

POPULAR HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

Cromwell's return to London.—Reforming policy of Cromwell.—Conference on the Settlement of the Nation.—Foreign Relations of the Commonwealth.—Differences with the United Provinces.—Dutch War.—Commerce.—The Navigation Act.—The Navy of England.—Blake.—Battles of Blake and Van Tromp.—Petition of the Army to the Parliament.—Dialogue between Cromwell and Whitelocke.—The question of future Representation.—Dissolution of the Long Parliament.—Public Opinion on the Dissolution.—Summons for a Parliament.

THE Parliament and people of England felt that Cromwell had saved the Commonwealth. He had done more than maintain a form of government. He had stopped the triumphant return to unlimited power of a prince who, once seated at Whitehall by military superiority, would have swept away every vestige of the liberty and security that had been won since 1640. The greater part of Europe was fast passing into complete despotism; and the state vessel of England would have been borne along helplessly into that shoreless sea. The enemies of Cromwell—the enthusiastic royalists and the theoretic republicans—saw, with dread and hatred, that by the natural course of events, the victorious General would become the virtual head of the Commonwealth. He probably could not suppress the same conviction in his own breast. Ludlow thus writes of Cromwell's return to London after the battle of Worcester: "The General, after this action, which he called the crowning victory, took upon him a more stately behaviour, and chose new friends; neither must it be omitted, that instead of acknowledging the services of those who came from all parts to assist against the common enemy, though he knew they had deserved as much honour as himself and the standing army, he frowned upon them, and the very next day after the fight dismissed and sent them home, well knowing, that a useful and experienced militia was more likely to ob-

struct than to second him in his ambitious designs. Being on his way to London, many of the Members of Parliament, attended by the City, and great numbers of persons of all orders and conditions, went some miles out of the town to meet him, which tended not a little to heighten the spirit of this haughty gentleman. * * * In a word, so much was he elevated with that success, that Mr. Hugh Peters, as he since told me, took so much notice of it, as to say in confidence to a friend upon the road in his return from Worcester, that Cromwell would make himself king.* Again and again Ludlow dwells upon the expression used by Cromwell in his letter to the Parliament, as if it were a foreshadowing of his own "crowning." Later writers accept it in the same sense. Cromwell's real phrase is this: "The dimensions of this mercy are above my thoughts: it is, for aught I know, a *crowning mercy*." To one who was as familiar with Scripture phraseology as Ludlow was, it seems extraordinary that he should attach any more recondate sense to this epithet than that of a *perfecting* mercy or victory. "Thou *crownest* the year with thy goodness" is the same as "Thou *completest* the year with thy goodness."

The authority of the Commonwealth being supreme in every quarter—England tranquil; Ireland subdued; Scotland incapable of attempting any further enterprise of a royalist character; the Channel Islands now garrisoned by a parliamentary force;—the reduction of the army was a natural policy. The Militia had been disbanded; but the great body of men in arms, who had so largely influenced the course of military and civil events, were still all-powerful. The regular army was reduced to twenty-five thousand men. The General made no opposition to a measure which in some degree arose from a jealous apprehension of his power. He was now most strenuous for the advancement of two great measures—an Act of Amnesty, and a Law for the Election of future Parliaments. These subjects had been often discussed, and as often laid aside. Upon Cromwell's return to London, he urged both measures forward with his wonted energy. They were just and salutary measures; yet evil motives were ascribed to him by the republicans. "He grew," says Ludlow, "most familiar with those whom he used to show most aversion to; endeavouring to oblige the royal party, by procuring for them more favourable conditions than consisted with the justice of the Parliament to grant under colour of quieting the spirits of many people." † The Law

* "Memoirs," vol. i. p. 365, and vol. ii. p. 447.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 447.

for the Election of future Parliaments was passed, by the House voting that it would not continue its sittings beyond the 3rd of November, 1654. Even this half measure was only carried by a small majority. It became manifest that the Parliament did not rest on very secure foundations. The old question of a Settlement of the Nation was very forcibly revived in many minds. How difficult a question it was may be collected from Whitelocke's report of a Conference held at Speaker Lenthall's house, by request of Cromwell. We do not attempt to abridge this account, which has been termed "dramaturgic"—"of a date posterior the Restoration"—but which, at any rate, shows us how these solid puritanical statesmen conducted their business:—

"Upon the defeat at Worcester, Cromwell desired a meeting with divers members of Parliament, and some chief officers of the army, at the Speaker's house. And a great many being there, he proposed to them, That now the old king being dead, and his son being defeated, he held it necessary to come to a Settlement of the Nation. And in order thereunto, had requested this meeting; that they together might consider and advise what was fit to be done, and to be presented to the Parliament.

'SPEAKER. My Lord, this company were very ready to attend your Excellence, and the business you are pleased to propound to us is very necessary to be considered. God hath given marvellous success to our forces under your command; and if we do not improve these mercies to some settlement, such as may be to God's honour, and the good of this Commonwealth, we shall be very much blameworthy.

'HARRISON. I think that which my Lord General hath propounded is, To advise as to a settlement both our Civil and Spiritual Liberties; and so, that the mercies which the Lord hath given unto us may not be cast away. How this may be done is the great question.

'WHITELOCKE. It is a great question indeed, and not suddenly to be resolved! Yet it were pity that a meeting of so many able and worthy persons as I see here, should be fruitless. I should humbly offer, in the first place, Whether it be not requisite to be understood in what way this Settlement is desired? Whether of an absolute republic, or with any mixture of monarchy.

'CROMWELL. My Lord Commissioner Whitelocke hath put us upon the right point; and indeed it is my meaning, that we should consider, Whether a Republic, or a mixed Monarchical Govern-

ment, will be best to be settled? And if anything Monarchical, then, in whom that power shall be placed?

'SIR THOMAS WIDDINGTON. I think a mixed Monarchical Government will be most suitable to the Laws and People of this nation. And if any Monarchical, I suppose we shall hold it most just to place that power in one of the sons of the late king.

'COLONEL FLEETWOOD. I think that the question, Whether an absolute Republic, or mixed Monarchy, be best to be settled in this nation, will not be very easy to be determined.

'LORD CHIEF-JUSTICE ST. JOHN. It will be found, that the Government of this nation, without something of Monarchical power, will be very difficult to be so settled as not to shake the foundations of our laws, and the liberties of the people.

'SPEAKER. It will breed a strange confusion to settle a Government of this nation without something of Monarchy.

'COLONEL DESBOROW. I beseech you, my Lord, why may not this, as well as other nations, be governed in the way of a Republic?

'WHITELOCKE. The laws of England are so interwoven with the power and practice of Monarchy, that to settle a Government without something of Monarchy in it, would make so great an alteration in the proceedings of our Law, that you will scarce have time to rectify it, nor can we well foresee the inconveniences which will arise thereby.

'COLONEL WHALLEY. I do not well understand matters of Law: but it seems to me the best way, not to have anything of Monarchical power in the settlement of our Government. And if we should resolve upon any, whom have we to pitch upon? The king's eldest son hath been in arms against us, and his second son likewise is our enemy.

'SIR THOMAS WIDDINGTON. But the late king's son, the duke of Gloucester, is still among us; and too young to have been in arms against us, or infected with the principles of our enemies.

'WHITELOCKE. There may be a day given for the king's eldest son, or for the duke of York, his brother, to come into the Parliament. And upon such terms as shall be thought fit and agreeable, both to our Civil and Spiritual Liberties, a Settlement may be made with them.

'CROMWELL. That will be a business of more than ordinary difficulty! But really I think, if it may be done with safety, and preservation of our rights, both as Englishmen and as Christians, That a settlement with somewhat of Monarchical power in it would be very effectual.'

Whether in this Conference the Grandees, as they were called, believed that when Cromwell expressed his thought "that a settlement with somewhat of monarchical power in it would be very effectual," he was consulting only his own ambition; or whether they felt that he was propounding a principle of which most men saw the practical wisdom, although "a business of more than ordinary difficulty"—this is not so clear as some have set forth. Whitelocke himself thought that Cromwell was "fishing for men's opinions"—a sort of angling in which he was generally successful.

The foreign relations of the English Commonwealth with the other European States here demand a brief notice; especially those which led to a great naval war with the Dutch.

The privateering hostilities of prince Rupert were necessary to be met by the Republican Parliament with no common energy. The navy was in the lowest condition of inefficiency in 1648; in three years it had become a most formidable force in every sea. The Packet-boat from Dover could now sail without being "pillaged," unless it had "a convoy," as in 1649, when Evelyn writes, "We had a good passage, though chased for some hours by a pirate; but he durst not attack our frigate, and we then chased him till he got under the protection of the castle of Calais; it was a small privateer belonging to the prince of Wales." Rupert had been driven by Blake from the Irish coast. The English Channel was well guarded by an adequate force. There was a Committee for the navy, of which Vane was President; and his zealous activity showed he was a man of action as well as of speech. English squadrons were cruising wherever there was a privateering enemy who could make commerce insecure; for as yet there was no actual war with a foreign nation. When Rupert had escaped from the blockade of Kinsale, he sailed to the coast of Portugal. Blake followed him to the mouth of the Tagus. The royal freebooter had obtained favour at the Court of Lisbon, as might have been expected from a Catholic king, incensed at republican audacity. The stout-hearted Captain who represented the honour of England demanded of king John IV. that he should expel from his ports the enemies of commerce between friendly nations; or that he, Robert Blake, should be allowed to enter the harbour and assert the demands of his government. The required admittance was refused. Blake, attempting to pass the bar, was fired on by the Portuguese forts; and he immediately made reprisals upon the ships of king John. Rupert escaped to the coast of Spain; and after similar demands

and refusals from the Spanish government, Blake destroyed the greater number of the privateering fleet. France and Spain were each under very doubtful relations to England, although Spain had recognised the Commonwealth. The time had not arrived when it was necessary to make any strict alliance, or to come to a decided rupture, with either of these great powers—Spain essentially weak in the decay of national spirit; France embarrassed by intestine commotions. The relations of the Commonwealth with the United Provinces were changed by the death of the prince of Orange in 1650. Had he lived his influence would have probably excited a war with the republicans, who had put his father-in-law to death, and abolished monarchical government. There was large commercial intercourse between England and these Provinces. They were both Protestant. The Council of State of the Commonwealth conceived the ambitious project of “a more intrinsical and mutual interest of each other than has hitherto been, for the good of both.” Two ambassadors, Oliver St. John and Walter Strickland, were sent to the Hague to accomplish this alliance; which really meant that the two republics should form one nation. This scheme was decidedly unpopular, as it deserved to be. At the Hague there were many English Cavaliers with the duke of York and his sister, the widow of the prince of Orange. The Dutch populace and the English royalists joined in insults to the suite of the ambassadors. Oliver St. John and the duke of York nearly came to crossing swords in the public park. These proceedings took place before the issue of affairs in Scotland. The ambassadors were at length recalled by the Parliament. It was manifest that the rival commercial states would not long remain at peace. A war was unavoidable, when the House carried the Navigation Act, under which no vessel could enter an English port with a cargo not produced or manufactured in the country to which the vessel belonged. This Act went to destroy the Dutch carrying trade. When the royalist cause was finally overthrown by the victory of Worcester, all the smaller states of Europe manifested the greatest eagerness for the alliance of the triumphant Commonwealth. The States-General now sent ambassadors to London. They were received with all outward manifestations of respect; but the English statesmen were resolved to restore the flag of their country to that supremacy which Elizabeth had asserted, but which her successors had suffered to pass away. The Great Seal of the Commonwealth ostentatiously exhibited the defences of

“The British Sea.” The salute of the English flag, the right of search, the limits of the fisheries, became the subjects of ardent contention between England and the States-General. Whilst these differences continued to be agitated in state papers; whilst the Dutch statesmen were demanding the repeal of the Navigation Act, and the English Council as strenuously refusing even a temporary suspension of that measure, so long considered the great foundation of our commercial prosperity; the fleets of Blake and the Dutch admiral, Van Tromp, came to a conflict on the 19th of May, 1652. The Dutchman had come into the Downs, with a fleet of forty-two vessels. Blake thought it right to look after them, and appeared with twenty-three ships. He fired three signal guns, to summon Van Tromp to lower his flag. Tromp paid no regard to the summons, and sailed on. He suddenly turned round, and sent a broadside into Blake's flag-ship. An engagement immediately took place which lasted four hours. Van Tromp lost one ship; and when morning dawned, the gazers from the heights of Dover saw no trace of a hostile fleet. There were conflicting statements from each nation. It was a premeditated attack, said the English; he came to insult us on our own seas. Stress of weather drove our admiral to your coasts, said the Dutch; he could have destroyed your fleet if he had meant war. The United Provinces appear to have been anxious to remain at peace; although there were party-divisions amongst their rulers. The English Council was probably not indisposed for a naval war. There was an end of land victories; and the popular excitement might find in maritime successes some occupation more safe than agitations for new reforms. War was declared against the States-General on the 8th of July.

The great naval power of the Dutch was founded, as naval power must necessarily be founded, upon the extent of their commerce. The industrial spirit of the reign of Elizabeth, the maritime discoveries, the bold but imperfect attempts at colonization, created the material force and called out the national spirit, that swept the Spanish galleons from the seas over which they asserted a haughty dominion. A year or two before the Long Parliament, the commerce of England appears to have been in a languid condition. The East India company, the Turkey Company, the Merchant Adventurers, had been long contending, with doubtful success, against the inevitable encroachments of private enterprise. The interlopers, as they were called, were sometimes permitted or

connived at; and sometimes repressed by stringent proclamations. Individual energy during the palmy days of the Star-Chamber was sufficiently retarded by small monopolies, in the shape of licenses and patents. Nevertheless the trade of the country went on increasing; and the plantations of America and the West Indies furnished new commodities in exchange for English produce. King James's "Counterblast to Tobacco" was forgotten; and many a good ship was now laden with the weed once sold for its weight in silver. The Civil War necessarily interfered with some mercantile operations; but if we look to the sums which were contributed by London and other commercial cities for the exigencies of the Parliament, we may be assured that in spite of fears and animosities, of civil and religious dissensions, the aggregate exchange of the country suffered no ruinous interruption. Under the Commonwealth there was undoubtedly a revival of commercial enterprise. A writer after the Restoration, complaining of the low condition of trade at that time (1668), attributes it to the mistaken foreign policy of Cromwell: "When this late tyrant, or Protector as some call him, turned out the Long Parliament, the kingdom was arrived at the highest pitch of trade, wealth, and honour that it, in any age, ever yet knew. The trade appeared by the great sums offered then for the customs and excise, nine hundred thousand pounds a year being refused."* There can be no doubt that upon the termination of the Civil War all industry recovered the check that it must have necessarily received. It was felt that property was secure; that a political revolution had been accomplished without any uprooting of the great principles of social order. The nation was prosperous; its rulers were proud of their triumphs and the peaceable results of their arduous contests. The Navigation Act, which was as real a manifestation of hostility to the Dutch as a declaration of war, originated in that increasing commerce which was grown powerful enough to contend with a long-established rivalry. The Dutch trade was founded upon many monopolies offensive to the English spirit of free adventure. A bold struggle was to be made for disputing their rival's possession of the carrying-trade of the world. The Navigation Act was a rude invention suited to the infancy of commerce; and it long held its influence over us, like many other political superstitions. Whether its immediate results were beneficial to the country may be doubted. The statesmen of that period and long after did not understand

* "The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell;" reprinted in Harl. Mis. vol. vii.

that buying and selling, freighting and unloading vessels, bringing home useful or luxurious products of foreign countries to exchange with our own growth or manufacture—that these complex operations were not of national benefit merely as conducing to the enrichment of merchants, but chiefly beneficial as they supplied the necessities, or increased the enjoyments, of the great mass of the people. And yet they had glimpses of this truth. In 1649 France prohibited all trade with England. On the 23rd of August, as Whitelocke reports, the House voted, that no wines, wool, or silk, of the growth of France, should be imported into England. But upon the question whether *linen* should be prohibited, "it was resolved in the negative, in regard of the general and necessary use thereof." But the Council of State could dispense with luxuries. The French minister in London wrote to Mazarin that when he told the Council "that they could not do without our wines, they answered jocosely that men soon got accustomed to anything; and that as they had without inconvenience dispensed with a king, contrary to the general belief, so they could also dispense with our French wines."*

In the spirit of commercial rivalry,—with sailors in both fleets that were sometimes serving in the mercantile marine, but always trained to fight, for there were sea-robbers hovering about every rich cargo,—Van Tromp and Blake were to try the mettle of their crews. In every material of naval warfare the Dutch were superior to the English. Their ships were far more numerous; their commanders were more experienced: their men better disciplined. Blake, and Deane, and Popham, and other sea-captains, were land-officers. When Cromwell writes from Ireland to the Council of State, he mentions "Colonel Blake" in one letter, and "General Blake" in another. The Dutch had a more practised body of naval tacticians, who had been educated for a special service connected with the rich commerce of their Indian and American settlements. But in the English fleet there was a devoted zeal which feared no encounter however unequal, and was indifferent to the grounds of a quarrel in the determination to uphold the national honour. In 1652, in anticipation of the Dutch war, Blake was appointed sole admiral and general of the fleet. The character which Clarendon gives of this great commander is candid and discriminating; and it shows how a resolute will, seconding nat-

* Guizot's "Cromwell," vol. i. p. 221; quoted from the despatch in Archives des Affaires Etrangères de France.

ural talents, may triumph over the impediments of traditionary habits and imbecile routine: "Having done eminent service to the Parliament, especially at Taunton, at land, he then betook himself wholly to the sea; and quickly made himself signal there. He was the first man that declined the old track, and made it manifest that the science might be attained in less time than was imagined, and despised those rules which had been long in practice, to keep his ship and his men out of danger; which had been held in former times a point of great ability and circumspection; as if the principal art requisite in the captain of a ship had been to be sure to come home safe again. He was the first man who brought the ships to contemn castles on shore, which had been thought ever very formidable, and were discovered by him to make a noise only, and to fright those who could rarely be hurt by them. He was the first that infused that proportion of courage into the seamen, by making them see by experience what mighty things they could do, if they were resolved; and taught them to fight in fire as well as upon water: and though he hath been very well imitated and followed, he was the first that gave the example of that kind of naval courage, and bold and resolute achievements."* The great men of the Civil War and of the Commonwealth were called out by the circumstances of the times. The genius of Blake, in the chases and battles of the sea, was the same creation of a strong necessity as the genius of Cromwell in his land-fights. The great admiral was made out of an idle country gentleman; the great general was made out of a plain follower of rural industries. The statesmen of the time were fashioned by the same rough teaching. Howell, who was a sagacious observer of men's actions, and whose judgment was not much obscured by his political feelings, writes thus of the men of this period: "The world stands in admiration of the capacity and docibleness of the English, that persons of ordinary breeding, extraction, and callings, should become statesmen and soldiers, commanders and councillors, both in the art of war and mysteries of state, and know the use of the compass in so short a tract of time."†

The sea-fights between the English and the Dutch in that war of two years have no great historical interest, for they originated in no higher principle than commercial rivalry. Nevertheless they abound in traits of individual heroism; and certainly, whatever have been her subsequent naval glories, England may still be

* "Rebellion," vol. vii. p. 216.

† "Letters," vol. iv. 1655, p. 111.

proud of the fame of Blake. Never were her great admirals opposed to one more worthy than Van Tromp. Costly as this war was to the nation,—impolitic in the leaders of the republic—it revived that popular spirit of reliance on the navy which even the base humiliations of the next reign could not extinguish. The maritime glories of the Commonwealth could be referred to with honest pride when Englishmen blushed for the disgraces of the Restoration. We must tell the story very briefly. In June, 1652, Blake had a fleet of a hundred and five ships; carrying nearly four thousand guns. Van Tromp had a hundred and twenty ships. Blake's first business was to assert the bounds of the English fishery. In the seas of the north of Scotland he dispersed six hundred herring busses; capturing or sinking twelve ships of war that were protecting the fishermen's operations. Sir George Ayscough was defending the Channel. Van Tromp came out of the Texel with seventy-nine men of war and ten fire-ships, to engage with Ayscough's inferior squadron. He was becalmed, and unable to engage. He turned to the North Seas; and Blake met him between the Orkneys and Shetland. A tempest came on; the Dutch vessels were scattered and much damaged; and Van Tromp returned to Holland, pursued by Blake. The Dutch admiral was unjustly blamed for his misfortunes as if they had been faults. He resigned his command, and was succeeded by De Ruyter. This bold sailor came into the Channel with thirty vessels; and drove Ayscough into Plymouth. De Ruyter was joined by Cornelius De Witt; and, with a fleet of sixty-four sail, encountered Blake in the Downs. After a severe engagement on the 28th of September, the Dutch were driven back to their own coasts. Van Tromp was again reinstated in command; and he took the sea as winter was approaching, with a fleet of seventy-three sail. The possibility of a hostile navy appearing off the English coast at the end of November was little calculated upon. Blake had only thirty-seven ships to meet the Dutch admiral. But he resolved not to shrink from battle. The issue was a conflict off the Naze, which ended in the necessity of a retreat, with great loss, to the Thames. Van Tromp sailed up and down the Channel with a broom at his mast head, to manifest that he would sweep the seas of the proud islanders; and the States-General proclaimed England under a blockade. The Parliament was not disheartened; and they were just to the merits of their admiral. They sent him again to sea in February, 1653, with a fleet of eighty sail, having Penn and Lawson under his command.

He met the Dutch fleet, on the 18th of February, between Portland Hill and Cape La Hogue. It consisted of seventy-five men of war, convoying two hundred and fifty merchantmen. The battle lasted all day, without any decided success. It was renewed on the following noon. Van Tromp made all sail for his own coasts, with Blake following him. The same running fight was maintained for two more days, with equal courage and obstinacy on both sides. It was not a decisive victory, though the Dutch lost many ships. Each government bestowed rewards upon its brave captains; and the English parliament appointed a General Thanksgiving. The broom was not again set up at the Dutch mast-head during the war between the two republics.

The large expenses of this Dutch war drove the Parliament and their Council of State to resort to very arbitrary and oppressive measures. The Act of Amnesty afforded some security to the persons of royalists, but that indemnity was not extended to their property. Search for "delinquents" was to be strictly made. Those who had been spared were now called upon to compound for the possession of their estates. Of many Cavaliers all their real and personal property was confiscated. Hundreds of others were required to pay one-third of their property's value within very limited time. Cromwell was opposed to these proceedings. He might, as some may imagine, have desired to embarrass the government of which he was contemplating the overthrow; but we must do him the justice to believe, that, speaking in the face of his contemporaries, he was not making a pretence of moderation, when he thus declared his opinion in 1654: "Poor men, under this arbitrary power, were driven like flocks of sheep, by forty in a morning, to the confiscation of goods and estates, without any man being able to give a reason why two of them had deserved to forfeit a shilling. I tell you the truth. And my soul, and many persons' whom I see in this place, were exceedingly grieved at these things; and knew not which way to help them, except by our mournings, and giving our negatives when occasion served."* The victorious General of the armies of the Commonwealth had put himself into the position of the leading reformer of the tyrannies and neglects of the rulers of the Commonwealth. He necessarily had a large body of supporters in the people generally; but his strength was in that body of men whom he had led to conquest—whom he had moulded into a conviction that he was yet to be their instrument in com-

* Speech to the First Parliament of the Protectorate. Carlyle, vol. iii. p. 44.

pleting the national deliverance from the evils which were still to be striven against. Whilst the English and Dutch were fighting in the Channel in the autumn of 1652, a Petition was presented to the Parliament by "the Officers of my Lord-General's Army. They craved Reform of the Law; they asked for a Gospel ministry; they most especially urged a swifter progress to the Bill for a new Representation in Parliament. Upon this very expressive intimation that there was something going on which was not to be despised, the lawyers applied themselves to settle some very intricate questions as to the possession of estates, so disturbed by the late intestine commotions; and the House voted that "the Committee for regulating the Law be revived." Subsequently they appointed a Commission "to take into consideration what inconveniences there are in the Law; and how the mischiefs that grow from the delays, the changeableness, and the irregularities in law proceedings may be prevented, and the speediest way to reform the same." The demand for a Gospel ministry—a vague demand—was only met by strong laws against "atheistical, blasphemous, and execrable opinions," and by continuing severities against Catholics and Episcopalians. The question of a new Representation went on very slowly to a solution. The undisguised hostility of Cromwell to the existing order of things seemed to make the prediction of Hugh Peters not unlikely to be realised. The nation began to feel the embarrassments occasioned by the union of the legislative and executive powers in an Assembly, not numerous enough to be the interpreters of opinion, and too numerous for salutary and consistent action. There is a well-known dialogue between Cromwell and Whitelocke which, although recorded with a little more elaboration than seems natural to the relation of an evening's talk in St. James's Park, may be received as a trustworthy notion of the state of affairs, and of the temper of the man who was destined to change the mode of government. Cromwell complains of "jarrings and animosities one against another;" he points out "the dangerous condition we are in." Whitelocke agrees with him: "My lord, I look upon our present danger as greater than ever it was in the field; and, as your Excellency truly observes, our proneness is to destroy ourselves, when our enemies could not do it." It is "the factions and ambitious designs" of the army to which he is pointing. Cromwell admits that "their insolency is very great;" but, he continues, "as for the members of Parliament, the army begins to have a strange dis-

taste against them, and I wish there were not too much cause for it. And really their pride and ambition, and self-seeking, engrossing all places of honour and profit to themselves; and their daily breaking forth into new and violent parties and factions; their delays of business, and designs to perpetuate themselves, and to continue the power in their own hands; their meddling in private matters between party and party, contrary to the institution of Parliaments, and their injustice and partiality in those matters; and the scandalous lives of some of the chief of them;—these things, my lord, do give too much grounds for people to open their mouths against them, and to dislike them. Nor can they be kept within the bounds of justice, and law or reason; they themselves being the supreme power of the nation, liable to no account to any, nor to be controlled or regulated by any other power; there being none superior, or co-ordinate with them. So that, unless there be some authority and power so full and so high as to restrain and keep things in better order, and that may be a check to these exorbitances, it will be impossible in human reason to prevent our ruin." Whitelocke somewhat defends the members of Parliament: "Too many of them are much to blame in those things you have mentioned, and many unfit things have passed among them; but I hope well of the major part of them, when great matters come to a decision." Cromwell does not quite agree: "Some course must be thought on, to curb and restrain them, or we shall be ruined by them." There is a difficulty in this, as Whitelocke judges: "We ourselves have acknowledged them the supreme power, and taken our commissions and authority in the highest concerns from them; and how to restrain and rule them after this, it will be hard to find out a way for it." The reply is startling: "What if a man should take upon him to be King?" Whitelocke replies as if there could be no doubt that the Lord-General meant himself: "As to your own person, the title of king would be of no advantage, because you have the full kingly power in you already concerning the militia, as you are General. As to the nomination of civil officers, those whom you think fittest are seldom refused; and, although you have no negative vote in the passing of laws, yet what you dislike will not easily be carried; and the taxes are already settled, and in your power to dispose the money raised. And as to foreign affairs, though the ceremonial application be made to the Parliament, yet the expectation of good or bad success in it is from your Excellency, and particular solicitations of foreign ministers are made to you only,

So that I apprehend indeed less envy, and danger, and pomp, but not less power and real opportunities of doing good, in your being General, than would be if you had assumed the title of King." This bold declaration of Cromwell was met by what appears a singular mode in Whitelocke to propitiate a man who had such power to carry his day-dreams into realities. "What if a man should take upon him to be King," was answered by him with an expedient which he propounds with very considerable alarm. He is re-assured when the Lord-General says, "There shall be no prejudice come to you by any private discourse between us. I shall never betray my friend." The expedient is this: "I propound for your Excellency to send to the king of Scots, and to have a private treaty with him." Cromwell postponed the consideration of this expedient to a further time; and Whitelocke adds, "My Lord-General did not in words express any anger, but only by looks and carriage; and turned aside from me to other company."

During the winter and spring the great question at issue between the Parliament and the man described by Whitelocke as having kingly authority in all but the name, was the long debated question of future representation. In February it was determined that the existing Parliament should dissolve on the 3rd of November of that year. The future number of Representatives was to be four hundred, to be elected by freeholders in counties, and owners or tenants in boroughs. But this was not to be wholly a new Parliament. The members then sitting were to remain as the Representatives of the counties or boroughs for which they then sat; and it was resolved that a general Committee should pronounce upon the validity of the new returns. Against the proposal "for the perpetuating the same men in Parliament," as Cromwell afterwards described this Bill, he gave his most strenuous opposition. On the 19th of April, 1653, there was great conference of members of the House, and of officers of the Army, at Cromwell's residence of Whitehall. One party pressed the necessity of the Bill; the other desired that "they would devolve the trust over to some well-affected men, such as had an interest in the nation, and were known to be of good affection to the Commonwealth."* "At parting," continues the same narrator of these proceedings,—Cromwell himself—"one of the chief" of the members, and "two or three more, did tell us, that they would endeavour to suspend farther proceedings about their Bill for a new Representation until they had

* Cromwell's Speech to the "Little Parliament," Carlyle, vol. ii. p. 317.