive action in the Near East. Nevertheless, he accomplished a bril-

liant diplomatic success at the Congress of Berlin in 1878; and, though he did not live to see it, his policy in India and Africa became not long afterwards the accepted British policy. If Clive was the "Founder of the British Empire," Disraeli was in large measure the founder of the Imperialist state of mind.

A severe agricultural depression in 1879 and renewal of the Irish Question led to Disraeli's defeat the following year. The Liberals, under Gladstone, came in for another innings of five years. But they were very far from the united Party of a decade before. They had no consistent program of reform; they split on the Irish Question; and their leader did not push foreign affairs with the vigor the country now demanded. They did, nevertheless, justify themselves to some extent by two characteristically liberal steps: the first Employers' Liability Act and The Third Reform Bill. The latter really involved two measures: the Franchise Bill of 1884, which doubled the number of voters, practically establishing manhood suffrage; and the Redistribution Bill of 1885, by which all England was divided into electoral districts, in place of the antiquated system of representation by boroughs and counties. In large measure this third step in electoral reforms completed the gradual growth of self-government from Magna Carta through nearly seven hundred years. The barons had checked the king; the king, with the aid of Parliament, had checked the barons; the squires had thwarted Stuart usurpation; cabinet control had triumphed over George III's autocracy; extension of the suffrage had broken the oligarchy of the squires; and this further extension virtually put English government into the hands of the whole nation.*

The Irish question sidetracked both Parties. The Fenians had become actively violent again, and the Government attempted coercion. Gladstone's second Land Act, though it was better than the first, found little favor in Ireland, either with landlords or tenants. Terrorism broke out in Dublin, and the Phoenix Park murders led to the coercive Prevention of Crimes Bill. The situation was worse than ever.

Meanwhile Gladstone, averse to pushing foreign affairs, found himself very much involved. His temporizing attitude towards Russia on the Afghan border and his failure to rescue Gordon in

* Omitting the women!

the Sudan turned the majority against him. Salisbury, the Conservative leader, became premier for a short period of seven months; then Gladstone for five. The motives of the two Parties had become hopelessly confused, especially in regard to Ireland. Salisbury tried to placate the Irish by his Land Purchase Act, but he soon lost most of his already broken support; Gladstone, on the other hand, found his Liberal Party shot to pieces by the secession of a large group, including Joseph Chamberlain, who called themselves Liberal Unionists.

With the support of this group, the Conservatives now came in, again under Salisbury, for a period of six years. But their vigorous conduct of foreign affairs was obscured by the recurring problem of Ireland; and conditions at home, marked by the London dock strike and by a general growth of trade-unionism, were by no means settled. The Conservatives were too weak to hold their power when Gladstone, with the support of the Irish in Parliament, pushed the Home Rule Bill again. But the bill could not get through the House of Lords, and the defection of the Liberal Unionists virtually destroyed the old Liberal Party.* At the same time John Morley's wise administration in Ireland temporarily eased the situation there. After Lord Rosebery's brief effort to lead the scattered Liberals, the old, broken-down Conservative Party, transformed into the Unionist Party, took on new life. In 1895 it came into almost undisputed power for ten years.

Freed from the Irish distraction, the government of Salisbury now gave renewed attention to foreign affairs, particularly in Africa. Expansion of British interest in Africa had been going on for over half a century and was as much the cause as the result of the imperial policy of these times. In the North, the conflict with the fanatical tribes under the Mahdi led finally to Kitchener's celebrated march to Khartoum and to the subjugation and annexation of the Sudan. In Central Africa David Livingstone, a missionary, made his important explorations, chiefly in the Zambesi region during the third quarter of the century, and the interesting Welshman, Sir Henry Morton Stanley, made equally important journeys to the Congo. Sent out by the *New York Herald* to find the lost

* This was Gladstone's last ministry. The "Grand Old Man" died in 1898, in his ninetieth year.

Livingstone, Stanley found him in 1871, with his famous, formal greeting, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?"; but, Livingstone preferring to go it alone, Stanley pursued his own course to the northwestward and secured materials for his well-known books, among them *In Darkest Africa*.

Still farther south, the long story of conflict with the Boers began when English settlers in large numbers, during the twenties, crowded north from the small British possession at the Cape of Good Hope. Serious trouble soon arose over various matters, such as the abolition of slavery and the raids of the native Kaffirs, hostile to both Dutch and British; but the chief difficulty came from the pressures on the Boers. These peaceful Dutch farmer-folk, the original settlers, withdrew in 1835 on their Great Trek. Taking their Bibles and their cattle, they moved, like the Children of Israel, into a new land far to the Northeast, where they supposed they might live undisturbed. But it was not long before British commercial promoters crowded in north of the Orange River. The discovery of diamonds in 1867 and of gold in 1886 brought in hordes of settlers and squatters, till the Dutch found themselves in the minority even in their own lands. To offset this, they refused to admit foreigners to full political rights. Various temporary arrangements, often well intended, had been made by the British. In 1852 the independence of the Transvaal had been recognized, and later a South African Republic was formed; but in 1871 the British annexed the Orange River Basin and six years later the whole South African Republic. The Boers revolted successfully in 1880, but the discovery of gold in the Transvaal precipitated new aggressions.

The prime mover in Britain's South African policy had for some time been Cecil Rhodes, now fabulously rich in diamonds and gold. His methods were high-handed, as were those of American rail and oil kings in their spheres of expansion; but Rhodes, believing in British Imperialism as in a religion, was out to serve his country as well as himself. He feared German aggression from Southwest Africa; his great vision was the control of the whole area by Great Britain. He sought peaceful negotiations at first, then subsidized revolutionary movements in the Transvaal, and finally arranged for a *coup* through his friend Dr. Jameson.

With Jameson's premature and unsuccessful raid — for he moved on his own initiative against the advice of Rhodes — the fat was in

the fire. Sir Alfred Milner, the British High Commissioner, sought to work out a fair basis of conciliation, but the old Boer President, Kruger, would not yield an inch, and on October 12, 1899, war broke out. The Boers put up a magnificent fight —

I've known a lot o' fellers shoot
A dam sight worse than Piet . . .

— but the greater power of the British forces, under Generals Roberts and Kitchener, gradually conquered. Kruger fled, but Boer guerrillas kept up the struggle for a year-and-a-half longer. Finally, in the spring of 1902, the Treaty of Vereeniging provided for British sovereignty, but also for autonomy as soon as conditions were properly settled; and the English paid the bills. As Kipling continues, Piet was now “on the peaceful track, regardless of expense.”

Two aspects of the South African situation stand out clearly. The first is the ugly fact of aggression — no uglier than earlier British aggressions, but so near modern times that civilized people were ashamed of it. The countercurrent against resort to war had begun to run strongly; the Hague Conference of 1899 was only the chief among many efforts to rely on arbitration. The violation in South Africa of this tendency to settle disputes peacefully was therefore especially conspicuous. The offense was somewhat offset, to be sure, by the uncompromising obstinacy of the Boers in refusing full citizenship to foreign settlers when most other nations permitted it. The age was, moreover, still one of imperialist aggressions — in the Near East, the Far East, even in Europe.* The English Imperialists, Rhodes especially, felt, not so much that they were coercing the Boers, as that they were preventing German domination of South Africa; for the saber-rattling Kaiser himself had no small imperialistic ambitions.

The other aspect reveals the better side of English colonial government, already evidenced in the treatment of Canada and Australia. By 1906, the Transvaal was granted responsible government, and by 1909 a convention provided for the Union of South Africa, established the following year. The Boers themselves were amazed by the rapidity and fairness of this settlement. The best proof of its success lies in the fact that Generals Botha and Smuts became

* Theodore Roosevelt boasted, we may recall, that he “took” Panama!

the leaders of the new order, and that South Africans, whether Dutch or English, have been loyal supporters of the Empire. Rhodes himself is no longer remembered for his questionable methods, but for his devotion to his country and for his munificent foundation of scholarships at Oxford.

While the South African war was still in progress, Queen Victoria died, on January 22, 1901. Two full generations had elapsed since Lord Melbourne initiated the girl Queen into the mysteries of her high position, and in that long period English royalty had taken on a new quality, a new prestige, from the character and conduct of its sovereign. By the time of her Golden Jubilee in 1887, and still more so by the time of the Diamond Jubilee ten years later, people sang the National Anthem with a devotion unsurpassed since the days when they sang popular songs in support of Charles I. Victoria had become an almost magical symbol to her people. Few men could remember, or think of, an England without her. Yet this high place in the hearts of her subjects was not due chiefly to the passage of time, though that had something to do with it. All classes and conditions respected and loved Victoria. She had shown courage, honesty, devotion consistently; her charities were stintless, often at great fatigue to herself — not merely handsome gifts of money, but such tokens of personal interest and affection as her Christmas gift to every soldier in South Africa; in her private life, she had provided a model which none could hope to surpass; above all, in her relations with her ministers and her Parliament, she had set a new pattern for constitutional monarchy. For centuries, the English people had been gradually breaking the power of the sovereign. This new monarch ended the conflict, not by attempting to take power from her people, but by making her power their power. In an almost spiritual sense, the sovereign had now become the servant, and therein had found perfect freedom.

Edward VII was nearly sixty when he ascended the throne. Rebelling against the austere regimen of his father's household, he had passed a gay youth, much of it in France. He was always popular, but belated Victorians, who thought only in terms of "the late Queen," could not help wondering whether the amiable patron of the turf would make a good king. Their fears were soon dispelled.

Not only was Edward devoted to his country, but he knew how to use his greatest asset — the power of making friends. Only a few years before, France and England, with constant friction on the edges of their Empires, had been far from cordial. Tension had been increasing rapidly in Europe; the Kaiser and his ministers were busier than ever in their attempt to put Germany in the key position; and the renewal of the Triple Alliance in 1902 was a menace to both France and England. But friendly relations between the two nations seemed impossible; the *entente cordiale* of 1904 was therefore almost a miracle, brought about largely through Edward's influence. Nor was it made any too soon, for the Moroccan crisis the following year revealed the German threat to either country if it could be taken alone. Everywhere, the English King's informality and cordiality won him new friends. When the Kaiser visited Italy in great pomp, with a bodyguard of Uhlans in full dress, Edward made a quiet personal visit, in mufti, and stole the show.

For a while after Edward's accession, the Conservative Party remained in power — now under Arthur Balfour, succeeding Salisbury, who had retired. In its conduct of foreign affairs it was able enough; and foreign affairs, with the Russian—Japanese war in the East and explosive situations in the Mediterranean, needed close and competent attention. But a new sort of liberalism had been gaining ground; the nation generally was not alive to the hair-trigger situations abroad; and in 1905 the Liberals came in for a long period, first under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, then under Herbert Asquith.

Viewed at arm's length, the new liberalism was the beginning of the labor drive for political recognition, as the liberalism of the nineteenth century had been the drive of the middle class. In the eighties and nineties socialistic ideas had been finding a foothold in England, notably through the efforts of the Fabian Society, and in 1893, the Independent Labour Party was founded. But radical socialism, already active on the Continent, found few adherents in contented England. The Liberal Party in 1905 made no conscious concessions to it. Nevertheless, the radical ideas, toned down, revealed their influence in the shift of emphasis from the older type of reforms to a new type — acts to protect the laborer, taxation to smoke out idle wealth, and bills to prevent the veto power of the



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House of Lords. The chief figure in promoting the last two of these measures was David Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Asquith government.

His People's Budget of 1909 raised a storm of excitement. The main point was to tax possessors of wealth, instead of producers; especially by income and inheritance taxes and by raising the levies on unimproved land. The second of these features, forcing the sale of property held cheaply against future profit, was a threat to the immemorial privilege of the old landholding classes, to baron and to squire, as well as to speculators. After a lively struggle the budget passed the Commons, but was defeated by the Lords. Asquith appealed to the country, and the Liberals, with the support of the Irish Nationalists, were returned again to power. The Parliament Bill, after much hot debate and another general election, finally went through, May 15, 1911, when Asquith threatened the creation of enough new peers to insure passage. Its chief provisions were that the Lords should have no veto power on appropriations, and that any bill, after passing the Commons in three successive sessions, should become law in two years, even if vetoed by the Lords. It was a characteristically English solution. Instead of abolishing the Upper House and inviting a violent reaction, Englishmen, conservatively liberal rather than radical, gently voted the Lords into a debating society. They thereby saved its best feature, that of a salutary check on impetuous legislation.

The Liberal Party, with Sir Edward Grey as foreign minister, was by no means oblivious to the foreign issues. Lord Haldane, as Minister of War, was the author of the plan for reorganizing the Army so that militia and volunteers should be combined into one territorial force. As far back as 1889 the British Navy had been raised to a two-power standard, and its high quality was maintained through both Conservative and Liberal governments. In fact, it was partly the heavy naval expenditures which provoked Lloyd George's revolutionary budget. The British Navy at this time, possibly more than any other force, was a great influence for peace, paradoxical as it may seem. Nor was it merely a British peace, of the "have" nation against the "have-not." That sort of talk came later, as did "freedom of the seas." The seas were more open than they had ever been; the ships of all nations moved with a security they had never known before; and the German mercantile marine,

East and West, was often beating the English themselves in maritime trade.

A conspicuous feature of English seafaring in the early years of the century was Antarctic exploration. For a while, after the expeditions of Sir James Ross in the middle of the nineteenth century, the Antarctic was neglected in favor of the North Pole, where the chief honors went to Americans, Scandinavians, and Italians. But before the century was out, the Southern Pole was again an object of quest, and after 1901 Captain R. F. Scott and Sir Ernest Shackleton made several important explorations. Scott, on his last expedition in 1910-1912, reached the pole one month after its discovery by Amundsen, but his whole party perished in a blizzard. The story of his quiet fortitude as he recorded the story in the face of certain death is one of the great epics of mankind. In the course of the next two decades Shackleton, the Australian Sir Hubert Wilkins, and Sir Douglas Mawson made further significant trips, equaled only by the extensive explorations of the American, Admiral Byrd.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Compared to the dueling, wig-wearing gentlemen of the eighteenth century, even compared to the early Victorian, the late Victorian and the Edwardian seem so modern that they hardly need comment. But a good deal of water has gone under the bridge since their days. The crinoline had already passed, to be sure, and the fluffy neckwear of gentlemen, but one has only to glance at a picture of Du Maurier's to realize that the age of bustles, or later of puffed sleeves, of top hats on clerks in omnibuses, and of hansom cabs was not the present day. The stagecoach had yielded to the railway and during the nineties the bicycle had its heyday, while a decade later the telephone, the automobile, and the cinema were coming into use; but rush and noise as we know them were still in the future.

The conspicuous feature of late Victorian society, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, was its well-ordered comfort, its rather complacent acceptance of the world and its ways as permanently settled. Conditions heretofore possible only to a few were now realized by the prosperous middle class: the possession of solid, habit-

able mansions, with a hierarchy of trained servants — underpaid, but competent and rather contented. With this life, moreover, went various “durable satisfactions” — not merely financial solvency, though that no doubt made things easier; not merely an undue consciousness of worth, though that was sometimes a substitute for genuine virtue; but a wider interest in education, in books, in travel, in good music, in games of skill — in short, in the various employments and amenities which occupy civilized man.

The serious interest in education was evidenced by the founding of new colleges and universities — Leeds and Liverpool in the late nineteenth century, and Bristol and Birmingham early in the next; and for women, Newnham at Cambridge, and Lady Margaret and Somerville at Oxford. It was evidenced, too, by the growth of the free schools, by the Education Act of 1902, which recognized the obligation of the State to supply secondary education,* and by such progressive experiments as Sanderson began at Oundle in 1892.

Even in his amusements, the solid citizen inclined to substantial diet. The music hall, vaudeville, and other forms of light entertainment enjoyed considerable popularity, but the theater provided a large proportion of plays of established reputation. The new plays produced before the nineties, when the renaissance of drama began, were of mediocre quality, but a great deal of Shakespeare was constantly repeated; and the leading rôles have rarely been better acted than by the “stars” of that day — the American Edwin Booth, who several times visited London, and Henry Irving and Ellen Terry. Booth is usually called the greatest of all Hamlets; Irving’s most famous part was Shylock; and living people remember especially Terry’s Portia; but when she was younger, according to report, she was perfect as Rosalind and Beatrice.

Any such picture, however, inclines to describe one type of late Victorian. Of course there were other types — the frolicsome, though they were comparatively rare; the vulgar; the large group who had learned to read but who could enjoy only “penny-dreadfuls,” which obliging publishers supplied; the philistines, to whom pelf was power. But in general the late Victorian, whether “gentleman” in the old sense or solid middle-class gentleman in the broader sense, appears to have been a civilized, comfortable, serious, rather com-

* In the matter of State schools, England still lagged far behind north-western Europe and the United States.

placent individual. Because the life was somewhat formal, rather quiet, the modern critic is too ready to assume that it was dull. It had in unusual measure those qualities of pleasant living and enlightened intercourse which attracted many cultivated Americans, such as Henry James, to make their home in England.

Our typical Victorian took his religion seriously. He went to church every Sunday, and he probably said his prayers. Otherwise, Sunday was his worst day, for, counting the Continental Sunday frivolous, he renounced all delights but overeating. Nevertheless, a very genuine earnestness in religion and conduct was prevalent, in spite of some rather pretentious piety. Wives, if not women, he held in respect. Unquestionably there was a good deal of "double standard," but it was the pretense of virtue rather than the unusual amount of prostitution which has caused the modern critic to point at it. Women in England had fewer rights and privileges than their American sisters, but far more than their Continental ones. Anything like parity with the male overlord was still in the future; but the education of women had begun, their rights were being advocated, and by Edward's reign they were sharing not only in the ideas, but in the sports of the men.

But the middle class, though it included a great many people when you count the clerks as well as the prosperous proprietors, was not the most numerous. The multitude were what Ruskin called "the laborious poor." Unquestionably they were better off than a few decades before — partly because of remedial legislation, partly because of improved sanitation. London was now a modern city, with adequate sewage and a good water supply, and with countless charities and organizations which looked after the sick and the destitute. Nevertheless, the condition of the poor was by no means improved in proportion to that of the middle class. Though the population of all England increased less rapidly towards the end of the century, London and the great manufacturing centers continued to grow. The slums were no worse perhaps than those with which Jacob Riis struggled in the contemporary New York, but they were bad enough. The daily bath, even though the portable tub was still more common than the bathroom, had become a rite in the West End, but it simply was not possible in the East End. And that may act as a symbol of other deficiencies — in kitchens, in adequate housing, in most of the little things which go to make

up a decent home — deficiencies prevalent in the poorer quarters of London and the factory towns. This condition, however, was no more conspicuous in England than in other industrial countries. Indeed, in some factory districts, England was the pioneer in providing model tenements and recreation centers for employees.

All of these features of late Victorian England are to a large extent a natural, rather obvious result of what had gone before — predictable conditions. But in one respect late Victorian England made a novel contribution, set up a new way of life. The expansion of sport in course of time revolutionized manners, customs, architecture, as completely as did the French salon way of life in the preceding century.

The English were pioneers in this modern development. To be sure, a favored few had always been hunters and fishermen; and riding, in the lists, and later "at the ring," as well as falconry and the use of the foils, had once been part of the education of gentlemen; but, during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the French and Italians went in for similar sports as heartily and sometimes more skillfully. Foot races and horse races were as old as time. It is also true that there had long been games, especially bowling and football. But from such instances it is a far cry to a Wimbledon tournament, a test match at Lord's, or a Henley regatta. In Victorian days sport became, not the amusement of a few, but the occupation, even the preoccupation, of the many. Every village green had its Saturday cricket match, the schools and universities made much of soccer, rugger, rowing, field sports, and cricket; inter-county cricket flourished, and by 1880 the name of W. G. Grace, the "grand old man" of cricket, was as familiar to the average citizen as was the name of the "grand old man" of politics. An Oxford-Cambridge boat race described by Charles Reade in *Hard Cash* (1863) might have been written yesterday.

The date is significant. James Ford Rhodes, in his description of American college youth just after the Civil War, calls attention to the sallow faces and flabby muscles of boys not generally occupied by sport, and George Wright, an American pioneer in sport, used to tell an amusing story of how as late as the early eighties he put *one* golf club (his entire stock) in his shop window, but there was no sale, for there were no courses, and no one knew the rules. Twenty years later, when America and Australia were alive to out-

door games, the word "sport" in France and Germany still meant merely an excuse for betting; games were not played seriously by the multitude, and the average Frenchman, who looked with amused disdain on the British preoccupation, indulged for exercise in a "*petite promenade*." But in another twenty years games of all sorts spread over the world — not merely to America and Australia, but to the Continent of Europe, to Japan, and to the isles of the sea.

Perhaps more significant than the mere games themselves, this universal attention to sport promoted a new way of life. The French in the remoter provinces, resisting the kindly invasion, still preserve something of the formality and elegance of the old salon fashion, but generally speaking Europe and America, Australia and South Africa have succumbed in large measure to the new way — to country life, to casual manners, and to easy clothes (first jerseys, then knee-breeches, then shorts). "*Toujours la politesse*" has yielded to "Cheerio" and "Attabo!" Such life means playgrounds, outdoor clubs, and houses adapted to informal activities; indeed, the English type of country house may be seen in Bavaria, as in Iowa. Here and there in England one still comes on stately "spa" hotels, with vast formal drawing rooms and a terrace for promenade and tea; one expects to see a gentleman in Wellington boots come through the doorway, but usually such places are deserted except for a few old ladies and a belated Mr. Dombey or two. People go to the modern resorts, not to take the waters, but to swim in the waters, not to view the "prodigious wild prospects," but to climb the hills, not to converse, but to renew their youth at tennis or golf. And in the crowded municipal playgrounds the multitudes, who used to work ten or twelve hours a day, are doing the same thing. Clearly the whole civilized world has found a way of life as common, as dominant as the French fashion which transformed Europe in the eighteenth century; the English "experience" of sport has become as influential, and will perhaps eventually be as significant, in its by-products, as the English "experience" of Democracy and Industrialism.

SCIENCES AND ARTS

The scientific impetus of earlier Victorian days, as might be expected, gained rather than lost momentum as the century advanced.

In England it lacked the distinction of indisputably great geniuses, such as Faraday and Darwin, but it was on the whole more scientific, less philosophical — more inclined to stick to its last. Alfred Russel Wallace we have already noticed as arriving, independently of Darwin, at the same theories in regard to the variation of species. He belongs properly with the early Victorians, but he lived into the next century and in his long life made many valuable records of animal life in the tropics. While Darwin's observations of animals were based largely on domestic instances, Wallace's, on the whole more useful in support of their theories, were based on animals in the wild state. Another nonagenarian, Francis Galton, friend of Darwin, founded the mathematical method of studying heredity and is said to have used "eugenics" first in its modern sense. Some of his conclusions have been discredited, but his method has flourished like the green bay-tree. Among other biologists of note, Francis Maitland Balfour, brother of the premier, made extensive studies of comparative embryology, and his treatise was for some the chief work in that field. One of the most interesting biologists of the time was Sir John Lubbock, Baron Avebury, the son of Sir John William Lubbock, the astronomer. A distinguished student of insect life, he had a happy gift for popularizing science.

In the more scientific aspects of surgery and medicine, Englishmen have been on the whole practitioners rather than discoverers. In recent years particularly, English surgeons have enjoyed a high reputation, but the great discoveries and innovations since Harvey's day have been largely by foreigners. Robert Liston, who lived in the early nineteenth century and who invented the splint, must have been a remarkably able man, for he demonstrated in practice the importance of speed in operation. Even now, in spite of anesthesia, modern surgeons recognize the importance of Liston's principle. But the greatest recent name in English surgery, with respect to innovations, is that of Joseph Lister, who revolutionized the practice by the introduction of antiseptic bandaging. In the field of medical research, one of the most eminent men was Sir William Osler, the Canadian who, after distinguished work in America, was appointed Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford in 1905 and who made many valuable studies of the heart, of diseases of the blood, and of malaria.

Significant work in the physical and chemical fields took a new

turn during the later nineteenth century on account of the advance of knowledge in electricity. Sir William Crookes, primarily a chemist and the discoverer of thallium, was led, during his attempts to weigh it, to construct the radiometer; and this line of investigation led him, later, to his valuable experiments with electricity discharged through exhausted tubes and thus to his theory of "radiant matter." Crookes was one of the pioneers in attempting to get beyond the molecule and atom, and his theory is the chief precursor of the later electronic theory.

The greatest name among the physicists of the late nineteenth century was that of William Thomson, created Lord Kelvin in 1892. His first important work, by some scientists considered his most valuable, was in thermodynamics. James Prescott Joule, who, as early as 1843, had shown the relation of heat to energy, spent the rest of his life in experiments to establish the principle in exact mathematical terms. But Joule's theory was not widely accepted till Thomson gave it his support, in a brilliant paper read in 1851 before the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Thomson was then only twenty-seven. Born in Belfast in 1824, he studied at Cambridge and Paris and, when only twenty-two, was appointed professor at the University of Glasgow, a position which he held with distinction for fifty-three years.

The modern world probably knows Lord Kelvin best for his work in connection with electricity, particularly in the making of delicate instruments. In his thermodynamic work he had already devised an absolute thermometric scale. When his interest turned to submarine telegraphy, he at once began to make better instruments. He refused to abandon what was scientifically sound because it could not be demonstrated by crude instruments. His way was to construct adequate ones. In addition to his mirror galvanometer, siphon recorder, and electrometer, he worked out an improved compass, which compensated for the magnetism of the ship, and invented an ingenious sounding apparatus. In his long life he published over three hundred scientific articles. A great scholar and a skillful inventor, Lord Kelvin was also a modest gentleman, a kind friend, a sympathetic and inspiring teacher — in short, not only a great scientist, but a great human being.

The rapid advance in electrical knowledge attracted many other able physicists. It is difficult to omit any of six or eight distinguished

men — such men, for instance, as George F. Fitzgerald, the Irishman who converted Hertz to Maxwell's theory; or John A. Fleming, who invented a glow-lamp and was long associated with the Edison companies. But in so brief an account it is perhaps more to the point to remind ourselves that all this valuable extension of electrical knowledge derives largely from the pioneers, Young, Davy, Faraday, and Maxwell. Among their successors, especially with reference to the study of sound and light waves, two men are relatively conspicuous in the early twentieth century, John W. Rayleigh, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1904, and Baron Rutherford, who won the same honor in 1908 for his work on radio-activity. The chief after Kelvin, however, was probably Sir Oliver Lodge. His championship of spiritualism in the latter half of his life dismayed scientists and delighted occultists, and it resulted in a newspaper notoriety which has tended to obscure his real service to science. Lodge was nearly twenty when he began, after a rather sketchy education, to study science seriously, and he was over thirty-five when he commenced his brilliant career as Professor of Physics at University College, London. But from then on, at London, at Liverpool, and finally as Principal of Birmingham University, he made his important investigations of lightning, of electromotive force, of electrolysis, of electromagnetic waves, and of wireless telegraphy. Working on light waves in relation to electricity, he extended the researches of Hertz in further confirmation of Maxwell. He was heaped with about all the medals and honorary degrees available. Until he was over eighty-five, Sir Oliver continued his vigorous work, dying in 1940 in his ninetieth year.

Among the arts which flourished during the period under consideration, one sadly neglected for over a century took on new life. The revival of English music apparently derives largely from the cumulative influence of German music and began, roughly, soon after the death of Mendelssohn in 1847. Apologists can make a doubtful case for English composers between Handel and Sir Arthur Sullivan. It appears to be an attempt, in the words of one critic, "to squeeze some prestige, if possible, from an otherwise dry sponge." Cathedrals and the Anglican Church had continuously nurtured competent organists and trained choirs, but original composition had for a long time been negligible.

Sir Arthur Sullivan, chiefly known for his delightful operettas, was one of the first to stir English interest in the successors of Mendelssohn, particularly in Schumann, Schubert, and Wagner. Born in 1842, son of an Irish bandmaster at Sandhurst, he is said to have learned to play every wind instrument in the band by the time he was eight. After a youth as chorister in the Chapel Royal and as student at the Royal Academy of Music, he studied for three years in Leipzig and became familiar with the styles already popular there. His first recognition came with the performance of his incidental music for *The Tempest*, in 1862, and soon afterwards he earned wider praise among worthy judges for his "Irish" *Symphony in E*. The same year, 1866, he first showed his talent for light opera in *Cox and Box*, but nearly a decade elapsed before he began his regular association with W. S. Gilbert, at the instigation of D'Oyly Carte. During the interval he did a good deal of conducting and taught composition at the Academy. *Trial by Jury*, in 1875, was the initial number of the Gilbert and Sullivan series, soon followed by *Pinafore* and the *Pirates of Penzance*. They were enormously successful; *Pinafore*, at the Opéra Comique, ran for 700 nights. In 1881 the company moved to the Savoy Theatre and there produced in the next eight years the other famous operettas, such as *Patience*, *Iolanthe*, *Mikado*, which everyone knows. It seems gratuitous to remind the reader of the qualities of Sullivan's familiar music, but it is perhaps not fully realized that, with Gilbert, he was the pioneer in creating a type of musical comedy not only peculiarly English, not only the perfection of blended grace and humor, but far superior to the tawdry *opéra bouffe* of his contemporaries. What is more, few comic forms can endure revival in periods of different culture; but these operettas seem only to gain in popularity with each new generation of audiences.

Obviously, Sullivan's popularity rests on his operettas, but these have tended to obscure his excellence in other forms of music. In addition to many songs and incidental music, his *Te Deum* in 1872, an oratorio, *The Light of the World*, in 1873, and *The Golden Legend*, written for the Leeds Festival, in 1886, are ranked among his finest serious compositions.

By the time Sullivan's success was established, the whole English musical climate was undergoing a change. This development was evidenced not only by more receptive audiences, but by a greater study of music, and by more notable efforts at original composition.

Cecil Sharp, for instance, did more than anyone else to organize and publicize the wealth of forgotten folk material in both England and America; and Ernest Newman, by his scholarly biographies, stimulated intelligent interest in various musicians and their styles. Among the best composers about the turn of the century, the names of Sir Edward Elgar and Frederick Delius stand out. The first, though he was not a follower of the rigid academic styles, struck a fresh and individual note rather than a new; the second was the first of the English moderns, an impressionist.

Elgar, born in 1857, was the son of the organist of the Roman Catholic church of St. George in Worcester and before he was thirty succeeded his father in that position. About the same time he began his important compositions, but was not well known till his famous oratorio, *The Dream of Gerontius*, with its twelve-part chorus. Soon afterwards his fine march, *Pomp and Circumstance*, brought him great popularity, and his orchestral symphony in 1908 confirmed the general estimate of his power and originality. Knighted in 1904, made "Master of the King's Musick" in 1924, Elgar was held in increasing esteem throughout his life. Distinguished for his orchestral style, instanced by his well-known *Enigma Variations*, he excelled especially in choral compositions, familiar at almost every festival in England and still repeated often in radio programs on both sides of the Atlantic.

Delius, born in 1862, was less popular, partly because he was so unorthodox. In fact, he might well be placed with a later group if he had not been far ahead of his time. It is important, perhaps, to realize that, though the English have been rather hesitant in adopting new forms, Delius, a cosmopolitan in blood and in experience, was already writing impressionistic music in the last century. His opera, *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, which is not so much an old-style accompaniment as an interpretation of the story, is a significant instance. Delius wrote in various forms and media—orchestral, choral, chamber music, and songs. His unorthodox style precluded popularity at first, but it won him the respect and admiration of a small but judicious group long before his death in 1934.

Architecture during later Victorian days did not improve much at first. Architects for some time continued to introduce, without much taste, novelties picked up abroad. Villas, as P. L. Dickinson

puts it, were "willfully picturesque"; a London street was "a fancy-dress parade." Individual buildings were often good as separate specimens, but there was no attention to grouping. In addition to this, there was unprecedented extension of the rows on rows of dingy little houses so familiar to anyone who has approached London from the South. The influence of men like Ruskin and Morris was beginning to tell, however; and new country houses, especially after 1890, were often built with taste — reminiscent of the Georgian style or of the simple Kentish manor house. The chief architect of Middle Victorian times was Sir George Gilbert Scott, who gave most of his attention to Gothic restoration. Fortunately he was more judicious than Wyatt, of the earlier Gothic mania.

In art, with our date of beginning 1874, we must remember that, of those discussed in the preceding chapter, Watts, Brown, Millais, Hunt, and Rossetti were still in full career. Their friends, Sir Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, only slightly younger, followed in large measure the Pre-Raphaelite principles. Burne-Jones, a pupil of Rossetti's, inclined to more idealized interpretation than his master. Though much of his most interesting work consists of designs for stained glass, he is best known for his Arthurian pictures. His imagination had a rather affected otherworldliness — it has been called "effeminate"; and, like Rossetti, he had more sense of color than of structure. William Morris, even more than Burne-Jones, was interested in the crafts, and he did much to raise them from the low estate into which they had fallen. He established, with Rossetti, Burne-Jones, and others, a company for making beautiful furniture and decorations of all sorts, including stained glass. Finally, in his old age at Kelmscott, he set up a model press, from which he issued just before his death, in 1896, the truly magnificent edition of the *Kelmscott Chaucer*. In many ways Morris's contribution to the crafts — his education of workmen, his revival of guild fidelity, his attack on vulgarity — was his greatest work. His painting and designing, like his poetry, though they are both beautiful and interesting, suffer, as does the painting of Burne-Jones, from a sort of hypothetical medievalism.

Two other important men among the artists of the last half of the century were Sir Frederick Leighton and the American who became identified with London, James McNeill Whistler. Leighton,

almost exactly contemporary with Millais, stands in rather marked contrast to the Pre-Raphaelites — not as an opponent so much as a representative of the more traditional styles. As such, he might have been mediocre, even dull, if he had not been an excellent technician or if he had been literal-minded, like Alma Tadema. He had, further, the advantage of a youth spent almost wholly abroad. When he settled in London in 1860, at the age of thirty, he had absorbed the best of European art, especially Italian. His first painting to attract attention, in 1855, was *Cimabue's Madonna Carried in Procession through Florence*, and this kind of symbolic subject painting, usually historical, was his most characteristic type. He did fairly good work in a variety of forms — murals, black-and-white illustrations, portraits. He was a competent sculptor, at his best in the *Athlete Struggling with a Python*. And two of his best subject paintings, *The Summer Moon* and *The Music Lesson*, are purely imaginary, not historical. But the great bulk of his work was in the historical subject field. President of the Royal Academy in 1878, recipient of many academic honors, raised to the peerage, Lord Leighton came in his later life to be almost as much a symbol of Victorian art as Tennyson was of Victorian poetry.

Whistler, in contrast, had little place in the orderly Victorian mind. Opinionated, a bitter enemy, something of a poseur in dress and manner, an innovator, but so individualistic that he established no school, Whistler, like Delius in his earlier days, found only a few who could understand or appreciate his work. Born in 1834, Whistler was still a young man when he settled, after a French training, in London; but he was nearly sixty before his work was at all widely appreciated. He was chiefly conspicuous in these middle years for his sharp wit, his poses, his controversies. He went to law over a criticism of Ruskin's and was awarded one farthing damages; and in 1890 he gave himself and his less orthodox readers entertainment by writing *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*. The conventional Academicians often refused to exhibit his pictures. He was rather widely, though erroneously, supposed to be an offshoot of the foreign, misunderstood school of Impressionists. As a matter of fact, though he had close association with the Impressionists, he was far too individualistic to belong to any school. Possibly the strongest influence in his work came from his pioneer study

of Chinese and Japanese art. He was not French, any more than he was American or English; he was just Whistler.

Entirely free from the conventions and traditions of English art, Whistler was able to look at subjects in a new way, to see beauty where many had passed it by. He had extraordinary skill in technique, which enabled him to accentuate the "impression" he wished to convey. Perhaps he made too much of what he called "arrangement," was too interested in interpreting a particular turn of the head. This objection has been made against his famous portrait of his mother. But his great work was in his painting and etching of scenes, such as his many familiar "Nocturnes," as of the Thames or of Valparaiso Harbor; and though his paintings were interesting, his etchings, of which he left several hundred, were his finest work. Critics seem agreed that in this field he stands, without question, close to Rembrandt and Van Dyck.

While these men, both traditionalists and innovators, were at work, the art of illustrating continued its high quality. Among many skillful artists, one remembers especially Kate Greenaway and Walter Crane, for their charming pictures in children's books; Hugh Thompson, for his sketches of life along the highways and byways of coaching England; George Du Maurier, for his drawings in *Punch* as well as in his own novels; and Aubrey Beardsley, whose defiance of perspective was a revolutionary innovation, but who gave illustration a new, ornamental quality, especially in poster work. Condemned by his horrified contemporaries, Beardsley was the pioneer of a modern cult.

In literature, the fact-finding, scientific Victorians continued to produce a large proportion of prose. The bulk of the reading public was now naturally a prose public, but, after subtracting the newspapers, magazines, and popular publications, prose was still the main diet. History, with much of the old approach and style, was written in increasing quantity; but, though none of it was so picturesque as Macaulay's or of such literary worth as Carlyle's, the scholarship was more accurate than in the earlier histories, the personal bias less marked. The excellent work of E. A. Freeman, John R. Green, W. E. H. Lecky, S. R. Gardiner, John A. Symonds, and George O. Trevelyan at once comes to mind. It is an imposing list, for these men, especially Green, Symonds, and Trevelyan,

were masters of that lively but dignified style which was one of the great qualities of Victorian prose. The only other country which has matched it with a prose style as suitable for historical and biographical narrative is France.*

An especially important figure in this historical writing was Frederic W. Maitland. Since the days of Blackstone, the history of English law had never been properly written. It is a safe guess that for every book on either the history or philosophy of jurisprudence in England, there were a dozen in France and a score in Germany. Maitland's great work, among many important books on legal history and contributions to the *Cambridge Modern History*, was his *History of English Law*, in conjunction with the celebrated jurist, Sir Frederick Pollock. Like so many other Victorians, he was master of a style which made an unusually dry subject interesting.

In historical writing there began a significant change towards the end of the century — a development due largely to the influence of Lord Acton. To him careful scholarship was not enough; it must be freed from personal bias; it must be an exact, impersonal, documented record. Made Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge in 1895, he planned the extensive *Cambridge Modern History*, though his death in 1902 prevented his having much part in it; but his influence, emphasizing the scientific approach in other branches of learning, was an inspiration to his successors. It was a necessary step of great value; but it has had its defects. Since Acton's day history has tended to become largely a cold-blooded record of fact, or mere entertainment. The middle ground, which was the position held by such men as Hallam, Macaulay, Green, is now virtually vacant. With this dehumanizing of the subject, moreover, has come a dehumanizing of style.** *Le style, c'est l'homme*; and the man must not intrude in scientific work! But it was precisely the style of the older men, of scientist as well as historian, which bridged the gap between the reader and the fact.

The same comment may be made for the Victorian essayists as for the historians, both as to the worth of their matter and the

* One or two writers, such as Mommsen and Freytag, in Germany, and only one, Parkman, in America, have come near it.

** Not so conspicuous in England as in America.

charm of their style. Some, like Walter Pater, especially in his *Marius*, are more notable for style; others, like Frederic Harrison, for matter; others still, like John Morley and Leslie Stephen, for a happy combination of the two. Somewhat apart stands Robert Louis Stevenson, primarily a literary artist in his essays, almost a virtuoso, but with so charming and picturesque a style that already his papers have ceased to be mere essays and have passed into the select group of permanent literature. People *ought* still to read the other men, for there is much matter in them; but they *do* still read Stevenson's *Virginibus Puerisque*, *Inland Voyage*, and *Travels with a Donkey*.

The novel, like history, also experienced an important change towards the end of the nineteenth century. The old Victorian type still flourished in such writers as George Macdonald and William De Morgan, both now largely, though undeservedly, forgotten. The old romantic type of novel had also a new lease of life in Stevenson; and a newer form, more dependent for its romance on the scene and the style than on the heroic adventure, in Joseph Conrad. In fact, Conrad described the sea he knew well with great realism and with a singularly vivid and graceful style. In some of his books, such as *The Nigger of the Narcissus* and *Typhoon*, the sea is everything; even in *Lord Jim* it is a major part. But Stevenson and Conrad, like Hardy, have both been "revived" — deservedly — and are well known.

It was rather with George Meredith and Thomas Hardy that real innovation set in. In what has been called Meredith's "romantic irony" — in such novels as *Richard Feverel*, *Diana*, and, particularly, *The Egoist* — he represents the beginning of two significant trends. Life was not, after all, an external phenomenon, satisfied with mere representation; nor do things invariably move, after a convenient set of obstacles, into a happy ending. A poet, with a distinct bias towards romance, Meredith found the bubble of romance constantly bursting. Life was heart-rending at times, but much of it was silly and needed to be exposed and laughed at. Nevertheless, it was in the main good; Meredith had much faith in "nature." The other trend, in which Meredith, after Eliot, was a pioneer, was to base the developments in a given story, not on characters committed to a type, but on their psychology. In neither of these trends did he go so far as Hardy and Henry James; but he created

credible, human characters, if not great ones, unhappily hidden from the passing reader by his difficult style.

Thomas Hardy went much further than Meredith because he viewed the irony of life, not merely as man's mistake, but as man's grim fate; not merely as the condition of a set of circumstances, but as a fundamental trait at the heart of man's existence. Perhaps he felt it all the more tragically because he lacked Meredith's sense of humor; in most of his stories a jolly, objective man out of the real world would play havoc with the tragic intensity of Hardy's poor introspective souls in the clutch of circumstance.* But Hardy offset this defect to some extent by his largeness of view; he invested his romantic catastrophes with a sort of classic inevitability. If he lacked humor, he also was not morbid. He was not depicting merely the petty misadventure of this man or that woman; back of it was always the universal tragedy of mankind, especially of womankind. Hardy is as sad and as dignified as a Greek chorus. Somehow you forget the preposterous coincidences on which most of the stories depend; you even fail to realize, temporarily, that Clym Yeobright was a silly idealist and that Angel Clare was an ass; you, like Clym and Eustacia, are enchained on Egdon Heath and find the story credible; you even suffer almost to tears with poor Tess during that last night at Stonehenge. But the charge of a fatal unreality must still be laid at Hardy's door. When you get over the hypnotism of his style, you realize that few of his characters — though Gabriel Oak, and Tess, too, may be exceptions — could live in any real world. His art was to create his world, his Wessex — by no means the actual Dorsetshire; and in that world, through his magic, his characters come alive.

But the point that chiefly concerns us here is that Meredith and Hardy had introduced a new note into English fiction. The other new note of significance, the analysis of the inner workings of the minds of the characters, had already been somewhat foreshadowed by George Eliot, Meredith, and Hardy. But the author who made a principle of it was Henry James, the American who spent most of his boyhood in Europe and who settled in England before he was thirty. It is a commonplace that James was too much of a

* Hardy was not the pioneer in using this influence of environment. Balzac and Hawthorne had done it before he cut his molars; and the Brontës too.

psychologist, and that his characters were recruited too wholly from a leisured, intellectual class, idle enough to be preoccupied with their own subtle minds. In his later novels, such as *The Wings of a Dove* and *The Ambassadors*, he inclines to analyze his people out of reality into psychological specimens, and on that account his earlier work, such as *Roderick Hudson* and *Daisy Miller*, may have more permanence. But this characteristic of getting behind the springs of action, together with Hardy's refusal to treat life any longer as mere "beer and skittles," gave fiction a new turn.

Other novelists near the turn of the century, though of less importance than Hardy and Conrad for their quality, or than Hardy and James for their influence, were distinctly out of line with the Victorian traditions. One of these was George Gissing, whose novels, such as *The Nether World* and *The Whirlpool*, reflected his feeling that worth is forever "by poverty depressed"; but Gissing, a scholarly recluse, is probably best known for his *Henry Ryecroft*, a sort of autobiography. He was a shrewd critic and a master of style rather than a great novelist. George Moore, one of the first in the Irish Revival,* attempted in his novels to accomplish the unvarnished realism of Zola, and his earlier work, at times repulsive, shocked English audiences; but other books, especially *Esther Waters*, revealed that he was a master of style and an able, if not a master, novelist. Again, George Du Maurier's *Trilby* found a wide public, but, fascinating as it is as a study, it has little merit as a novel. Far more substantial as fiction are the works of the myriad-minded H. G. Wells. Scientist, socialist, philosopher, historian, Wells began to write fiction by combining his scientific and political views in the *Time Machine*, published in 1895; but, later and with better art, he showed his great ability to draw character in *Love and Mr. Lewisham*, *Tono-Bungay*, and *The History of Mr. Polly*. Nor would any brief list of Edwardian fiction be complete if it omitted two other men. Conan Doyle's clever creation of Sherlock Holmes has given him a unique place in English fiction — so unique, in fact, that it overshadows his *Micah Clarke*, an effective story in the old historical pattern. And Arnold Bennett, once he got over his journalistic pot-boilers, wrote, in *The Old Wives' Tale*, one of the best character novels of the first decade in this century.

* See page 363.

Compared to France, Russia, and America, late Victorian England was not conspicuous in the short story. Conan Doyle, of course, wrote some of his best Sherlock adventures in this form; and Hardy, in tales like *The Three Strangers*, showed what he might have done had he not been occupied with novels; but only two men, Stevenson and Kipling, revealed exceptional ability in this medium. The literary artist in Stevenson caught something of the finish and delicate grace of French models. In *A Lodging for the Night*, and to a certain extent in stories with more substance, such as *Markheim* and *The Sire de Maletroit's Door*, it is the style, the deft finish, which carries them. Kipling, less a master of technique, had far more strings to his bow, and his collections of animal stories, Indian tales, soldier adventures, fanciful children's stories, and anecdotes of living machines reveal the variety as well as the fecundity of his powers. Not great in characterization, barring the perennial Mulvaney, Kipling had such unusual powers of invention, such a clear vision of his scenes, and such a vigorous style, touched with a rare sense of humor, that everyone reads and will probably continue to read his stories. If Kipling had not done it, one would have considered it well nigh impossible for the same man to have written *Wee Willie Winkie* and *The End of the Passage*, *My Lord the Elephant* and *The Brushwood Boy*, *Puck of Pook's Hill* and .007.

Late Victorian poetry bears some resemblance to late Victorian painting. Many of the earlier poets, as the earlier painters, were still living; and Tennyson and Browning, like Millais and Leighton, claimed the chief attention. Similarly, as in the painting, there were some new figures; but only one of them, Kipling, got much hearing at first. Among those writing in the traditional Victorian style, a host of minor authors wrote good verse. One thinks of Lang, with his happy phrases; of Stevenson, with his sense for the perfect word. William Ernest Henley stands out for his two great poems, *Invictus* and *Margaritae Sorori*; James Thomson for his poignant *City of Dreadful Night*; Francis Thompson, who eventually found comfort in his Catholic mysticism, for his equally poignant and far more poetical *Hound of Heaven*; and William Watson for such fine lyrics as *Ode in May* and his tremendous little poem, *The Great Misgiving*. Thomas Hardy also was writing verse,

early and late, and the world has at last come to appreciate its quality — a quality manifest in his novels, of searching thought wedded to beautiful language. But Hardy's short poems, lacking lyrical distinction, are as nothing compared to his long epic-drama, *The Dynasts*, published 1904–1908 — perhaps the greatest English poem written in this century.

About 1900, however, poetry went almost out of sight in England. Only one poet, Kipling, was able to sell his verses at a profit. The rest, for the most part, were feebly imitating Tennyson, mouthing what Amy Lowell called "cosmic phrases." Kipling with his vigorous style, his realism, and his easy, swinging rhythm, caught the popular fancy. Furthermore, he struck a new note. Images which are "hard and clear" — claimed by the Imagists as their special feature — Kipling used a decade before the Imagists made a peep. With a strong sense of fact and stirring narrative — the virtues of Noyes and Masefield — Kipling was the pioneer in returning poetry to primary qualities. Lacking in delicacy of feeling, with no great sense of beauty, he at least saved verse from the recumbent esthetes and brought it back to human life. His many jingles are merely clever; but some of his *Barrack-Room Ballads*, like "Gunga Din," and some of his narratives, like the *Rhyme of the Three Sealers* and *The Ballad of East and West*, deserve their continued popularity.

After 1910, when the Poetry Book Shop was opened in London and the public "discovered" Robert Frost and A. E. Housman, other poetry besides Kipling's found an audience. Nevertheless, in the first decade of the twentieth century, not only Yeats * and Housman, but Alfred Noyes, John Masefield, and Henry Newbolt wrote some of their best verse. Slight as Housman's output was, *The Shropshire Lad* poems have more lyric quality than any poetry written this side of Tennyson. Newbolt's ballads of the sea, particularly *Drake's Drum* and *Admirals All*, as well as his *Vitai Lampada*, are now universally known. The same may be said for Noyes's *The Highwayman*, *Forty Singing Seamen*, *The Barrel-Organ*, and *Sherwood* — almost hackneyed in school repetition; and many of his longer poems, such as *Drake* and the *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern*, deserve recapture. Of these four men, however, Masefield stands

* Yeats is discussed, under the Irish Revival, on p. 363.

out for his special skill in narrative verse — the best, it is probably safe to venture, since Scott and Byron. All the world knows a few of Masefield's fine lyrics, such as *Cargoes* and *Sea Fever*; but it is an equally fair venture that he is not a great lyric poet. The narratives are another matter. In them the story, the description, the simple, running verse all combine to give quality to a type of poetry which looks easy but which is rarely done really well more than once in a century. Some of his later ones, such as *Right Royal* and *Reynard the Fox*, are probably his best, but many readers still champion *The Dauber* and *The Widow in the Bye Street*.

The Irish Renaissance, which began towards the end of the nineteenth century and was at its height early in the next, differed fundamentally from the Celtic Revival of the eighteenth century in that it was by Irishmen in Ireland for Ireland. A group of gifted men, chief of them George William Russell ("Æ"), George Moore, and William Butler Yeats, realized that the struggles for Irish emancipation had been largely negative, based on economic discontent, that the whole movement must be given new life by a national consciousness of Irish tradition and Irish culture. They therefore set about reviving Celtic myths and legends and writing stories, poems, and plays based either on the older material or on contemporary Irish life. The particular Irish genius for acting — many of the best actors in England for two centuries had been Irishmen — led to the "literary theatre" group in Dublin, in 1899. In 1903 they moved to the Abbey Theatre, and their plays soon gave the Irish Renaissance its chief fame. Before long the Abbey Players were known on both sides of the Atlantic.

But most of these men were primarily poets. "Æ" took a less public part than the others in campaigning for the cause and is now chiefly remembered for the sincerity and graceful beauty of his lyrics. Yeats, too, is probably more widely known for some of his shorter poems, such as *When You Are Old* and *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*, than for his dramas. His plays, even when in prose, are essentially poetical, symbolic; and his greatest plays, as literature, are his poetic dramas — *The Countess Kathleen*, *The Land of the Heart's Desire*, and *Deirdre*. They have some dramatic intensity, but their high quality is their haunting sadness — that mystical fusion of grief and beauty which so often turns sentimental

in Saxon hands, but which is so earnest in the tragic soul of the Celt.

Among many good plays written by the associates * of Yeats, by far the best, as plays, were written by John Millington Synge. He had a livelier dramatic sense than Yeats, more humor, and a closer touch with the life and speech of the simple peasant folk he portrayed. His two comedies, *The Playboy of the Western World* and *The Shadow of the Glen*, are realistic rather than poetical or symbolic; but his unfinished *Deirdre* and his perfect little *Riders to the Sea*, with its simplicity and its tragic sincerity, have the passionate sadness and the birthright touch with the fairy world so characteristic of many of the Irish plays as well as of the poetry.

It is unquestionable that part of the success of the Irish plays sprang from a generally revived interest in drama throughout the English-speaking world. Shortly before 1890 the English stage had reached its lowest ebb. T. W. Robertson, it is true, had turned to real life and somewhat natural language two decades before; but his example was not much followed. Moribund sentimental or romantic or heroic drama still held the field. Ibsen and other Scandinavian and German authors, though their plays were already transforming the continental theater, had hardly touched England as yet. Musical comedy, in spite of the good example set by Gilbert and Sullivan, was the frothiest sort of entertainment, with a few good songs set in a make-believe potpourri of ballet and romance. The best actors kept on, somewhat desperately, reviving Shakespeare. Then, within a few years, the greatest English drama since Elizabethan days burst into full flower.

The main characteristics of the new drama are so familiar that they need little more than mention, by way of reminder. The most fundamental feature, apparently, was the interest, first, in domestic problems, and then, as in the novel, in social problems. One natural result was a return to the comedy of manners, and to natural language in place of theatrical rhetoric — a change manifest in the witty, satirical dialogue of Oscar Wilde, but a familiar characteristic of most of the writers — Jones, Barrie, Galsworthy, and, particularly, Shaw. With this went, naturally, the representation of contemporary life; the inner conflict, with discussion, became

* Space forbids more than an inadequate gesture towards Edward Martyn, Lady Gregory, and Padraic Colum.

more important than the external one — action receded in favor of ideas. Of all these ideas the most prevalent were those which were at bottom a criticism of the social structure. In a sense it was part of the revolt against smug Victorianism, with its taboos, and on that account most of the playwrights went just as far with sex as the traffic would bear. In general it derived largely from Ibsen, and, as in the case of Hardy and the novelists, it related the domestic problem, particularly that of the status of women, to the larger social questions behind the problem. It has been said that before Ibsen a play led up to marriage, but that after him it began with marriage. Shaw's *Candida* and many other plays, obviously enough, fitted this definition, but a large number of plays, such as Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton* or Galsworthy's *Loyalties*, were concerned almost wholly with class conflicts.

Sir Arthur Wing Pinero and Henry Arthur Jones began to produce plays along these new lines somewhat before 1890, but their best — Pinero's *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* and Jones's *Michael and His Lost Angel* — were not acted till 1893 and 1896, respectively. Barrie's *Little Minister*, hardly in the newer vein, was as late as 1897, and his first great play, *Crichton*, dates from 1902. Shaw's *Widowers' Houses* was written as early as 1892, but in general the new drama in England was Edwardian. Of the many able playwrights in the first ten or fifteen years of the century, the three chief names are, of course, Barrie, Shaw, and Galsworthy.

The critics, preoccupied with this purpose of literature as social criticism, seem inclined to place Sir James Barrie lower than the theatergoing public has. But social criticism, in itself, has never given perennial life to novels or to plays. We do not read Dickens and Thackeray now for the social criticism in which they indulged; we ignore Ben Jonson, with his contemporary situations and puppet characters, for Shakespeare, with his recognizable human beings in ever-recurring situations. A case in point is our reading of Masefield's *Tragedy of Nan*, which, though it does not touch the social problem, draws a character with such realistic intensity that it stands far above most of the sociological clinics of other dramatists. On this ground something may be said for even such sentimental romance as *The Little Minister* and a great deal for *Peter Pan*, *Dear Brutus*, *The Admirable Crichton*, and *What Every Woman*

Knows. Barrie's characters are rarely great creations, but they are real enough to live in the situations which he ingeniously sets up; and his social problems, if not pressing, like Galsworthy's, are at least rarely so strictly contemporary that they have interest for only one generation.

Bernard Shaw, on the surface, represents the devastating social critic. Undoubtedly he often is such, especially in *Man and Superman*, and to some extent in all of his plays. That he exemplified the new turn of the drama more effectively and more widely than anyone else seems unquestionable. Shaw thought with more penetration and with fewer traditional inhibitions than any of his Edwardian contemporaries. But one has always to make a reservation in favor of a sprightly little Celtic devil in Shaw's blood. Sometimes he seems to be tilting at certain bogies just because he likes to make the English squirm. Half the time, one suspects, he is just exercising his quick wit and his delight in topsy-turvy humor. One's response to Shaw is not so often "How true" as, rather, "How entertaining" — or perhaps, if one is gored, "How cruel!" Further, Shaw's rank, in distinction to his place, in dramatic history must be determined, not by his social criticisms, however searching, but by his dramatic power and skill. No one, except perhaps Barrie, is his equal in stage technique; no one comes anywhere near him in the devising of ingenious but natural situations. In a drama which depends more on ideas than on action, his lively dialogue is far ahead of any other. Is this enough? Few of his characters, however real, are great creations. Possibly *Candida*, with this aspect in mind, is therefore his greatest play. It has all the other virtues, plus two well-drawn characters. One cannot help noticing that many people find Shaw's prefaces more interesting than his plays. Perhaps, then, it is his stimulating ideas rather than his dramatic power which really holds his contemporaries.

John Galsworthy in all his plays concentrated on social criticism, particularly on the problems arising out of class and racial distinctions and the miscarriages of justice. That he could draw characters admirably, when he had elbow-room, he later showed abundantly in such figures as Soames, Irene, and old Jolyon in his great novel, *The Forsyte Saga*. But his plays are not distinguished for their characters; and his stage technique is far below Barrie's and Shaw's. His success has rested largely on the urgent character

of the social situations he exposes, on the unity of each piece, intensifying the effect, and on his excellent command of dialogue. But it seems probable that his plays, if the problems lose their urgency, will lose much of their power over the public.

In conclusion, then, the Edwardian Era, though the outlook and manners of the ordinary citizen were little changed from his ways in late Victorian England, saw significant new trends in the novel and in the drama. Within a few years the man on the receiving side of the footlights was to find himself in a new world. For the ideas of the novels and plays were only one aspect of the ideas stirring in other realms — political, economic, social, international. But Edwardian man, sufficiently at ease, drifted gently down the current, with little thought of the rapids ahead.

Chapter XVI

DEMOCRACY AND NATIONALISM

THE year 1910, though a convenient point of departure for this chapter, is arbitrary in one sense. The mental climate which followed it was in large measure the natural result of the new directions in legislation, under the pressure of Socialist and Liberal, and in art and literature, under the influence of men like Whistler, Hardy, and Shaw, in the two decades before 1910. But into this inherited way of thinking came three disturbing factors which resulted in new ways. One was the World War, which not only dislocated normal existence all over the world, but left behind a period of black depression. Another was the unprecedented acceleration of mechanical devices, particularly in the electrical field. A third was new knowledge, with new theories, in the realm of physiology. These three conspicuous factors, with others more or less derived from them, produced such social disturbances, required so much new orientation, that the worlds of 1920, 1930, and 1940, in spite of their inheritance, were very different, even in traditional England, from the world of 1910.

The whole period of the past thirty years has been one of conflict and confusion — not one of adjustment to new conditions, but of efforts, some gentle, some violent, to find what the adjustment should be. The structure of society, threatened by the World War, was still more threatened by the Peace which was no Peace; and now, more clearly than before, the issue is joined between Democracy and Despotism; not between the Old Order and a New Order — there will be some sort of New Order in any case — but between chosen order and dictated slavery. For nearly thirty years, men felt this confusion in their bones and saw it manifested in little at home, and in large throughout the world. With society in such condition it is small wonder that its cultural expression revealed confusions — experimentation, question, negation; rarely affirmation. It has been only recently that Englishmen, with the issue clear, inescapable, have emerged from their confusion with a lucidity and a unity of affirmation which have astonished the world.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

George V, on his accession in 1910, was looked upon by his people as a safe, respectable king rather than as a leader. He seemed uninspiring, even dull, but his sincere belief in constitutional monarchy won him a sort of negative regard. In course of time, however, it became apparent that he had great qualities, obscured at first more by his quiet manner than by any real defect. For what he lacked in intellectual force he made up in sympathetic understanding. During the war his interest in his people was not merely unstinted; it had the high mark of genuine devotion. Later, when party blocs impeded orderly government policies, he emerged as a leader and persuaded his ministers to form an effective coalition. Even more than his grandmother, he promoted the special British conception of kingship, which rested the actual power in the people yet at the same time enhanced the prestige of the sovereign.

Asquith's government, in control when George came to the throne, continued its liberal policies up to the outbreak of the World War. In 1911, it passed the National Insurance Act, to take care of sickness and unemployment among working people, and the next year a Minimum Wage Law. In spite of these measures, however, there were serious strikes on the railways and in the coal mines. The combination of growing socialist ideas and of prices out of line with wages created much unrest; but again, as so often in Victorian times, the Irish question sidetracked the Government from catching up with other problems. A Home Rule Bill, which Asquith put forward in 1912, was actually passed in 1914, as was the Bill providing for Welsh Disestablishment; but both were suspended on the outbreak of the war. At the same time a bill for electoral reform, including every male of voting age but excluding women, led to the famous suffragette picketing; but a final vote on this bill was put off during the war.

The World War engaged the attention of the whole world for over four years. It is so familiar, especially to those who were then living, that it needs little rehearsal here. What is not so familiar, especially to the younger generation, is the succession of events which led to the war. Many learned their "causes" during a period of intense national antagonisms; others, younger, have been sub-

jected to a long barrage of insidious propaganda. It may be well to repeat the main points of the record.

The murder by a Serbian Nationalist of the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo, on June 28, 1914, was of course only the "exciting force" — the match to highly inflammable tinder. That tinder, evidently, consisted of two main ingredients: the intense national spirit of the Balkan states, particularly of Serbia, with resentment of Austrian domination in Bosnia; and the Romanoff-Hapsburg contest for control of the Balkans. If that had been all, the conflict might have been localized, even arranged peacefully. But the high hand played by Austria relied on more than assistance from Germany in case of attack: the Kaiser and his Chancellor had given Austria what amounted to a blank check. England, they thought, occupied with the Irish Question, Indian unrest, and strikes, would not act; France, promised immunity, would stay out; it would be easy to realize the dream of a "*Drang nach Osten*."

In this sense, Germany was guilty, though the immediate guilt of breaking-down of negotiations rested with the Austrian and Russian ministers. But back of this contemporary and local situation was a condition which had been growing for a number of years. Ever since Disraeli's day, when the Congress of Berlin arranged the Balkan situation, Europe had been engaged in "power politics." England's interest was chiefly concerned with colonial controls; Germany's, with the control of central Europe, as well as with colonial expansion. The brilliant work of Bismarck in unifying the German states was accompanied by the aggrandizement of Prussia; and that, soon, was followed by the Kaiser's bristling imperialism. The real conflict in the offing, though it might appear to be Balkan, was the contest between England and Germany.

But though a good many Germans and a few English saw this impending contest, it was not in the foreground when the war began. There was some German talk of "Freedom of the Seas" and toasting of "*Der Tag*" in naval and military circles; but the issue, at first, was not primarily with England or France. So far, it was not an attack by autocracy on democracy; it was not even a rivalry between the Austrian and the Russian peoples; it was a contest between Hapsburg and Romanoff ambitions. Even after the war began, with democratic England and Republican France on the

side of autocratic Russia, it must be recognized as still, like former wars, a struggle in power politics.

Nevertheless — and this is the point which the partisan propagandists dodge — the development of world-wide hostilities depended largely on the behavior of the German militarists. With the growth of Prussianized Germany, the old Germany of liberal enlightenment was dying — the Germany of Luther, of Leibnitz, of Goethe. The worth and dignity of the individual was submerged in an organized, dehumanized State. The doctrine that might makes right, that anything is justified if you can get away with it, was widely accepted by the Prussianized German people; and a disciplined nation, easily persuaded that it was attacked, gave eager support to the leaders. There was no talk then of "have" and "have-not" nations; Germany was prosperous, prepared. Now that the issue was joined, the Prussian Junkers went forward to accomplish their desire. There is no other way to account for the unwillingness of Germany to heed Sir Edward Grey's urgent insistence on further conference. England and France could have stopped Russia; Germany could have stopped Austria. The "scrap of paper" incident, when Belgium was invaded, gave the whole case away.

The World War, then, in so far as it may be confined to the Romanoff-Hapsburg rivalry, or to England's support of Russia, or to Germany's support of Austria, was the old-style war of power politics. But that was not the real war. The invasion of Belgium, the disregard of treaty obligations, turned it in fact into what Galsworthy aptly described as "pounce by autocracy." Further, if this aspect was not fundamental at first, if it was quite as much to England's interest as to her honor to support Belgium, the course of the war, especially the submarine campaign, revealed increasingly that the military machine which the Kaiser had nurtured was a Frankenstein. When England declared war, on August 4, 1914, Germany had already crossed the Belgian border.

Without rehearsing in detail the story of the war, it may be well to remind ourselves of conspicuous features. For the first three years, Germany had almost all the successes on land. Though she was fighting on the Eastern Front and, after Italy's entry, on the Southeastern, she continued offensive after offensive on the Western Front. But she could not break through to a decision there. Checked at the Marne in 1914, and again at Verdun in 1916, she

was nevertheless able to stop the counteroffensives of the Allies in 1915 and 1917, and to set her "Hindenburg Line" well within the French border. Both sides had devised defense tactics superior to offense, and the war on the Western Front, after the first rush through Belgium and Northeastern France, settled down to a long period of virtual stalemate. The offensives launched by both sides proved enormously expensive in men and materials and, on the whole, unsuccessful.

England's part in this struggle on the Western Front was at first slight, for she had only a small Army. Her "little contemptibles" put up a magnificent rear-guard action in the retreat from Mons, but during the first six months of the war ninety per cent of the line was held by the French. The best blood of England volunteered for service, and the Colonies responded nobly; but it took time to train an Army, and to supply it with adequate arms; and there was much delay and inefficiency before the effort was organized, with conscription, on a basis which could compete with Germany's coordinated machine. Asquith, an able premier in a reform government, was not an aggressive war minister, and it was not till December, 1915, when he resigned, that the prosecution of the war, with Lloyd George as premier, was pushed with sufficient vigor.

On the sea England was better prepared. During 1914, German raiders were sunk or driven into port, and an effective blockade was set up. In 1916, the German High Seas Fleet made its only appearance, off Jutland, and had the better of the fight with the English battle cruisers, but it ran back to port when Jellicoe's battleships came up. It never ventured out again. But for a while in 1916 and 1917, Germany's submarine campaign threatened to frustrate the best efforts at sea — in fact, to destroy England's very life-line.

This submarine campaign proved to be one of the determining factors of the war — but not quite as Germany intended. Not only was it the most conspicuous among the newer methods of warfare, — the tank and the airplane were of little importance till the latter part, — but, more than anything else, as practised by the Germans, it served to arouse the hostility of the United States. The invasion of Belgium, the arrogant behavior of Germans there and in Northern France, and the use of poison gas, had all fed the growing conviction, not only in America but in nations all over the world,

that the war was not, at bottom, one of power politics, but a war "in defense of democracy," and of "the rights of small nations" against aggression. Naturally this opinion was fed by British propaganda; but it was confirmed again and again by facts, chiefly by the sinking of merchantmen without warning. The successive flouting of naval and military conventions, and the ruthless indifference to human values, antagonized the whole world. On April 6, 1917, the United States made common cause with the Allies.

The step taken by the United States encouraged the war-weary French and English, but, so far as land operations went, for a long time it gave more moral than actual assistance. The tragic failure at Gallipoli in 1916 had been followed by a Turkish advance towards Suez, and now, in 1917, came the Russian débâcle and the Italian disaster at Caporetto. Though the submarine menace was gradually mastered with the help of the American Navy, and though Colonel Lawrence and General Allenby routed the Turks, it was obvious that the embattled French and British, with a little band of Belgians, would have to stand the whole weight of another German assault in the West. The Germans realized, too, that they must win on the Western Front in 1918 or give up. General Ludendorff made several terrific attacks during the spring and summer of 1918. The effort took the Germans again to the Marne, but again they were thrown back. Then the Allies began their final campaign, on August 8, 1918. Steadily, but slowly, they drove the Germans back. The war had escaped from the trench phase of the past four years; and the Allies, with American aid now effective, had the preponderance in men and metal. The Hindenburg Line was broken, but there was no rout of the German Army; retreating in good order, it asked for an armistice while it was still on French soil.

The game was up. Bulgaria, Turkey, Austria, had all sued for peace. The sailors in the German Navy had mutinied; revolt had broken out in Munich. The Kaiser fled to Holland. The French, who had borne the brunt, and the English and the Americans, who wished a decision rather than a slaughter, were glad enough of the Armistice on November 11, 1918. But though Allied troops occupied Western Germany after the Armistice, the German people generally felt that they had been betrayed, not defeated. With this state of mind, they were fertile ground for the propaganda which aroused their military ambitions fifteen years later.

If the World War proved anything, it proved that Norman Angell was right when he insisted, in his *Great Illusion*, published in 1911, that, under modern conditions of close international relationships, nobody really gains by war; that victor suffers with vanquished. The obvious conclusion was that the treaty should aim at economic peace. Corollaries of this conclusion indicated "open covenants openly arrived at" and an association of nations, working towards international concord.

These conditions had been included in President Wilson's "Fourteen Points," but they were largely disregarded in the treaty which followed the war. Wilson himself was so keen to break up the map of Europe into "self-determined" racial units that he encouraged the very nationalism which he deplored. Lloyd George appears to have been, personally, for a liberal treaty, but his hands were tied by his promises to electors that the Germans should be made to pay. Clemenceau, who had seen France twice attacked by Germany in less than fifty years, was for an old-style treaty which should break the German power.

The resulting Treaty of Versailles, bad as it was, was no more severe than the treaty the Germans had recently forced on the Russians at Brest-Litovsk. Yet the notion is widely current that it is chiefly responsible for the present situation in Europe. The inclusion of the war-guilt clause was foolish; but, if it was wholly unfair, it might have been laughed off by an innocent nation. The reduction of German territory was unwise, as it provoked the German insistence on "*Lebensraum*." The disarmament features, and the temporary occupation of the Rhineland, however, were not unreasonable. The indemnity, again, was unwise, for the very reasons Norman Angell had advanced — it impoverished victor as well as vanquished; but the amount was twice reduced, till it was not punitive, and still the Germans made no effort to pay. The worst feature was the economic strangulation, not only of Germany, but of all Europe, that resulted from the creation of new nations, which, to preserve their national identity, proceeded to erect tariff barriers. These economic and nationalistic conditions, it is now painfully clear, led to an unrest which made people throughout Europe fertile soil for the propaganda of nationalistic demagogues; but the difficulty might still have been adjusted if men of all countries had been willing to meet in the constructive

spirit of Cecil, Briand, and Stresemann just after the war. The root of the present trouble is not the treaty, bad as it was, but the old, barbarian doctrine that might makes right.

The idealism, the dream of a better world which animated "plain people" at the time of the Armistice of 1918, received some expression in the formation of the League of Nations. Weakened by the refusal of the Congress of the United States to support Wilson's pet idea, the League did nevertheless promise, under the leadership of men like Viscount Cecil, to develop into a solvent of international quarrels. But it was hamstrung by the short vision of stupid politicians; it became too wholly an incompetent agency to prevent war, without the power necessary to enforce its sanctions, instead of an agency to solve the economic problems underlying the unrest in Europe.

The most astonishing feature in the English attitude during the next decade was that most men seemed to feel that the situation had been adequately taken care of, was permanently settled. Galsworthy, in *American and Briton*, wrote that the world trend was towards the democratic plane — "the world's face is that way set"; but within very few years a new kind of autocracy, with machine guns, was springing up right and left. It is true, Englishmen had enough domestic problems to occupy them, — Irish, Indian, suffrage, labor, economy, — but on the whole they revealed an incredible lack of concern over European unrest. Ramsay MacDonald and Stanley Baldwin were able premiers at home; they were almost oblivious to the volcanic gases abroad.

The political picture in England during the past twenty years seemed extraordinarily confused, year by year, as one watched it. Viewed now in retrospect, it takes on rather marked characteristics. The Government, on the whole, was disposed to make good the arrears in reform measures postponed by the war. But it did not move fast enough for the accumulated demands of Labour, which voted a Socialist, Ramsay MacDonald, into office. MacDonald, however, was too "international" for the British mind, especially in regard to Russia, and the Conservatives were returned for five years. Labour came back, but MacDonald's second ministry faced the worst economic depression in years; by 1931 it looked almost as if there was no way out. Then a rather characteristically British solu-

tion was found. A Coalition Government, first under MacDonald, later under Baldwin, restored order out of chaos. The significant thing is that this Coalition, neither Socialist nor Conservative, but a sort of modified compound of apparently irreconcilable elements, worked out a practical compromise. Britons rarely move into a new set of ideas without bringing something of their past. Ramsay MacDonald was read out of his Party, but he left a government which had embodied in practice a good many socialistic ideas, tempered to English conditions. And Baldwin, though he was the Conservative leader, promoted policies which his Tory forebears would have denounced as radical. By 1937, a basis for a solvent domestic government, brought up to date, appeared to have been established. It was then, however, that the foreign situation became so acute that domestic problems receded into the background.

To go back to 1918 and recall some of the chief measures and incidents in this postwar period, the deferred Reform Bill, which gave the vote to all males of twenty-one and to females over thirty * years of age, was actually passed in April, before the end of the war. In the general election of the following December, an anomalous combination of Coalition Unionists and Coalition Liberals won an overwhelming victory; and Lloyd George, the Liberal, continued as premier of a largely Conservative government. To complete the anomaly, this government gave Ireland Home Rule. But it was not the Home Rule provided for in the bill of 1914. The opposition of Ulster, led by Sir Edward Carson, resulted in a complete separation of Southern and Northern Ireland—each to have its own legislature as well as seats in the English Parliament. Most of the Southern representatives, however, would not take their seats, and finally, on December 6, 1921, they secured Dominion Status as the Irish Free State. The Irish grievance, one might suppose, had at last been satisfied. But the Sein Feiners desired complete separation; and, even without that, both Free State parties resented the exclusion of the prosperous, tax-paying Ulsterites. After several more years of friction—during which Ian Hay, humorously but justly, wrote of the “oppressed English”—the Irish Republicans under De Valera secured control, abolished the oath of loyalty, and set up the entirely independent state of Eire. But the “Question” is still far from settled. Eire relies on England for economic security and must, in

* In 1928 the law was revised, putting women on the same basis as men.

case of attack, rely on England for protection. And the Ulster issue remains.

At home the Government faced a difficult problem. Though the Army had been demobilized with speed and efficiency, unemployment was naturally great, business was confused, debts were heavy, and strikes, especially in the coal mines, kept recurring in 1919-1921. A dole to the unemployed was a necessity, but it increased expenses. The Conservatives * withdrew their support, Lloyd George resigned, and the elections of 1922 returned the Conservatives for a year and a half. But they were defeated on Stanley Baldwin's proposal of a protective tariff, and MacDonald's too "international" government had a short life. The voters returned to the Conservatives in 1924, with Stanley Baldwin again as premier.

During his ministry there were two events of special significance. The audacious General Strike in 1926, a bold effort of Labour with implications of revolution, failed because volunteers of all sorts came forward and kept the necessary services going. It was a typically English solution - no military compulsion, simply the spontaneous response of Englishmen who refused to see the whole country wrecked, perhaps the whole structure of government altered, for the sake of one group, however large.

The other important event was the Imperial Conference of 1926, in which the Dominions were declared to be completely autonomous units within "the British Commonwealth of Nations." In 1931 this momentous step was ratified by Parliament in the Statute of Westminster. Again, as in the earlier granting of responsible government to her colonies, England's liberal attitude strengthened, rather than weakened, the loyalty of the member states of the Empire. A deeper, human tie has proved stronger than a purely legalistic one; Burke's old principle of the "Power of Refusal" has at last been translated into fact. Stephen Leacock puts the whole point in a nutshell when he writes: **

If you were to ask any Canadian, "Do you people *have* to go to war if England does?" he'd answer at once, "Oh, no." If you then said, "Would you go to war if England did?" he'd answer, "Oh, yes." And if you asked, "Why?" he would say, reflectively, "Well, you see, we'd *have* to."

* The name "Unionists" had no longer much point, but it was still used.

** *Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1939.

Economic conditions remained bad in England, and in 1929 the Labour vote turned the Conservatives out. But MacDonald soon found that his Socialist plans must be modified to work. The economic depression was a national problem, not a Party problem; and that meant compromise. With this realization, he took the important step of breaking with the die-hards in his party and of joining with the Conservatives in a Coalition. During six years, this Coalition, first under MacDonald, then under Baldwin, gradually restored order, economy, and a measure of prosperity. The belated, but violent depression in America and the collapse of Austrian finance made the whole effort complicated and slow. England was forced to abandon the gold standard in 1931, but the Government managed to reduce the dole materially, reorganized the railroads without state ownership, and substituted economies for experiments in government spending. Possibly the most significant step was the abandonment of the century-old Free Trade in favor of Protection. Whether this step was wise or not remains to be seen; but it was largely forced by the conditions of international trade.

Through the whole period since the World War difficult problems have arisen in India. The situation has been constantly marked by violent outbreaks of eager Nationalists, passive resistance under the leadership of Gandhi, and efforts on the part of the British Government to go as far towards granting self-government as conditions would bear. Two important Government of India Acts, especially the second, of 1935, have provided virtual self-government, but certain important powers, especially military, are reserved for the Governor. The purpose of the Act is eventually to establish an All-India Federation; but any realistic view of the conditions must recognize that there is little cohesion in India as yet — it is a collection of states and castes, rather than a nation — and that complete autonomy now would almost certainly result in confusion, followed by aggression from outside.

The international conditions which promoted the adoption of a protective tariff in England have already been mentioned. A great number of new states, supposedly maintaining their economic existence by tariff walls of preposterous height, added to the growing sense of nationalism which had been taking shape in Italy and

Germany. The London Economic Conference in 1933 showed that English statesmen were beginning to sense the dangerous direction of affairs; but the conference failed, and England inevitably joined the nationalistic parade. "Buy British" became a patriotic duty. England was not really alive to the whole danger. Ramsay MacDonald had shown a keen interest in a sort of idealistic internationalism, had visited President Hoover for a friendly discussion, and had favored rapprochement with Russia; but he did not fully understand the sinister threat of European ferments. It was not till the Italo-Ethiopian crisis in 1935 that England began to wake up.

Stanley Baldwin, who was then premier, realized, when the Spanish problems were added to the Ethiopian, that he was unqualified to deal with international affairs, frankly said so, and resigned. Before his retirement, however, the death of George V in 1936 and the abdication of Edward VIII in the same year brought into sharp relief the authority which the British people had over their sovereign. The foreign press, particularly the American, indulged in a good deal of gratuitous criticism to the effect that "the King had a right to lead his own life." That was precisely what he had not, though no statute had defined it. As a private citizen, yes; but not as King. The Dominions and Scotland, even more strongly than the English people, supported Baldwin. The result showed that Britons were not "subjects" in the old literal sense; that, in effect, though they held no popular election, they chose their ruler. George VI, who succeeded his brother, has already restored the prestige which his father maintained, not by asserting himself but by serving his people.

The situation which Neville Chamberlain inherited from Baldwin in 1937 was already at the point of explosion. The refusal of England to support America's proposal to check Japanese aggression in Manchuria; the failure of the League to enforce the sanctions against Italy; the uncertain policy in Spain; the inaction when Hitler crossed the Rhine; the unpreparedness of the British Navy, and particularly of the Air Force — these were his inheritance. He has been blamed for all the ills that followed his policy, and evidently he erred grievously in his efforts at "appeasement," Hitler being what he was. But, just as evidently, his effort was sincere, in the belief that a military decision would really decide nothing

satisfactorily, any more than the World War did; indeed, that even an unsatisfactory peace would produce more lasting benefits than any sort of war. His great defect was his persistence in assuming that he was dealing with gentlemen; his inability to see, as Anthony Eden and Winston Churchill did, that Hitler was merely bluffing England into concessions and was making promises he had no notion of keeping. Yet many men whose eyes are now open then supported the Premier's policy. For over two years his "appeasements" went on. It is a familiar story — Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland. . . . On September 3, 1939, England and France declared war on Germany.

Throughout the prewar period few people understood clearly, what is now easy to see in retrospect, that the issue was not solely one of conflicting nationalisms, but that it was, at bottom, a conflict between free nations and totalitarian despots. Many, however much they disapproved of Hitler's methods in his own country, believed that Germany was the chief bulwark against Russian Communism. It was only when the methods of external aggression, as of internal tyranny, bore an identical, ugly mark, that people realized the real threat to an orderly world of free men. Cajolery, coercion, broken promises, invasion — the method was much the same in Ethiopia, Czechoslovakia, Finland; it made little difference whether the shirt was black or brown or red. To this conflict, unlike that of the Great War, there was little question of power politics. It was, and is, starkly an issue between orderly government by free peoples and government by enslavement of the world to the dictates of ruthless autocrats.

The record of the war, as this book goes to press, is still largely a newspaper story of "inspired" communiqués, at once too familiar and too incapable of verification to warrant inclusion here. In a general summary, without attempting to rehearse details, it is obvious that England's position after the collapse of France has been serious, almost desperate. In spite of the fortitude and cheerful spirit of her civilians under vicious and promiscuous bombing, in spite of the unexampled heroism on the beaches of Dunkerque, the record so far, except at sea, is one of retreat. Germany has had all the military success. It may be worth noting, however, that Germany has had all the moral defeats. She has not merely one "Irish" problem on her hands, but thirteen — in the form of ravaged, discon-

tented nations. At the same time, Great Britain has won the admiration of free men everywhere. But what this may forebode is the province of the soothsayer, not of the historian.

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Almost all the social changes in England during the past thirty years had their equivalents in other countries. A world which from Cheops to Victoria had moved about on foot or in horse-drawn vehicles must needs be transformed, in England as elsewhere, by the use of the motor car. That is a commonplace, as are the changes wrought by telephone, cinema, radio, airplane. The only question with regard to England is the relative degree with which such things have revolutionized society. Any adequate answer must include many qualifications. For instance, the radio and airplane have been "taken up" more rapidly than the cinema was and much more rapidly than the telephone; but it seems to be generally true that England has been slower than other industrial countries, particularly America, in adopting — or, shall we say, in succumbing to — a mechanized life. The same thing, with one or two conspicuous exceptions, applies to other aspects of the modern world — to fantastic novelties in art, music, architecture; to headlong indulgence in the "release psychology" of the night clubs, or of such get-saved-quick panaceas as flourish in Los Angeles; to the financial experiments and the political ideologies which have turned other countries upside down. It is only another commonplace to remark that such stability might be expected from conservative England. But it is erroneous to suppose, as many foreigners do, that, because the changes have been less spectacular, they have not taken place to an important degree.

In several respects, indeed, the changes have been great. The emancipation of women has been as rapid and as far-reaching in England as in America. The enactment of social legislation, though it has had a longer, more gradual growth than in America, has gone farther than the American efforts in the same direction. It is perhaps more accurate to say that the changes have been more temperate, less emotional, less marked by violent action and equally violent reaction, than in other countries. An obvious instance is the handling of the liquor problem. In America an impulsive Prohibition was followed by an impulsive Repeal; there were changes, but no ad-

vances. In England, price regulation, early closing, and the requirement of food with drink, in many places, have all helped to diminish the abuse of liquor. Another instance is the case of Labour. In England, Labour has a substantial, respectable part in the Government, and has at the same time accepted responsibilities which the American Unions oppose, while on the Continent it is either conscripted or in a ferment of political discord.*

Again, one may cite the Press as an example. The power of the Fourth Estate reached its greatest height during this period, though latterly the radio has given an advantage to the political demagogue. But, though the influence of the Press in England is enormous and though it is on the whole a capitalist power, it has never become so sensational as the American "yellow press" nor so much the tool of self-seeking groups as the French publications. One reason for this, perhaps, is that the Socialist group in England has been to a considerable extent recruited from the same class of educated people which has produced many of the capitalists; it has not been composed chiefly of "parlor pinks" and revolutionary cranks. The menace, the cleavage, has not been so alarming. But a deeper reason is also apparent. The Englishman's instinct for reserved judgment and his distrust of coercion have made an intemperate or a venal Press less profitable in England than elsewhere. More than this, in the better cases there has developed a high standard of editorial ethics — in no instance more steadily exemplified than by the *Manchester Guardian*, of which Charles P. Scott, liberal, fearless, independent-minded, was the distinguished editor for nearly half a century.

These conditions, of course, do rest, in any final analysis, on the common sense, conservative nature of the Englishman. Possibly the continuance of old ways of education — in matter as well as in method — has been one of the chief factors. Not that there have been no educational changes, especially in government schools; there have been intelligent studies in recent years, with important alterations and a considerable extension of secondary opportunities; but the main diet in the great Public Schools is still essentially the old classical education. The result is a common fund of knowledge,

* It is only fair to note that certain smaller countries, especially Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, and Sweden, have been not only exceptions, but models of efficient adjustment.

which, however useless in a vocational sense, means that educated men can communicate with each other, can share ideas, sympathies, humor. Most of these ideas, in spite of novelties, are rooted in a long tradition. To realize this, even on the lighter side, one has only to glance at *Punch*, in every number of which several of the jokes assume a bowing-acquaintance with the Classics and with Shakespeare — with what used to be considered a “cultural background.” Nevertheless, the changes, however gradual, have been considerable. The old, “comfortable” England of Edwardian days, with its well-ordered scheme of domestic felicity, has vanished. The “master” cannot afford it, and, even if he could, there are no longer any “admirable Crichtons” for hire.

Viewed in its chronological course, the social climate went through various changes familiar in other countries too. First there was the short-lived hope of young men returning from the trenches with their vision of a new and better world; then disillusion and cynicism when the older generation took to reviving the corpse of an outworn world. The young, unaware that their elders had once, as young men, girded against the world of their grandfathers, thought that they had a new impulse; but, instead of providing anything positive, they spent their energies in condemning “Victorianism” and all its works. Youth was in the saddle, but it had little control of the reins. Culturally, the result was pessimism and cynicism — witness the verse and the fiction of the twenties — or escape, in sport or in a sort of joyless frivolity.

It was a blessing that a large part of this escape was to sport. Rich and poor, young and old, gave themselves over to games as they never had. Association football, which had a great vogue, especially in the North and the Midlands, became too professional, too much of a spectacle; and spendthrift betting on the races, seen or unseen, became too popular a pastime. But in general people of all sorts were participants — in cricket, in golf, in tennis, in camping and walking and bicycling. Even the poor, who found the dole so much more pleasant than seeking a nonexistent job, spent their new leisure in fairly wholesome ways. 'Arry, with 'Arriet perched on the pillion of his motor-bike, was a blasphemous sight to the esthetic soul, but he was out-of-doors, having a good time — not drilling in squads of Youth Movements or plotting in cellar gangs of malcontents. And among people of more judgment and taste, Wimble-

don, with its great tennis matches, was as much a symbol of the English dedication to the finest kind of sport as Lord's Cricket Ground had been for two generations.

Nevertheless, a good deal of this was symptomatic of escape. The most sinister aspect of the twenties was a widespread spiritual apathy. In this respect, so far as it is possible to judge at close range, England was rather unique. In America there was a sort of blatant, confident materialism — hardly spiritual, but certainly not apathetic. In France and Germany there was a sort of cynical agnosticism — despair and disgust and discontent, but not apathy. The time was ripe for a new awakening, a great revival; but none came. Barring a notable appeal of the Roman Church to intellectuals and the old style of evangelical appeal on the street corners, there was little life in religion. The theological débâcle, as Canon Hannay pictured it, had been followed by a ritualistic, then by a devotional decay. Spiritually, England appeared to be drifting.

Yet — and here is another of the paradoxes which forces the chronicler of England to eat his words — in the next decade England came to life. There was no great religious revival, but the renaissance had spiritual qualities. A people who had really succumbed to materialism or pleasure could not have stripped themselves, as the English have in recent years, of the encumbrances of "carnal logic," could not have displayed the quiet devotion and heroism which they have. It was not the courage of disciplined soldiers at Dunkerque which made that retreat the "finest hour"; it was the eager service of men and women, even of boys and girls, without thought of fear or of counting the cost, who manned any cockleshell for the rescue or who stood ready with succor on the beaches. The common man seemed to understand — in fact, to live — without benefit of theology or ritual, the spiritual significance of the phrase, "Play up! and play the game." He may or may not have learned it in church; he had practised it in sport.

One other aspect of English conditions requires mention. There should be little question that England is a democracy in much the sense that America is a democracy; that is, that the Government performs its functions under constitutional provisions, authorized by and subject to the vote of the entire adult population. But apparently there is a fairly common notion in America, even among Senators,

that England is still controlled by an "aristocracy." A large capitalist group, recruited from every social class, exercises great influence, precisely as it does in America; but the inclusion in this group of some who prefix "Lord" or "Sir" to their names no longer means much, so far as government goes. In the first place, many such titles are bestowed for merit, not inherited; one need only recall such men of "common," often humble, origin as Sir Ernest Shackleton, Sir Arthur Sullivan, Sir John Millais, Lord Kelvin, Lord Reading, Lord Tweedsmuir. In America, we do the best we can for similar men with the LL.D. degree, and some of them, like Woodrow Wilson, become important political figures, but not "aristocrats"! In the second place, the social distinction of the gentry, especially where it is inherited, is nowadays actually associated with poverty. The old ruling class of rich landed proprietors is practically extinct. If any groups rather than the whole people control the Government, they are the bankers, the merchants, the manufacturers, and the shippers, by and with the consent of labor — precisely as in America. They pay the taxes, or produce the wealth on which the taxes are based. In the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, the prosperous country squire, in conjunction with the merchant, ran the country. As the franchise was extended, the manufacturing middle class secured control. In this century, with the universal franchise, business shares its control with labor — precisely as it does in America.

In the social field, even, the show of superiority which is supposedly attached to the "aristocracy" is usually conspicuous among new-rich upstarts — precisely as it is in America. It is the bourgeois "bounder" with money who gives himself airs. If one is looking for class consciousness based on birth, one is not likely to find it among those with "Lord" or "Sir" prefixed to their names, but among the country gentry of ancient lineage, many of them without titles and without wealth. They make up what the Englishman calls "County." They recall that their ancestors, more than any one group, made England; and they still quaintly cherish their superiority of blood; but they preserve also their high sense of responsibility.* Incapable of doing much, for they have few abilities and are often as poor as

* One could point to similar old families on the Atlantic coast of America, somewhat overconscious of their blood virtue, but, like their English cousins, devoted to good causes.

church mice, they are nevertheless ready, first and last, to give what they can for their country. If there is any class-conscious aristocracy in England, this is it. It does not rule England; but, though it represents the "Low" of the intellectual atmosphere, it still probably represents the "High" of the moral climate.

SCIENCES AND ARTS

If it is hazardous, at close range, to determine who are the more important persons in public affairs, it is midsummer madness to attempt to pick out the "permanent" figures in science and art.* In this contemporary chapter, the emphasis must be on directions, with only occasional reference to persons who are illustrative of those directions. At the same time, it must be recognized that a good many people discussed in the last chapter lived on beyond the arbitrary date of 1910 with which this chapter begins — such men, who seem secure against oblivion, as Yeats, Elgar, Lodge, Hardy; while others, perhaps equally important, are still living. Even omitting these, it is by no means a lean period. A generation hence, the recorder will no doubt find a goodly list, especially in science, of those who have outlived the immoderate praise or blame of newspaper gossip.

In the application of new knowledge to the production of new products, Englishmen have recently been rather slower than many other nations, especially Germany and the United States. This general statement applies especially to the developments of various chemical products and to the mass production of cheap machines of different sorts. In the manufacture of fine machinery and of precision instruments English workmen are still unsurpassed. The same may be said for the manufacture of fine tools, cloths of high quality, porcelain, silverware, cutlery, leather goods; and English artisans have been particularly renowned for their grinding of lenses used in microscopic and telescopic work. But most of these articles have been produced in continuation of older industries. Among newer activities, it is in the laboratory rather than in the factory that English science has won distinction.

In the field of physics, research in the various aspects of electricity

* An estimate in 1820 would have glorified West and ignored Blake; one in 1870 would scarcely have mentioned Clerk Maxwell.

and radiation has attracted the chief attention in England as elsewhere. Among many, besides Rutherford and Lodge, the name of Sir William H. Bragg is conspicuous for his work on atoms and crystals, work made possible by his development of an X-ray spectrometer. In these labors he was ably assisted by his son, William L. Bragg, and together they were awarded the Nobel Prize in 1915. Sir James Jeans, primarily a mathematician, applied his knowledge to the mathematics of radiation and electrons; and in astronomy, for which he is better known — partly because of his happy faculty for publicizing a difficult subject — he has continued the physicist's approach, particularly in the study of stellar dynamics and of the radiation of gaseous stars. The other great name in contemporary English astronomy is, of course, Arthur S. Eddington, also a mathematician and the Director of the observatory at Cambridge. One of the first to grasp the significance of relativity, his chief studies have been on the motions of stars. But, in addition to his astronomical work, he is distinguished for an unusually interesting book, *Science and the Unseen World*. Philosophical without being abstruse, it is a lucid exposition of the possibilities and limitations of science and of the validity of faith.

In biology, as elsewhere, English scientists have given their chief attention to physiology and bio-chemistry. In fact, new knowledge of glands and of the chemistry of animal and plant life have turned biological studies from form to function and have revolutionized not only biology, but psychology and the philosophy of Evolution. Among the first Englishmen to stress this direction was Sir William Bayliss, whose *Principles of Physiology*, published in 1914, is still considered an important statement of modern physiological thought. Other well-known names are Lancelot Hogben and J. B. S. Haldane, not only as physiologists in the general sense, but especially as distinguished students in the fields of genetics and evolution.

These scientific trends, especially in the biological field, have had an enormous influence on the philosophical thinking of this century. With the impact of the ideas of Freud and Jung, such thinking has obviously concerned itself a good deal with the subconscious mind, sex, and social behavior; though, except for some of the novelists, Bertrand Russell in his later work, and Havelock Ellis, — that interesting compound of psychologist and literary artist, — English

philosophy has not been so obsessed by these directions as continental and American thinking has. Richard Burdon Haldane stands somewhat apart. Born in 1856, a great war minister under Asquith, unjustly suspected of German sympathies because of his wide acquaintance among German scholars, chairman of a committee on educational reforms, Lord Haldane was an eminent public figure; but he was also one of the most profound thinkers of his time. A great student of the older German metaphysics, he opposed the general English trend of experience philosophy from Locke through Hume and Mill and Spencer. When kindly oblivion settles over the Behavioristic vogue, Haldane's *Pathway to Reality* and his *Philosophy of Humanism* may very well emerge again and give a new stimulus to inquiring minds.

Haldane, though he lived to 1928, was virtually a Victorian. But several quite contemporary thinkers have been more preoccupied with the social and political aspects of philosophy than with what may be called the psychopathic. L. P. Jacks, long editor of the *Hibbert Journal*, has written vigorously on the moral and religious problems of man as a member of society; and H. G. Wells, whose wide activities have somewhat overshadowed his penetrating thought on philosophical questions, has been interested not only in social and political man, but in man as a creative agent in the evolutionary process. Aldous Huxley, philosopher as well as novelist and critic, has written, in *Ends and Means*, one of the most stimulating books of our day. Bertrand Russell, in spite of his concessions to Behaviorism and his unorthodox social views, has been primarily the philosopher of a logic based on terminology. Starting as a mathematician, he won distinction for his *Principia Mathematica*, in 1911-1913; but his *Analysis of Mind*, in 1921, and his *Outline of Philosophy*, in 1927, are probably his chief works. His great service has been his painstaking effort to redefine philosophical language.

In other branches of learned investigations, the quantity has increased as new sources have been discovered, and the quality has improved as the habit of scientific exactness has developed, but that is true in most civilized countries. The particular monument of English scholarship during the past half-century has been the *New English* (or "Oxford") *Dictionary*, historical as well as etymological, begun under the editorship of Sir James Murray. In other fields of research, particularly in Assyrian and Egyptian, the con-

tribution has been distinguished; the names of Sir E. Wallis Budge and Sir William Flinders Petrie are known the world over.

What gives the English a special character in this respect is that the scientific and historical approach has not sterilized the prose style of the scholars. Possibly this happy condition springs from a conservative adherence to liberal studies preceding specialization; possibly it is largely a strong tradition. Whatever the reason, it is a conspicuous fact. In scientific, critical, and historical writing — outside of purely technical research — not only is there a wealth of sound material, but it is presented in readable, frequently in memorable, form. We have already noted, among scientists and philosophers, such writers as Eddington, Jacks, Huxley, Russell, Ellis — men who can write as well as think. To these must be added such economists as J. M. Keynes,* Sir Philip Snowden, and Lord Stamp, interesting even when technical, and such specialists in language as I. A. Richards. Turning to the historians and critics, one thinks at once, among the older writers, of Edmund Gosse, Sir Walter Raleigh, Hilaire Belloc, G. K. Chesterton, H. G. Wells, Gilbert Murray, Dean Inge; among more recent, of H. A. L. Fisher, G. M. Trevelyan, J. E. Neale, John Buchan, Lytton Strachey, J. C. Squire, Virginia Woolf, and J. M. Murry. If no giants, like Carlyle and Ruskin, show far above the others, at least few periods in English history have provided such a multitude of writers with good manner as well as good matter. At the same time, essayists in lighter vein, to whom style is naturally a first consideration, have continued a happy tradition — notably Ian Hay, A. A. Milne, A. P. Herbert, and especially E. V. Lucas, the Dean of English humorists, biographer and literary heir of Charles Lamb.

In non-fictional prose, two men stand out for innovations rather than tradition: Chesterton for his use, sometimes overuse, of arresting paradoxes; Strachey for a new type of biography, impressionistic rather than exhaustive, which, instead of disinterring a figure of the past, takes us directly into the living presence of that person. The method depends not only on style, but on a skillful selection and massing of detail. Aably handled by Strachey in his *Eminent Victorians* and his *Victoria*, but not so well in his *Elizabeth and*

* It is worth noting that the lend and spend ideas of Keynes found more favor in America than in practical England.

Essex, it unfortunately tends, among his many imitators, to degenerate into fiction masquerading as biography.

In the realm of legitimate fiction, the tendency towards social criticism which marked novels and plays at the turn of the century has increased till it is now the familiar type in England, as in America. The other early characteristic, appearing in Hardy and still more so in Henry James, of attempting to get behind the minds of the characters, has also been a conspicuous feature, sometimes to the point of psychoanalysis. These are extensions of what had already been begun, but two new directions have been given to fiction in recent years. One of them is the handling of sex under the influence of the new biological discoveries and of the Freudian philosophy. The psychological analysis of a given character thus becomes a physiological study, an analysis, not of his mind, but of his glands. This particular type, however, has had more glaring than frequent examples and would not be especially conspicuous in England were it not for the writings of D. H. Lawrence. He was obsessed by what Viola Paradise has called the "sex simplex," but he had, in addition, a great feeling for words, so that he not only developed his analysis with skill, but he wrote excellent descriptions of scenes. The other feature, not entirely new, for George Eliot foreshadowed it somewhat, is a natural result of the new psychology. It is the attempt, best exemplified in the novels of Virginia Woolf, to work out human relations, not from what people do or say, but from what they really are beneath their conventional external selves; an attempt to reproduce the "stream of consciousness."

Virginia Woolf, especially in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, seems to rise clear of her contemporaries as a significant novelist. Her appeal, however, lies largely in her power of description and in the quality of her style. But her style is somewhat academic — she is as competent a critic as a novelist; indeed, her novels are essentially critical, almost bookish. The old criterion arises: Are the characters real, perennial? They seem to remain always part of the author's interesting mind; they do not quite escape into flesh and blood realities. So Edward M. Forster, distinctive for his humorous, slightly satirical novels representing the conflict between conventional people and creatures of overmastering natural impulses, is good reading and essentially in the ana-

lytical vogue; but he is not read now as he was when *Passage to India* was a sensation. So also Somerset Maugham, witty and rather cynical, has had much success both with novels and plays, chiefly in the field of social criticism. But if one holds these new tendencies at arm's length, one sees that such literature, as indeed a good deal of contemporary poetry, is indicative primarily of an analytical, critical, rather than of a creative age; and an analytical viewpoint, if it doesn't watch out, is likely to mistake technical devices for creation.

The contemporary English novel, however, has by no means been wholly occupied with this analytical or critical viewpoint. John Galsworthy, especially in the *Man of Property* part of his *Forsyte Saga*, rested his case fundamentally and successfully on the creation of characters. Wells, Hugh Walpole, J. B. Priestley, A. J. Cronin, and James Hilton — at least in the incomparable *Mr. Chips* — have realized the same necessity; and even the humorists, P. G. Wodehouse and Ian Hay, have aroused in us the "emotion of recognition" as they pursued their uproarious course. Katharine Mansfield, especially skillful in the short story, gave in her brief life great promise in both characterization and style; and H. M. Tomlinson, author of *Gallions Reach*, with his graphic manner of writing, has revealed ability to make both people and adventure "come alive." The romantic novel of adventure, furthermore, has come again to life in the heir of Stevenson, John Buchan — and in Maurice Walsh, who, in spite of a single theme, has captured indelibly the "small dark man" of the Celtic world — particularly in *The Road to Nowhere*.

Poetry, subject to the same influences as the novel, has followed much the same course; but poetry, being more emotional and introspective, has inclined to accentuate the revolt against convention and the experimentation with new forms. For a while, before and during the war, much of the romantic tradition lingered — either in such older poets as Yeats, Noyes, Bridges, Chesterton, Newbolt, Hardy, De la Mare, and Masefield, or in such younger devotees of hope and devotion as Rupert Brooke, Robert Graves, Siegfried Sassoon, and John McRae. The modern critic is perhaps too inclined to discount the quality of much of this poetry just because it is "traditional" in form and outlook. That criterion would be a

hard test for Shakespeare himself! Courage and hope and faith in man's unconquerable soul are an important part of the human experience; when they are memorably expressed, poetry, if not the only valid poetry, emerges.

But Yeats wrote: —

We were the last romantics — chose for theme
Traditional sanctity and loveliness.

Even before the war poets had begun to break with a romanticism which had in large measure degenerated into sentimentalism and to seek new techniques in symbolism, imagism, realism. But what Amy Lowell called "The New Poetry" in 1917 was very far from the novelties of the twenties and thirties.

The first phase of the changes after the war was rooted in disillusion and dismay. The world had gone wrong — hopelessly and terribly wrong. But in general the attitude was one of negation, not of affirmation; for a while, the young dreamers had no better world to offer. One thing they were sure of: they must break with convention. Under the leadership of writers like T. S. Eliot, they began to explore techniques, to experiment with patterns and words. Poetry became too intellectual, too analytical; unintelligibility was almost paraded as a virtue.* But others, following the lead of Robert Frost, had recourse to simple, natural speech about ordinary things seen with an imaginative eye. Meanwhile, the impact of Freudian psychology, compounded with the analytical mood, produced the poetry of psychopathic sex. Some of the poets, notably Eliot and D. H. Lawrence, had extraordinary skill with words; but they were writing so generally for either intellectual man or glandular man that their appeal was not wide. Those who applauded them rejoiced rather in the novelty, the difference, than in the memorable or inspiring thoughts. Poetry had moved into the laboratory and the clinic.

Then in the thirties appeared for a while an effort to find a political way out of the vacuum. There was a short-lived celebration of social revolution, almost a new romanticism. But it was too afraid of its emotions; it was still too much in the experimental laboratory. It attracted the intellectual few; it lacked — in fact, it *feared* — the

* If Arthur S. Eddington can be lucid on astronomy and eternity, does poetry have to be cryptic?

simple, emotional appeal of the revolutionary poetry of Burns and Wordsworth and Byron. "Slogans are bad," says W. H. Auden.

By many critics Auden, one of the younger poets, is hailed as a new and stronger voice. But in general he represents, in one way or another, most of the characteristics mentioned — the naturalness of Frost at times, the verbal enigmas of Eliot, the social criticism, the break with convention, the fear of enthusiasms, the instinct to experiment. His promise seems to be in his varied imagination, his striking phrases, and his frank repudiation of "poetic diction." But his work is uneven: there is as yet little synthesis of his powers.

Though the drama was also subject to the conditions which influenced fiction and poetry, it was affected especially by two factors peculiar to its field. The first, the rapid growth of the cinema, needs no comment — except that it was slower in displacing the legitimate drama in England than in America. A considerable number of London theaters have kept their audiences; and the Stratford Theatre, the Abbey Players, and the D'Oyly Carte Company have maintained something of the old popularity which the stage had before cinema competition. Nevertheless, in the provinces, as in America outside of New York, the old-style drama has passed largely into the hands of amateur and semi-professional groups. The other factor seems to be an inexorable characteristic of great periods of dramatic expression — intensity and brevity. They rarely run with much vitality for over twenty-five years. This characteristic was true of tragedy in ancient Greece, of the Elizabethan drama, of the stage of Corneille and Racine, of the German drama in Schiller's day.

The great period of English drama which began about 1895, in other words, had lived its allotted span by 1920. Soon after that, Barrie and Galsworthy ceased to write plays, and the inexhaustible Shaw had done his best work. Even many authors whom we associate with the next decade belong, so far as plays go, with this Edwardian group. John Drinkwater's *Lincoln* appeared in 1918 and his *Lee* in 1923; while A. A. Milne's delightful comedies, in the Barrie tradition — *Mr. Pim* and *Dover Road* — came at about the same time. There have been several successful plays in more recent years, particularly in the deft hands of P. G. Wodehouse and Ian Hay; but powerful drama, as in the case of O'Neill, Anderson, and Sherwood in America, has not been conspicuous. Among the innovations and

experiments, James Elroy Flecker's effort, in *Hassan*, to restore poetic drama to the stage, was short-lived; and the many dramatized biographies, entertaining as they are, indicate an exhaustion, rather than new life, in the drama. The most successful innovation has been by Noel Coward, in his skillful combination of features from both the screen and the stage. His *Cavalcade*, which appeared in 1931, was novel and impressive — the revue seemed to have a new and greater field; but, with the perfection of the "talkies," the screen has assumed this type of play, and the drama is forced back to a moribund stage.

What has been said for the various forms of literature goes in the main for music and art. It is unnecessary to repeat the story of revolt from convention and of exploration and experiment. In music, as in poetry, certain older men of established reputation were still living — chief among them Sir Edward Elgar. The new directions, of which Frederick Delius was the pioneer, have had an increasing number of exponents, and, like the poets, they have inclined to an intellectual approach and to an almost exclusive attention to niceties of technique. In this connection the most typical instances seem to be Constant Lambert and William T. Walton. But in music England has been somewhat more conservative, less "clinical" than in poetry. Possibly this condition derives from the fact that the musicians have developed constructive ideas and methods — something to be affirmative about; possibly from the fact that what they have discovered, English folksong, is essentially old, traditional. Credit should go in part to a number of competent musical scholars, particularly Edward Joseph Dent, who, instead of experimenting in a vacuum, have explored the past.

The best known among the composers is Ralph Vaughan Williams. Without attempting to agree or disagree with certain critics who call him one of the greatest living composers, we may note the fruitful growth of his work. Born in 1872, he came under the influence of old conventions, but for some time he was dissatisfied. It was not so much that he revolted as that mere imitation gave his singularly creative imagination no scope. When he did find a new field, he did not become a mere experimenter in novelties, though he has shown, as in his *Third Symphony, in F Minor*, that he could use a very modern style when it suited his purpose. But the folksong

gave him his first real impetus, and its influence has remained basic in his style; while he has added to that a sympathetic feeling for the music of the older English composers — Tallis, Byrd, and Purcell. When his work took this direction, he became interested in the Competition Festivals and won much distinction for his fantasia, songs, and choral music for the Three Choirs Festivals in 1910–1912. He has written music for the stage, including an opera, but chiefly incidental; and his reputation rests largely on his choral and orchestral work. His *Sea Symphony* has many admirers and is certainly typical, but critics seem to consider his *London Symphony* his chief and most characteristic composition. It reveals what is, after all, his great quality — the power to express the modern spirit in modes which, with his imagination, he has recaptured from the past and transformed into the living present.*

In English art, though there has been some experimentation, novelties are less conspicuous, proportionately, than in other countries. Possibly the commonplace of English conservatism is responsible; certainly impressionism had been actively resisted in Whistler's day. Another reason may be that the natural English bent for portraiture, sketching, and etching — frequently with an underlying motive of illustration — has not lent itself readily to the more striking novelties. Among the portrait painters, moreover, Sir John Lavery, an Irishman working in the style of the Glasgow school, has been pre-eminent; and his work, in period as in type, represents a tradition well established before 1910. Augustus John, with his high-keyed painting, is more modern, but not "modernistic"; and the same general comment may be made for most of the other portrait painters, such as Sir William Orpen and Gerald Brockhurst. Augustus John and Gerald Brockhurst are also distinguished for their etchings; while the sketches of Muirhead Bone, the lithographs and woodcuts of Clare Leighton, and the water colors of Russell Flint add to the impression that the best English art has not "gone" wildly modern. As early as 1910 an exhibition for "modern painting" was held at 19 Fitzroy Square. The movement was promoted by Walter Sickert, Augustus John was associated with it for a while, and later, as the "Camden Town Group," it had consider-

* Poets and artists might give this experience a thought! Forms do not have to be new; they have to be revitalized.

able influence. But the "modern" vogue in the England of 1910 was impressionism. Since then, the tendency to emphasize structure and direction, rather than tone and color, has found some able exponents — C. R. W. Nevinson, the brothers John and Paul Nash, and Henry Lamb. Still, the more bizarre of the ultramodern vogues have not taken hold in England as strongly as in France and America.

Sculpture has had considerable attention in recent years. The most conspicuous work — certainly in quantity — has been that of Jacob Epstein. All over London one finds examples of his sculpture, and each new instance has excited violent criticism. His work is called "crude," "grotesque," "powerful," "full of strange beauty." "Powerful" seems to be the fairest description, with concessions to all of the other comments. His first type of work, in "abstract" sculpture, suggests the influence of Rodin, without the genius, but some of his bronze portraits show both skill and imagination. Another conspicuous name in sculpture is that of Eric Gill, distinguished for what has been called his "modern archaism." His carved stone *Stations of the Cross* in the Roman Catholic Cathedral at Westminster are typical of his best work; and all of his sculpture has an effective unity of design, supporting his strong belief that craftsman and designer must be one person.

Ultramodern experiments seem to have invaded architecture even less than they have music and art. The skyscraper and the streamlined house of glass and concrete have not appealed to the English imagination, and it is hard to see how they could fit into the English scene, either urban or rural. There have been recently a great many "developments" of old estates, especially near London, with rather unattractive houses of pattern design and cheap workmanship; but, in general, English building, particularly where an individual architect is employed, shows not only improved taste in separate cases, but is designed with some reference to the plan of the whole area. One of the best instances of this is the recent restoration of the old façade of Regent Street. The most impressive single building of late years is the large Liverpool Cathedral, designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, grandson of Sir George. It employs nearly all of the Gothic styles, freely interpreted, with the aim of an imaginative combination rather than a mixture; but it has not escaped severe criticism as well as enthusiastic praise. The point seems to be that it looks

both modern and Gothic — a defect or a virtue, according to the point of view. At least Scott attempted to do in architecture what Williams attempted in music — to give ancient modes not mere revival value, but modern vitality.

Looking back over the literature and arts of the past thirty years, one sees rather clearly that the general character is one of exploration, of an attempt to adjust forms to a new world without being quite sure what that world is. As such it is provisional, experimental. In so far as one can judge at close range, it appears to be a transition. But in England there is manifest, as in public affairs, a reluctance to break with the past. Tradition, thus stubbornly adhered to, has sometimes proved a dead weight — as in the delayed reforms of the early nineteenth century — but usually it has proved a valuable counterpoise.

At the end of the story, then, we come back to a paradox — as we began with one. The Englishman, in spite of his deep-rooted traditions, seems extraordinarily capable of change; but he seems at the same time equally capable of resisting change. In either case, those changes which he does make grow out of his experience rather than out of his theories. No instances could be more convincing than the undesigned but progressive developments in parliamentary government and in the administration of empire. Other countries have bright boys who stage disastrous revolutions. England doesn't pay much attention to her bright boys — Wiclif or Burke, for example — but in course of time she quietly adapts and adopts their ideas. The same may be said in the main for the changes in her social ways and of the literature and art which express them. The English experience through more than a thousand years is too various to be safely synthesized into a single characteristic, but at the heart of it seems to lie this central quality of balance. Perhaps it is only a bookish way of saying "common sense."

The result is that an Englishman is suspicious of theory and innovation. Even radicals, except for cranks, have a sort of conservative bias — a bias based not so much on an outworn order as on an unwillingness to adopt any order, new or old, which belies the essential English experience. It is superficial to say that England is fighting for capitalism or for any "ism" or even for democracy

as an ideology. She is fighting for the right of the individual to live in a world of justice and honest dealing. Particular methods of government and trade are mere accidents rather than essentials of her long experience. We are prone to forget that for centuries England lived in a world where property was common land and, after that, for a half millennium under feudal tenure and the corporate government of towns. Her world of private enterprise is only a few hundred years old. Doubtless, if another order supersedes the capitalistic, she will work out a practical version of it; but it must be an order, not a disorder, if it is to square with her experience.

The man in the street, no doubt, is fighting simply, courageously, for hearth and home, as any other national might do; but though he may not think the reason out, his grim determination goes deeper than that. His instinctive response, like the more reasoned answer of the philosophic Englishman, rests fundamentally on the experience of his race. He is fighting for fair play.

LIST OF BOOKS

The following list is intended to provide suggestions for readers who wish to go more fully into some particular branch of the subject. Those who wish to make an extensive study, particularly of the political, social, and industrial phases, will find an excellent descriptive bibliography in Lunt's *History of England*, pp. 822-881.

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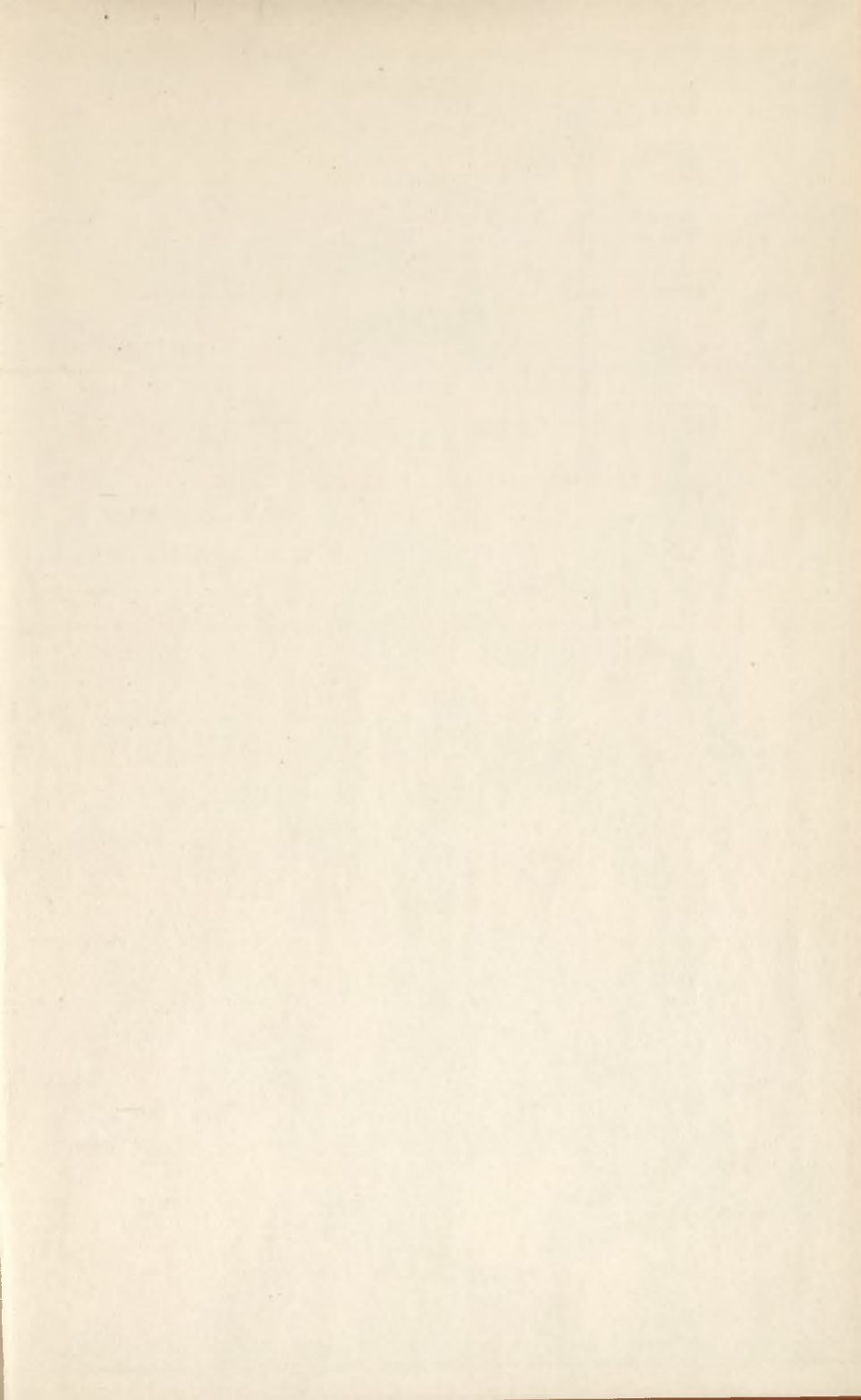
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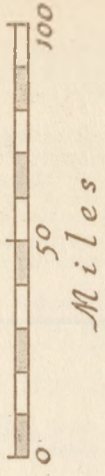
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Map of
ENGLAND



NORTH
SEA



IRISH
SEA

Lincoln
SHERWOOD FOREST

