

to him the result of their deliberations. The two bodies met in separate chambers; and they each finally agreed to present to William addresses, to request that he would issue letters to summon a Convention of the Estates of the realm, and in the mean time take upon himself the administration of government. These resolutions were agreed to with less hesitation when it was known that James, after staying a week at Rochester, had gone over to France. William applied himself with all the energy of his character to extricate the nation out of its confusion. The exchequer was almost empty. Such was the confidence in him that, upon his word alone, two hundred thousand pounds were immediately placed in his hands by the Common Council of London, as a loan subscribed by the merchants. The nation felt, generally, that it was under a temporary ruler who would respect the law, and maintain order and security. The letters for calling the Convention were sent out; the old charters had been restored; and the elections proceeded without any interference with the freedom of the electors, by the influence of the servants of the government. The prince of Orange had also been requested to proceed in the same manner in regard to Scotland as in England—to take on himself the provisional administration, and to call a Convention of the Estates.

On the 22nd of January the Convention met. The composition of the House of Commons was such that there was not likely to be any serious difference of opinion upon the fundamental principles of a settlement of the nation. But there were great difficulties to be overcome. Evelyn has related the discussions at a dinner on the 15th, at the palace of the archbishop of Canterbury, where he met five bishops and several peers: "Sorry I was to find there was as yet no accord in the judgments of the Lords and Commons who were to convene. Some would have the princess made queen without any more dispute; others were for a Regency; there was a Tory party, then so called, who were for inviting his majesty again upon conditions; and there were Republicans, who would make the prince of Orange like a Stadtholder." The bishops, he adds, "were all for a Regency, thereby to salve their oaths, and so all public matters to proceed in his majesty's name." The most important of these differences was encountered and settled by the Commons, in their great vote of the 28th of January: "Resolved, That king James the Second, having endeavoured to subvert the Constitution of the Kingdom, by breaking the original Contract between king and people, and, by the advice of Jesuits, and other

wicked persons, having violated the fundamental Laws, and having withdrawn himself out of the Kingdom, has abdicated the Government, and that the Throne is thereby become vacant." On the 29th they passed another resolution: "That it hath been found, by experience, to be inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom, to be governed by a Popish Prince." The Lords, on receiving the Resolution of the Commons that the throne was vacant, to which their concurrence was desired, entered upon long and serious debates, having concurred in the Resolution that the kingdom ought not to be governed by a Popish Prince. The great question by them discussed was, whether a Regency, under which the royal power should be administered in the name of king James II. during his life, was not the best and safest way to preserve the laws and the Protestant religion. This motion was only lost by a majority of two, fifty-one to forty-nine. They then proceeded to the discussion of the abstract question, whether or no there was an original contract between king and people. This brought into conflict the assertors of divine right, and the assertors that all power originally belonged to the community, the power of the king being by mutual compact. This latter position, which rejected the notions of absolute authority which had been so servilely maintained since the Restoration, was carried by fifty-three votes against forty-six. It was then resolved, that king James had broken the contract; and then the substitution of the word "deserted" for "abdicated" in the Resolution of the Commons was agreed to. But the great point of discussion was, "Whether king James, having broken that original contract between him and his people, and deserted the government, the throne was vacant." The negative was decided by a majority of fifty-five to forty-one. The Lords and Commons were now at issue upon a great principle. The majority maintained that in the monarchy of England the throne could never be vacant; that upon the demise of the crown the right of the heir was complete; any other principle would make the monarchy elective. A conference between the two Houses was carried on with remarkable ability; but the firmness of the Commons, intent as they were upon a practical result, led the Lords to agree, the day after the Conference, to the Resolution of the Commons, without alteration; and further to resolve, that the prince and princess of Orange should be declared king and queen of England and all the dominions thereunto belonging. The Commons had resolved, on the 29th of January, that "before the Com-

mittee proceed to fill the throne now vacant, they will proceed to secure our religion, laws, and liberties." They accomplished this in the memorable document known as "THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS." On the 13th of February, the two Houses of the Convention went in a body to Whitehall. The princess of Orange, who had arrived from Holland on the previous day, sat with her husband, under a canopy in the Banqueting-House. Halifax, the Speaker of the Lords, addressed their highnesses, and said that both Houses had issued a Declaration, which was then read by the Clerk of the House of Lords:

"Whereas the late king James, by the assistance of divers evil counsellors, judges, and ministers employed by him, did endeavour to subvert and extirpate the Protestant religion, and the laws and liberties of this kingdom: By assuming and exercising a power of dispensing with and suspending of laws, and the execution of laws, without consent of Parliament: By committing and prosecuting divers worthy prelates, for humbly petitioning to be excused from concurring to the said assumed power: By issuing and causing to be executed, a commissioner under the great seal, for erecting a Court called 'The Court of Commissione for Ecclesiastical Causes:'. By levying money for and to the use of the Crown, by pretence of prerogative, for other time, and in other manner, than the same was granted by parliament: By raising and keeping a standing army within this kingdom in time of peace, without consent of parliament; and quartering soldiers contrary to law: By causing divers good subjects, being Protestants, to be disarmed, at the same time when Papists were both armed and employed contrary to law: By violating the freedom of election of members to serve in parliament: By prosecutions in the Court of King's Bench for matters and causes recognizable only in parliament; and by divers other arbitrary and illegal courses. And whereas of late years, partial, corrupt, and unqualified persons, have been returned and served on juries in trials, and particularly divers juries in trials for High Treason, which were not freeholders: and excessive bail hath been required of persons committed in criminal cases, to elude the benefit of the laws made for the liberty of the subjects: and excessive fines have been imposed, and illegal and cruel punishments inflicted: and several grants and promises made of fines and forfeitures, before any conviction or judgment against the persons upon whom the same were to be levied: All which are utterly and directly contrary to the known laws and statutes, and freedom of this realm. And whereas the said late king James II. having abdicated the government and the throne being thereby vacant, his highness the prince of Orange (whom it hath pleased Almighty God to make the glorious instrument of delivering this kingdom from Popery and arbitrary power) did (by the advice of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and divers principal persons of the Commons) cause letters to be written to the Lords spiritual and temporal, being Protestants, and other letters to the several counties, cities, universities, boroughs, and cinque-ports, for the choosing of such persons to represent them as were of right to be sent to parliament, to meet and sit at Westminster upon the 22nd day of January in this year 1688, [1689] in order to such an establishment, as that their religion, laws, and liberties, might not again be in danger of being subverted: Upon which letters, elections having been accordingly made; and thereupon the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, pursuant to their several letters and elections, being now assembled in a full and free representative of this nation, taking into their most serious consideration the best means for attaining the end aforesaid, do in the first place (as their ancestors in like case have usually done) for vindicating and asserting their ancient rights and liberties, declare: That the pretended power of suspending the laws, or the execution of laws, by royal authority, without consent of parliament, is illegal: That the pretended power of

dispensing with laws, or the execution of laws, by royal authority, as it hath been assumed and exercised of late, is illegal: That the commission for erecting the late Court of Commissioners for Ecclesiastical Causes, and all other commission and courts of the like nature are illegal and pernicious: That levying money for or to the use of the crown, by pretence of prerogative, without grant of parliament, for longer time, or in any other manner than the same is or shall be granted, is illegal: That it is the right of the subjects to petition the king, and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning, are illegal: That the raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of parliament, is against law: That the subjects, which are Protestants, may have arms for their defence suitable to their condition, and as allowed by law: That elections of members of parliament ought to be free: That the freedom of speech, and debates, or proceedings in parliament, ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of parliament: That excessive bail ought not to be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted: That jurors ought to be duly empanelled and returned; and jurors, which pass upon men in trials of high-treason, ought to be freeholders: That all grants, and promises of fines, and forfeitures of particular persons, before conviction, are illegal and void: And that for redress of all grievances, and for the amending, strengthening, and preserving of the laws, parliaments ought to be held frequently. And they do claim, demand, and insist, upon all and singular the premises, as their undoubted rights and liberties; and no declarations, judgments doings or proceedings, to the prejudice of the people in any of the said premises, ought in any wise to be drawn hereafter into consequence or example. To which demand of their rights they are particularly encouraged by the declaration of his highness the prince of Orange, as being the only means for obtaining a full redress and remedy therein. Having therefore an entire confidence that his said highness, the prince of Orange, will perfect the deliverance so far advanced by him, and will still preserve them from the violation of their rights, which they have here asserted, and from all other attempts upon their religion, rights, and liberties; the said lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, assembled at Westminster, do resolve, That William and Mary, prince and princess of Orange, be, and be declared king and queen of England, France, and Ireland, and the dominions thereunto belonging, to hold the crown and royal dignity of the said kingdoms and dominions, to them, the said prince and princess during their lives, and the life of the survivor of them; and that the sole and full exercise of the royal power be only in, and executed by the said prince of Orange, in the names of the said prince and princess during their joint lives; and after their deceases the said crown and royal dignity of the said kingdoms and dominions to be to the heirs of the body of the said princess; and for default of such issue, to the princess Anne of Denmark, and the heirs of her body; and for default of such issue, to the heirs of the body of the said prince of Orange. And the said lords spiritual and temporal, and commons do pray the said prince and princess of Orange, to accept the same accordingly: And that the oaths hereafter mentioned be taken by all persons of whom the oaths of allegiance and supremacy might be required by law, instead of them; and that the said oaths of allegiance and supremacy be abrogated: 'I, A. B., do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful, and bear true allegiance to their majesties, king William and queen Mary. So help me God. I, A. B., do swear That I do from my heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, this damnable doctrine and position, That princes excommunicated or deprived by the pope, or any authority of the see of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever. And I do declare, that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state or potentate, hath or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical, or spiritual, within this realm. So help me God."

When the reading of the Declaration was concluded, lord Halifax, in the name of all the Estates of the realm, requested the

prince and princess to accept the Crown. "We thankfully accept," said William, "what you have offered us." A few words of assurance from those undemonstrative lips, that the laws should be the rule of his life, that he would endeavour to promote the kingdom's welfare, and that he would constantly seek the advice of the two Houses of Parliament, concluded this memorable transfer of the Crown. Amidst the shouts of the people, the Prince and Princess of Orange were proclaimed King and Queen of England. The Revolution was accomplished.

The Revolution of 1688 is the commencement of a new era in English history. It was not a great popular victory over an absolute king or an intolerant priesthood. Such a victory had been achieved by the Long Parliament; but the change from a Monarchy to a Commonwealth, from Episcopacy to Puritanism, was too extreme, and too sudden, to be permanent. The re-action brought back the evil theories of Strafford and Laud; but the time was past when any successful attempt could be made to carry them out to their extreme consequences. The time was also past when resistance to oppression and corruption would contemplate the overthrow of the Crown and Mitre. The opposition to the measures of the two successors of Charles the First was narrowed by limits which did not circumscribe the contest with their father. When the insane passion of James the Second, to thrust an obnoxious religion upon the nation, was to be carried through by his own illegal assumption of power,—when chartered privileges were violated—when justice was corrupted at its fountain head—the desire to substitute some other form of government in the place of the ancient monarchy was gone. The republican enthusiasm of Vane and Ludlow had given place to the safe Constitutionalism of Halifax and Somers. When the Church of England was roused by its own danger into a contest with the absolute king, whose right-divine to unlimited obedience it had so strenuously maintained, the Non-conformists did not reproach the Church for its inconsistency, or make common cause with its enemies, in the hope of its downfall. The zealotry of Peters, and the fanaticism of Venner, had been succeeded by the moderation of Howe and the peace-making of Penn. Hence, in the Revolution of 1688, there was scarcely a manifestation that the leaders of the movement contemplated any violent change in the institutions of the country. It was by no means clear that the most influential among them contemplated

the removal of their obnoxious sovereign. They sought to curb his illegal proceedings, through the power of a foreign prince, whose interest in the welfare of the kingdom gave a semblance of legality to his invasion; and whose sagacity and courage were the pledges that his attempt would not miscarry for the want of the necessary qualities to carry it through. From the same cause that had rendered the resistance to the government a policy rather than an impulse, the support which the government still retained was a calculation rather than a feeling. That Loyalty was gone, which regarded the king as the supreme arbiter of a nation's destiny, to be served without any limitation, and to be obeyed without any doubt. With the Roundheads of the Civil War, resistance to this irresponsible power was a principle. With the Cavaliers, the defence of all royal power was a sentiment. Charles the Second destroyed the sentiment when it became incompatible with respect for the possessor of the crown. James the Second completed its destruction, when he cast off those allies who had attempted to found implicit obedience upon the divine command. From the inevitable changes of national feeling in the past half century, whose lessons of experience had been so harsh and yet so salutary, it resulted that the Revolution of 1688 was not a great emotional change, in which the evil might be feared as much as the good—a convulsion which should overthrow many right things which ought to be preserved as well as the bad things which ought to be swept away. That convulsion had taken place in the previous generation. It was scarcely necessary now to do more than preserve what had been won; to restore what had then been destroyed; and to render any future attempts impossible to bring back the period of misrule that preceded the great catastrophe of the Monarchy. But to accomplish this amount of good effectually and securely, it was the first condition of success that the Monarchy should be preserved. The great difficulty of effecting this preservation, and yet changing the occupier of the throne, is the natural explanation of the inconsistency of the theory upon which James was set aside. The practical necessity over-rode the abstract incongruity. There was to be sovereignty; but the legitimate sovereign was cast out and the heir passed by. And yet the elective principle was not absolutely maintained. But at the same time the right divine, upon which the claim to absolute power had been built, was rejected; the compact between king and people was recognised. There was still the Monarchy, with all its an-

cient dignity and possessions, but the title rested no longer upon slavish theories. The title of William and Mary was irrevocably associated with the Declaration of Rights. When, on the thirteenth of February, William, prince of Orange, said to the Peers and Commons who tendered him the Crown in conjunction with his wife—"We thankfully accept what you have offered us"—their recognition of the gift also recognised the conditions of the gift,—that the Rights and Liberties of the People, and the legal prerogatives of the Sovereigns, were thenceforth to be inseparable.

The broad foundation upon which the Rights and Liberties of the People were to be restored, kept up, extended if necessary, was that of a free Parliament,—freely elected, free in its proceedings, without whose consent no taxes could be levied, and no standing army maintained—a Parliament frequently meeting, "for redress of all grievances, and for the amending, strengthening, and preserving of the Laws." Upon Parliamentary Representation was the Revolution based. It is for this reason, especially, that the Revolution may be considered the commencement of a new era. The Parliament was thus to be a great integral part of the Constitution, without which no act of government could have a real vitality. During the whole unhappy time of the Stuarts, their great struggle had been to govern without Parliaments. During the Civil War and the earlier years of the Commonwealth, the attempt of the legislative power to govern without the monarchical, was found to be full of danger and insecurity. The sagacity of Cromwell saw that a Monarchy, or "something like a Monarchy," in conjunction with a Parliament, was best adapted to the whole structure of the English laws, and best suited to the character of the English people. What Cromwell in vain aimed at was accomplished without difficulty, by a prince who much resembled him in some of the great qualities that belong to a ruler of men. In 1689, the Constitution was established through the principle of Resistance, not upon any new theories, but upon fundamental laws, many of which were of an older date than that of the oldest oak which stood upon English ground. For this reason, it has never again been necessary to call in the principle of Resistance. A time would come, when the government of England, being so essentially a Parliamentary government, the struggles of Parties would have more regard to the possession of power than to the interests of the nation. But it was the essential consequence of these very strifes of Party, that, whatever the influence of oli-

garchs or demagogues, a controlling public opinion was constantly growing and strengthening. The power that distinguished the century following the Revolution from all other centuries, was the power of the Press, and especially the power of Journalism. Rude and incomplete as were its first efforts against, and often for, corrupt and unpatriotic administrations, it gradually rendered public opinion so active and concentrated, that statesmen could no longer affect to despise its admonitions. The Press ceased to be controlled by a licenser. It ceased to be awed by the fear of state prosecutions, when its security rested upon the verdict of twelve men. The tampering with Juries was one of the most crying evils of the period which preceded the Revolution. The doctrine which had been so often violated was solemnly asserted in 1689, that "Jurors ought to be duly empanelled and returned." Chiefly through the influence of public opinion, kept in vigorous order by the Press,—and let it always be borne in mind that the Press was essentially controversial, and always will be so,—extreme opinions became less and less. In the same degree the union of Classes became closer. The representatives of the old great families approached the commonalty, not as a "rabble," but as fellow-citizens. The commonalty looked upon the aristocracy, not as a hateful caste of oppressors, but as their natural leaders. The Revolution of 1688 has been despised by some as an aristocratic Revolution. Happy for us that it was not born of that "violent and unextinguishable hatred of inequality," that fierce desire "to raze to their foundations all that remained of the institutions of the Middle Ages;"* which, chiefly, have made the Revolutions of another great nation so unstable.

* De Tocqueville.