

but from the day of Charles I.'s execution twelve years before. The troops of the Commonwealth were speedily disbanded, but the king retained a picked guard of 5000 men, which became the nucleus of a new standing army.

**520. The King's Character.**—The sovereign who now ascended the throne was in every respect the opposite of Cromwell. Charles had no love of country, no sense of duty, no belief in man, no respect for woman. Evil circumstances and evil companions had made him "a good-humored but hard-hearted voluptuary." For twelve years he had been a wanderer, and at times almost a beggar. Now the sole aim of his life was enjoyment. He desired to be king because he would then have every means for accomplishing that aim.

**521. Reaction from Puritanism.**—In this purpose Charles had the sympathy of a considerable part of the people. The Puritan faith, represented by such men as Milton and Hampden, was noble indeed; but unfortunately there were many in its ranks who had no like grandeur of soul, but who pushed Puritanism to its most injurious and offensive extreme. That attempt to reduce the whole of life to a narrow system of sour self-denial had at last broken down. Now, under the Restoration, the reaction set in, and the lower and earthly side of human nature—none the less human because it is at the bottom and not at the top—seemed determined to take its full revenge. Butler ridiculed religious zeal in his poem of "Hudibras," which every courtier had by heart. Society was smitten with an epidemic of immorality. Profligacy became the fashion in both speech and action, and much of the popular literature of that day will not bear the light.

**522. The Royal Favorites; the Cabal.**—The king surrounded himself with men like himself. They vied with each other in dissipation and in jests on each other. Charles's two chief favorites were the Earl of Rochester, a gifted but ribald poet, and Lord Shaftesbury, who became chancellor. Both have left on record

their estimate of their royal master. The first wrote on the door of the king's bed-chamber:—

"Here lies our sovereign lord, the king,  
Whose word no man relies on;  
He never says a foolish thing,  
Nor ever does a wise one."

To which Charles, on reading it, retorted, "'Tis true! because while my words are my own, my acts are my ministers'."

A bright repartee tells us what the second favorite thought. "Ah! Shaftesbury," said the king to him one day, "I verily believe you are the wickedest dog in my dominions." "Yes, your Majesty," replied Shaftesbury, "for a *subject* I think perhaps I may be."

The new reign, from a political point of view, began decently and ably with the Earl of Clarendon as leading minister, but in a few years it degenerated into an administration called the Cabal, which was simply a government of debauchees, whose sole object was to advance their own private interests by making the king supreme.<sup>1</sup> Its character and deeds may best be learned from that picture of the council of the "infernal peers," which Milton portrayed in "Paradise Lost," where the five princes of evil, Moloch, Belial, Mammon, Beelzebub, and Satan, meet in the palace of Pandemonium to plot the ruin of the world.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This word was originally used to designate the confidential members of the king's private council, and meant perhaps no more than the word *cabinet* does to-day. In 1667 it happened, however, by a singular coincidence, that the initial letters of the five persons comprising it, namely (C)lifford, (A)shley-Cooper [Lord Shaftesbury], (B)uckingham, (A)rlington, and (L)auderdale formed the word CABAL, which henceforth came to have the odious meaning of secret and unscrupulous intrigue that it has ever since retained. It was to Charles II.'s time what the political "ring" is to our own.

<sup>2</sup> Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book II. The first edition was published in 1667, the year the Cabal came into power, though its members had long been favorites with the king. It has been supposed by some that the great Puritan poet had them in his mind when he represented the Pandemonic debate. Shaftesbury and Buckingham are also two of the most prominent characters in Dryden's political satire of Absalom and Achitophel, published in 1681.



**523. Punishment of the Regicides.** — The first act of Charles's first Parliament was to proclaim a pardon to all who had fought against his father in the civil war. The only persons excepted were the members of that High Court of Justice which had sent Charles I. to the block. Of these, ten were executed and nineteen imprisoned for life. Most of the other regicide judges were either already out of the country, or managed to escape soon after. Among these, William Goffe, Edward Whalley, and Col. John Dixwell took refuge in Connecticut, where they remained concealed for several years. Eventually the first two went to Hadley, Massachusetts, where they lived in seclusion in the house of a clergyman until their death. The bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, Bradshaw, and Pride were dug up from their graves in Westminster Abbey, and hanged in chains at Tyburn.<sup>1</sup> They were then buried at the foot of the gallows, along with the mouldering remains of highway robbers and criminals of the lowest sort.

**524. Religious Persecution; Covenanters; Bunyan.** — The Episcopal form of worship was now restored, and in the course of the next few years severe laws were passed against the Nonconformists, or Dissenters.<sup>2</sup> The Corporation Act ordered all holders of municipal offices to renounce the Puritan covenant,<sup>3</sup> and take the sacrament of the Church of England. Next, the Act of Uniformity enforced the use of the Episcopal Prayer-book upon all clergymen and congregations. This was followed by a law<sup>4</sup> forbidding all

<sup>1</sup> Tyburn, near the northeast entrance to Hyde Park, London. It was for several centuries the chief place for the public execution of felons.

<sup>2</sup> The chief Nonconformists, aside from the Roman Catholics, were: 1. The Presbyterians. 2. The Independents, or Congregationalists. 3. The Baptists. 4. The Society of Friends, or Quakers. Originally the name Nonconformist was given to those who refused to conform to the worship of the Church of England, or Episcopacy, and endeavored to change it to suit their views. Later, when the Nonconformists gave up that attempt, and asked only for permission to worship according to their own convictions, they received the milder name of Dissenters.

<sup>3</sup> Covenant: the oath or agreement to maintain the Presbyterian faith and worship. It originated in Scotland. See Paragraph No. 490.

<sup>4</sup> Conventicle Act: from conventicle, a religious meeting of Dissenters.

religious assemblies whatever, except such as worshipped according to the established church. Lastly, the Five-Mile Act forbade all dissenting ministers from teaching in schools, or settling within five miles of an incorporated town.

By these stringent statutes 2000 Presbyterian clergymen were driven from their parishes in a single day, and reduced to the direst distress. The able-bodied among them might indeed pick up a precarious livelihood by hard labor, but the old and the weak soon found their refuge in the grave.

Those who dared to resist these intolerant and inhuman laws were punished with fines, imprisonment, or slavery. The Scottish Parliament—a Parliament, says Bishop Burnet, “mostly drunk”—vied with that of England in persecution of the Dissenters.

The Covenanters were hunted with bugle and bloodhound, like so many deer, by Claverhouse and his men, who hanged and drowned without mercy those who gathered secretly in glens and caves to worship God. Even when nothing certain was known against those who were seized, there was no trial. The father of a family would be dragged from his cottage by the soldiers, asked if he would take the test of conformity to the Church of England and to Charles's government; if not, then came the order, “Make ready—present—fire!”—and there lay the corpse of the rebel.

Among the multitudes who suffered in England for religion's sake was a poor day-laborer named John Bunyan. He had served against the king in the civil wars, and later had become converted to Puritanism, and turned exhorter and itinerant preacher. He was arrested and convicted of having “devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church.” The judge sentenced him to Bedford jail, where he remained a prisoner for twelve years. It was, he says, a squalid “Denn.”<sup>1</sup> But in his marvellous dream of “A Pilgrimage from this World to the Next,” he forgot the misery of his surroundings. Like Milton, in his

<sup>1</sup> “As I walk'd through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a Denn, and I laid me down in that place to sleep: and as I slept I dreamed a dream.” *The Pilgrim's Progress*, edition of 1678.



blindness, loneliness, and poverty, he looked within and found that —

“The mind is its own place, and in itself  
Can make a heaven of hell.”<sup>1</sup>

**525. Seizure of a Dutch Colony.**—While these things were going on in England, a disgraceful event took place abroad. The Dutch had established a colony in America, and built a town on Manhattan Island at the mouth of the Hudson River, which they called New Amsterdam.

A treaty made by England with Holland under the Commonwealth had recognized the claims of the Dutch in the New World.

Charles, however, had no intention of keeping faith with Holland; and though the two nations were at peace, resolved to seize the territory. He accordingly granted it to his brother James, Duke of York, and sent out a secret expedition to capture the colony in his behalf.

One day an English fleet suddenly appeared in the harbor of the Dutch town, and demanded its immediate and unconditional surrender. The governor was unprepared to make any defence, and the place was given up. Thus, without so much as the firing of a gun, New Amsterdam got the name of New York in honor of the man who, with his royal brother, had with characteristic treachery planned and perpetrated the robbery.

**526. The Plague and the Fire.**—In 1665 a terrible outbreak of the plague occurred in London, which spread throughout the kingdom. All who could fled from the city. Hundreds of houses were left vacant, while on hundreds more a cross marked on the doors in red chalk, with the words “Lord have mercy on us,” written underneath, told where the work of death was going on.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Paradise Lost, Book I. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Pepys writes in his diary, describing the beginning of the plague: “The 7th of June, 1665, was the hottest day I ever felt in my life. This day, much against my will, I did in Drury Lane see two or three houses with a red cross upon the door, and ‘Lord have mercy upon us’ writ there, which was a sad sight.” Pepys’ Diary, 1660–1669. Defoe wrote a journal of the plague in 1722, based, probably, on the reports of eyewitnesses. It gives a vivid and truthful account of its horrors.

This pestilence swept off over a hundred thousand victims within six months. Among the few brave men who voluntarily remained in the stricken city were the Puritan ministers, who stayed to comfort and console the sick and dying. After the plague was over, they received their reward in those acts of persecution which drove them homeless and helpless from their parishes and friends.

The dead-cart had hardly ceased to go its rounds, when a fire (1666) broke out, of which Evelyn, a courtier, who witnessed it, wrote, that it “was not to be outdone until the final conflagration.”<sup>1</sup> By it the city of London proper was reduced to ruins, little more being left than a fringe of houses on the northeast.<sup>2</sup>

The members of the Cabal gloated over the destruction, believing that now that London was destroyed, the king, with the aid of his army, might easily crush out political liberty. But selfish as Charles and his brother James unquestionably were, they were better than the Cabal; for both worked heroically to stop the flames, and gave liberally to feed and shelter the multitudes who had lost everything.

Great as the calamity was, yet from a sanitary point of view it did great good. Nothing short of fire could have effectually cleansed the London of that day, and so put a stop to the periodical ravages of the plague. By sweeping away miles of narrow streets crowded with miserable buildings black with the encrusted filth of ages, the conflagration in the end proved friendly to health and life.

A monument near London Bridge still marks the spot where the flames first burst out. For many years it bore an inscription affirming that the Catholics kindled them in order to be revenged on their persecutors. The poet Pope, at a later period, exposed the falsehood in the lines:—

“Where London’s column pointing towards the skies  
Like a tall bully lifts its head and lies.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Evelyn’s Diary, 1641–1705, also compare Dryden’s Poem, *Annus Mirabilis*.

<sup>2</sup> See Map in Loftie’s London, Vol. I. See also Paragraph No. 64, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> Moral Essays, Epistle iii.



Sir Christopher Wren, the most famous architect of the period, rebuilt the city. The greater part of it had been of wood, but it rose from the ashes brick and stone. One irreparable loss was the old Gothic church of St. Paul. Wren erected the present cathedral on the foundations of the ancient structure. He lies buried under the grand dome of his own grandest work. On a tablet near the tomb of the great master-builder one reads the inscription in Latin, "Reader, if you seek his monument, look around."<sup>1</sup>

**527. Invasion by the Dutch.**—The new city had not risen from the ruins of the old, when a third calamity overtook it. Charles was at war with Holland. The contest originally grew out of the rivalry of the two countries in their efforts to get the exclusive possession of foreign trade. Parliament granted the king large sums of money to build and equip a navy, but the pleasure-loving monarch wasted it in dissipation. The few ships he had were rotten old hulks, but half provisioned, with crews ready to mutiny because they could not get their pay. A Dutch fleet, manned in part by English sailors who had deserted in disgust, because when they asked for dollars to support their families they got only worthless government tickets, now sailed up the Thames. There was no force to oppose them. They burnt some half-built men-of-war, threatened to blockade London, and made their own terms of peace.

**528. Treaty of Dover; the King robs the Exchequer.**—But another and still deeper disgrace was at hand. The chief ambition of Charles was to rule without a Parliament; without supplies of money he found this impossible. A way to accomplish the desired end now presented itself.

Louis XIV. of France, then the most powerful monarch in Europe, wished to conquer Holland, with the double object of extending his own kingdom and the power of Romanism. He

<sup>1</sup> "Lector, si monumentum requiris, circumspecte."

saw in Charles the tool he wanted to gain this end. By the secret treaty of Dover, Louis bribed the English king with a gift of £300,000 to help him carry out his scheme. Thus, without the knowledge of Parliament, Charles deliberately sold himself to the French sovereign in his plot to destroy the political liberty and Protestant faith of Holland. In addition to the above sum, it was furthermore agreed that Louis should pay Charles a pension of £200,000 a year from the date when the latter should openly avow himself a Catholic.

True to his infamous contract, Charles provoked a new war with the Dutch, but found that he needed more money to prosecute it successfully. Not knowing where to borrow, he determined to steal it. Various prominent London merchants and bankers had lent to the government large sums on promise of repayment from the taxes. A part of the revenue amounting to about £1,300,000, a sum equal to at least \$10,000,000 now, had been deposited in the exchequer, or government treasury, to meet the obligation. The king seized this money,<sup>1</sup> partly for his needs, but chiefly for his vices. This act of treachery caused a financial panic which shook London to its foundations and ruined great numbers of people.

**529. More Money Schemes.**—By declaring war against Holland, Charles had now fulfilled the first part of his secret treaty with Louis, but he was afraid to undertake the second part and openly declare himself a convert to the Church of Rome. He, however, did the next thing to it, by issuing a proclamation of indulgence to all religions, under cover of which he intended to show especial favor to the Catholics.

To offset this proclamation, Parliament at once passed a law requiring every government officer to acknowledge himself a Protestant. Charles became alarmed at this decided stand, and now tried to conciliate Parliament, and coax from them another grant

<sup>1</sup> "'Rob me the exchequer, Hal,' said the king to his favorite minister; then 'all went merry as a marriage bell.'" Evelyn's Diary, 10 Oct., 1671.



of money by marrying his niece, the Princess Mary, to William of Orange, president of the Dutch republic, and head of the Protestant party on the continent.

**530. The "Popish Plot."** — While the king was playing this double part, an infamous scoundrel, named Titus Oates, whose hideous face was but the counterpart of a still more hideous character, pretended that he had discovered a terrible plot. According to his account, the Catholics had formed a conspiracy to burn London, massacre the inhabitants, kill the king, and restore the religion of Rome. The news of this alleged discovery caused an excitement which soon grew into a sort of popular madness. The memory of the great fire was still fresh in people's minds. In their imagination they now saw those scenes of horror repeated, with wholesale murder added. Great numbers of innocent persons were thrown into prison, and many executed. As time went on, the terror seemed to increase. With its increase, Oates grew bolder in his accusations. Chief-Justice Scroggs showed himself an eager abettor of the miserable wretch who swore away men's lives for the sake of the notoriety it gave him. In the extravagance of his presumption Oates dared even to accuse the queen of an attempt to poison Charles. The craze, however, had at last begun to abate somewhat, and no action was taken.

An attempt was now made to pass a law called the "Exclusion Bill," debarring Charles's brother James, the Catholic Duke of York, from succeeding to the crown; but though voted by the Commons, it was defeated by the Lords. A second measure, however, received the sanction of both Houses, by which Catholics were declared incapable of sitting in Parliament; and from this date they remained shut out from all legislative power and from all civil and corporate offices for a period of over a century and a half.

**531. Political Parties.** — It was about this time that the names "Whig" and "Tory" began to be given to two political parties, which soon became very powerful, and which have ever since

divided the Parliamentary government of the country between them.

The term "Whig" was originally given by way of reproach to the Scotch Puritans, or Covenanters, who refused to accept the Episcopacy which Charles I. endeavored to impose upon them.<sup>1</sup> "Tory," on the other hand, was a nickname which appears to have first been applied to the Roman Catholic outlaws of Ireland, who were regarded as both robbers and rebels.

This latter name was now given to those who supported the claims of the king's brother James, the Roman Catholic Duke of York, as successor to the throne; while that of Whig was borne by those who were endeavoring to exclude him, and secure a Protestant successor.<sup>2</sup> The excitement over this question threatened at one period to bring on another civil war. In his fury against the Whigs, Charles revoked the charters of London and many other cities, which were re-granted only on terms agreeable to the Tories. An actual outbreak against the government would probably have occurred had it not been for the discovery of a new conspiracy, which resulted in a reaction favorable to the crown.

**532. The Rye House Plot.** — This conspiracy, known as the "Rye House Plot," had for its object the murder of Charles and his brother James at a place called the Rye House, in Hertfordshire, not far from London. It was concocted by a number of violent Whigs, who, in their disappointment respecting the passage of the Exclusion Bill, took this method of securing their ends.

It is said that they intended placing on the throne James, Duke of Monmouth, a natural son of Charles, who was popularly

<sup>1</sup> See Paragraph No. 490.

<sup>2</sup> Politically, the Whigs and Tories may perhaps be considered as the successors of the Roundheads and Cavaliers of the civil war, the former seeking to limit the power of the crown; the latter, to extend it. At the Restoration (1660), the Cavaliers were all-powerful; but at the time of the dispute on the Exclusion Bill (1679), the Roundhead, or Peoples' party had revived. On account of their petitioning the king to summon a new Parliament, by means of which they hoped to carry the bill shutting out the Duke of York from the throne, they were called "Petitioners," and later, Whigs; while those who expressed their abhorrence of their efforts were called "Abhorrrers," and afterward, Tories.



known as the "Protestant Duke." Algernon Sidney, Lord Russell, and the Earl of Essex, who were prominent advocates of the bill, were arrested for participating in the plot. Essex committed suicide in the Tower; Sidney and Russell were tried, convicted, and sentenced to death on insufficient evidence. Both were unquestionably innocent. They died martyrs to the cause of liberty, — Russell, with the fortitude of a Christian; Sidney, with the calmness of a philosopher. The Duke of Monmouth, who was supposed to be implicated in the plot, was banished to Holland.

**533. The Royal Society.** — During this reign the Royal Society, for the discussion of scientific questions, was organized. In an age when thousands of well-informed people still cherished a lingering belief that lead might be changed into gold; that some medicine might be discovered which would cure every disease, and prevent old age, that worst disease of all; when every cross-grained old woman was suspected of witchcraft, and was liable to be tortured and hanged on that suspicion; the formation of an association to study physical facts was most significant. It showed that the time had come when, instead of guessing what might be, men were at last beginning to resolve to know what actually is. Under the encouragement given by this society, an English mathematician and philosopher published a work which demonstrated the unity of the universe, by proving that the same law governs the falling of an apple and the movements of the planets in their orbits. It was with reference to that wonderful discovery of the all-pervading power of gravitation, which shapes and holds in its control the drop of dew before our eyes, and the farthest star shining in the heavens, that the poet Pope suggested the epitaph which should be graven on the tomb in Westminster Abbey: —

"Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night;  
God said, 'Let Newton be!' and all was light."

**534. Chief Political Reforms.** — As the age did not stand still with respect to progress in knowledge, so it was not wholly unsuc-

cessful in attempts at political reform. The chief measures were, first, the Habeas Corpus Act,<sup>1</sup> which provided that no subject should be detained in prison except by due process of law, thus putting an end to the arbitrary confinement of men for months, and years even, without conviction of guilt or even form of trial. The next reform was the abolition of the king's right to feudal dues and service, by which he was accustomed to extort as much as possible from his subjects,<sup>2</sup> and the substitution of a fixed yearly allowance, raised by tax, of £1,200,000.<sup>3</sup> This change may be considered to have practically abolished the feudal system in England, so far as the crown is concerned, though the law still retains many remnants of it with respect to the relation of landlord and tenant.

**535. Death of Charles.** — In 1685 the reign came suddenly to an end. Evelyn tells us in his Diary that he was present at the royal court at the Palace of Whitehall on Sunday morning, the last of January of that year. There he saw the king sitting in the grand banqueting-room, chatting gayly with three famous court beauties, "while a crowd of richly dressed nobles were gathered around a gambling-table heaped with gold. Six days after," as he expresses it, "all was in the dust." Charles died a Roman Catholic, his brother James having smuggled a priest into his chamber in time to hear his confession and grant him absolution. Certainly few English rulers have stood in greater need of both.

**536. Summary.** — The chief events of the period were the persecution of the Puritans, the Plague and Fire of London, the "Popish" and Rye House Plots, and the Dutch Wars. Aside from

<sup>1</sup> Habeas Corpus ad subjiciendum (1679) (*that you have the body to answer*): this writ is addressed by the judge to him who detains another in custody, commanding him to bring him into court and show why he is restrained of his liberty.

<sup>2</sup> See Paragraph No. 200. See also Blackstone's Commentaries, II. 76.

<sup>3</sup> This tax should have been levied on the landed proprietors who had been subject to the feudal dues, but they evaded it, and by getting it assessed as an excise duty on beer and spirits, they compelled the body of the people to bear the burden for them.



these, the reign presents two leading points: 1. The policy of the king; 2. That of the nation. Charles, as we have seen, lived solely to gratify his inordinate love of pleasure. For that, he wasted the revenue, robbed the exchequer, and cheated the navy; for that, he secretly sold himself to France, made war on Holland, and shamefully deceived both Parliament and people. In so far, then, as Charles had an object, it began and ended with himself. Therein, he stood lower than his father, who at least conscientiously believed in the Divine Right of kings and their accountability to the Almighty.

The policy of the nation, on the other hand, was divided. The Whigs were determined to limit the power of the crown, and secure at all hazards a Protestant successor. The Tories were equally resolved to check the growing power of the people, and preserve the hereditary order of succession without any immediate regard to the religious question. Beneath these issues both parties had a common object, which was to maintain the national Episcopal church, and the monarchical system of government, preferring rather to cherish patriotism through loyalty to a personal sovereign, than patriotism alone through devotion to a democratic republic.

JAMES II. — 1685–1689.

**537. Accession of James II.; his Two Objects; Oates gets his Deserts.**—James, Duke of York, brother of the late king, now came to the throne. His first great ambition was to rule independently of Parliament; in other words, to have his own way in everything; his second, which was, if possible, still nearer his heart, was to restore the Roman Catholic religion in England. He began that restoration at once; and on the Easter Sunday preceding his coronation, “the worship of the church of Rome was once more, after an interval of a hundred and twenty-seven years, performed at Westminster with royal splendor.”<sup>1</sup>

Not long after, James had the miscreant Oates brought to trial

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay's England.

for the perjuries he had committed in connection with the “Popish Plot.” He was found guilty, and the community had the satisfaction of seeing him publicly whipped through London with such terrible severity that “the blood ran in rivulets,” and a few more strokes of the lash would have ended his worthless life.

**538. Monmouth's Rebellion; Sedgemoor.**—At the time of the discovery of the Rye House Plot, a number of Whigs who were implicated in the conspiracy fled to Holland, where the Duke of Monmouth had also gone when banished. Four months after the accession of James, the duke, aided by these refugees and by a small force which he had gathered in the Low Countries, resolved to invade England and demand the crown, in the belief that a large part of the nation would look upon him as representing the cause of Protestantism, and would therefore rally to his support. He landed at Lyme on the coast of Dorsetshire, and there issued an absurd proclamation declaring James to be a usurper, tyrant, and murderer, who had set the great fire of London, cut the throat of Essex,<sup>1</sup> and poisoned Charles II. ! At Taunton, in Somersetshire, a procession of welcome headed by a lady carrying a Bible met the duke, and presented him with the book in behalf of the Protestant faith. He received it, saying, “I come to defend the truths contained in this volume, and to seal them, if it must be so, with my blood.” Shortly after, he proclaimed himself sovereign of Great Britain under the title of King Monmouth. Many of the country people now joined him, but the Whig nobles, on whose help he had counted, stood aloof, alienated doubtless by the ridiculous charges he had made against James.

At the battle of Sedgemoor, in Somersetshire (1685), “King Monmouth,” with his hastily gathered forces, was utterly routed, and he himself was soon after captured hiding in a ditch. He desired to be taken to the king. His request was granted. When he entered his uncle's presence, he threw himself down and crawled to his feet, weeping and begging piteously for life—only life—

<sup>1</sup> See Paragraph No. 532.



on any terms, however hard. He denied that he had issued the lying proclamation published at Lyme; he denied that he had sought the crown of his own free will; finally, in an agony of supplication, he hinted that he would even renounce Protestantism if thereby he might escape death. James told him that he should have the service of a Catholic priest, but would promise nothing more. Monmouth grovelled and pleaded, but the king turned away in silence. Then the duke, seeing that all his efforts were vain, rose to his feet and regained his manhood. He was forthwith sent to the Tower, and shortly after to execution. His headless body was buried under the communion-table of that little chapel of St. Peter within the Tower grounds, where the remains of Anne Boleyn, Lady Jane Grey, Sir Thomas More, and many other royal victims are gathered, and of which, it has been well said, that no sadder spot exists on earth, "since there death is associated with whatever is darkest in human nature and human destiny."<sup>1</sup>

After Monmouth's death there were no further attempts at insurrection, and the struggle at Sedgemoor remains the last encounter worthy of the name of battle fought on English soil.

**539. The Bloody Assizes.**—The defeat of the insurgents who had rallied under Monmouth's flag was followed by a series of trials known, from their results, as the "Bloody Assizes."<sup>2</sup> They were conducted by Judge Jeffreys, assisted by a band of soldiers under Colonel Kirke, ironically called, from their ferocity, "Kirke's Lambs." But of the two, Jeffreys was the more to be dreaded. He was by nature cruel, and enjoyed the spectacle of mental as well as bodily anguish. As he himself said, he delighted to give those who had the misfortune to appear before him "a lick with the rough side of his tongue," preparatory to roaring out the sentence of torture or death, in which he delighted still more. All who were in the remotest way implicated in the late rising were now hunted

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay's England.

<sup>2</sup> Assizes (from the French *asseoir*, to sit or set): sessions of a court; also used in the singular, of a decree or law.

down and brought to a trial which was but a mockery of justice. No one was permitted to defend himself. In fact, defence would have been useless against the blind fury of such a judge. The threshold of the court was to most that crossed it the threshold of the grave. A gentleman present at one of these scenes of slaughter, touched with pity at the condition of a trembling old man called up for sentence, ventured to put in a word in his behalf. "My Lord," said he to Jeffreys, "this poor creature is dependent on the parish." "Don't trouble yourself," cried the judge; "I will soon ease the parish of the burden," and ordered the officers to execute him at once. Those who escaped death were often still more to be pitied. A young man was sentenced to be imprisoned for seven years, and to be whipped once a year through every market town in the county. In his despair, he petitioned the king to grant him the favor of being hanged. The petition was refused, but a partial remission of the punishment was at length gained by bribing the court; for Jeffreys, though his heart was shut against mercy, always had his pockets open for gain. Alice Lisle, an aged woman, who, out of pity, had concealed two men flying from the king's vengeance, was condemned to be burned alive; and it was with the greatest difficulty that the clergy of Winchester Cathedral succeeded in getting the sentence commuted to beheading.

As the work went on, the spirits of Jeffreys rose higher and higher. He laughed, shouted, joked, and swore like a drunken man. When the court had finished its sittings, more than a thousand persons had been brutally scourged, sold as slaves, hanged, or beheaded. The guide-posts of the highways were converted into gibbets, from which blackened corpses swung in chains, and from every church-tower in Somersetshire ghastly heads looked down on those who gathered there to worship God; in fact, so many bodies were exposed, that the whole air was "tainted with corruption and death."

Not satisfied with vengeance alone, Jeffreys and his friends made these trials a means of speculation. Batches of rebels were