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A HISTORY OF THE TORY PARTY

A HISTORY OF THE TORY PARTY

IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

With a Sketch of its Development in the Nineteenth Century

BY

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192883
5.12.24

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LIMITED LONDON

JN
1129
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Cop. 2

Made and Printed in Great Britain, 1924.
Richard Clay & Sons, Limited,
Printers, Bungay, Suffolk.

TO

THE RIGHT HON. LORD BEAVERBROOK

WHO GAVE ME THE LEISURE TO

WRITE THIS BOOK

PREFACE

This book does not profess to be a national or even a political history of the period which it covers. It is an attempt to disentangle a single thread—the growth and development of Toryism from 1660 to 1792 in the same sense in which a writer might try to follow the isolated fortunes of the agricultural labourer within a given period. All else is seen in relation and perspective to the main object. When the Tory Party is active and powerful, and the information about it therefore abundant, I have given a detailed narrative of events year by year. Where it sinks into insignificance and darkness, as between 1714 and 1760, it is dealt with in brief outline. During the eclipse, the great national policies pursued by its antagonists in the hour of their unquestioned success are left practically undiscussed. Similarly, very little space has been devoted to events like the Wilkes controversy or the right of the Press to report Parliamentary proceedings which fill the pages of the Whig historians of the period between 1763 and 1771, because the quarrel, being mainly between Court Whigs in office and Liberal Whigs out of office, has little interest for a specialist student of Tory ideas and development. These two instances among many may perhaps suffice to show the selective method pursued and the strict limits put to this book. Any other course would have involved an attempt to write the general history of these one hundred and thirty years from a Tory standpoint—a task far beyond my competence or the space of a single volume. Neither have I attempted to describe either Scotch or Irish Toryism, so very different from each other and from the English brand, or in effect to deal with Scotland or Ireland at all.

I make no claim to any research, and have used the established authorities on each period—a list of which is recorded in the Appendix for the convenience of readers.

At the same time, it is impossible to help feeling how difficult the interpretation of English political history is until some historian will make a detailed and detached examination into our whole electoral system of the past. When anyone can tell us exactly how that system worked in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, what its variations were, and what its immediate effects on General Elections and the composition of the House of Commons, the inquirer will have a compass pointing straight to the political Pole Star.

In the absence of any such chart and compass many of the computations of electoral results and of the national and personal influences underlying them remain in the realm of guess-work. It is often hardly practicable to square the acknowledged facts with the accepted theory in dealing with the electoral system. I only claim with the Whigs and Liberals the right to guess with the rest.

The need for a special history of Toryism stretching indeed far beyond the period of 1660 to 1792 into the nineteenth century resides in the fact that no such history written by an avowed Tory exists. Froude, unfortunately, never turned his gifts in this direction, if we except his slight sketch of Disraeli. This is not in the least to accuse the great Whig historians like Lecky and Macaulay, who cover these two centuries, of partiality or misrepresentation. These writers appear to me, on the contrary, to be magnificently impartial.

The trouble is that that they are biassed, not by intention or malice, but by an inability to grasp the Tory standpoint. They are disinterested in what does not interest them. In consequence, they misrepresent or ignore what is of vital importance in the development of the Tory concept simply through a lack of intellectual sympathy.

My only excuse for this book, written under the pressure of many other affairs, and with all its consequent faults and failings, is that it is an honest attempt to look at history through Tory and not through Whig spectacles.

In order to complete the outline of the story, I have appended a final chapter outlining Tory history from 1792 to 1900, and if fate allows I hope some time to complete the history I have begun in this volume on the same scale.

My thanks are especially due to Prof. Sir Charles Oman, M.P., for consistent encouragement in the task, and to Mr. L. V. Stampa, of Magdalen College, Oxford, who has given me the best of advice and assistance, and also to Mr. John Hugh Smith for one extremely valuable and fruitful suggestion.

MAURICE WOODS.

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CHAPTER I

THE CROWN AS THE TORY IDEAL

The term Tory was invented at the time of the Exclusion Bill in the reign of Charles II, in 1680, and has been used ever since either as a title of self-praise, or as a hostile nickname. Where friends and enemies have combined to recognise a name for a body of political thought for two hundred and forty years it is convenient and true to describe it by that title, even though the Party began before the name, and has in later days been described as Unionist or Conservative. The rough popular description is correct; and the train of thought called Toryism can be traced to a period which embraces four centuries.

When did Toryism actually begin as an organised idea which can be recognised as having a direct historic connection with the Party as it exists to-day? It appears to date beyond question to the civil commotion caused in 1642 by the armed conflict between the Crown and the Commons. It is quite true that the very idea of the sanctity of the Crown as the supreme embodiment of national unity takes rise in conditions long anterior. And this will be demonstrated. But beyond that it would appear to be false to try to trace Toryism or Liberalism back through Tudor times into the Middle Ages. Since time does not alter the instincts of humanity, there have in all periods been Tories, Conservatives, Whigs, Liberals, Radicals, Tory-Democrats, and Labour men, and a certain class of historian will describe the Wycliffites as the forerunners of the modern Nonconformist and Radical, Jack Cade as the mouthpiece of organised Labour in revolt, or the English Catholics in the Reformation as the ancestors of modern Conservatism. These statements are just as true and just as irrelevant as the fact that the creation of the Roman Empire was due to the final triumph of the Cæsarist Tory-Democrats over a Whig–Conservative oligarchy. They have no connection whatever with the England which emerged from the Middle Ages and was born out of the immense mental and economic change known as the Reformation. There is always a kind of indestructible rubble out of which political bricks may be made.

The traceable origin of Toryism is the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings as heads of a National Church. This claim to Divine Right by legitimate succession is not the distinctive feature of kingship in the Middle Ages. It is there weakened by two other rival claims: the primitive German and Saxon method of electing the monarch out of the Royal House, and the attempts of the Papacy as spiritual overlord to make or depose monarchs. The first claim attacked the temporal right of succession, the second the spiritual one.

In the Middle Ages the attitude of the Pope must be the acid test of the spiritual side of the doctrine. Christ's Vice-Regent upon earth could not possibly have incited subjects to depose the Lord's anointed. In effect this was what Rome constantly did. When we find the successor of St. Peter excommunicating John and encouraging his subjects to rise against him, not because his right of succession was in doubt, but because he disregarded the Papal supremacy—the Church in England constantly making cause with the Barons as rebels—and read the story of the controversies between Anselm and Henry I or Becket and Henry II, it is impossible to believe that the Divine succession was taken seriously by the supreme ecclesiastical authority. Had it been so taken, the King would have had a perfect right to call on the Church to hurl its thunder at any or every rebel, and the request could not have been refused. The all-embracing Papacy, in a word, no more regarded the provincial kingships of Europe as of Divine origin than the Tudor Crown would have so regarded the right of succession to an earldom. Both might be set aside on occasion.[1]

On the temporal side the matter is more complex. As in the Roman Empire we find the principle of hereditary succession continually varied by that of adoption, or again by that of acclamation by the armies, so in the age which succeeded two conceptions are in conflict. In the first place comes the idea that the legitimate heir succeeds; in the second place comes the claim of the nobles, or later of the Estates of the Realm, to pick out the most suitable successor from the Royal Family and even to depose a vicious or incapable monarch. It is only in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as the Crowns of Europe score a decided triumph both over the feudal chiefs and a weakening Papal power, that the doctrine of divine legitimacy really triumphs; and then almost immediately it is challenged again in England by the force of Parliament. So that in a sense the Whig elective view of the Crown resembles that of the Middle Ages, and the Tory hereditary conception springs from the times that come after. None the less, it would be very easy to exaggerate the elective aspect of the English Crown from the time of William the Conqueror to that of Henry VIII, and pages of special pleading might be written on one side or the other.

The fact that neither William II nor Henry I was the Conqueror's eldest son counts for little. Empires like that of Canute or of William I or of Henry II were frequently divided up by racial units among the sons of the "Emperor." Stephen's semi-effective usurpation was due to the fact that for a generation there was a breach in the direct male line, but no one questioned the real validity of the claim of Henry II as grandson. Again, Arthur, not King John, was the direct heir—but with his murder John became king by right of direct inheritance from Henry II. From that date till the deposition of Richard II there was no deviation in the succession. When Simon de Montfort and the Barons seized executive power they thought it wise to carry Henry III round with their camp as a kind of flag to prove their right to control. Edward I succeeded him as naturally as Edward III succeeded the deposed and murdered Edward II. Seven generations of Plantagenets thus followed each other in the direct line. By the time of Richard II the mass of the people certainly regarded the legal heir as the inevitable king. An undisputed succession was as much to their interest as it was to that of the Crown, while the ambitions of the nobles and of the Papacy led them in the contrary direction. The first great break, then, from the time of John was the election of Bolingbroke as Henry IV by Parliamentary acclamation, for in any case he was not the heir, but only the strongest Party leader of royal descent. Von Ranke has put forward an ingenious argument that on this account the Lancastrians stood for the elective monarchy and the Yorkists for the right of succession, and he suggests in reinforcement of his contention that the monarchy of Edward IV[1] was more absolute in character than many of his predecessors and than any successor up to the reign of Henry VIII. Henry VII, however, though in the main Lancastrian, was careful not to base his claims too strongly on the approval of Parliament. So disastrous, indeed, was the experiment of the Parliamentary kingship, that from the time of Bolingbroke as Henry IV to the flight of James II it was never again carried into effect. Enough has been said of the mediæval kings of England to show that while their Divine right was never accepted by religious authority or popular opinion, their temporal right to succeed by primogeniture undoubtedly was.

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[1] The Jesuits put forward this argument in attacking National Sovereignties in the sixteenth century.

The claim for the Tudors and the Stuarts to Divine kingship arose, therefore, not from a throw-back to the shadowy right of Plantagenet kings, but from a totally different set of circumstances. From the time of John to the death of Richard II the legitimate heir had always succeeded to the throne of England. The nation thus became accustomed to an ordered succession of monarchs as a kind of law of nature. The crime of the murder of Richard II was that he had no indisputable heir; that of Edward II had no ultimate significance, because Edward III was bound to succeed to his rights. Instantly on the murder of Richard II the horrors of the reign of Stephen began to be re-enacted on a far more protracted scale. The mass of the people had no interest, and took no interest, in the upshot of the struggle which, with varying turns of fortune, raged till the battle of Bosworth. They were like a man with two bandits fighting over and trampling on his body. The Paston Letters contain a vivid picture and an irrefutable proof of the state of confusion and terror into which the England of the late fifteenth century had lapsed as the result of the decay of mediævalism, the Wars of the Roses, and the collapse of the Crown. The Pastons were rich and powerful people of the second order, but this did not prevent, as Mr. Edmund Gosse has pointed out, their houses being mobbed, one member of the family being nearly beaten to death in the precincts of Norwich Cathedral, or a friend of the family being pulled out of his house and murdered by a parson. The condition of smaller people was infinitely worse. "What is surprising," says Mr. Gosse, "is that, having sunken into such a state of anarchy, England could ever have become civilised again." That she was so re-civilised was entirely due to the restoration of the Central Crown under the Tudors. The only concern of the commonalty was that the conflict of the warring baronial factions should cease. The lessons of these terrible years burnt themselves in the mind of the nation with an indelible emphasis. From the political standpoint, the necessity of the Crown as the centre of national unity, and for an undisputed heir to it, became a cardinal doctrine of thought. From a religious point of view, it appeared to the ordinary layman as if

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[1] It must be pointed out, however, that Edward IV was not the legitimate king, belonging as he did to a younger branch of his house.

God punished a whole people because men had raised their impious hands against the lawful heir of the Plantagenets.

The historical plays of Shakespeare are, from one point of view, so many propaganda pamphlets directed to teaching this lesson.[1] The glorification of Henry V is only the apotheosis of the Tudors as the symbols of national prosperity, safety and unity. Nor is it any accident that the wicked uncle in *Hamlet* is a usurper and murderer of a king.

Henry VII then ascended the throne as the representative of both parties to the struggle, at a time when the Baronage had destroyed itself, when the Church was in decay, and vast proscriptions and the possession of the only train of artillery combined to make the Crown the only possible power. That monarch, however, was not a very attractive figure, and the full tide of popular worship swept to the feet of Henry VIII. There is no doubt that a personal monarchy of the French type could have been established if he, or rather his advisers, had cared to let Parliament drop into desuetude, and to use the savings of Henry VII to set up a standing army. The fortune of the event turned otherwise.

It is impossible to understand how the Reformation took place without a fierce civil war, such as devastated Germany and nearly broke up France, unless we realise how deep rooted was this adoration of the Crown. If the generation which has endured the strain, the discomfort, the danger of the twentieth-century war with Germany can imagine these same terrors coming in short recurring cycles, and lasting not for five years, or even one generation, but for three; and if some Governor had suddenly appeared and delivered them from all these evils, and pointed out if they had not abandoned him nothing of this sort would have happened, and that his existence was the only guarantee against their recurrence, would not even this sceptical age have hailed the deliverer as almost divine? How otherwise can it be explained that vast masses of men changed their religious beliefs, or at least their practices, backwards and forwards at the mere whim or political necessity of Henry VIII? The British people are not so long-suffering but that there would have been, not one rebellion, as there was, but ten. Therefore they accepted what most men then, and most men now, would consider an atrocious act of blasphemy, by which a layman, the head of the civil Government, declared himself also the head of the Church, and wrenched the keys from the successor of St. Peter. By this strange birth of a National Church, with the King as its spiritual head, the Crown attracted to itself a twofold current of power—the forces which had made for the Empire, and the forces which had made for the Papacy—the loyalty of the patriot, the zeal of the Churchman. It was as though a Pope had become an Emperor or Barbarossa put on the Triple Crown. In this combination we have the origin of a doctrine of Divine Right and non-resistance pushed to an extreme which would seem under normal conditions foreign to the English temperament.

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[1] "For well we know, no hand of blood and bone
Can grip the sacred handle of our sceptre
Unless he do profane, steal, or usurp. . . .
Yet know, My Master, God omnipotent,
Is mustering in His clouds, on our behalf,
Armies of pestilence; and they shall strike
Your children yet unborn and unbegot
That lift your vassal hands against my head,
And threat the glory of my precious crown."
Richard II.

But the Tory Party did not come into existence in the days of the Tudors. The political sentiments described were too general to form the subject of an internal controversy, and the Church of England had yet to feel its feet solid under it. On the right were the unflinching Catholics, on the left the extreme Protestants, both refusing to bow to edicts which were accepted willingly or unwillingly by the vast bulk of the nation. None the less, from this time onwards it is possible to trace the gradual growth of two opposing forces which finally clashed in 1642, and brought the modern parties to birth in the collision. On the one side there was the persistence of that opinion which put loyalty to the throne above all else, backed by the growth of a Church more and more firmly attached to the religious settlement and to any non-Catholic sovereign. On the other side was a section which was beginning to forget the Wars of the Roses, and to talk about the responsibility of Parliament. The first mutters of this storm are heard towards the very end of the reign of Elizabeth over the question of monopolies, and grow ever louder through the two succeeding reigns. So that just as the Parliamentary party was beginning to make itself really unpleasant to James I, that monarch was putting into words what before had existed only in thought and claiming out of the Bible the Divine Right of Infallibility for kingship. The full effects of Protestantism now began to be realised. James appealed to the Book of Kings, his opponents to that of Samuel. In this way the Bible brought, not peace, but a sword.

For some time before the acute appeal to arms in 1642 the position was tolerably clear. On the one side was a National Church with a monarch in Charles I sincerely devoted to its doctrine and interests; a body of political thought that considered the King so essential as to be almost sacred, and rebellion as the sin of witchcraft; and on the other side the Parliamentarians, mere Constitutionalists or Whigs in the Commons, and, at the outset, a few men backed in growing numbers by the extremist Radicals of the religious left outside. The fact that religious tenets as well as secular issues made up the counters of debate is largely an accident of time. The fundamental resemblance to the modern parties is undoubtedly there. Even inside the ranks of the Tory Party itself were most of those differing modes of thought which, if allowance be made for changes of time and circumstance, diversified it in subsequent centuries.

The case of Strafford supplies a touchstone. Strafford fell because his military schemes for establishing a despotism failed, and for those schemes he had practically no backers outside the royal circle. To bring an Irish army to England to put down a Protestant Parliament was a plan as abhorrent to Tory and Loyalist sentiment as it was to the forerunners of the Whigs. There never has been a party in English history in favour of a personal despotism—that is to say, a system under which the armed might of the Crown forces the popular will and abolishes all safeguards. Strafford was not a Tory at all to begin with; he was a deserter from the ranks of the Whigs. For the rest, he was an individual type well known to history: dark, sombre and brooding, immensely able, greatly daring and ambitious, full of a conscience according to lights which denied to him mercy or scruple—one who in another age would have found the grave of the Pretender or the throne of the Cæsars. Is this a description of his contemporary, the Duke of Ormonde, or in a later time of Lord Liverpool, or shall we say of Lord Long of Wraxall? Indeed in the Irish policy of "thorough" it was Cromwell alone who outdistanced Strafford. It is true that at all times in the extreme wing of Toryism there have existed men who in moments of national crisis would shoot their opponents "like dogs in the street"; but they are never very numerous and they are not intellectual Straffords.

The main body of the Tory Party stood behind the Crown, or, to be more accurate, those who stood firm for the King became the Tory Party of the future. Until the mad attempt to arrest the five members in the House of Commons itself, the issues between the two parties to the dispute appeared to most reasonable men subjects to be decided by constitutional lawyers rather than by swords. They concerned the debatable ground between the prerogative of the King and the rights of the Commons. But when the King threw his cap over the windmill and the dour Pym replied with open war, men had to choose their sides. They decided less by pure reason than by that instinctive form of reasoning based on subconscious and inherited opinions of the past which is known as temperament. The traditional loyalty to an acknowledged sovereign, the recollection still echoing in the corridors of popular memory of what a denial of that national unity which was the Crown meant, the determination of the Church to stand by the Lord's anointed against the schismatics, the pure passive conservatism which desired to see no violent change—all found their expression in the support of the Loyalist cause. The Parliamentarians represented the converse to these attitudes of mind. In politics they were the men who had forgotten the Wars of the Roses or regarded new issues in a different light—in fact the more restless and progressive spirits. In religion, though they ranked among them just as sound Churchmen as their antagonists, they stood mainly for the Low Church and the Presbyterians; and behind them were ranged all the extremists and the sectarians who ever since the time of Henry VIII had been beyond the pale of the National Church and National Government alike.

Two plausible but quite erroneous views of this distribution of parties have been put forward. Mr. Chesterton has contended that the new landed aristocracy of the Reformation, "dripping with the fat of sacrilege" and enriched by the possessions of the plundered Church, having destroyed that Church with the aid of the King, turned now as a body to destroy its co-partner in guilt. Some of the Whig historians, such as Mr. J. R. Green, on the other hand, have suggested rather than stated that the battle lay between the aristocracy on one side and the bourgeoisie of the town and the smaller yeomen on the other. These statements are mutually destructive, and neither of them is true. The very great landlords show all through English history a tendency to oppose anything but a subservient Crown—for the obvious reason that an effective Crown is the only check on their power. In this sense the Crown has always been a popular institution; but it would have perished long ago if it had not been able to count on some support from the great feudal magnates. In a word, there has always been what may be called both a Whig and a Tory nobility—and so it was in the Civil War. Similarly, the smaller tenants, as opposed to the tenants-in-chief in the Middle Ages, and their later counterpart, the squirearchy, as opposed to the nobility, tended always to support the King—so it was in the Civil War. Their influence and popularity, as the actual dwellers on their land, was immense, and affected not only their immediate dependents, but their small independent neighbours. On the other hand, in certain parts of the country, in the eastern counties and to a less degree in the north, the small squires or big yeomen stood firmly for the Parliament. The town population was also divided. London followed its main tradition in opposition to the Crown. On the other hand, many of the boroughs owed their charters and prosperity to the monarchy and were strongly Loyalist.

There is therefore no trace in the contest known as the Civil War of a conflict of economic interest, of the class war, or of the opposition between democracy and aristocracy. This is a kind of subtle twist which has been given to the issue by the later Whig and Liberal historians writing under the unconscious influence of the political conditions and prejudices of their own day. It has been encouraged by the Romanticists, who write as if every trooper in Rupert's Horse was the scion of a noble house! In the later stages of the conflict, when Cromwell really took hold, whatever the Puritan army stood for it did not stand for democracy. The difference, in a word, was one of opinion and temperament cutting down horizontally through all classes. It is important to note this fact in connection with the division which gave birth to the Tory Party—for what opinion is in the flower it is apt to be in the fruit.

One other curious distinction in the distribution of the two sides has to be noted. The east of England held for Parliament; the extreme north was divided.

The western counties, the Home counties (save Buckingham, Herts, and Bedford), the Marches, and Lancashire were for the King. It is suggested that the Parliament area represents the limits of the Danish invasion, and if this view is fanciful, it is at least possible that we have traces here of some racial division sunk so low beneath the surface of time that the foundations only appear in the shock of a supreme conflict of party temperament. It is more interesting still to compare the electoral maps of England from the 'eighties to the present day and to see how closely the areas coloured Tory coincide with the Royalist blue of the history books—except where the industrial revolution has changed the whole complexion of a district.

With the story of the armed struggle which followed this sketch is not concerned. The Parliamentarians triumphed, but not till their opponents had exhausted every means of military resistance. And, as always happens in successful revolutions, the moderates were soon whirled away in the torrent they had unloosed. Not only the King fell, but the Church fell, and the Lords fell, and finally the House of Commons fell. The extreme left both in politics and religion was in the saddle, and England, for the first and last time in her history, suffered a military despotism. What was begun by Essex and Hampden ended in the sectarian dictatorship of the Republicans and Anabaptists. The consequences were nearly as unpleasant, though not nearly so long enduring, as those of the Wars of the Roses. But the most significant feature of Cromwell's rule was that the Protector assumed an authority as great as any Tudor king, and was only deterred from adopting the royal title by the inveterate prejudice of the Army against it. Cromwell, in contemplating this step, was certainly not swayed by any vulgar vanity; he had the reality of power and was not the man to care for the trappings. The truth was that he found the constitutional and practical difficulties of administering the country under any other title or system than that to which countless generations had been accustomed one of the gravest difficulty. To Englishmen, the central executive must be the Crown. Whether, if Richard Cromwell had possessed brains, a new dynasty might have been founded remains a mere matter of conjecture. But one thing is quite certain: the people would have had either Richard IV or Charles II. Nothing throws a brighter light on the immense strength of the Tory conviction that the Crown was the visible symbol of England, something in which alone patriotism could find its fulfilment, than the fact that the Radical leader of this day was compelled to consider taking the abhorred title of the man at whose death he had connived and adding to it a fuller personal dominion than his fallen foe had ever exercised. But what is important is not the tragic irony or poignant humour of the scheme, it is the witness it bears to the popular temperament which urged its adoption. A man who cannot understand how vital and living and permanent a thing that temperament was, and is, will never understand Toryism either then or in the succeeding centuries. The old conception of the monarchy has partially vanished with its powers, but just as its responsibilities have become diffused throughout the body politic, so the worship and adoration have come to embrace a wider view of the national life as the end and object of patriotism. The symbol has widened its concept; the feeling remains the same. The ideal which Toryism has embodied in the Crown is the State as a living organism embracing each individual and including all classes, and existing at once as the memory of the past, the experience of the present, and the dream of the future—something for which we ought to live even if we live badly, and ought to be ready to die even if we cannot bring ourselves to do it. It is not the State, because it is not something apart; it is not a Kultur, because that implies something in ourselves of which we approve; but being both immanent and transcendant, its analysis defies the intellect rather than its reality the heart. Of such a conception vulgar men will speak vulgarly and stupid men stupidly; but as it is not given to every man to be a genius or a gentleman, they will be none the less sincere in reaching out after some vision beyond the scope of their narrow lives. The unity, safety and strength of the nation are thus the three cardinal Tory doctrines; and the greatest of these is unity, because without it the other two are impossible. They may be summed up in the single word Patriotism. This does not mean that Liberalism or Radicalism are necessarily anti-patriotic. The point is that they do not put Patriotism in this sense first; and if one of their own cardinal doctrines happens to conflict with it, it is Patriotism which goes to the wall. Neither, again, is this equivalent to saying that Liberalism is necessarily wrong; it is only to point out that it is not Toryism.

The circumstances attending the death of Charles I added the martyr's crown to the horror attaching to the execution of the sovereign. It is hard to find any term to describe that death. If any man did his personal best to get himself executed, it was certainly the martyred monarch—that is to say, if chicanery and double dealing in matters of State and making oneself an inconvenience and a danger to a new and illegally constituted Government deserve the penalty of death. None the less, it was a judicial murder, for no court in England could try the Crown; and the retaliation on the regicides is the fate which awaits revolutionary tribunals. The act not only immensely strengthened the movement for the Restoration, but in producing a new cult it stimulated the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings. The Church of England now possessed its royal martyr and the bond between Church and State was proportionately strengthened. The blunder in policy is too obvious for comment. From the blood shed in Whitehall on that cold wintry morning went up a thin vapour which spread like a miasma over the later period of the Commonwealth.

And then the great, if unwilling, regicide died himself—and so came the Restoration! The Cavaliers had only been the fathers of Toryism, for they had sprung to the appeal not of debate but of the sword. But the great majority in the Commons which dominated the first Parliament of Charles II was the first Tory majority. Henceforward the Party has a recognisable character and begins to develop, as does an individual, under the reaction of circumstances. Like every Party, it begins to show its moderates and its extremists, its vested interests and its fixed ideas. From the Restoration to the great catastrophe of 1714 it is occupied with three great problems all closely related, with foreign policy, with the position of the Church, and with the succession to the Crown. But looking backwards to the origin of Toryism as it emerges from the conflict of the Civil War and traces its descent beyond this to the national polity of the Tudors, we can see one central inspiration. Above all else stands the Crown—the visible symbol of patriotic unity and religious faith.

CHAPTER II

DANBY AND CHARLES II

THE first Tory majority in the House of Commons is undoubtedly that returned to the Parliament of the Restoration—and the first Whig opposition can be discovered in the feeble fragments of the old Cromwellian and Presbyterian party which reformed its shattered and depleted ranks at Westminster in 1661. Up to the time when the fierce controversy over the Exclusion Bill overwhelms all other issues, for nearly twenty years the story is that of a contest between a patriotic Tory House of Commons fighting reluctantly enough the pro-French and semi-Catholic policy of the monarch it professed to adore. In this drama there are two central figures, Danby and Charles II. The King is drawn towards the absolute theories of European monarchy; the Tory Party and its chief pull instinctively in the other direction.

The battle-ground is the Church, foreign policy, and the Protestant succession—issues interwoven beyond unravelling by any practical statesman.

With the growth of a party system—however rough—and the immense shock to the monarchy given by the civil wars—however popular the recovery might be—a great change takes place in the relation between Parliament and the Crown. The battle is now mainly between contending parties and principles in Lords and Commons, and no longer directly between the Estates of the Realm. The bickering between the Executive and Parliament continues—but it loses all vital interest because the Executive, even if it wins a trick in the game, is bound to lose the rubber. The King can get his way only by using his immense influence to exalt or depress alternate parties and individuals, or he can evade the House, as Charles II did, by taking foreign subsidies. But it required a far more stupid man than the average or than Charles was, to imagine that there could ever again be a direct conflict of principle. The restored exile was a man of penetrating intelligence, too idle to use his brains to place himself in the front rank of statesmen, but energetic enough to secure what he personally wanted. He never really made a mistake, though once or twice he sailed very near the wind. His throne depended on the support of the Tory Party, and that support was assured so long as he conformed as a Protestant, kept the prerogative technically within sight of the law, and committed no open act of treason. For the rest, he was largely out of sympathy with some of the most vital elements in Toryism—a fact for which his foreign upbringing may have been partly responsible. That Party soon began to show very definite characteristics that had nothing to do either with abstract loyalty or passive obedience. It was a National Party both in Church and State. In Church matters, it hated Roman Catholics and schismatics almost equally; while the Whigs made up for their tolerance of Nonconformity by an additional bias against Catholicism. In foreign affairs the Tories, representing as they did the counties rather than the capital, were less well informed and less interested than their opponents. Nor were they the kind of people to embark on a Protestant crusade for the regeneration of Europe. At the same time, they were not prepared to stand any nonsense from Louis XIV. If he meddled with or threatened England, their patriotism was touched on the raw and they rose up as one man, whatever the King might say or think.

Every organisation possesses some kind of special interest, material or moral, which supplies it with a permanent backbone and enables it to survive its periods of unpopularity. The Church had now become a very definite vested interest in the fabric of Toryism—one that had been trampled almost out of existence under the Protectorate—and was determined that such a terrible experience should not befall it again. In secular matters the firm and vested interest of Toryism lay in peace and security; that each man should live an ordered and happy life under his own vine and fig tree, and endeavour to repair the ravages of the civil commotion. It was the party in possession; it did not wish to be disturbed. Such were the views of the vast bulk of the Party after the Restoration, and how permanent they were is proved by the immense difficulty experienced by the agitators of the coming period to stir up, even under the greatest provocation or in the light of the most brilliant opportunity, anything approaching a Tory revolt against an Established Order. At the same time, the Party had its inevitable die-hards and extremists by temperament, who in the past had shaded off into the Jesuits and were destined in the future to be the victims of Jesuit and Jacobite propaganda combined.

With such a majority as that of 1661 backed by the whole force of national opinion, and with an Opposition so crushed that it could hardly lift its head, there might have been expected to follow such a period of intense peace as came in with the complete Whig triumph and the Walpole administration after 1714. The difference was that in 1661 and in the three succeeding reigns it was considered quite unnecessary, except with one brief interval under William and another under Anne, that the Executive should be chosen to represent exclusively the majority in Parliament. As long as King and Commons marched together in the main, the Constitution worked and the Crown naturally selected its own servants. The personal views and abilities of individual statesmen, therefore, became of greater importance than their representative character. And when, as in the case of Charles II, the policy of the Executive was to depend on Parliament as little as possible, personal issues might override the party complexion of the House over a period of years. Parliament and its parties possessed, in fact, nothing but a reserved power. This fact raises a great difficulty in the path of any writer who desires to sketch the development of a party rather than the fortunes of individuals or the history of a nation. The nearest modern parallel to a condition which in a greater or less degree affects the politics of Great Britain all through the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries may be found in the state of affairs which existed during the recent war against Germany. In 1914 the party system was abrogated, and the disinclination to hold a general election during a great war made an appeal to the electorate only a reserved power to be exercised in the ultimate resort. Under these circumstances men were promoted to high office who possessed no party backing; extra-Parliamentary talents became conspicuous; what each prominent politician stood for in the Commons or the country became a matter of guess-work, and three Ministries followed one another in succession without an adverse vote in the House or an appeal to the country, simply because individual leaders grouped themselves into a new pattern. The writer of the future who describes those five years from 1914 to 1919 will find himself far more engaged with personalities than with political parties.

In the light of these introductory remarks, it will be possible to traverse the attitude assumed by Toryism towards the Crown, the Church, and Foreign policy from the Restoration in 1660 to the Exclusion Bill in 1680. Clarendon, as the first head of the Government, survived the Restoration only six years. He fell partly because of his own unpopularity and ostentation, but mainly, as Macaulay points out with justice, because he could not realise that the battle between the Executive and Parliament was over, and that even a Tory or Loyalist Parliament was bound to encroach on the prerogative. Clarendon, in fact, antedated the Tory Party because he was a Cavalier and not a Tory. He attempted in 1661 and onwards to maintain the *status quo ante* of 1640 and he paid the penalty in complete ruin. In Church matters his *régime* was marked by penal legislation of the most severe character against the Nonconformists, and attending a schismatic meeting qualified the audience for imprisonment and even transportation. In foreign policy Clarendon became responsible for the sale of Dunkirk to France, and for the disastrous war with the Dutch. The Penal Statutes alone were popular in the country, and the Tory Party joined the Whigs in revolt against the maladministration of the Government, the failure of our arms, and the policy of kowtowing to the French. The Court was alarmed at the Tory uproar; the Minister was sacrificed; the foreign policy suddenly reversed. The inherent Tory instinct for the Protestant cause proved too strong for the monarchical combination which bound Charles II and Louis XIV together. Temple's consolidation of Holland, Sweden and England into the Triple Alliance against France was immensely popular both with the Tories and the Whigs. The Tories had been roused to fear that the encroachments of Louis XIV were endangering their country, and the Whigs had a natural sympathy with any militant crusade on behalf of Protestantism in Europe. The old Roundheads, Presbyterians and Nonconformists raised their heads once more and re-formed themselves as the "Country Party." But this shift of the helm on the part of the monarch was only a temporary expedient due to dire necessity. Since it was clear that his own Tory majority would not agree to an unconditional surrender to the Royal will on foreign affairs, and was suffering in itself a process of attrition, it became necessary to look for outside support, and help could come from Paris alone. The answer to the Tory revolt was the French subsidy. The Ministry which followed Clarendon's, commonly known as the Cabal, possesses, therefore, little interest for the student of a Parliamentary party. It represents nothing but the effort of the Court to elude its own supporters in the Commons. Not a single member of it was a Tory. Clifford and Arlington were Catholics and useful because of their readiness to traffic with Louis. Buckingham was a courtier. The interest attaching to Lauderdale belongs entirely to Scottish affairs before the Union; his title to infamy is that he had sold his king. Ashley was the ablest and most pernicious renegade who ever infected English politics. He was never a Tory leader, but if there were any competition on the subject it would be to decide which party could repudiate him with the greatest thoroughness. It is a black period and one to be hurried over in which the King of England, his Ministers, and the leaders of the Whig opposition, all took money from the French King to fill their own purses or forward their interests and his. The Russells and the Sidneys stand in the dock beside the Arlingtons and the Cliffords, while the dark and impervious countenance of the monarch himself smiles cynically in the front row of the criminals. With all this the Tory Party has nothing to do, and can wrap itself quite securely in the mantle of its simple and patriotic virtue. No one knew better than the Cabal Ministers themselves that if the facts of the deals with France ever leaked out to the Tory majority the result would be less a revolt than a revolution. The Party possessed many vices, but selling their country was not one of them.

Under the Cabal was concluded in 1670 the Treaty of Dover, every term of which was a flat defiance to Tory religion, Tory patriotism and Tory foreign policy. We were to help Louis destroy the Dutch and capture the Spanish Empire; Charles was to declare himself a Roman Catholic; Louis was to pay him money for the apostacy, and if an insurrection followed was to land a French army to put down an English revolt. It may be presumed that neither monarch really intended to keep his bargain. Charles wanted the money and would sell his foreign policy for it. Louis would not insist on a religious declaration which would entail the immense and impossible effort of conquering England by invasion. So it proved. But in the meantime Charles was able to govern without his Parliament, and published the Declaration of Indulgence remitting the penal laws against the Roman Catholics and Nonconformists alike. This gave, on both counts, as deep offence to the Tories as did the change back to a pro-French policy.

In 1673 the money ran out and Parliament once more assembled. Both parties insisted on the repeal of the Declaration of Indulgence, the Tories because they objected to both Catholics and Schismatics and the " Country Party " because it preferred penalising the Schismatics to indulging the Catholics. The Tories then advanced further and succeeded in passing the Test Act, the effect of which may be traced throughout the whole course of Tory politics and national affairs from this time down to the Catholic Emancipation crisis of the late 1820's. All civil and military officers were compelled to take the oath of supremacy, receive the sacrament according to the English rite, and declare their disbelief in Transubstantiation. Thus while the original Reformation statutes had placed a definite penalty on non-observance of the State religion, the new statute debarred from office both the left and the right wing of religion, and when later the first penal statutes were withdrawn this further bar remained intact. After this both parties in combination fell on and dispersed the Cabal and compelled the abandonment of the war with the Dutch. So disappeared what may be called for convenience Charles's second Ministry, and it must remain till the end of time a matter of mystery why a man of such extraordinary cleverness should have subjected himself to these continual and quite unnecessary humiliations. He had only to go on calling himself a member of the Church of England—which he did until mundane affairs had ceased to interest him—and to stop assisting Louis on the Continent—which he never succeeded in doing in any effectual or consistent manner—to obtain from an immense Tory majority devoted to the Crown all the money he wanted for personal profusion. It is true that by the French alliance and the Catholic policy he obtained his subventions, but it was at the cost of continual struggle and annoyance, at the risk of his crown and at the price of real shame and constructive treason.

Why not, then, have taken the cash and let the discredit go? The Whig historians treat the successive political revolts of the great Tory majority of 1661 against the Crown far too much as a matter of course, and this error in the reading of a diverse temperament is natural and pardonable. But in reality it was most distasteful to the descendants of the Cavaliers, to squires from whose pulpits the parsons were proclaiming week by week the doctrine of non-resistance, to be in eternal conflict with the monarch on grounds which justified the Parliamentary opposition of Pym and Hampden. Nothing except the strongest prejudices and principles of patriotism and religion could induce them to pursue this course. Charles II had only to play the game with them and all would have been well. Who can explain why even the cleverest of the Stuarts had in him that strange intellectual kink, first manifested in Mary Queen of Scots, which always prevented the race marching directly on any object? But Toryism when in conflict with the monarchy was opposing its own cardinal doctrine of national unity as represented by that symbol. It suffered the uneasiness of the worshipper when the high priest himself is false. It had to choose between the denial of the nation and the condemnation of its head. And a worse crucifixion of this faith was yet to come in the near future when the falsity of the wearer of the crown compelled the breaking of the temporary idol. The Party concept, while not abandoning the ideal of the monarchy, then centred on the reality of the National Church. And so through the years and the breaking of creeds the unity becomes more embracing until it includes, or should include, the whole life of a people or empire.

But the time which lay before the Party in 1673 when the Cabal was expelled from power was one of great doubt and trouble. The third Ministry of Charles II may be called the *régime* of Danby. Sir Thomas Osborne, Lord Danby, Marquess of

Carmarthen and Duke of Leeds, was in effect the first Tory Prime Minister. He was appointed as Lord Treasurer in 1674 to manage the Parliament because he possessed the support of the Tory Party in the House and in the country. In virtue he appears to have been rather in advance of than behind his age: he was fond of office and power and money, as a man to-day likes £5,000 a year and a seat in the Cabinet if they can be got without any vital sacrifice of principle. To keep a majority he would use gold, as a Chief Whip to-day proffers the threat of losing a seat or the hope of obtaining a baronetcy. He held, in fact, to the morals of the sound Party man. But he was quite incapable of the calculated treacheries of most of his companions in eminence and coequals in ability. He represents, in fact, rather the honest corruption of the time of Walpole than the flagrant cynicism of the age of Shaftesbury. He was even a more genuine "patriot" than some of the eighteenth-century variety, for he never left his Party for power.

Like Lord Liverpool, whom he greatly exceeded, and the late Lord Salisbury, whom he perhaps nearly equalled in intellect, he was closely in touch with the arcana of the Tory faith. He believed in the doctrines of the National Church, was in sympathy with the mind of his Party and of the country, and was therefore prepared to give unflinching support to the Crown in so far as the reigning monarch was not practising apostasy, treason or tyranny. Rough in exterior, able in debate, he gave the great mass of the Tory countryside and the secular clergy the kind of moral lead and intellectual backing which they eminently required. In consequence he retained their unswerving support and confidence through many doubtful years, and was able to play a decisive part in more than one great crisis of history.

As might be expected of such a man, his policy in home affairs was one of unflinching Toryism. He was bound to attempt to reconsolidate a Party which had lost its moral cohesion as the result of the constant quarrels with the Crown, and to rally it once more to the banner of Charles II. In 1675 he therefore proposed a measure which, *cæteris paribus*, was in effect not unlike the scheme contemplated by Bolingbroke and Swift in the last months of Queen Anne's life for giving the Tories security of tenure against the well-known hostility of the incoming Hanoverian monarch. It was, in fact, to tighten up the Test Acts and to compel all members of both Houses and all office-holders in the country to take an oath which only strong Tories could honestly subscribe to. The oath embraced the doctrine of Non-resistance and a pledge not to alter the constitution in Church and State. Such a step would naturally be immensely popular with the Tories in the country, and if carried it would greatly assist Ministers in "making" the next elections. But while it is useless to talk about this epoch at all if we are to consider its legislation in the light of toleration, and must remember that the practice of mutual persecution by parties was habitual, none the less this measure is retrograde and indefensible even for the seventeenth century. The principle of the Act of Uniformity of Elizabeth, of the Test Act of Charles II, of the Six Acts of George III, or of the Defence of the Realm Act of George V is that certain views are opposed to the will and opinions of the great mass of the community, are therefore dangerous to the State, and must be put down with a firm hand if the State is to survive. The validity of this doctrine will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

But Danby's proposal was to substitute for an oath of allegiance to the State a pledge of fidelity to the doctrines of a Party, and probably to the doctrines of the minority of that Party, for how many Tories could honestly take the oath of Non-resistance? Such a scheme is obviously not sound Toryism, for it must almost certainly involve Government by a minority. The majority of the members of the House of Lords would not and could not have taken the oath, and if the majority of the Commons and the magistrates were willing to do so, subsequent events would have proved that they would have been unwilling to keep it.

The seventeenth century seems to have agreed with the twentieth century on this point. The Bill was severely handled in the Lords, and finally abandoned. Macaulay ascribes its collapse to the speeches of Shaftesbury, who had ratted to the "Country Party" just before the fall of the Cabal. The more natural explanation is that such an extreme Party measure was a "Flag" held up by the leader to reform his stalwarts on, and seen to go down in the dust of battle without any deep regret.

If Danby were a "die-hard" in internal affairs he had to tread more gingerly in foreign politics. Here again he reflected the views of his own supporters. He was against the French, and was pro-Dutch in so far as it might be necessary to support William in checking Louis XIV. But though Lord Treasurer, his powers were very limited in putting forward a policy diametrically opposed to that of the Court. It would be idle to discuss the vacillations of our foreign policy during this period of Danby's tenure of office. The French and the Crown were pulling one way, the Dutch, the Lord Treasurer, and the Parliament the other. As to Danby, "so little did he disguise his feelings that at a great banquet where the most illustrious dignitaries of the State and the Church were assembled, he not very decorously filled his glass to the confusion of all who were against a war with France." The net result was one of stalemate and non-intervention. Danby so far succeeded that he prevented England aiding the French until 1678 saw the close of a war in which the Stadtholder at least saved the United Provinces from annihilation.

It was impossible for Danby to explain to his supporters the tug of war which was going on in the inside ring, and he was suspect of being a party to every phase of policy which was hated by both sides in Parliament. As the obstacle to a French policy he had rendered himself odious to Versailles, and a fatal blunder laid him open to the enemy. He had consented, most unwillingly, to act as a go-between for the supply of French money to the Crown. Louis, who fed the Crown with one hand and the "Country Party" with the other, revealed the correspondence to the Opposition. The Tory Party, knowing little of the real facts, felt that they had been betrayed by the man in whom they trusted. It is difficult at any time to judge of the morality of a Minister tenacious of power and convinced that he is essential to his country who acts against his principles in a single instance in order to maintain his general position. It is a human and not a very culpable error, and posterity has acknowledged Danby to have been an honest patriot. At least he paid dearly for his sin. The Lord Treasurer fell at once, was lucky to escape impeachment, and some years elapse before he is heard of again.

His successor as Tory chief in the Cabinet, but by no means with the Party, was Laurence Hyde (Earl of Rochester and son of Clarendon). He was just as much a stick-in-the-mud as his father, but he exercised his obscurantist tendencies with greater prudence. The extremists of the Party alone followed a man whose temperament seemed to lead him directly into the camp of the Duke of York, now wondering whether he was to be James II.

The anti-French cudgels dropped by Danby were taken up by that curious figure Halifax, who, whether Whig or Conservative, was certainly no Tory. His bickering with Rochester and the Duke of York resulted in alternate victories and defeats, but at least England was not involved in the mesh of French European ambition as long as the reign lasted. So much was due to the influence of the first great Tory Premier, Danby Duke of Leeds.

CHAPTER III

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE CROWN AND CHURCH

In the tug-of-war over foreign policy between the Crown and the Tory majority in the House of Commons, the one leaning to the Catholics and the other to the Protestant princes, or at least to non-intervention, the balance remained equal. Neither side had obtained its objective and England remained at once powerless and innocuous. But a far graver issue to the Englishman of that time than a choice between the Hague and Versailles now swelled up on the horizon. The King was without direct heirs. The Duke of York was the legitimate successor. After him came his daughters, Mary and Anne, both of them married, chiefly by the wise provision of Danby, to Protestant princes. The Duke was a convinced, open, not to say bigoted Catholic. Was he to be permitted to succeed to a crown which since the time of Mary of terrible memory had never been held by a sovereign who was not of the Protestant faith? And since in spite of all protests he had married *en secondes noces* Mary of Modena, another Catholic, was the country to face the possibility of a line of Catholic princes?

It might appear a most extraordinary thing that when Henry VIII assumed the headship of the National Church, neither he nor his advisers seem for a moment to have considered what would happen if the wearer of the crown chanced to belong to some different faith. Elizabeth, whose life had been threatened under a Catholic predecessor and was long menaced by a possible Catholic successor, imitated this policy of inactivity. Henry VIII may have been drunk with power and desire. Elizabeth's cautious and restrained temperament had moved from the first among alarms. Yet nothing was done when Mary Queen of Scots was the successor to the throne. The flagrant inconsistency of a schismatic as the official head of the Church must have struck home to an age vitally concerned with such matters: it would be like putting a professed atheist into the chair of St. Peter.

The political inconvenience of a policy which penalised dissent in the subject, but not in the ruler who imposed the penalty, is equally obvious. Religion admittedly had been made to subserve the ends of the State: was not the monarchy to subserve those ends too? It is in the answer given to this question at various periods in our history that the root of the whole matter lies, and an attempt to afford an explanation of the popular attitude in early times has been made in the first chapter, on the monarchy. The Crown came before the Church and made it, and a divine of the Tudor period would not have been thought blasphemous if he had preached from the text, "Shall a man be more wise than his Maker?" The Crown had been strong when the new Church was yet weak, and the Divine Right of Kings to be strong had been impressed on the hearts of the people long before the National Church which was in part their creature came along to give its official blessing. Men therefore, looking back along the aisles of history, saw the brilliance of the Tudors as a surpassing glory, and in the light of it they saw Henry V in the press at Agincourt, the great figures of the Edwards, the hammers of the French and the Scotch, and the dimmer forms of that terrible Plantagenet race silhouetted against the tomb of the Conqueror. But in that long line of kings which defiled past their inward eye, as the ghost of future rulers passed the gaze of Duncan, there were two gaps in the orderly succession. There were the jostling ghosts of the Bolingbrokes, of Edward IV, of the Crookback, breaking for place like members of an ill-arranged queue and trampling across the bodies of men to secure their position. Then came a form who, like the apparition in the ancestral manor, might with justice have carried his severed head in his hand. The agony of Richard II and the agony of Charles I carried one common moral. To break the direct line was to invite evil.

Such would have been the unswerving answer of the average man in Tudor times, and in some senses the argument would appear to have been strengthened by the deposition of Charles I. But then Cromwell, the persecutor of the Church, had been in effect a Schismatic King. In any case times had altered. The monarchy had grown weaker and the Church had grown stronger in the affection of the nation. If a direct proposal was made to exclude the heir to the throne on the ground that he was an heresiarch, would the nation follow the real doctrine of legitimate succession or would it not? Quite possibly the question might never have arisen. No one in 1679 could tell. James might have died before Charles and without issue. But the whole matter was precipitated by a double accident: the lies of Titus Oates about the Popish Plot in 1678 and the dissolution of Parliament in January 1679, due apparently to the desire to save Danby from a false charge which he might have refuted by telling the truth about the Treaty of Dover. Whoever advised the dissolution on the top of the immense agitation which followed Oates's supposed revelations soon discovered his error.

The story of the Exclusion Bill is a thrice-told tale, and has been dealt with so brilliantly in the pages of Macaulay that a repetition would be tedious. How the Whigs returned, after eighteen years of opposition, with a majority; how two dissolutions of Parliament left that majority unshaken with the doubtful exception of the Lords; how Halifax's speeches won the Lords; how Charles himself wondered whether to sacrifice his brother's birthright to the prospect of civil war; how in the nick of time he realised that the country was swinging in favour of his natural stand for that brother's rights; and how Shaftesbury, "turning neither to right nor left, strode straight on to his doom"—all this belongs to national history.

Two points alone are of importance from the point of view of this narrative: the attitude of the Tory Party towards Divine Right and the fact that the change of opinion which defeated the Exclusion Bill and avoided a rebellion is the first instance of what is known somewhat inaccurately as the swing of the pendulum, but would be better described as the movement of middle opinion.

The hardened politician desperately intent on his own affairs is apt to forget how largely uninterested the mass of the public is. But suppose that some great issue arises which really does penetrate to the depth of public consciousness as light into fathoms of water, the inert mass bestirs itself and either out of passion or out of justice takes one side or the other. The idea that this swing of opinion oscillates regularly between Government and Opposition is a fallacy of the *fin de siècle* publicists of the nineteenth century, long since exploded. This view was based on the accident that Mr. Disraeli obtained a great majority in 1874 and Mr. Gladstone in 1881. But in one form or another this centre mass does operate like the reserve held back in the military school of Napoleon and Foch.

The dissolution of January 1679, due, as we have seen, either to a desire to protect Danby or to some motive which cannot be fathomed, resulted in the destruction of the great Tory majority of 1661. For the first time since the Restoration that queer compound of elements, great landowners who were jealous of the Crown, small business men, Republicans, yeoman farmers, Independents, ordinary people who cared for abstract liberty, Anabaptists, and the general run of Low Churchmen and Presbyterians, which made up the Whig Party, was in the saddle. Their demand was at once simple and sufficient—the exclusion by Act of Parliament of the direct heir to the throne. The kind of emotion that this proposal aroused could only be understood by those generations which witnessed the Liberal disruption over Home Rule in 1886 or the struggle over the Reform Bill in 1832. To a modern age whose feelings have been exhausted by high explosive it is only comprehensible in the light of imagination. Completely in theory and partially in practice the crown had been handed down from the Conqueror by the act of God. The limitations of the mediæval sovereignty had been forgotten: its popular character remained. And in addition it was now the head of the English Church upon earth. Man now proposed to limit the Divine ordinance.

Instantly the depths were stirred and the passions and beliefs of mankind were thrown up into a whirlwind. The transcendent and sinister abilities of Shaftesbury directed the daring of the innovators. The sullen mass of high Tory and Catholic resistance was represented by Rochester, brother-in-law of the threatened heir. Danby, who would have stood for all that was best and most reasonable in Toryism, was in prison, and the real defence of the succession was entrusted to the dry and lambent intelligence of Halifax. The King fought with unwonted courage and consistency for his brother's claims. His only chance was to play for time until the emotions roused by the "Popish Plots" had exhausted themselves and the cold fit followed the hot. Therefore on the 26th May, 1679, he prorogued the new Parliament and did not permit it to meet until October 1680. But the great central mass of opinion was still violently anti-Catholic and the Exclusion Bill was passed in the Commons. All now depended on the Lords. Sunderland had ratted to the Opposition, but the speeches of Halifax and the votes of the bishops turned the scale in favour of the Duke of York. The King again dissolved Parliament in March 1681, and it became apparent that the gale was blowing itself out. The Whig majority was considerably reduced, but it was still a working majority. The new Parliament was summoned at Oxford, for the simple reason that the country was on the verge of civil war and that the Government did not dare to trust itself to the vicinity of a rebellious London. Charles II hesitated for a moment, but almost before he could make up his mind, the pendulum swung suddenly and definitely. Faced with the crisis, moderate opinion went round to the side of the legitimate succession, and the butchery of Whigs succeeded to butchery of Papists. Within three years opinion in the country had completely reversed itself. In modern times the Government would have appealed instantly to the electorate and secured a "snap" election. It must appear curious that the King was simply content to prorogue Parliament. It was never summoned again until after his sudden death in 1685, and a period of inertia both at home and abroad marks these concluding years of his reign.

There can be no doubt that this singular instance of the swing of the pendulum was due to the operation of moderate and non-party opinion. But Charles could never have held out long enough to allow for the change of feeling if he had not been supported by the great bulk of the Tory Party when the tempest was at its height.

What then was the Tory attitude towards a Papist succession? Obviously it was one of grave doubt and fear. The Church and the Crown, which had been the staples of the national edifice, might find themselves opposed. Could a house so divided against itself stand? On the other hand, the basis of the Establishment had become so interwoven with the doctrine of the Divine Right of Succession that it was equally perilous to admit that Parliament had the right to lay a profane hand on the Lord's anointed. It was in the ultimate resort a question whether the Divine Crown or the National Church had the strongest claim on Tory attachment.

It has been pointed out that in the days of the Tudors the nation would not have hesitated to prefer the Crown as the acceptance of Queen Mary proved, and it will be shown that in the time of Queen Anne the ordinary Tory did not hesitate to prefer the Church and the Protestant succession to a Catholic Prince even though the advent of the Elector of Hanover spelt the ruin of his Party. But 1680 was a period of transition. The Crown was growing weaker and the Church stronger, but if the first had passed its zenith, the latter had not yet risen into the ascendant. That passion for a concrete object of worship as the symbol of national union, which is the distinguishing feature of the Tory mind through the centuries, had not yet transferred itself from the Crown to the Church, just as in later days it hesitated long before it substituted the Empire for the Establishment. The choice was not only deadly but it might be vital. The single precedent was not encouraging. The reign of "Bloody Mary" still lived in the minds of the people; but, on the other hand, the very men who were spreading the exaggerated stories of the sufferings of the martyrs in that epoch were also the convinced foes of Prelacy. The choice appeared to lie between the bigotry of James and the atheism of Shaftesbury added to a return of the "Reign of the Saints."

Under these circumstances the Tory Party, absolutely destitute of leadership by the fall of Danby, acted with prudence, moderation and wisdom. It decided to stand by the Duke of York so long as he proved himself worthy of confidence, and it only abandoned James II when it was shown that his word was by no means as good as his bond. It was perfectly possible that a Catholic monarch would respect the Establishment both in Church and State. Many men have held high office, in the law, the Church or the State, without allowing their private opinions or predilections to bias them to any marked degree in their administration of affairs. To exclude James was in effect to condemn him unheard. Was the country to go through all the old agonies of a disputed succession simply on the off chance that a Catholic, who was nearly as old as his brother the reigning monarch, and had only Protestant heirs, might, if he reigned at all, forget in a few short years that he was an Englishman and only remember that he was a Catholic? Besides, it was obvious that the excluded heir would at once retire to Versailles as a Pretender. Then would begin again the old sickening story of the conflicts of the houses of York and Lancaster: the landings on the coast with a handful of adherents or with foreign mercenaries, the risings of the home party, the sudden battle which transferred the crown, and the vast proscriptions, widespread disorder and terrible executions which hailed the victor. That all these things did happen in a minor degree does not affect the argument of 1680 at all. The Tory Party attempted to avoid them by pursuing a course straight in the line of its traditions. No one could foretell whether James would prove a fool or a statesman. Toryism in consequence supported the direct succession to the Crown. The Party, therefore, stood by the legitimate succession and risked the anomaly of a heretic sovereign and the possible danger to the Church. Such was the real basis of the Tory decision, and, being patriotic in essence, it commended itself in the long run to the country.

The Whig historians, who are, unfortunately, our chief guides through this epoch, exaggerate the political influence of the parsons who preached the doctrine of Non-resistance and the Divine Right of Kings, when they infer that it was this influence rather than a very broad view of the paramount necessity of keeping the Crown in the direct line which decided the action of the Tories. The noisy extremists of any view are apt to leave the greatest record. Would it be fair to interpret the policy or the general view of the Tory Party in the twentieth century solely in the light of the leading articles in the *Morning Post?*

The doctrine of Non-resistance was based chiefly on the advice of St. Paul to the early Christians not to resist the administration of Nero, which was taken to mean that established Governments should be respected—an excellent and prudent doctrine. It might have been pointed out with equal truth that the early Christians frequently suffered martyrdom because they would not burn incense to the Divus Cæsar—a purely formal act of homage, like that of kissing hands. The line of the Cæsars was indeed held as divine, and traced its descent back through Æneas to the goddess Venus, and what was lacking in genealogy was supplied by political pressure. The deification of the Emperor, like Henry VIII's headship of the National Church, arose partly out of State necessities and partly out of the gratitude by which men recognise a saving and a unifying force, whether that force springs from sheer genius, as in the first case, or from mere success and usefulness, as in the latter. But he must be a bold preacher who would maintain that the same divine halo surrounded the brows of the heirs of Tiberius as those of Edward VI. Such a doctrine is rank Paganism. It sufficed, however, for some of the illiterate extremists of the Tory right and has been exposed to justifiable sarcasm. But it never infected the main body of the Tory Party. The little influence which the extremists exercised in all these matters is shown by the willing acceptance of William III by the Tory leaders, by the failure of all the Jacobite intrigues of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and by the sullen submission with which a vanquished party welcomed the hated Hanoverian. But the doctrine of the extremist turned inward on itself. Had not William III as good a title to the crown of England as Nero had to the Imperial dignity? Was not the one as good an established Government as the other? Sensible people did not argue, but pursued the path which led to the best interest of the realm. The paradox works itself out when one discovers that the keenest advocates of the Divine Right are the first to shout when the Church itself is injured by the monarchy, and that it was the trial of the bishops which decided the fate of James II. But this much is clear. The average Tory stood not by the Divine Right of James but his temporal claim to the hereditary succession.

The reasons for and against an hereditary monarchy have been discussed once and for all by Gibbon, who has pointed out that most of the troubles and sufferings of the Roman Empire sprang from the failure of the line of the Cæsars to breed legitimate heirs. The consequent system of adoption was unsatisfactory, and led ultimately to the legions on the frontiers electing the man who would pay them best. As a result a whole civilisation quite as comfortable and possibly better educated than ours was in the year 1914, broke down, and terrible hardships and murders were suffered by innumerable people. Rome was in reality dead long before she could learn the lesson. England, by one of those kind of violent efforts by which the body throws off the effects of a drug, recovered sanity in the reign of Henry VII. England saved herself by the acceptance of the doctrine "the legitimate heir must succeed." The reason for the acceptance of this simple faith is not to be found in the Divine Right of Kings, but in the fact that no other system of administration is possible for this country. Under it the King's writ still runs, "though the King that wrote it were under the earth." The Executive is, in fact, continuous whatever may happen to the individual. Those people, therefore, who, like Shaftesbury as a Whig, and possibly Bolingbroke as a Tory, may care to dally with the idea of Republicanism in this country are beating the air, and the first Labour Government which acceded to power would be a strong supporter of the Throne. Cromwell himself was compelled to accept the working theory of Royalism.

The Tories were therefore right in holding to the legal and hereditary right in the succession to the Crown, but the Whigs were also right in holding to its limitation. Neither Whig nor Tory was prepared to suffer a tyrant, even though he was anointed by the holy oil. And in fact both parties agreed that if a monarch had proved himself impossible, the next direct successor should assume the crown.

Both parties were back in agreement, if they had only known it, to the conception of the mediæval monarchy. But precisely for this reason the Tory Party and the country were justified in their attitude over the Exclusion Bill, whereas the Whigs were in the wrong. It was impossible to bar the next legal heir on a mere supposition.

The attitude of Shaftesbury has excited much speculation. He had changed sides three times before 1680, and Dryden's great poem suggests the view that he might have been expected to change sides again before it was too late. Sunderland ratted back and was forgiven. The explanation may perhaps be found in the diverse tempers of the great apostate and the coming monarch. Shaftesbury knew James in a way the average elector could not do: he realised the temper of the man who rather enjoyed seeing people tortured and allowed his nephew to throw himself at his feet with his hands bound behind him in a vain plea for mercy. And Shaftesbury, with all his crimes, was a man of impetuous temper, and anything like temper and plain speaking was impossible with James. In the closet he never could have imitated the brilliant suavity of Sunderland. He might have made his peace with a clever man like Charles II or William III, but the stupidity of James left him no choice between victory and ruin.

So ended the first great political struggle between parties in English history. The Whigs were utterly routed, and, following the custom of the times, two of the noblest heads in England fell under the axe as a warning not to believe the false prophecies of electoral returns. Such a sacrifice may have been necessary to the extreme right wing, which, though it had not won the day, had fought manfully in the battle. It would be a profound error for political leaders to imagine that they can do without the aid of their zealots, who heat up the whole mental atmosphere just at a time when one view is in the ascendant or stick by a cause even when it appears to be ruined. Their views are generally absurd to any mind conversant with the real problems of statesmanship, but their support has to be purchased, and cheques drawn on the bank of expectation have to be honoured. A block of votes for the Divine Right of Kings might be worth the head of a Russell or a Sydney, just as the Whigs had murdered Catholic nobles on the strength of the voting value of Titus Oates.

The legitimate heir was thus not excluded, and in 1685 Charles II died, as he had lived, at once a great rogue and a great gentleman. James II succeeded without the slightest opposition. It remained to be seen what the new ruler would do with the Tory Party and the National Church which had saved him.

CHAPTER IV

TORYISM DENIES DIVINE RIGHT

The Tory Party viewed the accession of James II with feelings in which hope was diluted with apprehension. Those members of it who had most hope were destined to the most profound disappointment. The men who viewed the situation from the most detached standpoint were certain that they had done the right thing in resisting the Exclusion Bill, but, knowing the personality of the new monarch, were the least inclined to an optimistic view of the future of their Party. James at once issued a most satisfactory declaration about the rights of the Church. "We have the word of a king," said a worthy Bishop, "and of a king who was never worse than his word." "My Lord," replied the cynical and all-knowing Halifax, "you are talking treason." That was the trouble. James II, beginning with moderation, continued with increasing violence to press forward a policy which could only spell the complete destruction of the National Church itself. That which the Tudors had not provided for had come to pass: the head was attacking the body and the body resisting its head. In this first vital clash of Crown and Church, for in the reign of Mary the Church had not been strong enough to protect itself and the main opposition had come from the Schismatics, the final decision rested with the Tory Party. In 1680 it had, after much hesitation, taken the risk of defeating the Exclusion Bill. But the experiences of 1685 to 1689 changed the view of all but the extreme right of the Tories, and in that year the great majority stood firmly by the Revolution. The Crown went down and the Church took its place in the affection of this vast section. Such a result was not arrived at without great searchings of heart. The minority of Toryism broke away, and, preferring the Divine Right of Kings, passed into the wilderness of a hopeless opposition. It was an age of shattered faiths and broken lights.

There were, of course, other causes which contributed to the fall of James. His somewhat wavering pro-French policy was offensive to all sections of English opinion, and the Whigs violently resented the straining of the prerogative in favour of the Catholics from the purely civil point of view. But it must remain very questionable whether these resentments would have sufficed to change the succession so long as he had the Tories behind him. There was only one certain way to loosen that staunch allegiance, and that was to attack the Church. This was the lynch-pin of the royal coach, and it was not long before the monarch was trying to pull it out.

In support of this contention it may be pointed out that James began his reign under fair auspices. He was not personally unpopular with the great mass of his supporters. It was the leaders in politics alone who had gauged his temper. The General Election of 1685, which followed the demise of the Crown, returned a strong Tory majority. It is true that the Government was able to make the elections in the boroughs to a certain extent, but this is too common a feature of the period to invalidate a result. The defeated Party was sullen, but the country as a whole rejoiced.

Furthermore, the utter failure of the landings of Argyll and Monmouth which followed in May and June 1685 showed the full strength of the Crown. From the military point of view they were mad plans undertaken by incompetent leaders. The point is that the Whigs would not stir a finger to help the invaders, and that the Tories rallied enthusiastically to the Crown.

Curiously enough, it was a Tory Parliamentary victory twelve years before which was the effective cause of the conflict between James and the Tory Party. In 1673 the Test Act had been passed into law. It precluded both Catholics and Dissenters from holding public office. Now the policy of James was to do very much what Danby had attempted under Charles, and the Whigs were to attempt under William, and what Swift contemplated in 1714—namely, to make it impossible for any other Party than theirs to sit in Parliament or to be an officer or a magistrate. To succeed in doing this was to establish a sort of party-political despotism for the Party leader, and James as the party leader of Catholicism was aiming at establishing exactly this privileged position for the members of his own religion. The King was, however, in a slightly different position, for he could hardly dare to introduce much less hope to pass a law at once making it illegal for any but Catholics to sit in Parliament. On the other hand, the Crown possessed immense powers of patronage. If all the offices in its gift or under its influence were staffed with Roman Catholics, the wild course of re-converting England to the ancient faith on which he had set his heart would have made a great stride forward. The Executive would at least be for Rome. But to this course the Test Acts presented an absolute bar, and those Acts were the very *arcana imperii* of Toryism.

But might it not be possible to secure a formidable coalition of Presbyterians, Dissenters and Catholics against the State Church and its protectors? Supposing both extremes could be freed from their penal disabilities, might not the collapse of the Test Acts follow, or would not their evasion by the Crown be regarded with general approval? There was a certain amount of tactical ingenuity in this idea which does credit to the ability of James or his advisers. The weak point was that the alliance was too unnatural to be valid, and that the method of carrying it out would offend the Whigs as much as the end in view consternated the Tories. For to free dissidents from the Penal Statutes it would be necessary to use the

Dispensing Power, and if there was one thing that the Whigs loathed, it was this particular prerogative of the Crown.

There were or had been great conveniences in giving the Executive power to remit penalties incurred under old statutes or in view of special circumstances, and this right had remained undisputed at least until the time of James I. Similarly there are considerable advantages in acting by Order in Council in moments of grave crisis. But such ordinances are meant to be used in exceptional cases and not to be made an instrument for altering the policy or subverting the constitution of the country. The use to which James II proposed to put the Dispensing Power by means of the Act of Indulgence was to destroy on his personal initiative a settled view of State policy which had come down from the days of the Tudors. The only method of procedure was to get Parliament to pass an Act of Toleration, and this it was well known Parliament would not do. In the meantime James proceeded to the task of filling up the offices of State with Roman Catholics in a manner completely illegal. The Whigs and Dissenters were naturally outraged by the whole procedure, and all chance of their support vanished. On the contrary, their long nourished dislike of the monarch was exasperated beyond measure.

But what were the feelings of the Tory Party? The Head of their own Church had engaged to try to engineer a conspiracy of Papists and Schismatics against the State religion of which his own father was a sainted martyr. They had an undoubted majority both in the Commons and the country for their view of life, religion and policy. Or, if that majority was vanishing, it was due to the necessity of pretending to defend the crown of a monarch who should have been their best friend, and was proving their worst enemy. Deep and loud were the growls and the grumbles in the country manors and parsonages and in the cathedral towns, and terrible the dilemma of the apostles of Non-resistance. As a fact during these three years the opinion of the Party swung steadily from right to left, and the moderate views of men like Danby prevailed completely over the extremist conceptions of Rochester and Clarendon. These two, being not only attached to the Court, but brothers-in-law to the King, were naturally suspect to the Party in the country.[1] And the same suspicion attached, in a lesser degree, even to the pompous and immaculate virtue of Nottingham, though he was not in office. Danby in his retirement and Seymour in the Commons were in a far better position to feel and to represent the temper of the rank and file. It was admitted by now on all hands that a grave injustice had been done to the former in accusing him of compliance to France, so that he was in a position to resume his natural leadership of the Party. Edward Seymour, on the other hand, could add to his immense Parliamentary experience the claim to be the First Country Gentleman in England—one who could refer to the Duke of Somerset as a cadet of his house. A scrutiny of these five names will lead us to certain conclusions which are supported by other evidence. Nottingham was an extreme High Churchman; Clarendon was an extreme Royalist; Rochester was both an extreme High Churchman and an extreme Royalist. The temperament of all three indicated that they would stand by James as long as it was humanly possible. Indeed in the future Nottingham hastily escaped from the tentative overtures made to him to sign his name to the document calling in the Prince of Orange. Rochester and Clarendon only ratted when all was in reality over and no choice remained except that between ruin and submission. But Danby and Seymour, who led the Tories in the insurrection, were neither "Old Cavaliers" nor "Extreme High Church" in their views. They were so far sound Churchmen that they declined to stand by theories, however excellent, which preached that the Crown might be turned into a tyranny which could at will destroy the Church.

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[1] Rochester was Lord Treasurer in James's first ministry. The only other Tories were Godolphin, merely a great Civil servant, and Ormond, who was at once degraded from the Vice-royalty of Ireland and made Lord Steward. Marlborough was sent on a special embassy to Louis XIV.

They had a choice of evils, and they chose the lesser one. And in making this choice they had the backing of the great bulk of the Party. Leaders and supporters exhibited here for the first time in the history of the Party what may be regarded as another of its marked permanent characteristics—practical opportunism. In theory Divine Church and Divine Crown could not be opposed: in practice one or other had to perish in the mêlée of the 1680's. Balancing all the alternative advantages and disadvantages on either side, they decided that the balance lay with the National Church against a monarch who was using French money and bargaining for French military aid to reimpose the Papacy. Once they had taken their choice they acted boldly and resolutely, even though action meant offending the stronger brethren who meant to cling to the theory, and involved the acceptance of a Dutch king and an alliance with the hated Whigs. And it must be remembered that Danby, though he was ready to welcome William as a deliverer, regarded Mary as the next legitimate successor to the throne.

It has been said that foreign policy had little influence on Tory views in this grave crisis. This statement might seem to need some explanation or qualification. The Tory Party held for nearly a century certain well-defined principles or prejudices applying to the attitude of England towards the Continent. These were the principles of Non-Intervention. Opportunism might modify them on occasion, but the constant belief remained. Whether these views sprang from some ancestral recollection of the fearful exhaustion of money and man power which followed the attempts of the Edwards to seize the crown of France, and of the humiliations and horrors which accompanied the expulsion of the Generals of Henry VI from the conquests of Henry V, it is impossible to say. Certainly Cromwell had made himself terrible to Europe with the threat of his standing army—and a policy and institution connected with Cromwell was obnoxious to Toryism. Clearly a military adventure on the Continent required the use of regular forces, and who could tell to what use of tyranny at home such forces might be put? Cromwell had shown one such use. And some deeper instinct urged that what Britain needs and loves is quiet and repose, with just so much force as will keep her shores inviolate and enable her to sally out against an insolent aggressor. The Tory Party, therefore, believed in a minute regular army, in a strong fleet and in the local militia. Such forces should be sufficient to protect Britain from invasion. They could not tempt her to aggression abroad and they could not be used for tyranny within. But a great European policy must change all this. Therefore insularity and nationalism were the best and safest of courses.

But it was difficult to apply the precepts of non-intervention to the situation in 1687–1689. Our own internal politics were tangled up with the great struggle between Louis XIV and William of Orange then raging in Europe. The French and English Crowns were in secret agreement: the British Whigs were in clandestine correspondence with William. Men like Danby on one side and Devonshire on the other had far too much knowledge of foreign affairs to be deceived as to the realities of the situation. If the Tories declined to join the Whigs they might destroy the religion and liberties of England and would merely be acting as bonnets for Louis. If they did so join they might succeed in bringing in the Prince of Orange. But the Whigs knew perfectly well, just as Danby must have known, that William was not coming for love. He would take the fearful risk of the invasion only to bring England into his great combination against France. The Whigs were willing to accept the price because they were not in a mood to stick at anything in order to overturn the tyrant, and because they had no constitutional objection to a vast Protestant crusade. From the Tory point of view the alternate disadvantages about balanced themselves out. Church and Liberty had to be weighed against continental intervention. Finally it was not a consideration of foreign policy but of "The Church in danger" which weighted the scales against James and decided Danby to advance.

Such were the considerations which dominated the Tory mind as the aggressions of James increased and the great mass of the Party swung over to resistance. Even so it was necessary to face the certainty of a painful disruption, for there were many members who would accept no sovereign but the Lord's anointed. And men may consider long before they take desperate risks. The law of high treason was precisely designed to deter adventurous spirits from embarking on these perilous enterprises. And in fact probably no one would have moved except under the goad of necessity and despair. But the outrages on the Church came in a cumulative series. When hands were actually laid on the very ark of the High Church, and the Fellows of Magdalen were driven out of their College because they would not accept as President a particularly disreputable Papist, men said that the scholars of Oxford were to be brought up as Jesuits. The graduates of that venerable training-ground of the Establishment stirred uneasily in their parsonages. The Declaration of Indulgence itself would have been difficult to resist, because it was simply a negative enactment, but for the orders of the High Commission to read it from the pulpits. Then followed the passive resistance of the clergy, the protest, imprisonment, and trial and acquittal of the Bishops. And all the time Irish troops were pouring into the country. James clearly intended to add Strafford's "Thorough" to Cromwell's persecution of the Church. This was more than Tory flesh and blood could bear, and the spirit of non-resistance vanished like snow in the sun.

On the last day of June 1688 a momentous meeting took place. It was for the purpose of signing the joint invitation to the Prince of Orange to come to the rescue of the English people. The Whigs had long been in touch with William, and it was agreed that a rising would be useless without the stiffening of an invasion by trained troops, and that such an incursion would be useless without the assured prospect of a general insurrection. All William's hopes depended on the extent to which his victory, if he succeeded at all, would be bloodless,[1] and this in turn would be decided in the main by the attitude of the Tories. If they supported James, or even if most of them remained quiescent, as many of the Non-resistance divines urged they were entitled to do, the struggle would take an aspect of a civil war with James, his army, and some of the Tories on one side, and the Whigs and the Dutch regulars on the other. Even a victory under these circumstances would have been a Pyrrhic one: William's moral position even after victory would have been impossible. The last word, therefore, rested with Toryism, and it is significant that Danby's single signature was considered sufficient as the Tory pledge of revolt. Compton, Bishop of London, signed for the Church.

It is not necessary to describe the successful landing of the Prince, the treason of Marlborough, and the flight of James. It is sufficient to say that the Tory pledge was kept. Seymour joined the invaders in the west, while Danby led the insurrection in the north, and even Oxford received the deliverers with gay colours and loud acclamations. But as soon as the Prince was safely installed in the capital the Tory conscience was once more on the rack. When the intoxication of the triumph was over, the Whigs and the Tories were like strange bedfellows who wake in the morning and eye each other with anything but enthusiasm. A wrangle broke out at once.

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[1] "A bloody victory gained in the heart of the island by the mercenaries of the States General over the Coldstream Guards and the Buffs would be almost as great a calamity as defeat."—Macaulay, *History*, chap. IX.

What was James, the legitimate monarch, now being embraced by the King of France? To the Whigs the answer to the problem was perfectly simple. He was a King who had been deposed by the will of the people. All that remained to do was to elect his successor. Against this answer the whole essence of Toryism cried out in protest. One school of Toryism held that the King who had been appointed by God could not be deposed by man, and a deeper Tory instinct still revolted against such a wrong done to the legitimate heir of the Conqueror. Therefore at the outset the Tories would not even admit that the throne could be vacant, for if it was vacant, the next heir, the doubtful Prince of Wales, would be King. It has been pointed out how deeply embedded this conception is, not only in the mind of the Tory party, but of the whole nation.

Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, who does not appear to have been either a very wise or very consistent individual, produced an ingenious but impossible argument for meeting the difficulty of his supporters. The King, he said, must always be the King, but James II's whole course in abandoning his kingdom obviously shows him unfit for his duties: he must be treated as if he was a minor or insane and a Regent appointed to rule in his name.[1] The Prince of Orange would obviously be the Regent.

Danby struck a far deeper chord in the memory of the people. His suggestion, which was in the straight line of Tory policy, was that James had abdicated by his flight and that the next heir was *de facto* monarch. It was impossible to prove that the supposed Prince of Wales was legitimate, and the probability was against it. Therefore Mary was actually Queen and William Prince Consort. He might have added that monarchs have often been permitted to resign the crown to a son or daughter and not permitted to resume it when the whim or necessity had fled.

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[1] This, of course, was actually done in the case of George III, but here George IV as next heir became Regent.

The slightest consideration will show the absurdity of Sancroft's suggestion. It was to inflict on William more than all the disabilities which Oliver Cromwell had attempted to escape in vain. Ultimately if it succeeded at all it would have substituted an elected Emperor for the ancient British Crown, for each successive sovereign of the new line would have had to be elected as Regent by Parliament in turn. It is regrettable to confess that so far had the reaction after the victory gone against William that the great majority of the Tory Party preferred the Regency to the sound alternative plan. But Danby was in a strong central position, and might have succeeded had he been gratifying, as he thought he was, the wishes and ambitions of Mary. As a matter of fact the whole question was settled, not by the politicians, but by the monarchs. William declined the Regency: Mary declined a queenship at the expense of her husband. The result was the most happy solution of a joint monarchy. William satisfied the Whig desire for election, Mary the Tory passion for legitimacy. But the Tory Party suffered severely from the Bill of Rights. A section on the right broke off definitely, and, turning an indignant back on the betrayers of Divine rights and legitimacy, sat down for sixty years to wage a futile and implacable war on succeeding *régimes*. The bulk of the Party, imbued with a greater sense of reality or a more practical opportunism, set their faces towards the brief era of splendour awaiting them in the dawn of the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER V

THE COALITION GOVERNMENT OF WILLIAM III

The idea that the accession of William III was to usher in a period of Whig and Parliamentary domination over the throne was utterly falsified by the event. William was a Stuart on one side, and a Stadtholder, who had overthrown and dominated the Republicans in Holland, on the other. He was, in addition, well aware that Tory support alone had secured his bloodless accession to the throne. The Whigs of after years, dwelling on the memory of the helplessness of the early Hanoverians, consecrated him as a saint in the succession of royal impotence. As a matter of fact he exercised greater power than any sovereign since Elizabeth. William was in temperament rather more a Tory than he was a Whig.

The politics of the reign of William can be divided roughly into three periods: the first, in which he governed with a Ministry more or less equally divided between the two sides; the second, in which he entrusted entire control to the Whig Party; the third, in which he attempted to rule with the same Whig Junto which had in the meantime lost its majority in the House of Commons.

But before proceeding to describe these phases it is necessary to discuss a growing force of division in the nation—the opposition between the town and the country. It has been said that in the civil wars there is no marked sign that this difference affected the choice of sides. The inclination of the few great towns such as London and Bristol was to be for the Parliament; the small boroughs were erratic in their choice; the counties were also divided. But after the Restoration a fissiparous tendency grows until it culminates in the great political and economic splits of 1832 and 1845. What was the small borough, denounced and used by both parties? It was a tiny town which sought the protection of the King against the tyranny or encroachment of the neighbouring baron or abbot. It obtained protection from villeinage or feudal dues in the form of a Royal Charter. It was therefore directly attached to the King and stood outside the ordinary feudal system. In the Middle Ages such a system afforded a valuable check on the Baronage, and possibly we have here the origin of the battle between town and country. The Edwards in particular created these boroughs freely, both for economic and political purposes. The local officers were given the privilege of sending representatives to Parliament. The Tudors when they wished to take the opinion of the country at rare intervals thought that this kind of representation was valuable and accurate, and they were not particularly concerned as to the precise numbers of the local population. In any case a new borough vote was in the first instance a vote for the Executive Government. The origin of the borough vote is, therefore, Royalist, just as the country vote began by representing in the main the views of the great landowners who desired, whether in defiance or support, to be independent of the Crown. But when the Wars of the Roses and the artillery of Edward IV and of the Tudors broke the Baronage, a slow *chassé* begins across the corners of history. The Baronage is no longer feared, and in proportion the Crown ceases to be revered as a protector. The skilled craftsman in the town is reinforced by all the outlying Radicals or by the victims who have fled there for protection in the course of years. On the other hand, for reasons which have already been explained, the country elements, outside the higher nobility, rallied to the Stuarts. The Commonwealth gave an immense stimulus to both tendencies. Praise-God Barebones as a retired sergeant practised his local industry in the borough and preached at night in his little bethel to that particular sect with whom he agreed or which agreed with him. Except in localised areas, such as the eastern counties or Yorkshire, he eschewed the countryside. The squire, on the other hand, no longer competed with, or feared, the Crown, and became in addition, by the mere force of reaction, the more violently opposed to the views of the Republican saints. But there was a third element which ultimately affected the politics of many boroughs, even so early as the reign of James II and of William III. The tradition of the great feudal tenants-in-chief to hate the Crown, as a rival coercive force protecting the poor, survived even the vast proscriptions of Catholic Church property which ensured the finality of the Reformation. This tradition was the beginning of Whiggery. Therefore in all parts of the country were found great nobles who were out of political sympathy with the Crown and the smaller local magnates, had great difficulty in getting their tenants to vote straight against the Tories, and sought in exchange to extend their powers in another direction.[1] The inhabitants of the boroughs had ceased to hate because they had ceased to fear them, and a liberal outpouring of Whig county cash stimulated an innate Radicalism. The great Whigs have begun to corrupt the small towns. In the period we have reached the power of the Crown to make or unmake charters and officers who can return Members to Parliament is met and checked in many localities by this new influence, which in the eighteenth century is to produce the rotten borough. It is difficult to bribe a whole countryside, it is easy to "conciliate" a magnified village. So when the first Reform Bill is introduced into the Commons in 1692 it drops dead. The Tories ignore it out of sheer Conservative indifferentism, and because they remember the Royalist traditions of the small towns which would fall under the sickle. The Whigs are opposed to it because it would transfer to the counties they are losing the voting power of a force which they have already marked for their own. The green tree of the seventeenth century was preserved dry for the axe of Walpole. Thus corruption and Puritanism have already met together, Whiggism and Radicalism have kissed each other.

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[1] It is very curious to see this political antagonism in its last phase in the novels of Trollope, where the great local figure like the Duke of Omnium is always a Whig, drawing his wealth largely from non-agricultural sources, and disliked by the squires and parsons of the county.

It will be seen from this brief summary that with certain salient exceptions the town is, by the time of William III, beginning to come into direct political opposition with the country. The term " Country Party " was adopted by the Opposition to the Tories in the time of Charles II, but only in the sense of being opposed to the Court. Indeed even in that day the Whigs had little right to employ it in any other sense. The term is used again in the modern sense by the Opposition to the Whigs in William's Third Parliament, and in his reign begins the definite and open clash between the counties and the moneyed interests of the towns.

William III regarded the actions of English and Scotch politicians much as one might watch the antics of trained frogs and mice. If the animals went through their performance satisfactorily, so much the better; if they reverted to type, it was very irritating, but not a thing to stir one to anger. Here and there he made an apparent exception in liking or respecting a man for his personal qualities: Marlborough for his military genius; Nottingham for his ostentatious honesty; Danby because he was a straight Party man who could whip a house; Godolphin because he was a good Treasury clerk, or Montague because he could find him money. But it was the quality he liked, not the man. His warm but limited affections, all the stronger for being compressed, were only poured out to his wife, to Portland or to Heinsius, and the early friends of his adversity. On this count there is no occasion for blame. Nearly all great men are compelled by the force of circumstances to reserve the energies of affection for a few intimates. Nothing so much saps character as a general capacity for friendship: genius loses itself in the quicksands and gives to a hundred people what should be a clear, straight current running to a definite goal.

The early Government of William was exactly like that of his predecessors: it was a personal Government having no precise relation to the state of parties in the Lords and Commons and drawing its personnel indifferently from both sides. The power of Parliament was now rapidly approaching a point where such a system must become impossible, and the plan was not satisfactory to either Party or to the needs of good administration. The Commons were incredibly factious: the House of Lords jealous of its rights; while the Crown had not the slightest intention of being made a puppet of the majority. The result was that the three Estates were in perpetual conflict, and, absurdly enough, a Parliamentary leader who joined the Administration was considered to have become a "courtier" and to have betrayed his party. The old clamour about "place-men" was renewed, and in this matter the Tories were even more foolish than their opponents. Seymour, the only capable man the Party possessed in the Commons, was in effect deprived of the leadership for the crime of accepting office at a later date. He was a loss that could be ill afforded. Toryism indeed possessed among the leaders of the State brains quite as brilliant as could be discovered on the other side, but these, either by birth or choice had passed into the Lords. That House was between 1660 and 1714, if we except the old Magnum Concilium of the Middle Ages, at the very zenith of its power. Promotion to it was therefore not regarded as a form of embalmment in a gilded sarcophagus, and the rising Parliamentarian passed with incredible rapidity into a Chamber where the debates were more brilliant than across the way and where tenure of office was not dependent on the risk and expense of election. Danby, Rochester, Nottingham, Godolphin, were the real leaders of the Party, while Marlborough and Halifax might be counted on for general support.[1] But this galaxy of Party talent in the Lords was ill reflected in the House of Commons. When a blight had been put upon the influence of Seymour, the powerful Tory minority which the convention of 1689 had returned to the Lower House was left absolutely leaderless, save for the honest incapacity of Sir John Lowther, who was himself suspect as a member of the Government, and suffered in consequence perfectly needless humiliations and defeats. Under these circumstances there occurred a phenomenon which has no counterpart in Parliamentary history, though the career of the Fourth Party affords some faint parallel. A knot of dissident Whigs, too extreme for their own extremists, took charge of an Opposition to which in every principle they were diametrically opposed. But it is true in politics that absolute extremes often meet and that the last word in Conservatism is often indistinguishable from the very highest and driest form of Liberalism or Labour, so that a Lord Lansdowne and a Ramsay Macdonald may be found sharing identical views on questions of foreign policy. Such at any rate was the origin of the rise of Harley to the leadership of the Tory Party. Springing from the extreme Puritan country gentry of Worcestershire, he went through the usual process, that is to say, that the adopted leader was gradually converted by the led. In this unsatisfactory House of Commons the Tories exhibited folly and the Whigs vice. No Whig historian has attempted to defend the venom with which the majority tried to avoid the Bill of Indemnity and to organise a counter-massacre even of those opponents by whose aid their cause had triumphed, or the fury with which they welcomed the "cold magnanimity" of a sovereign whom they had expected to be at once their butcher and their tame man. William had been through all this bullying as a youth with the States General, and was no more prepared to be a nonentity as King than to pose as a cipher as Stadtholder. Probably he would not have worried much if Wharton, the Whig Manager, had shared the fate of the De Witts.

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[1] Danby became Marquis of Carmarthen after the coronation, and Lord President, or in effect Prime Minister, in William's first Administration. Nottingham became Secretary of State.

Of far greater interest to the Tory mind is the attempt of Nottingham in 1689 to combine toleration of worship for the Dissenters with a Comprehension Bill—the last attempt to reunite the dissidents of the Tudor period with the worship of the Establishment. Nottingham was extremely respected and extraordinarily unpopular in his life, and both feelings have pursued him beyond the grave. He appears to have united the spiritual views of the High Church with the mental outlook of the Low Church—a terrible combination. The High Churchman may be exact in matters spiritual, but he is generally a gentleman and a man of the world in matters temporal. What he demands for God he is prepared to remit unto Cæsar. The Low Churchman, on the other hand, makes up for his lack of zeal about faith by his insistence on works or at least an appearance of them. In this kind of battle between bigotry and cant, or of real spiritual fervour and moral respectability, Nottingham seems to have got the worst of both worlds, and history has treated him accordingly.

It is difficult to be fair to such an unattractive character, but justice demands some impartiality. In engineering the deal by which the Toleration Bill was to secure Nonconformists from the consequences of the Elizabethan statutes, as a price for promoting the Union of Protestant bodies and saving the Test Act, Nottingham exhibited real statesmanship. So great was the weight he carried in High Church circles that he would probably have succeeded in carrying the deal through if the Nonconformists themselves had not broken faith. They desired and obtained Toleration: they were not in the least certain that they desired comprehension. The High Churchmen at any rate saved the Test Act, so that no one had any great reason to complain. These schemes for the reunion of sundered faiths always seem to have the same fate awaiting them.[1] At one moment it is the reunion of the English Church with Rome, at another a joint confederation of Protestant bodies, or a combination of the Greek and Anglican communities on the basis of the doctrines of the third century. But it appears to be a melancholy truth that while heresy is easy, reunion is impossible. In this case, however, the political leaders of the Tory Party made a real offer to the Nonconformists and carried out their share of the bargain. Henceforward it was possible for the dissidents to worship God after their own fashion so long as they would take the oath of allegiance. Neither Nottingham, Danby nor Seymour can be blamed if the rest of the agreement fell through, and if a reference of the subsequent proceedings to Convocation sealed the fate of this wide scheme of compromise. Nottingham's intentions were creditable, but it is probable that his failure was a blessing in disguise. Great changes were threatened to the liturgy of the Church, and a compromise of this kind was more likely to ruin the affection for the Establishment among its friends than to conciliate its included opponents.[2] Such a compromise is rarely effective. Toryism may have suffered from the failure of a Comprehension Bill which would have disarmed the Opposition, though it is equally arguable that a Church half full of Presbyterians and Low Churchmen would have deprived it of the driving force which made it on the whole the most powerful and popular party up to the fatal year 1714. On the whole the Church gained by the concentration of its forces, and for the next twenty years the Tory Party was the Church, and the Church the Tory Party.

The next measure of importance was proposed by the Whigs as represented by Sacheverell. It was, in effect, the converse of the proposal put forward by Danby in 1675 to exclude all but Tories from office and Parliament. The boroughs were to be made Whig by legal enactment. The boroughs had been created partially as a means of giving the Crown a strong backing in Parliament, and the influence of the King through the charters could be exercised effectively on bodies elected through a narrow municipal franchise. It has been pointed out at the beginning of this chapter that in the seventeenth century this influence was battling continually with the counter forces of the Whigs and Independents. As one move in this perpetual game the Tory majorities in many boroughs which resulted from the great reaction from the Exclusion Bill had been persuaded to hand over their electoral charters and in effect to permit the Crown to nominate their members of Parliament. In the winter of 1689–1690 a Bill was brought in proposing, rightly enough, to restore these forfeited franchises. But the delights of Christmas at home had proved too much for the country squires, and the Tory attendance was miserably small. Instantly the Whig extremists saw an opportunity for a snap division. An amendment was moved declaring that "every municipal functionary who had in any manner been a party to the surrendering of the franchises of a borough should be incapable for seven years of holding office in that borough." Further pains and penalties were added to a measure which would have made practically every borough in England Whig for a generation. The amendment was carried, but the moderate Whigs revolted from the even more monstrous proposal to rush the Bill straight through all its stages before the absentees could arrive. There was a tremendous Tory whip up, and the newcomers, with the assistance of Whigs who did not wish to launch a feud of Montague and Capulet in every English borough, succeeded in defeating the proposal. Enough has been said on the measure of Danby to show the absolute immorality of an attempt by a temporary majority to entrench itself permanently in power by legal enactment.

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[1] It will be remembered that a similar attempt was made by the Convention, largely consisting of Presbyterians, which recalled Charles II, but that it broke down immediately the Tory majority was returned to Parliament at the General Election.

[2] The Liturgy is the Church of England. If that Church ever breaks up it will be on an attempt to alter the Liturgy, following on the fatal act which has removed the Church of England from all but the nominal control of Parliament.

It is possible in any case that the Lords would have intervened, but so bad were the relations between the two Houses, and so uncertain the actions of the Lords themselves in this epoch, that no one could foretell such intervention, or the upshot of it if it took place. The majorities in the Lords were even more fluctuating than in the Commons, where the Whigs had better brains and a marked superiority in numbers.

In the Upper House Whig and Tory votes succeeded each other with startling rapidity, and the divisions were always very close. There was obviously present a balancing force of independent peers with no fixed party attachments who were able to turn the scale; and in no case are the bonds of party discipline so strict in the Lords as in the Commons. Marlborough, for instance, called himself a Tory, but his voting was quite erratic. It is clear that in the last forty years of this century speeches in the Upper Chamber often changed the issue of debate.

It does not concern us to contemplate the incredible malevolence and factiousness of the Whig majority during the opening months of William's reign. Their conduct made them odious both to their King and their countrymen: finally, the former came to the conclusion that he could put an end to it by referring them to the latter. Acting probably on the advice of Danby, whose electoral judgment was usually sound, in 1690 he dissolved Parliament amid the rancorous but silent dismay of the majority.

William III had no objection to the Tory Party so long as it would support his foreign policy, and this up to 1690 it had done, even though under its acquiescence there lay a silent misgiving. It would appear that on the whole he got on better with the Tory statesmen than with their opponents. The King was a very practical man, only caring about bending materials to definite ends, and the first-class Tory mind is very practical too. The Whig Junto, on the other hand, always seemed to imagine that the Deliverer had crossed the sea to establish certain fixed principles of Government conceived by them, which was far from being the case. No man was less likely to agree with the theory of a Venetian constitution under which the head of the State is a harmless cipher. And the persecuting spirit always revolted him. He had been unable to get his Bill of Indemnity, to which his honour was pledged, through the House of Commons, and had been compelled to produce a threat of resignation to restore to his Ministers any sense of proportion or sanity. He was therefore not disinclined to give the Whigs a lesson and the Tories a chance. Danby drew up for him in secret the address in which he prorogued Parliament, and the King, in a letter to Portland, showed that even his cold temper did not prevent him gloating over the discomfiture of the obstructionists. His account might be summed up in the description given by Lord Randolph Churchill of the Cabinet's reception of his Budget: "They said nothing, but you should have seen their faces."

The election of 1690 was fiercely contested on both sides, but the Tories obtained a clear majority. The Party had just come out of a crisis in which it had been compelled to abandon the Divine Right of Kings, one of its principal doctrines, and was suffering in consequence the desertion of some of its followers. According to all reasonable expectation a long period of weakness and disorganisation should have followed. The fact of the victory is therefore remarkable, but the explanation is a simple one. From the Restoration to the Revolution the Stuarts with brief intervals had been carrying a pro-French policy and the Romish religion on their backs, and the Tory Party had been trying to carry the Stuarts. So, though the bulk of popular sentiment had in those thirty years been undoubtedly on the Tory side, its full operation had been hindered by this perpetual cross-current checking the swing of opinion and confusing the Party counsels. Now this disturbing factor had suddenly vanished into mist. Any man could vote Tory, without the appalling thought that he might be plumping for Papacy, or tyranny, or the King of France. This was the fact that more than made up for the shock of dynastic change and the abstention of the Non-jurors and Jacobites. It certainly could not be said that the result was due to the influence of able leadership. The Whig Party managers like Wharton were amazingly clever and assiduous, while outside the ranks of the peers the Party was leaderless but for Seymour. This fact became only too fatally apparent when the majority got back to Westminster, and discovered itself like some gigantic whale in eminent peril of a swordfish. The process of deliquescence indeed went on with amazing rapidity until a purely Whig Ministry was controlling a House of Commons elected in the opposite interest. The country was Tory but the brains were Whig—a state of affairs only too frequent in the long course of political history. The very circumstances which gave Toryism its immense power, popularity and cohesion even under disaster, made the field from which it could draw its leadership limited. If it could throw up from the ranks of the squirearchy a man of genius or even of ability, all was well : if it could not there was little hope of recruiting a leader from outside.[1] Even if such an evangelist could be found, would he be a prophet in the Tory Israel?

The results of the elections were to some extent reflected in the Government by an increase in the Tory representation. Danby's authority was greatly increased and both Seymour and Lowther were promoted. But in effect Danby had to try to lead the Commons from his seat in the Lords, using Lowther as a feeble instrument in place of the able but discredited Seymour. Faced with this debating weakness on his front bench, the Lord President did not scruple to continue the practice introduced by Clifford years before, and to bribe members of Parliament on an extended scale. The only other help came from Harley and his dissident group now moving from left to right across the Parliamentary field.

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[1] The British nation found itself in much the same dilemma during the German War. Only a small knot of regular officers were considered eligible for the highest commands, and it was very improbable that such a small circle, itself selected from limited material, would produce a military genius.

The first period of Williamite politics in which the King endeavours to govern by a mixed Administration is now reaching a close, in which Toryism is cheated of its apparent electoral triumph by the incompetence of its leadership in the Commons. From the point of view of this narrative it would be impertinent to relate the various squabbles between the Court and the Commons, and the Commons and the Lords, which fill the opening years of this Parliament. The Abjuration Bill, by which men could be compelled not merely to take the oath of allegiance but to abjure in formal terms James's right to the crown, was an ingenious move of the Whigs to widen the breach between Tories and Jacobites and to strengthen the latter at the expense of the former, but it failed. William, strengthened by the Tory victory, was able to make an instant counter-move to the persecutors and pass an Act of Grace.

Only two measures of this concluding period are of importance to the subject of this essay—the Place Bill and the Triennial Bill. Their conjunction is interesting because the two parties are found precisely in the reverse positions which they might be expected to occupy. Toryism, like the Crown in the Middle Ages, depended on the popular force in the country; and a Redistribution Bill in the seventeenth century would have given it an immense accession of strength. Any measure, therefore, which led to frequent General Elections was in its interest. The Whig attitude, on the contrary, was based on the tradition which found previous expression in the Long Parliament, and subsequently in the Parliaments of the eighteenth century. The House of Commons was to that Party a thing apart from the electorate, something so busy fighting the King that it had no time to bother about the people. The House would be justified in practising the most absolute method of tyranny so long as all was performed in due accordance with the procedure of Parliament. But Whig antipathy to the Crown, its prerogative, and its nominees was sincere and complete. Toryism, on the other hand, had in its very essence a tenderness for the power of the Crown. In the natural course of events, then, it might have been expected that the Tories would have been for a Bill forcing an appeal to the country every three years and the Whigs against it, and that the Whigs would have favoured a proposal to exclude place-men from Parliament, while the Tories would have regarded the plan with doubt or even with aversion. Precisely the opposite proved the case. The Tories wanted the Place Bill and the Whigs Triennial Parliaments. The truth of the matter is that parties often do not understand their own principles and are incapable of grasping their own interests. And this shortsightedness is rampant in all matters of constitutional change. Men wish to alter the rules of the game for some immediate purpose, and cannot see that what appears to be an overshadowing interest is merely a leaf dancing in the wind. The Whigs had returned smarting from a crushing defeat inflicted on them by the power of the Crown to choose the moment of a dissolution: they wished to limit the prerogative by fixing definite dates. The Tories, on the other hand, were obsessed with the idea that the Dutchmen occupied all the high places in the Government, that courtiers, scoundrels, and venal lawyers walked off with the remainder, and that no honest country gentleman need apply for any office or emolument. One might at least punish the rascals by excluding them from the Commons and thus deprive them of their votes—one of the articles they had to sell. There is a certain element of truth in both these views, but it is the truth of the mirage, not of the reality.

The Place Bill was carried through the Commons in the winter of 1692, and lost in the Lords by three votes on a division which witnessed a great deal of cross voting. It is curious to reflect that those three votes perhaps prevented the British Constitution developing in the direction of the United States Constitution, which excludes the Executive from Congress. But one may well believe that the plan was so opposed to the political genius of the race that it would have been abandoned after a brief trial. The Triennial Bill, on the contrary, went forward a few days later because it was the result of a triangular duel. The people, already beginning to stir into active resentment of the arbitrary temper of an unrepresentative Parliament, thought it would dish the Commons, and the Commons felt sure that it would dish the King. The Bill was too popular to be resisted by either Party, though the Tories Seymour and Finch put up a stout battle against it in the Commons. Danby was, as usual, wiser: he saw that the Bill told for, not against, the Tory interest, and he incurred the bitter displeasure of William by refusing to oppose it. The Bill went through easily, but the King, strong in his recent Irish victories and in the indispensable nature of his services, took the view that he would not touch with the sceptre a measure which infringed the prerogative. The Bill, therefore, for the moment dropped dead.

The real remedy for the political coils of the time was, as Macaulay has pointed out with irresistible force, a Redistribution and Reform Bill which would have brought the growing power of the Commons under the control of public opinion. Such a measure was proposed in 1692, but failed to secure any substantive support for reasons which have been explained in a previous chapter. It is difficult to speak with patience of the short-sighted folly of the Tory Party in dealing with this problem. By declining a Reform Bill which would have given it the popular backing in the constituencies which belonged to it of right, it prepared for itself the long domination by which the Whig corruption of the boroughs held it in impotence and subservience for the greater part of the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER VI

TORYISM AND FOREIGN WARS

By its refusal of the Reform Bill of 1692 Toryism threw away for the first but by no means the last time the decisive trick in the political rubber. It had refused the conditions of absolute predominance in the constituencies, and it was unable to produce a sufficiency of intellect in the Commons even to justify the numerical superiority which the nation still continued to give it. The Tory Party was at once, and at the same time, bankrupt both in strategy and tactics, though yet possessed of overwhelming potential powers.

It was at this point in the year 1693 that Sunderland reappeared on the scene with a proposal which was destined to mark an epoch in our political history. That great man was neither a Whig nor a Tory, but an adviser of kings, whose business it was to give his master good advice if he could and bad advice if he had to.[1] Something in his mentality, perhaps its pure concentration on efficiency in his professional work, appealed to William's practical mind. The King was not interested in Sunderland's morals: he was interested in his views. The statesman's remedy for the ceaseless bickerings which had so far marked the reign was to form a regular party administration representing the majority in the Commons. To the modern age such advice seems obvious: to contemporaries it appeared revolutionary. It was, in fact, a far more serious infringement of the prerogative than any other measure of the period, for it limited the inherent right of the Crown to choose its own servants, and we shall see some of the after consequences which embarrassed William five years later. Sunderland's view was that the Whigs were the best instruments for the purpose: their ability had by a process of attrition secured them equality of numbers in what was originally a Tory House; that ability ensured good administration and good party management; they were sound on the war, and the Tories were not. There can be no doubt that Sunderland was right on his facts, and the event proved him so: that is to say, his counsel secured for the moment a compact and efficient War Ministry. But William was very reluctant to yield to his logic. Had he realised the full extent of the rights he was surrendering he would probably have rejected the whole plan. Nor would he have agreed with Sunderland merely because the Tory leaders in the Commons were obviously incompetent. It was the Tory attitude towards foreign policy which decided his mind.

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[1] The best attempt to delineate Sunderland's character is contained in Miss Marjorie Bowen's brilliant series of historical novels dealing with the career of William of Orange; cf. *The Defender of the Faith*, etc., etc.

It has been pointed out that Toryism ever since the days of Cromwell had been opposed to a policy of military adventure on the Continent except as a dire necessity of self-defence. When it accepted William it also accepted the war in Flanders as a necessary part of the bargain. But it was growing tired of the agreement and of the failure of William to secure any marked military success. Its instincts, long repressed, were rushing back in full flood, and the Party foreign policy was reverting to type. There was, therefore, from the point of view of the King, a real danger that if he selected the Tories as his agents he might not only be defeated in the Commons but find his own Ministers in flat rebellion against his policy.

Therefore he chose the Whigs. In this manner was born the Whig Junto—the first organised Cabinet to hold office in Great Britain, though even so it originally contained several Tory names. We have to wait nearly twenty years for its Tory equivalent.

With this Administration we are only concerned from the obverse side of the shield. While in purely political matters at home it showed little improvement on its predecessors, it was eminently successful in the two main things which the King cared about—it held the national nose steadily to the war grindstone, and it produced with conspicuous success the money required for successive campaigns.

The attempts to pass the Place Bill failed completely after repeated efforts—very much to the advantage of the nation. In November 1693 Seymour, by a brilliant piece of Parliamentary tactics, had defeated the Triennial Bill which the King had vetoed in the previous spring, but none the less the measure was too popular to be checked indefinitely, and received the royal assent in the following year. The year 1696 was decided on for the next necessary General Election, though the King could, of course, dissolve Parliament in the interval.

The blot on the record of the Junto Ministry was the narrow and persecuting spirit of its leading members. It was in that year (1696) that the Whigs distinguished themselves by the judicial murder of Sir John Fenwick, who was guilty of refusing to take part in a plot to assassinate his sovereign, but did not betray his informants. Since it was impossible to obtain conviction in law he was executed by attainder to satiate the blood lust of the majority. Although Fenwick was a Jacobite and not a Tory, the flagrant illegality of the whole proceeding infuriated the constitutional minority, who considered, not without reason, that the tyranny of a Whig Parliament differed in few respects from that of James II.

It was the financial policy of Montague as Chancellor of the Exchequer which preserved the Ministry from the reaction against its own violence, and laid the foundations of our future fiscal policy. Montague undoubtedly possessed all the attributes of financial genius, and secured a corresponding unpopularity following in the wake of his success. The brilliance of his rhetoric only heightened the annoyance caused by his triumph, and he suffered from the suspicion which clings to men who are too able to be believed. From the Tory point of view the interest of Montague's finance is in the founding of the Bank of England. The whole proceeding was regarded by the majority of the Tory Party as a form of trafficking with the powers of evil. The age-long conflict between the merchant and the squire, between town and country, between the product of exchange and the product of the soil, blazed suddenly into a white heat. The division between town and country which so far had been only hinted at became explicit. But in the last decades of the seventeenth century it was the country which stood for democracy and the township which represented privilege. The commercial interest was perfectly right but profoundly anti-democratic. The most moderate Reform Bill would have destroyed its influence in a day. The conflict between commercialism and the Tory Party thus became acute.

Montague, perhaps the ablest and certainly the most reckless of all our Chancellors of the Exchequer, was devoting his brilliant mind to the financing of the war and to building a foundation for the Orange *régime* on the self-interest of the moneyed classes. In the 1690's the most intelligent men hoarded their savings because there was no safe investment for them. The Bank of England,[1] founded by Montague in 1694, provided the security of the State at a reasonable rate of interest. Instantly the stockings and the strong boxes poured out their contents, while the Government gained a host of adherents among investors who knew that the first act of a restored James II would be to repudiate the liability for money lent to William. Both from the financial and political standpoints the Tories viewed this development with great uneasiness. They saw that the Whigs were strengthening their hold on the bankers and the boroughs : they themselves were, through the Land Tax, the main taxpayers of the nation. They saw that the money raised was being devoted to a foreign war, and they knew that, in effect, their taxes were the security out of which the new debt must be paid. They also perceived that the mere creation of a National Debt bound up the interests of the fund-holders with the existing Whig *régime.* Under these circumstances they accepted the challenge issued by Montague and rashly embarked on a conflict with the moneyed interests which lasted in one form or another almost without intermission into the middle of the nineteenth century. They regarded the new Bank as a method of " profiteering " out of a war, and though, under the stress of the Napoleonic conflict, the moneyed and propertied classes were to draw together, a rankling sense of divergence remained always latent and broke out in 1832 and 1846.

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[1] The Bank of England served a splendid end in its time, but it is a question whether in modern days its privileged monopoly has not outlived its purpose.

The Administration of the Junto was already beginning to justify itself by success when a victory abroad gave it a further access of prestige. The capture of Namur in 1695 immensely increased the popularity of the War, the King, and the Government. William therefore on returning to England in October decided on a prompt election rather than wait for a possible change of feeling in the following year when the Triennial Bill dictated a dissolution as a necessity. In the election of November 1695 the bulk of the Tory Party stood, as usual, firm in the faith, but the doubtful constituencies rejected the Opposition candidates. London and Westminster, which had returned Tories in 1690, sent back Whig members to Parliament in 1695. The result sustained Ministers in power and confirmed the judgment of Sunderland, who was, however, treated with the basest ingratitude by the men whose fortunes he had made. William accentuated the victory by a kind of triumphal procession round the provinces. He had now passed in the public estimation definitely to the Whig side, and could feel certain that for the next few years his European campaign of trench warfare would be supported by the politicians and financiers of Great Britain against a France now reaching the verge of economic exhaustion.

So it proved: and the Peace of Ryswick in 1697 marked the end of the policy of French aggression. None the less the general effect of these four years was to accentuate the estrangement of the Tory Party from the prosecution of the European war. The death of Mary in the last month of 1694 had removed from William the hereditary prop to his throne, and the eyes of all but the extreme legitimists turned to Anne as the successor. The Tories had been one by one, and reluctantly and of necessity, ejected from office. William explained to Nottingham with his usual real courtesy that he wanted to keep him but could not: Nottingham took his dismissal quietly, and becomes henceforward a loose force in politics. The case of Danby proved more difficult. The Lord President had, up till 1693, been in effect Prime Minister. He had secured that William should succeed without bloodshed: he had led the Tory Party for four difficult years and had been the King's right-hand man. An accident just before the General Election got rid of this growing embarrassment. Danby, whom royal gratitude had now made Duke of Leeds, was accused on somewhat flimsy evidence of having been bribed by the East India Company. There is no doubt that his own candid and cynical explanation in the House of Lords, "that he had obliged a friend," defines the extent of his culpability. In other words, he had let the East India Company think that they were putting money in the pocket of the Prime Minister and so influencing his action, when in reality they were paying it to an agent who had not the slightest control over public policy. The charge broke down, but the accusation was sufficient to send Danby first into an impotent retention of office, and then into final retirement.

So ended the career of the first and, with the exception of Bolingbroke and Disraeli, perhaps the greatest of the Tory leaders. He shared in every way the sentiments and the attributes of his supporters: the attributes because he was gifted not with genius but with a kind of superb commonsense; the sentiments because he stood for the Church consistently, for the old Crown so long as it was possible, and for the new Crown when it became inevitable, and, avoiding the fatal chasm of Jacobite reaction, guided his Party securely over the gulf which separated the old from the new. He was ruined once on the false accusation that he had sold himself to France, but he survived the lie and returned to the height of power, and in his old age he was sacrificed to political expediency on a doubtful charge. But it is pleasant to reflect that his dukedom and his estates, earned by good service to his country, have descended intact from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. These dismissals from office and William's change of attitude intensified all the old Tory doubts about his foreign policy, and right up to the Peace of Utrecht the Tory mind stirs uneasily as long as there is war on the Continent.

The question of the expediency of English intervention in Europe is clearly one on which any rational man must have the greatest doubt. The wars for the French Crown were an unmitigated disaster, and, from the English point of view, the only satisfactory thing about them was their lack of that success which would have transformed England into a mere province of a dual Empire. This she had been under the Angevin kings, and there was no need to repeat the experiment. At the time of the Armada no such question arose: we were clearly fighting for our lives on our own natural element, and, as a consequence, the whole nation, still largely Catholic, rose as one man. At a later date Tory sentiment—swayed by the great Whig-Conservative Burke—suddenly veered round on the whole question in the enthusiasm of a campaign against the doctrines and the murders of the French Revolution. This shifting of the Party helm exercised a permanent influence on its course, and in the twentieth century it was an extreme wing of the Tory Party which was always asking us to be ready to throw our army corps into Flanders. The Liberals, on the other hand, tacked just as violently about. While the old Whigs stood in 1794 for Pitt and the armed protection of the British constitution, a minority under the powerful influence of Fox had invented or accepted cosmopolitanism, and henceforward the left of the Liberal Party stood committed to the opinion that it was wicked to fight even for one's existence. It followed that to campaign in Europe must be a far more heinous act of immorality, though it must be added that this theoretical view no more prevented the Liberals of 1914 from standing in the forefront of the battle than the doctrine of Divine Right prevented the Tories from supporting William III. The truth of the matter is, that England can never look on with indifference while a single Power makes itself master of Europe: it is too obvious that she would be the next victim of a dominance whose material resources would enable it to overbuild her at sea, and whose man-power could then overwhelm her on land. When such a vital threat arises, as in the case of Philip or Napoleon or Wilhelm II, the whole nation moves instinctively and with irresistible force. But in the case of Louis XIV the proof was by no means clear. The French King had been guilty of many cruel and arrogant acts, but he was a born *poseur*, who preferred the reputation of a conqueror to the reality of conquest. And his serious policy was simply to extend the land frontiers of France and to make the small frontier States his vassals. It was this which brought him into conflict with the Dutch and so ultimately with the English. With all this England was very little concerned. No doubt beyond those hard facts there flitted the dream of uniting the French and Spanish Crowns and aspiring to a universal dominion of Europe and America; but the idea was never at the best more than a dream, and would have broken down hopelessly in reality. Spain herself could give no cohesive action to her vast and scattered dominions. Was it in the least probable that a new and alien Crown could succeed where Spain had failed? As to the invasion of England, Louis only once attempted it seriously, and the end was the blazing wreck of the French ships at La Hogue in 1692, which taught the Tories better than a hundred sermons could do to put their trust in the Fleet.[1] A heavy mist of uncertainty, therefore, shrouded the Tory mind in all matters of foreign policy. For a year Louis might seem really dangerous and the Party would rally to the war: then again it would sicken of a slaughter by which its sons seemed devoted to death in the interests of the Emperor or for the safety of the Dutch. William, of course, knew no doubts: he was the head of one of the Border States which the French King had determined to subdue. His interest was as real and as vital as ours would have been if the French had made Kent and Sussex their provinces and the fortified places lay along the ramp of the Surrey downs. But this division of interest and opinion between the insular and the European standpoints tended to bring the Tories and the King into a conflict of opinion which was discreditable to neither side. An agreement with the Crown was essential to the vitality of Tory policy, but there were many moments when the price of such an agreement seemed to be stated too high in the terms of English blood. The Peace of Ryswick in 1697 was therefore hailed with undisguised relief by the popular or Tory Party in the country. The Peace had an immediate effect on the two parties and their relations with the Crown. It was seen at once that the cohesion and prestige of the ministerial side depended on the continuance of the war. The Whig majority began to go to pieces, while the Tories, as the advocates of peace, began to assume frequent control of a House in which they had been until now in a minority.

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[1] The landing or attempted landings in Scotland are on too small a scale or too half-hearted to count.

Yet at the same time the changed circumstances did not bring them, as might have been expected, once more into cordial relations with the Crown, because the Party and William III did not view the peace in the same light. To the King it was nothing but an armed truce—useful to both sides, like the Peace of Amiens in 1802, to recuperate for the probable renewal of the struggle. To the Tories it was a permanent and satisfactory settlement to a strife they loathed. Nor was it easy for William, as a diplomatist, to announce to the whole world how thin he felt the crust of the agreement with France to be. The Tories thus turned joyously to the breaking up of a magnificently trained Anglo-German-Dutch army of 87,000 men, and the remonstrances of the King and the Junto Ministers fell on deaf ears.

Whatever may be thought of the wisdom of the Party attitude towards standing armies, it was for a hundred years after 1660 perfectly self-consistent and perfectly intelligible in the light of the causes which produced it. It was the result of a clear conception of what both English foreign policy and English national life should be, and of a bitter experience of the consequences of a different foreign policy and of an Administration hostile to that ideal of England. In the standing army the Tory Party had seen nothing but the instrument for Cromwell's policy of blustering abroad and of despotism at home. The Protector had used the redcoats to make himself the leader of Protestant Europe and to put down with pitiless severity all risings against his Government and in favour of the institutions the Tory Party loved. The army had therefore got itself fixed in the Tory mind as the necessary connecting link between the twin policies of foreign adventure and despotic power—both of which they hated. With a local militia and a strong fleet the Executive could neither fight in Europe nor hold down the counties of England: a fleet could not march to Mons or Namur, nor invade Worcestershire, but a standing army could do both.

It is not probable that the Tory members really believed that William could make use of the army to establish a despotism, though the suggestion might be a good electioneering cry to catch the extreme Whig vote. None the less they could not but remember that, leaving Cromwell aside, there had been in the last sixty years two attempts by the Crown to establish an absolute monarchy of the French type by means of regular troops. The first had been the plan of Strafford, which their Royalist ancestors had refused to support; the second had been the effort of James II, against which they themselves had risen. In effect Toryism leant instinctively towards the conception of the popular mediæval monarchy dependent on the people, not on guards, both for keeping order and for making war. They inclined to the militia as the nearest contemporary military equivalent for the old feudal levy.

Possibly, again, a purely legitimist Stuart sovereign might have appealed with greater success for the maintenance of the army, but then such a sovereign would not have asked for it for the purpose of a Protestant crusade in Europe. In the long run it is the Tory principle of non-interference abroad which is the root cause of their attitude after the peace of Ryswick. The militia was to be encouraged, and the navy kept up at the large peace establishment of 10,000. But the standing army in the main and the Dutch troops root and branch were to go. Here again the intense nationalism and parochialism of the Party made the continued upkeep of foreign troops a terrible rock of offence. England would be happy again if the foreigners were extruded, the slaughter of Englishmen in Flanders and the heavy Land Tax ceased to be a corollary of our foreign policy, if the country depended for defence on the Fleet, and the Crown on the popular militia for safety. There is nothing either illogical or ignoble in such a group of beliefs. The worst that can be said of a proposal which involves reducing the standing army to 10,000 or 7,000 men when a great military Power across the Channel has 150,000 men under arms is that it is unduly risky. But there is something in the British temperament, irrespective of party, which seems to compel it to take this particular kind of risk throughout the ages, and so far without disaster. Toryism can hardly be blamed for voicing the ineradicable instinct which makes Englishmen a warlike race which refuses to do regular military service.

The Whigs, on the contrary, were in a dilemma at once logical and practical. They wanted an army for foreign wars but not for the King to use at home. There was at once a sharp division in their ranks :[1] the men at the top, who held office by virtue of their warlike policy, were prepared to swallow a large army; the rank and file, with their eyes on their constituencies, and the coming statutory election of 1698, stood for economy and preached the fear of despotism. The Ministry, therefore, stood firm by the King, but their majority in the Commons became uncontrollable. The union between the Tories and the extreme Whigs became effective with the Peace of Ryswick, and henceforward the Whig Government is no longer in real power in the House of Commons.

Harley as a dissident Whig with the ear of the Tories was chosen to make the motion on army reduction. The ground he took on the 10th December, 1697, was well selected : he did not, as some of the fanatics desired, demand the abolition of the army, but moved its reduction to the establishment of 1680, shortly after the Peace of Nimeguen. The parallel between the two peaces was obvious; and it was urged in addition that the sovereign needed less guards for self-protection and the maintenance of order than did Charles II at the troubled time of the Exclusion Bill. There was a good deal of grumbling among the extreme Whigs that the motion did not go far enough. But Harley was right in thinking that the rank and file of the Tory Party had not so far lost their senses as to desire to disband the two regiments of Guards, the Foot Guards and the Coldstreamers, or to deprive the Government altogether of a striking force in an emergency. At any rate the motion was carried by 185 to 148 votes.

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[1] John Trenchard, a dissident Whig, was the main writer for the abolition of the standing army. He was answered anonymously by Somers as a Front Bench man in *The Balancing Letter.*

In the course of the debate fierce attacks were made upon Sunderland, who was promptly thrown to the wolves by the Ministry which owed its existence to him. In spite of this lightening of the ship, a ministerial attempt to rescind Harley's motion was defeated by 188 to 168. For the moment Ministers gave up any plan of direct opposition and fell back on a policy of administrative inaction, or of "interpreting" the motion. What was the establishment of 1680? Adding the garrison of Tangiers and the regiments lent to the Dutch by the home force, the Government computed it at 10,000 men. For this force and for 3,000 marines the House granted, after a sharp struggle between Harley and Montague, a compromise vote of £350,000 a year (14th January, 1698). Ministers dared not ask for a renewal of the Mutiny Act in time of peace, so that all valid military discipline in the army must come to an end with the expiry of the Mutiny Act of 1697 in 1698. The peace strength of the Fleet was to be 10,000—a very large number, witnessing to the continued adherence of Toryism to the blue-water school.[1] For the rest, Harley's motion had no immediate practical effect, for no steps were taken to disband the army.

The interesting thing about this episode and the ones which followed it was that the majority in Parliament professed the most unbounded loyalty and gratitude to the King, while at the same time flouting his known wishes and even attacking his admitted prerogative. As far as the bulk of the Tories were concerned these professions were undoubtedly sincere. They did admire William, but their admiration was a mere straw in the balance against the weight of their own principles and prejudices. They were not to be deflected from scarifying the Whigs who were his Ministers or from assailing the Dutch who were his friends. They showed their loyalty by an Act forbidding British subjects to communicate in any way with the Court of James II; they showed their ingrained hatred of the foreigners by attacking the Crown grants to Dutchmen of the lands sequestrated in Ireland after the surrender of Limerick.

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[1] I adhere to Macaulay's figures both for army and navy. Von Ranke makes a slightly different calculation, and Green another, but the point is of military interest rather than of political importance.

William had, after the pacification of Ireland, made a vague promise that confiscated lands would not be distributed until Parliament had given him its advice on the subject. Parliament never proffered this advice, though private members asserted the claim, and finally William did not wait for it. A great share of the property went to Dutch courtiers and Generals—some of whom had deserved rewards in the Irish campaigns and others had not. From the Tory standpoint the interesting feature of this controversy was, that its tradition of exclusiveness towards the foreigner proved stronger than its inherited attachment to the legitimate rights of the Crown. Lands confiscated by treason were the undoubted property of the King: no one had ever questioned this prerogative. In the ordinary course of events the Party would have grumbled no more and no less than they had at the profuse grants of English manors made by Charles II to his favourites and mistresses: it would never have suggested taking back what had been given to fellow-subjects by an undoubted exercise of the royal prerogative. In fact when Ministers, by an adroit move in February 1698, offered to annul all grants since the Restoration, the Tories abruptly refused the challenge. None the less, so violent was their hatred of the Dutch that they allied themselves with men like Trenchard, who were little better than Republicans; supported a Commission which insulted the King by dragging out the old scandal of his connection with Mrs. Villiers; and allowed that Commission to perpetrate in Ireland every act of injustice and favouritism. Finally, the joint Tory, dissident-Whig majority resumed all the Irish grants of William and so dealt a more shattering blow to the prerogative than any Minister since the Revolution had conceived. Such were the consequences of consorting in the division lobby with avowed enemies of the Crown in order to humiliate Whig Ministers and vent an unbridled hatred against the imported courtier. To such errors Toryism has always been prone when it has lacked the strong hands of a statesman from within its own ranks on the reins of leadership. It is perfectly obvious that a reasonable accommodation, saving the faces both of the King and the Tory Party and doing substantial justice to all parties concerned, could have been arrived at with the greatest ease. The King had promised Parliament a voice in the decision: he had been too profuse in the grant of lands to men who had taken no part in the conquest. Once before he had taken the advice of the Commons in recalling from Portland a grant given him in Wales. There is no doubt that in this case William would have been equally willing to do business. If Parliament had contented itself with advising him to make a new distribution, he would have bowed to the request, and, exercising the undoubted right of the Crown to resume gifts, would have made a settlement more in conformity with justice than either the original plan or the new one forced on him by Parliament. As it was, the Tories shattered the prerogative in order to perpetrate an injustice. They had only one respectable motive—the desire to use the resources of the Irish lands to mitigate the pressure of the Land Tax. And even here they were largely misinformed as to the value of the Irish property.

In the middle of these controversies over the army and the Crown grants came the General Election of 1698—inevitable under the Triennial Act. Ministers managed to retain Westminster, but lost one of the four seats in the City of London. Wharton was defeated in all his chosen strongholds, and Seymour won back for the Tories at Exeter the seat he had lost in 1695. But none the less the result did not show a straight swing from the Whig to the Tory side. As in the case of the General Election of 1886, it witnessed the growth of a new party—the dissident Whigs—and this confirmed the tendency of events in the last few months of the previous Parliament. Like Lord Salisbury in 1886, the Tory leaders in 1698 had gained something for themselves but more by dividing their opponents.

The Parliament met in November 1698, and immediately proved even more intractable to Ministers than its predecessors. The Government indeed carried Sir Thomas Littleton as Speaker, and with that their success ended.

The reductions in the army came up at once for consideration, the Opposition declaring, with great truth, that they had not been carried into effect honestly. Harley now moved that the 10,000 men who had been tacitly accepted as the force agreed to in his last motion should be reduced to 7,000. If the King had accepted the advice of his Ministers to profess himself satisfied with 10,000 the motion might have been defeated. But William would do no such thing. Ministers therefore sat silent, proposing no alternative figure, and Harley's motion was carried. It was added that all these troops must be native-born Englishmen—a proviso which meant the dismissal home of the Dutch Foot Guards.

So deep was William's mortification at the turn of events that he actually threatened to resign the crown and return to Holland. The threat may have been seriously meant, but it was one which on reflection could not possibly have been carried into effect. Even an England shorn of its army was better for

William's European plans than an England ruled by a puppet of Marlborough's, or in the alternative to be ruled by a puppet of Louis XIV. In 1699 Harley's proposals passed the Commons by 221 to 154. In the Lords there was a feeble effort at resistance by the Whig majority. But though the Lords might vote for an army they could not pay it. Several Whig peers therefore urged the futility of throwing out the Bill. The Tory leaders in the Peers were men of great eminence and enlightenment. They did not share the prejudices or approve the alliances of the rank and file of their Party in the Commons. They were, however, not prepared to produce a split in their own ranks equivalent to the division in that of their opponents and to fight their own majority in the Lower House. They said nothing, and the Bill passed to the Crown. The King had mastered his passion, and after a dignified speech of warning and rebuke touched it with his sceptre. But he still struggled vainly against the dismissal of the Dutch Guards, and was again, in March 1699, subjected to the humiliation of failure. It was only natural that Englishmen should desire their withdrawal, and in fighting against this decision William showed once more his chief defect—a local patriotism too strong for tact or reason in an English King. All that he succeeded in doing was to embroil the Lords with the Commons in a struggle which could only have one issue.

The session concluded with the "tacking" of the Commission on the Irish grants to the Land Tax Bill. Here again the Lords, though deeply resentful of this unconstitutional procedure, were helpless. It is impossible for any Tory to read the proceedings of this session without a sense of shame that a great party could in the passion of the moment so far desert its own principles.

The King seems to have reverted, in face of the manifest failure of the Junto to carry out his wishes, to the idea of a mixed Ministry. But his first attempt was half-hearted. Montague retired from the

Exchequer to the well-paid job of Auditor-General.[1] Danby, who had long been a mere figurehead, resigned for good, and Pembroke, a moderate Tory, succeeded him. Pembroke's Privy Secretaryship went to Sir John Lowther (now Lord Lonsdale), also a Tory. Jersey, a Tory, became Secretary of State. But the reconstruction of the Ministry was far too superficial to affect practical politics. This was made plain the moment the Commons met in the autumn of 1699. They began with what was equivalent to a vote of censure on the reconstructed Ministry—for giving the King bad advice on his relations with the House. There followed a violent attack on Somers for having put money into and affixed the Great Seal to the Adventure which terminated in the performances of Captain Kidd. The excellent gentlemen who financed the pirate were guiltless of all evil intention, but there is no more laughable event in history than twelve solemn peers and ministers sending out for the protection of our Indian trade a sheep-dog who turned wolf. The Whigs, it is true, could complain very little of having meted out to them the measure they had dealt to their opponents in the day of their power. But history may protest where a party with dirty hands cannot. Never were the Tories led with such an utter lack of responsibility and judgment as they were by the bastard combination of Seymour, Musgrave, Harcourt, Harley and Howe. The leaders in the Lords were either unwilling or unable to intervene. Age and Whig persecution had removed the Duke of Leeds; Nottingham was an uncertain factor playing a game of his own; Rochester felt no obligation to help a Crown which would not employ him. Neither

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[1] Montague subsequently became Lord Halifax on his final retirement. The habit of assuming titles only just extinct is a very confusing and indefensible process, now happily abandoned. In this case it makes it necessary for historians to refer to the "Great Lord Halifax" of Charles II's reign, so as not to confuse him with Montague. There is also another (nineteenth century) peerage of Halifax since which has no connection with its predecessors.

Marlborough nor Godolphin carried, at any time, much weight with a rank and file which felt instinctively and justly that their Toryism was the thinnest of veneer covering their theory of real politics in self-interest, finance and war. Pembroke, Jersey and Lonsdale as moderates carried no guns. William had in fact destroyed the solidarity and morale of the Tory organisation when he accepted the Junto, and the Party had passed beyond control. None the less the Tory policy, wrong as it often was, stood for the popular demand or the popular prejudice.

On the 15th December, 1699, the Report of the Commission on Crown Lands in Ireland was presented. A Minority Report of a comparatively reasonable and truthful character was contemptuously brushed aside and a Bill resuming all the Crown grants in Ireland dating from the accession of William III passed its first reading. When the Bill came up for second reading on the 2nd January, 1700, Ministers put forward a fair suggestion for a compromise which a sane Tory Opposition would have accepted. The idea was to divide the property into three parts : one for the King, one for the army, and one for the nation in relief of taxes. The proposal was defeated. "As usual," wails Vernon, now leader of the House in succession to Montague, "the Whigs suffered a lamentable overthrow. I do not see how they can ever rise again." It was indeed the beginning of the end for the Government. As was usual in this Parliament, the Bill was "tacked," and in April sent up to the Lords, who by no means liked a measure which threatened insecurity to property. The moderate Tory members of the Ministry—Pembroke and Lonsdale—protested vehemently against this procedure and were supported by Whig chiefs such as Lord Hartington and the Duke of Devonshire. For a moment it looked as if the Whigs, the moderate Tories and the courtiers in the Lords would provoke a constitutional crisis. But the Bill was popular. Wise counsels prevailed and the Lords and Crown gave way.

Parliament was immediately prorogued. The King now decided to abandon the Junto system of Government altogether, and to substitute a mixed Ministry comprising a majority of moderate Tories with an admixture of the least obnoxious Whigs. Wharton, Russell and Montague were now joined in retirement by Somers, who gave up the Great Seal. Rochester, who was an orthodox Tory leader, and Godolphin and several other members of the Party received high office. But the experiment was doomed to failure so long as the Tory leaders in the Commons remained unappeased and uncontrolled. The King then decided to test the popularity of the new Administration by a dissolution. But the General Election of 1700 is not worth discussing, for it proved nothing. The complexion and views of the new Parliament were the same as those of the old.

A new factor, however, now began to exercise an increasing influence on domestic politics. It has been pointed out earlier in this chapter what was the Tory attitude towards William's policy abroad: how the King and the Party read the Peace of Ryswick and Louis's intentions differently, yet how in general Toryism was perfectly willing to resist any threat from France which it conceived to be dangerous and real. Little as the Party followed foreign affairs, it now began to apprehend against its predisposition that serious trouble on the Continent might be imminent.

Very little has been said of the details of the relations between the European Powers in the course of this narrative because, out of the very natures of the home parties, foreign affairs were, from the English to the French Revolution, far more a Whig or a Jacobite interest than a Tory one. But in 1700 it became apparent to everyone that partly through French ill faith and partly through sheer bad luck all was not going well with William's schemes abroad. The Opposition in Parliament, by disbanding the army and flouting the King, had contributed to the unhappy *dénouement* which was to lead to renewed war and the restoration of Whig influence.

A rough summary of the European situation from 1697 to 1701 must serve our present purpose. At the time of the Peace of Ryswick Charles II, King of Spain, was known to be dying, and he had no direct heir. If the Spanish dominions remained intact they might pass either to the French Crown or to the Emperor. Either event would utterly upset the balance of power in Europe—the maintenance of which is the one true and permanent British interest in European affairs. There was a third claimant—with none too good a title—in the Electoral Prince of Bavaria. By the first Partition Treaty (1698) William secured his main object. The Electoral Prince was recognised as the heir of Spain, but a solatium was offered to the losing competitors in the form of a division of the Spanish possessions in Italy between them. It is uncertain whether either France or the Empire would actually have carried out their engagements. The matter was never put to the test. The Electoral Prince died suddenly, and all the weary work of accommodation had to be begun over again. Under the Second Partition Treaty of 1700 the Spanish Crown with the Spanish Netherlands and the Indies were to go to the Archduke Charles, second son of the Emperor. In compensation the French claimant was to receive all the Italian possessions of Spain. The Spaniards and their King not unnaturally objected to this breaking up of a once powerful Empire, and the dying Charles II left the whole of his dominions by will to the Duke of Anjou, the grandson of Louis XIV. Late in the year 1700 Louis tore up the Second Partition Treaty and accepted the Spanish throne for the Duke, who crossed the Pyrenees and was crowned in Madrid.

At the outset this sudden development produced no effect on the political situation in England. The Partition Treaties had been accepted by William as his own Foreign Minister, without the co-operation of Parliament, and with nothing more than the formal consent of his own Ministers. The country did not feel itself committed in honour to the settlement, and indeed, as William himself bitterly complained, "preferred the Will to the Treaty." This was the attitude both of the Parliament dissolved in 1700 and the reunited Parliament of February 1701. But this national view was qualified by a very distinct proviso. The new Spanish Crown must be really and not nominally independent of the old French one. Otherwise Paris could hurl against Great Britain the pooled resources of half America and nearly half of Europe. The Tories indulged in a passionate hope that the severance of the two Crowns would prove to be a fact, otherwise they would be obliged to fight, and the mandate given them at once by their own hearts and by their constituents was to avoid war at all costs. The test point at issue was whether Louis XIV would leave the Dutch garrisons of the Barrier forts in the Spanish Netherlands alone, or whether, with the connivance of the Spanish King, he would use French troops to turn them out. In November of 1700 Louis had privately determined to take this step, and immediately proceeded to put his intention into practice. Worse than this, he kept the Dutch troops as prisoners of war. The Dutch called on William to fulfil England's treaty obligations.

The new Parliament met again in February of 1701, while the French had already moved. The majority were agitated by the position in the Netherlands, but the King very wisely did not make any demand for an increase in the army, which would certainly have been refused, so passionately did the Tories cling to the idea of peace at any reasonable price. They passed a vague resolution giving the Crown a promise of support in foreign affairs, but called for the production of the treaties with the Dutch and of the Partition Treaties, with the avowed intention of attacking the Ministerial signatories of the latter. But the debate on the production of the Dutch treaties went entirely William's way. "The King," says Von Ranke, "was authorised to negotiate in order that the general safety of the British kingdom and the States-General and the peace of Europe might be secured. Tories and Whigs agreed here: the former in the hope of maintaining peace; the latter in the wish that it might lead to war." Which side would have their wishes gratified remained uncertain.

In the meantime the attack on the authors of the Partition Treaties went on vigorously in both Houses. The Tories in the Commons impeached the Whig Junto signatories; the Whigs in the Lords attacked the moderate Tory Ministers who had been accessories to the later treaties. Both parties tried to be on the popular side. The whole proceedings are from any other point of view but that of partisan hate and party advantage so boring as not to be worth recording. Finally we have the farcical spectacle of the Whig peers supporting Somers against the Commons for doing that for which they had assailed Portland, Pembroke and Lonsdale in the Lords. The King at any rate had been empowered to join with the Dutch in a negotiation to protect the Barrier fortresses. But he found the French intransigent and his own Parliamentary support feeble and reluctant. It is probable that if Toryism could so far have violated its principles and ignored its past pledges, as to come out strongly on the King's side, Louis might yet have drawn back. But representative government as a theory cannot have the advantage of both worlds. It cannot assert the right of the Parliament to rule and then blame the constitutional governors for the consequences of Parliament's own actions. It was the British people who, out of their intense desire for peace, helped so largely to make war inevitable. Louis was indeed warned by his expert representatives that Tory pacifism was only skin deep. He was, however, of opinion that he knew better than his ambassadors. He read the debates; he did not understand the British character. Other European monarchs since have made the same mistake. That character was already beginning to assert itself even while its representatives in the Commons hung back. In May of 1701 the "Kentish Petition," asking the

Commons to lay aside all variance and support the policy of the Crown, was sent up from the Quarter Sessions of Maidstone by freeholders on the Grand Jury. Both extreme Tories and schismatic Whigs were scandalised at such a piece of revolutionary impudence. The orthodox Whigs, of course, improved the occasion. They stimulated their own Party in the country by connecting it with the Right of Petition.

From May to September of this year the nation must be regarded as torn between two conflicting impulses—the hope of peace meeting the counter-current of fear that war might be necessary for the safety of the kingdom. This much at least is clear—the violent peace party found its predominant position seriously shaken, but it was still a majority and still had power. But an event was at hand in the autumn of 1701 which was to give popular opinion a decisive direction and terminate the existence of this ill-omened Parliament.

It is impossible to defend the proceedings of the majority in the Commons between 1697 and 1701. There are times when a party gets utterly out of hand. It finds all responsibility removed from it, suffers from a colourable sense of past injustice inflicted at the hands of opponents, and discovers that its more extreme tenets go down best with the constituencies. It cannot be denied that the agitation against foreign wars, standing armies, the Dutch, and heavy taxation had the approval of the electorate. How much of this sentiment was sowed by the leaders and how much sprang up naturally, it is impossible to say. But the whole condition of the House of Commons in these Parliaments was unsatisfactory. Ministers were in an almost permanent minority and afraid of the House. The personnel of leadership on the Opposition benches was defective in authority. The greater attractions of the Lords drew up to it at far too early a stage in life the best talent in administration and oratory and the greatest influence in affairs. A peerage was the natural goal for a man who had made his first mark in the Commons. Such success was viewed as a mere stepping-stone to an assembly where the level of speaking was on the whole higher, the chances of office greater, and where membership saved the aspirant from the uncertainty and expense of contested elections. The result was that the House of Commons was perpetually robbed of its highest ornaments just when they were reaching a position to dominate the Cabinet and control their party. So in the Parliaments under discussion all the great Tory leaders—Danby, Nottingham, Normanby, Rochester—were, in the Lords, generally in a minority, and in the main excluded from the counsels of the Crown. The Commons could only show Seymour, Harcourt and Musgrave, who could never be ranked as more than second or third class in the domain of statesmanship. Without believing all that his enemies have said against Seymour, whose birth enabled him to despise a peerage, it is clear that he was a man of violent animosities, quite incapable of pursuing any policy which looked beyond the hour. Harcourt's abilities turned his mind towards the Woolsack rather than to the leadership of a party; and Musgrave's name is now almost forgotten, although he appears to have been the ablest of the three. On the dissident Whig side of the Coalition there was plenty of venom and a little ability, both best represented by Howe. But the leading man in this Parliament was beyond all question Harley, who alone among his colleagues rose to the leadership of the State and left an imprint on history. He was admirably suited both by temperament and descent to form the connecting link between the two wings. Born of an eminent Cromwellian family in Worcestershire, he had been from his schooldays a friend of the Tory Simon Harcourt. His heredity and his solemn demeanour commended him to the successors of the Puritans, while his votes and his speeches were directed to the support of Tory measures. He could make even violence look respectable, while no party heat ever distracted his cunning sagacity and prudence from fore-sighted views of the main chance. He stood with a leg in each camp, ready to step off in either direction. It was sufficient for him that in this short epoch he became in effect leader of the House of Commons—a man marked out for high preferment in some future Government. He at least had this much claim to statesmanship, that he did not believe in the fanatic partisanship he led and encouraged.

We have seen that much of the energy of the House of Commons was directed to a series of attacks on eminent members of the Junto. Montague was frightened into retirement and Somers vainly threatened with impeachment. It would be possible to waste too much sympathy on these eminent statesmen. Both were men of marked ability who had done the State great service. Somers undoubtedly outshone most of his contemporaries in the calmness of his temper and the integrity of his character. Both, however, had connived at, and even sheltered with their names, all the Whig crimes and excesses devised by the malignant ingenuity of Wharton as manager for the Party. The doctrine of mutual persecution was accepted by the age: what the Junto had to submit to was merely the treatment they had served out to their adversaries.

While the issues of peace and war thus hung in the balance an accident of time decided the event. James II proved as dangerous to Toryism in his death as in his life. In September of 1701 the exiled King had a paralytic stroke and died shortly afterwards. Louis, by one of his occasional but consummate strokes of folly, recognised James's son, the old Pretender, as King James III of England. It was then seen what the supposed Jacobitism of the Tory Party was worth. The Whigs raised their heads again a moment to preach the European crusade; the vast mass of their opponents were stung by the insult into agreement, and it turned out, as Swift said of a later period, "that there were not 500 Jacobites in England." To Toryism the foreigner became immediately the Frenchman and not the Dutchman. William, seeing the way things were moving, took his courage in his hands and in November 1701 dissolved Parliament. The whole folly of the Tory Opposition in quarrelling with the Crown now came home to roost. It appeared that the country in the ensuing election had "gone back to 1695." The Tories, however, put up a stiff fight, and though defeated in the big towns and doubtful constituencies, succeeded in returning a strong minority. Musgrave lost his seat, and Wharton recaptured most of his tame counties, but it was the dissident Coalition Whigs who suffered most in the struggle. For the moment indeed they disappear as a Parliamentary force. The final result was not so much that the Whigs were returned to power, as that the country had declared unmistakably for the King and for war. Thus, although the Tories remained a very powerful minority in the House, nearly all the doctrines they had been preaching for the last three years were thrown into the dust. The King was the leader of the nation: war was to be welcomed—and war must mean in the long run the old Whig Executive and a new large standing army. In the ordinary course of events the Tories might have looked forward to a considerable period of opposition, when another royal demise put a different complexion on their prospects. In February 1702 William III, whose health had long been failing, was thrown from his horse and died within a few days.

The character of this great figure has been brilliantly described by eminent Whig and Liberal historians. It would be superfluous to add anything to their praise. But was William III any more a Whig than a Tory? Like most monarchs whose career has lain half inside politics and half in some other sphere, such as war and diplomacy, he set himself definite ends to accomplish and used politics as a subsidiary means to those ends. What were the politics of Cromwell or Napoleon or Cæsar? They had, no doubt, some general conception of what form the State they ruled should take, but these ideas cut across rather than conformed to the principles of any definite parties which existed in their time. They took, therefore, from political creeds those fragments which went to make up their own picture; they are therefore not comparable to those historic characters whose whole life is lived within the circle which surrounds the clash of party ideas. So it was with William III. While he is, therefore, to us a somewhat pale, cold and remote figure, as one to whom England was an instrument rather than an absorbing passion, he is also beyond the region in which partisanship can deny his splendid gifts.

I have purposely omitted the discussion of the Hanoverian succession in the Parliaments of 1698–1701 until the demise of the Crown. All parties had accepted the accession of Queen Anne to the throne. If Tories and Whigs had agreed to the claim of Queen Mary as a joint sovereign, much less could they cavil at a princess succeeding in her own right. It followed that the child Duke of Gloucester was the legitimate heir to the Crown on the decease of his mother. So long as he lived the problem of the succession was solved. It has been suggested by Von Ranke that both at the time of the recognition of King William and Queen Mary and subsequently there existed a party in England which was in favour of refusing to extend by law the succession to the Crown in the hope that a Republic might result by abeyance. Such a party may have existed, but if so it was on a par with the 500 Jacobites. A German historian is quite incapable of understanding what the British Crown means to the British people, and therefore falls easily into such an error. The real reason for the delay in making any settlement beyond the obvious heirs was a natural reluctance to raise a difficult question before it had to be faced. Unfortunately for the country, the Duke of Gloucester, a charming child "of whom so much was expected," died of small-pox in July 1700. William was not expected to live long, and Queen Anne was not a good life. It therefore became imperative to decide on the succession if England was not to be plunged into the horrors of a civil war. There were three Houses in

Europe who might put forward a claim to the throne: Stuart, Savoy and Hanover. The claims of the two latter went so far back that they had to be decided by expediency rather than legitimacy. The matter was settled by the fact that Stuart and Savoy embraced the Catholic cause and religion, and Hanover alone was Protestant. William therefore lent his weight to Hanover and the issue was henceforth never in doubt.

It was, however, doubly unfortunate for the Tory cause that the question of the succession should have arisen again just when its mad coalition with the Whig extremists was still in existence and the representatives of the country squires were talking the language of Pym and Hampden through the lips of Harley. The extravagant dislike of William and the Junto led the natural defenders of the Crown to draw up in 1701 resolutions on the Terms of Settlement with which the Whigs of every type were only too willing to agree. The general tenor of these resolutions was that the House of Hanover should be accepted on condition that its sovereignty was limited. Thus—

(1) The sovereign must be a member of the Church of England.
(2) England would not be responsible for the defence of his foreign possessions.
(3) The King was only to leave the country with the permission of Parliament.
(4) The decisions of the Government were to be taken as those of the Privy Council, and each Councillor must sign his name to a decision. By this means the Cabal or interior Cabinet intimate with the Sovereign was to be abolished.
(5) Foreigners were to be excluded from the Privy Council.
(6) A Judge would only be deprived of his post by Act of Parliament.
(7) The power of pardon against impeachment by the Commons was to be abolished.

In this tactful way the Tory majority in the Commons introduced itself to its prospective ruler, George I, whose mother was already doubtful about his suitability for the throne of England, because in his own possessions he already acted as an absolute king! Harley was the leader of the Commons in carrying these resolutions, and yet he wondered long afterwards why his approaches on behalf of the Tories were ignored by the Elector of Hanover. Verily the Whigs had used the Tories to pull the chestnuts out of the fire. It is a bitter truth that the "Venetian Constitution" was adumbrated by a bastard combine of Tories who disliked William III and semi-Republicans who hated monarchy. The official Whigs, on the other hand, were not slow to take advantage of the opening their enemies had given them. They went cap in hand to Hanover to point out that at least they, unlike their opponents, could not be suspected of desiring to restore the Pretender: the limitations on the Crown had been proposed by others, but they were the only sure friends. The cunning of Codlin triumphed over the folly of Short.

Such limitations of the Crown, each of them a direct censure on the King, would never have been recognised by William, and were, of course, not noticed by Anne as the legitimate successor of James II, the claim of the Prince of Wales being barred. They did not, therefore, assume any practical importance until the direct line died with Queen Anne. Then in a moment, with a terrific rebound, the full effects of the foolish temper of Harcourt, Seymour and Musgrave struck the Tory Party to the earth. They had censured an impartial Crown, and they were given a Whig Crown in exchange. Throughout all these transactions Harley was the evil genius of Toryism because he was always an Independent at heart, and he lived long enough to ruin the Party which had the misfortune to attract his services. Swift and others found him an attractive man: so no doubt were some of the angels Dante discovered in limbo who could not decide whether to fight for God or for Satan. Harley, however, bettered this performance, for he fought for both, and used the cant of his Puritan ancestors to ruin the descendants of the Cavaliers.

For the moment, however, the fatal effects of his policy in 1701 were still germinating in seed. The sun shone fair on the prospects of the Tory Party, for a member of the Church of England and an almost legitimate sovereign had ascended the throne.

CHAPTER VII

THE AGE OF ANNE AND THE CHURCH

THE accession of Anne cleared up for the moment most of those difficulties which in the past reign had tended to cast a cold shadow on Toryism, and the Party therefore emerges once more into a brief sunlight of brilliance and power. The difficulty of the succession is largely composed even to the mind of the most devout disciple of Divine right : the religion of the sovereign is the creed of the Tory Party; no difficulty really remains but the old trouble about foreign policy.

All except a small minority of extreme Jacobites were prepared to acknowledge as sovereign the daughter of James II. The untrue aspersions cast on the legitimacy of the Old Pretender could reconcile the tenderest conscience into accepting a *de facto* queen who was also a staunch adherent of the Church of England. The country, in fact, got what it wanted —a ruler with a good claim to Divine right who was neither a Romanist nor a Nonconformist. But it is the religion of a sovereign, who often in the teeth of Whig Ministers filled the prelacy with High Churchmen, far more than her formal title to the crown, which now becomes her claim to popularity with the vast bulk of the Party. For the time of the Church is at hand.

The Church of England had now reached the zenith of its power and popularity. In the period of the Restoration it had exercised immense influence through the medium of the country clergy. But even then it was living under the shadow of the throne. The expulsion of James II shattered the doctrine of Divine right, although the Establishment still continued to pay lip service to a political creed which it had in practice abandoned. Henceforward the Church really stood alone, and since the Tory mind turns instinctively to objects of unity, permanence or reverence, whether these are found in a State, a Church, an Army, or an Empire, the country transferred to the Establishment much of the devotion it had given to the Crown. Anne was not the legitimate successor, but she was legitimate enough for practical purposes, and both her religion and her stupidity endeared her to her subjects. The age of Anne is therefore the age of the Church—that purged form of Catholicism which is so singularly suitable to the English temperament—an institution which retained the Bishops and the laying on of hands, claimed direct spiritual descent from the Chair of St. Peter, damned belief in Transubstantiation as a deadly sin which excluded the holder from all public office, reverted to the custom of the primitive Church in matters of clerical marriage, put patriotism before Papacy, and diluted the wine of Rome with the water of Luther. The Deity, in fact, had become nationalised. It is easy enough to point out the spiritual inconsistencies of an Establishment whose doctrines had been founded on mere urgent civic necessities. It was the statesman rather than the priest who dictated the Thirty-nine Articles—formulæ indeed which, compared to the Liturgy, have never appealed to the clergy, and are therefore very justly hardly ever read. But we shall greatly misunderstand history and humanity if we do not recognise the fact that a people is probably entitled to worship God after its own manner. The more active elements in the human mind had marched past the Catholic system of thought, and the foreign policy of a Vatican faced with such a crisis was bound to produce a modernist and nationalist reaction. Was then England to be allowed to fall into a state of religious anarchy, in which any man might set himself up as a preacher of the Word? The Tudors thought not, and with the iron hand of a popular monarchy they insisted on a religious observance which in the long run commended itself to the great bulk of the nation. Such a policy is foreign to the ideas of a modern age, which is at once more faithful and more faithless. To the man of a spiritual mind it is repugnant to have his convictions shaped or supervised by the State. The sceptic cannot understand why anybody should ever bother to persecute. The Tudor age, on the contrary, conceived that politics, religion and morals were all one, and that a bad Churchman was likely to be a bad and possibly a dangerous citizen. A Catholic was liable to be a friend of the King of Spain, and a Dissenter was almost certainly an enemy of the Crown. And the Crown was England. After all the terrible oppressions suffered by the Church under the *régime* of Oliver Cromwell, these convictions set with the consistency of cement. They might have been regarded as purely reactionary and obscurantist, if they had not been dignified by the advocacy of Swift and Bolingbroke, who understood the reality of the doctrine of Church and State. Swift "knew no reason why they who entertained opinions prejudicial to the public should be obliged to change and should not be obliged to conceal them. As it was tyranny in any Government to require the first, so it was weakness not to enforce the second; for a man may be allowed to keep poisons in his closet, but not to send them about for cordials." [1]

Writing in the early part of the year 1914, it would have been impossible to have advanced these opinions of the Tory statesman and the Dean of St. Patrick's with any prospect of their being not so much accepted as understood. And the Victorians, living in the safe shelter of a commercial age which the courage of their ancestors had secured to them, united in condemning alike the Test Acts and the Acts by which the statesmen who fought Napoleon made Jacobinism a dangerous amusement. But the present age has exhibited both in the United States and Great Britain what a great democracy will do in the repression of hostile opinion when it feels that its life is at stake, and a country which put conscientious objectors in prison and deprived them of the franchise can hardly criticise the political intolerance of Pitt or Castlereagh, or the religious bigotry of Swift. We have admitted, like our predecessors, that there are occasions when tolerance is an intolerable danger. It is easy not to persecute for a cause in which one has ceased to believe. But when a nation is faced with a vital issue, on which its whole existence appears to depend, it will prevent the spread of destructive principles exactly as a landlord will prevent a lodger setting fire to the house. It will not pin the dissident to the table by breaking him on the wheel, but it will prevent him publishing by speech or in the Press. Such is the justification for the Government of Cromwell, which prevented an unlicensed parson from preaching, and when the wheel had swung full circle Swift was in favour of the Cromwellian policy in reverse. The idea of tolerance is, in fact, the invention of security.

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[1] Bolingbroke expressed a similar view: "The good of society may require that no person shall be deprived of the protection of the Government on account of his opinion in religious matters; but it does not follow from hence that men ought to be trusted in any degree with the preservation of the Establishment, who must, to be consistent with their principles, endeavour the subversion of what is established." The present generation may have cause to remember both these dicta.

With Crown, Church and popular party at one, the ordinary course of events would have produced an ascendancy for the Tory Party from 1702 till 1714 as complete and secure as the Whigs subsequently enjoyed under Walpole. But William had left as a legacy a fly in the ointment—the great campaign against France. The sudden news, before the Deliverer's death, that Louis XIV was once more attempting to unite the Crowns of France and Spain as a preliminary to dominating Europe and destroying England, was capped by his official recognition of the Old Pretender as the rightful King of England. This outbreak of an insolence indicating danger touched Toryism to the quick, and it rallied immediately in support of a fresh European campaign.

But the rally was that of a patient who reacts temporarily to a drug.

All through the reign of William the old Tory grumblings against foreign wars, against the foreigner, against standing armies, had made themselves heard. And though the challenge of Louis XIV in September 1701 stung the Party into acquiescence, it followed reluctantly in the train of the conquering Marlborough. It desired to be let alone to develop its own National Church and its own national industries, to follow the kind of quiet and prosperous existence which God had ordained for it: not to see its sons slaughtered on the plains of Flanders because a Dutchman had been essential to England, and English help essential to the Dutch: not to be made through the medium of heavy taxation a cat's-paw for the Emperor or a pawn in European politics. All this mass of sullen resentment which represented the rural democracy was gathering through the early years of Anne against the policy of the Whigs and of some of the Tories. Marlborough's victories were to Toryism like a river flowing into the upcoming surge of the sea: the tide has the best of it. The genius of the Tory Party was not in favour of armed intervention in Europe except in so far as it was necessary for security —and the nation was Tory. The Whigs had upon them the weight of William's policy and were urged into further excesses by the triumphant genius of Marlborough. But as the successes of that genius waned like a medicine which exhausts its power by repetition, the reluctance of the Tory Party to continue the war gathered in strength. Deep in the heart of that Party remained the old principles invincible by fate or fortune: love of unity as expressed in the monarchy, if it should be possible; love of the Church as the nearest expression of that loyalty, always possible; love of England within bounds which excluded the entangling alliances of the foreigner; hatred of Popish interference and virulent determination to repress schism within; liberty against the Pope; repression against the schismatic—and all these qualities could be combined with the adoration of unity in the existing Crown.

With so much preface it may be possible to describe very briefly the actual political events affecting the Party between 1702 and 1710. With the accession of Anne, Toryism stirred into a renewed vigour and returned an immense majority in the General Election of 1702.[1] But it was also a majority for war. Toryism had taken up the challenge of the formal recognition of the Pretender. Marlborough abroad and Godolphin at home, both Tories so near the border line of moderation as to be almost Whigs, were the moving spirits of the new Ministry. But the high places of power were packed with Tory extremists. Nottingham was Secretary of State, and his colleague Hedges was also a violent Tory. Dartmouth and Simon Harcourt—one of the violent obstructionists of William's Parliaments, now veering with office towards moderation—were made Privy Councillors, while Rochester, who clung on the very skirts of Jacobitism, was Viceroy of Ireland. But leaving the Jacobites out and including Marlborough and Godolphin, the Party was divided, as usual, between the moderates and the extremists. The latter group in reality hated the war and cared for nothing but attacking the position of the Nonconformists. The moderates were prepared, however unwillingly, to support Marlborough, and were quite ready to give vigorous aid to the Church if only to prove that their Toryism was orthodox. Rochester, Nottingham, Jersey and Normanby represent the extreme section in the Lords as against Godolphin and Marlborough; Hedges and Seymour stood for the extremists in the Commons against Harley and Harcourt. St. John, as yet without office, began as a whole-hogger, but soon turned towards moderation. The whole mental attitude of the Ministry was therefore rotten to the core, and its tenure of power in consequence utterly precarious. It cannot be regarded, like its successor of 1710, as a real, co-ordinate, exclusive Tory Ministry pursuing a policy of its own and secure from Whiggish influences. To disguise the fact that it was prosecuting a war in which its opponents believed, but in which most of its own members did not, it concentrated on the lowest common measure of agreement and assailed the Nonconformists at once through the Occasional Conformity Bill.

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[1] The nearest estimate is that three-quarters of the members of the Commons were Tories.

A certain number of Nonconformists were accustomed to take the Church Sacrament once a year in order to qualify for public office. It is perfectly open to argument that a refusal to join the Establishment should not debar one from the magistracy. It cannot be denied that an act of public apostasy is too high a price to pay for a seat on the Bench. The view of the Tories was simply directed to prevent this peculiar form of hypocrisy. Men who, owing to some strange doubt as to whether the early Church sanctioned Bishops—a point which the most exhaustive inquiry into the third century has not yet settled—declined to join the Establishment, yet did not hesitate to commit perjury in order to attain the Bench. Even so staunch a Presbyterian as Defoe denounced it "as a scandalous practice and a playing at Bo-Beep with God Almighty." Such was the eighteenth-century version of the Nonconformist conscience. It is difficult to argue that to take the Sacrament once a year is a venial deception and to take it every week is a crime.

The object of the measure was to put a stop to this practice of occasional hypocrisy, and it secured in the House of Commons the support of the fiery eloquence of St. John and an immense majority. It was immediately thrown out by the House of Lords. The new Ministry, with its predominant Tory element, at once discovered that a small but solid Whig majority of the great landowners sat entrenched in bitter hostility against it in the Upper House. The Bill itself continued to be sent up at intervals for the next ten years, and was rejected as frequently as it was sent up, until by a strange bargain, to which we shall refer later, it eventually passed into law. The reply of the Tories in the Commons to the recalcitrance of the Upper House was to impeach various Whig ex-Ministers in the Lords in a factious and indefensible manner.[1] The Party as a consequence of these manœuvres soon made itself just as unpopular in the country as had the Whig majority which attained power after the Revolution. The only thing that can be said for it is that, unlike its model, it escaped the stain of blood.

In the meantime the real Government of the country was in the hands of Marlborough and Godolphin, subject to the private influences which might be brought to bear on the Queen. The great General cared for nothing but his war; the great financier cared for nothing but finding the money to finance the war of his chief. To them parties were indifferent: what was necessary was support. As the extreme Tories moved gradually under the strain of taxation at home and of casualties abroad from the war policy towards one of peace, it became absolutely necessary to expel them from office and replace them with men who were prepared to accept the ideas of Marlborough. The natural course would have been to apply frankly to the Whigs, but the disposition of the Queen and of the majority in the House of Commons combined made this course impossible. The result was attained by a process of attrition which gradually removed the Tory extremists. Rochester resigned from Ireland in 1702, in 1704 Nottingham ceased to be Secretary of State, Harley and St. John were introduced into the Government in the latter year as the representatives of moderate Toryism. At the same time Lord Jersey and Seymour were dismissed, and one by one all the vacant places were filled by the official Whigs under the continued threat of Marlborough's resignation. The Government therefore wholly changed its character between 1702 and 1710, without its being possible to put a finger on any precise point at which the change occurred. What started as a strong Tory predominance in the Cabinet ended as an almost complete Whig Ministry. The election of 1705, which took place under the Triennial Act, completely justified this move from right to left. The victory of Blenheim in 1704 rallied the patriotism of the entire country to the support of the war, and the Tory Party suffered in the elections in proportion as it was suspected of being lukewarm to the cause.[1] The moderate Tory element was still allowed to remain in the Cabinet in deference to the Queen's susceptibilities and to the wisdom and past records of Godolphin and Marlborough, but it remained there on its good behaviour. Let it make one hostile move and it would go. The dominance, in fact, in spite of the tears of Anne, had passed wholly to the Whigs. The time was now fast approaching in which Marlborough and Godolphin must openly change sides and even the moderate Tories be turned out of their offices. Harley and St. John had been useful to mask the transition, but their period of utility had passed. In 1708 they were both dismissed. Harley, who was by nature a back-stairs man, had been engaged in some obscure Court intrigue against his own Prime Minister, if we may so term Godolphin, the precise details of which cannot be unravelled and are in any case of no importance. It is quite clear that with the best will in the world to form a moderate Tory Government, Anne was perfectly helpless in the toils of the Whigs, and it does not heighten one's opinion of Harley's abilities that he should have held a contrary view. The result was to drive Harley reluctantly into the leadership of the Tory Opposition, and so finally into the first real Tory Premiership. He accepted the task with that enthusiasm with which men go into a general action, and finally helped to present his followers with fifty years of Opposition.

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[1] It was the impeachment of Somers which called forth Swift's pamphlet in his defence. *Cf.* p. 114.

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[1] The figures given by Godolphin are: Placemen 100, Whigs 160, Tories 180. It follows that the Government had a clear majority in whatever direction it turned.

Lord Rosebery, in a very diverting passage,[1] has exhibited the strange fate which in the nineteenth century presented the Party with leaders like Canning, Disraeli, Churchill and Chamberlain. If he had been casting back into history he might have added Harley to his list. The most careful analysis of his character and his actions fails to elucidate any sure view, except that he was an uncomfortable and an unhappy man because he was leading the wrong side. What is amazing about him is his success. For a man of very moderate parts and no special rank to be three times Speaker of the House of Commons, Secretary of State, and finally a triumphant Prime Minister argues either extraordinary luck or the possession of some talent which the modern mind cannot fathom. It is quite true that Harley was pertinacious in low intrigue; but so were other men. It is obvious that he inherited from his ancestors the snivelling pomposity of the Puritan, but there were plenty of Whig members who could have beaten him at the game of cant. But the combination of the two qualities was formidable, for it is disconcerting to an enemy to find the pillar of respectability half-way down the back stairs. The Tory Party was also in desperate need of leadership since the retirement of Danby, and grasped eagerly at the man who by some perverse intellectual kink was unable to get on with his own side. But when all is said and done, these explanations are insufficient to account for the facts. The experience of every man will contain at least one instance of an individual who has made astonishing success of life with the very smallest abilities to back him, and in the list of these curious successes Harley must be placed. Men admire genius, but they equally resent it : if they can find an imposing image in the likeness of their own mediocrity, they are not averse to fall down and worship.[2]

It is impossible to blame either the General in the field or the Prime Minister Godolphin at home for the methods by which, as moderate Conservatives, they extruded the Tories from the Ministry one by one and substituted Whigs. They were driven the way they had to go. They believed in the war and they had to rely on men who believed in it too, nor could they afford to risk a complete change of Ministry and an open rupture with the Crown. But after the expulsion of Harley and St. John in 1708, the sands of the Administration were running out visibly. The casualty list in Flanders was the best Tory canvasser. The French fought with their customary valour, though they had a starving country behind them, and the victories still emblazoned on the banners of our regiments were often bought by a higher pile of dead than that which the vanquished left on the field. The faded flags which still hang from the walls in Blenheim were purchased at a terrible price. If the Tories had been convinced that the liberty and safety of the country depended on the continuance of the struggle they would, as usual, have fought to the last man and the last shilling; but they were not so convinced, and history has adjudged that they were right. To the Whigs the war had by now become just the same sort of monomania as the taxation of land values became to their successors. The war was mixed up with the tradition of William, of the glorious Revolution, of a great Protestant campaign on the Continent, and even the blood-bath of Malplaquet in 1709 could not reduce them to sanity. It was obvious that the power of France was broken, at least for a generation: it was notorious that the French King was ready to make peace on reasonable terms. Nothing but the folly of the Emperor and the selfishness of the Dutch stood in the way of a settlement. It was suggested that Marlborough was prolonging the war for purely personal motives, but it is quite unnecessary to enter on that famous controversy. The fact is, that by pamphlet and news-letter and word of mouth the country was becoming informed of the real facts and was getting ready to throw the Government out on the issue of foreign policy. In this manner the return of Harley and St. John to power was being prepared for them. Even the star of Marlborough began to pale in the cold light of the damning realisation. And the Tories were paying the taxes which made the war possible, while to their view the commercial interest was profiteering out of the victories and fattening like a vulture on the bodies of the dead.

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[1] *Lord Randolph Churchill*, pp. 121–123.

[2] Lord Liverpool and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman might be adduced as instances of successful mediocrities in Downing Street, but they were both firm party men.

But this turn of the tide in favour of the Tory policy of non-intervention was slow to take effect. It was a typical act of persecution on the part of the extreme Whigs in the Government which roused all these latent Tory elements into passionate activity. Dr. Sacheverell preached a rather ordinary sermon about Divine right at St. Paul's in November 1709. The Whig members of the Government decided to prosecute him, which might have proved a matter of small importance. They also decided to make the prosecution a peg on which to hang a general declaration of the Divine right of the glorious Revolution. This was taken, probably quite wrongly, as an open declaration of war on the Establishment. One may perhaps imagine a parallel if one supposed that a Labour Government in 1925 passed a resolution that the war against Germany was a mistake and that all who had taken part in it had committed an anti-social act and ought to be thoroughly ashamed of themselves, and that some obscure Brigadier was to be prosecuted, under D.O.R.A., for maintaining a contrary view at a local prize-giving. One can picture the kind of uprising which would take place among the Comrades of the Great War and the remarks which would be made by demobilised officers at the Club. The inner core of the Tory Party, that organisation which always obtains victory or survives defeat, immediately rose up as a single man in defence of the Church. In anticipation of their resentment the Government fell on the 8th August, 1710. All the grievance of the war, all the resentments against the Whigs and schismatics, were concentrated in one great wave of popular opinion which in the election of September 1710 swept the Tories into power with a majority approximate to that which they had reached in 1702. Harley became Prime Minister, with St. John as his principal lieutenant, and the war was doomed.

The first Whig Ministry had been the consequence of the deliberate policy of Sunderland. The first real Tory Ministry was the result of the unanimous wish of the country and of the failure of the Prime Minister to form a Coalition at the outset. No sooner was the Tory majority of 1710 assured than Harley made overtures to the Whig leaders to join him in office. The proposal was refused. The offer is typical of Harley's mentality, and explains how he led his Party through a triumph of which he did not approve, to a ruin of which he was the chief agent. Thus in its leader's despite Toryism soared to a height of power which it has seldom equalled and to a brilliance which it has never since attained.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ZENITH OF TORYISM

Part I.—The Peace of Utrecht

On the 8th August, 1710, Godolphin was dismissed from office. Harley became Chancellor of the Exchequer and in effect Prime Minister. St. John was appointed Secretary of State, with Dartmouth as his colleague. Harcourt became Lord Keeper and subsequently Chancellor. Rochester was President of the Council; Ormonde, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The minor appointments showed the same tendency. The chariots of Toryism and the horsemen thereof. The Tory victory was complete to the outside world. Those who moved in the penetralia of party events knew better. In the very month of August Harley's *âme damnée*, Defoe, was writing confidently to his chief that "Toleration—Succession—and Union" would be his main objectives. In other words, the policy of tolerating the Dissenters, supporting the Hanoverians, and maintaining the Union with Scotland, a Whig measure Tories like Swift detested, would be the main aim of the new Premier. Harley himself went one better than his henchman. His first thought on attaining office was to make terms with the Whigs at any price. Montague, who had stolen the title of the only Halifax which history remembers under that name, was in the game and continued to be in the game with him. Whenever Harley was frightened he appealed to Halifax, and whenever Harley appealed to Halifax he too was frightened. They became, therefore, the sterile mules of politics. But the Tory Party will note that Harley

Lord Oxford was from start to finish in treasonable correspondence with the Whigs.[1]

The election of September 1710 confirmed the judgment of the sovereign on the views of the country. Everywhere the Tories were victorious. St. John swept Berkshire; William Bromley was elected Member for Oxford University and Speaker of the House of Commons; Atterbury became the Prolocutor of Convocation, then no insignificant body. Everywhere the Tory standards flaunted high; but there was one patch of white in the universal blue—in the heart of the Tory chief. The first act of Harley on attaining power had been to ask the Moderate Whigs, or Centre Party, to join him. Shrewsbury and Argyll were to him Abana and Pharpar, better than the rivers of the Tory Israel. The Whigs refused the Coalition, but from that time until the very end of the Administration the Tory Party was threatened by the treacherous inclinations of its chief.

Harley therefore assumed the leadership as an unbelieving Pope might assume the triple crown. The post was necessary and convenient: it had no other relation to his convictions. Many men in quiet times temporal and spiritual have done worse and prospered exceedingly. But it so happened that in Harley's time Toryism was to be put to a supreme test: that a dangerous and difficult problem had to be solved in a way which could only be done by a man of real nerve and faith, and that two other figures whom the mediocrity of Harley could not ignore strode together on to the political stage. The Tory man of action and the Tory man of letters met in combination the Royalist-Puritan and the Tory-Whig. Harley had to deal with Swift and Bolingbroke. Both of these men were concerned less with appearance than reality. Whether in prose or rhetoric they were terrible in the offensive. The intellect shone and the rhetoric glittered until the opposing cohorts failed under the onset. But there remained the canker in the bud, the fact that the Prime Minister did not believe a word that a genius in letters and a genius in politics were saying on his behalf. Harley, with the white rod of office in his hand, never forgot that he inherited it direct by apostasy from Praise-God Barebones.

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[1] At this point Somerset, Argyll and Shrewsbury were described as Whigs. "Nominally Whigs, they were always opposed to the undisputed supremacy of any part. They largely contributed to the fall of the Whigs in 1710. They were the authors of the *coup d'état* at the end of Queen Anne's reign which ruined the Tory Party."—Hassall, *Life of Bolingbroke.*

But he reached a zenith of fame from the single fact that he witnessed the union of the man of letters with the man of affairs. A kind of brief radiancy, therefore, shines about his temples—the subtle light shed on them by Prior and Swift. The Whigs caught a similar but lesser gleam from Addison and Steele. Once, and once only, the Party leaders competed for the smiles of the intellectuals. Therefore that particular four years lives for ever, and so long as civilisation lasts men will inquire into its characters and its principles. They will feel that the great intellects of an age were put into the crucible, that all the passions which operate in the world of politics and letters alike were weighed in the balance against each other, and that the progress of the conflict was portrayed by master hands. The battle was at last fairly set for a straight fight between the Whigs and the Tories, nor were most of the protagonists on either side unworthy of the greatness of the occasion.

For the first two years Bolingbroke, Harley and Swift worked in fair accord. There was the old triple problem to face—religion, the succession and foreign politics. But from 1710 to the beginning of 1713 the immediate course of action was simplified by one plain necessity overriding and governing other considerations. The Tory Party was returned to office to secure peace with France. Until this mandate was carried out all other questions were of necessity relegated to the second rank. Church legislation might be enacted as a sop to extremists, but it would not dominate the mind of the country so long as the war continued. The question of succession could not even be discussed with any finality by the leaders of Toryism until the peace had been signed. What was the good of asking whether the Stuart or the Hanoverian should succeed while the direct heir, who would be Commander-in-Chief of the British armies, was fighting his own regiments in Flanders? Until this absurd paradox was abolished it was useless to ask further whether the Pretender was prepared to abjure the Catholic faith in return for the throne of England. In addition, the peace formed the single ground of convinced agreement for all the leaders and the whole of the rank and file. However much Marlborough and Harley might trick each other, in the first months of the Ministry, into the belief that some accommodation between their views and between Tory peace-makers and Whig war-makers was possible, the event showed swiftly that the idea was a deception. Harley himself was honestly in favour of peace: Marlborough had been so only the year before; but faced with the fact that his glory would depart with the shock of arms, the great captain on his return passed finally into active opposition, with the militarist party as his colleagues.

The issue was now clear: peace promptly if not at any price. Louis was broken. It was a mere question of fairly generous terms. But, taking all these facts into account, it is no easy business to transfer a state of general European war into an accomplished peace, even when the two protagonists are ready to do a deal. The Tory Ministry had to consider not only the ease with which the Whigs might turn the terms of peace into a weapon against the Government by declaring them insufficient or dishonourable, but they had either to square or to coerce the Emperor and the Dutch. In a word, it was necessary to make certain of public opinion in England and to bring the Allies into line before anything definite could be accomplished. It is not surprising under these circumstances that the whole operation took two years from start to finish.

The bedrock of the peace was the consent of England. This had been given in general by the election of 1710, but not agreed to in the particular terms. Both Harley and St. John felt the absolute necessity of getting that opinion solid behind their Party. It was with this object that Bolingbroke started the *Examiner*, and in November 1710 Swift was introduced to Harley and adopted with enthusiasm as Tory pamphleteer in chief.

The adherence of Swift to Toryism has been the subject of certain accusations of tergiversation little sustained by facts or by evidence. Anyone who reads Swift carefully from cover to cover, from works written before he was intimately connected with Harley and St. John to works written long after this intimate connection had ceased, must realise that he was a Tory by profound natural conviction. He could be no other. On all the questions which divided opinion in his day his prejudices and beliefs were hard and clear cut; and they were Tory prejudices and Tory beliefs. He stood for the Church above all things, and so did his Party: he loathed "Scotch hell-hounds" and abominated the Act of Union, which was the work of Whig statesmen. He had a kind of inherent dislike of professional soldiers and of war, and the Whigs were the war-mongers and the Tories the defenders of the local militia and the advocates of peace. Even in his latest phase as the apostle of Irish independence in fiscal matters he leaned to the Tory view of Ireland as an independent principality under the Crown, in opposition to the Whig idea of Ireland as the slave of the British Parliament.[1] Such connection with the Whigs as he had was, therefore, of a very accidental and transitory character. Somers was his earliest friend in high place, and he very justly defended him against an unjust impeachment in 1701.[1] He dedicated to him the *Tale of a Tub* in 1704. The dedication may have flattered the statesman: the sentiments contained in the book were anything but Whig ones.

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[1] Cf. *Drapier Letters.*

In 1707 Swift was despatched to England as an informal ambassador of the Irish Church to ask that the first-fruits (Queen Anne's Bounty) should also be conferred on the Irish Establishment. An ambassador has to apply to Ministries in power, irrespective of political convictions on either side. He failed in his attempt in 1708 and was not unnaturally embittered against Somers and Godolphin on the ground that they had not fulfilled their promises. But the grievance was a personal, not a political, one.

Swift's striking appearance as the intellectual leader of Toryism was in line with the whole development of his character, intellect and temper, worked on by the situation which finally crystallised in 1710. Earlier in the century he had been simply an Irishman in affairs, and, as has been justly observed, an Irish Whig is an English Tory. In the eight years preceding 1710 the British Ministry had changed its whole complexion. It had become by slow gradations violently Whig, pro-war and strongly anti-Church. Swift loathed the war and loved the Church. He fell naturally enough straight into the arms of Harley and Bolingbroke, not without some unsaintly gloating over the discomfiture of the Whigs who had rejected his Irish policy. Indeed, whatever the vices of that strange intellect, subject to mental passions and physical disablements of which the ordinary man fortunately has no experience, hypocritical self-seeking was not in his composition. He loved influence and the name and power which influence brings: he swallowed them indeed in the brief period which fate allowed with something of the gluttony of a man long starved. He resented bitterly

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[1] Mr. Asquith was threatened with impeachment by some extreme Tories for his conduct of the House of Lords controversy in 1910. Would a journalist who wrote an article against such a proposal have been of necessity a Radical?

the final twilight of exile and impotence which the declining years in Dublin gave him. His good heart did not make him nice in his manners either in prosperity or adversity. But the very coarseness of those manners was more likely to turn into brutal attack on the great and strong than to triumph over the defeated. His pleasure in the society of Prime Ministers never developed in the direction of sycophancy. No man was less of a hypocrite, and it was the very nakedness of his invective and the sincerity of his expression which cost him the highest promotion which the sovereign could confer on a Churchman. He liked to strip his own soul and that of mankind too bare to make a successful Archbishop or to have the chance of becoming one. To accuse Swift of "ratting" for interested motives is absurd. One might as well accuse a volcano of growing vines on its slopes to lure the innocent peasant to his doom. Swift left his transitory flirtation with one Whig and one semi-Tory leader at the very zenith of the Whig power. He joined the new Tory Ministers at the very moment when his innate convictions were fundamentally in agreement with theirs. His first task was to lay a sure foundation for peace in a bold and resolute public opinion. He was to set up a secure shield, immune against Whig militarist darts, under which the treaty-makers might work in safety. This was originally done in the *Examiner*, in which he collaborated with Bolingbroke from November 1710 to June 1711. The latter had in No. 10 of that sheet launched a general attack on the failure of the Whigs to make an honourable peace when they had the chance. This Swift followed up with a series of assaults on Marlborough, whose popularity was still sufficient to be a bar to the Tory foreign policy. But the approach to the peace was made slowly and with great caution. In December 1710 Harley was still playing with Marlborough and the Duke was still saying "that he was prepared to live with the Ministry."

Harley and St. John were still on intimate terms, dining together every Saturday, and after February

1711 Swift made a third in the party. During the whole of this period the triumvirate conducted affairs with marked prudence, skill and success. The position of the Ministry was by no means so secure as its majority in the House might indicate. Not only was there the fear that a quarrel with Marlborough might swing moderate opinion round to the war, while at the same time his dismissal was an inevitable prelude to the peace on which the future of Toryism depended, but the House of Lords was hostile to the new Ministers. Furthermore, the immense influence of the Queen, pressed on either side by Mrs. Masham as Tory *intrigante* and the Duchess of Somerset as ambassador of the Whigs, was still an uncertain factor. And the very prudence which these circumstances enjoined shook the hold of Ministers on their own followers. The October Club, founded in October 1710, was the centre of rank and file resentment, denouncing a Ministerial timidity which the critics could not understand.[1]

Faced with this position, the Tory triumvirate very wisely divided up the labour. Swift's trenchant pen was turned to the task of blackening Marlborough's reputation in the country. To Harley was allotted the management of the Court, an art in which he was a past master, while St. John's fiery eloquence was used to impress on the "ginger group" that their leaders were far more reckless than they really were. The seeds of Bolingbroke's final triumph over Harley were sowed in this manœuvre by agreement.

In the meantime such domestic legislation was introduced as was best calculated to keep the Tory extremists quiet. A Qualification Bill was passed through both Houses, making a certain income derived from land a necessity for sitting in the House of Commons. This was, of course, a formal assertion of the rights of the landed as opposed to the moneyed interest to govern the country.

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[1] This divergence between leaders who understand the facts which govern the strategy of the campaign and the followers who feel the necessity of keeping up the morale of the rank and file by violent language and action is perennial in politics. Toryism, Liberalism and Labour alike wrestle with the problem.

An opportunity was found in the defeat sustained in December 1710 by the allied arms at Brihuega in Spain to move a vote of censure in the Lords on the military policy of the late Government.

There existed in England at that time two schools of thought not unlike those of the Westerners and the Easterners in the German war. The Whigs maintained that the way to win the war was to smash the main French army in Flanders, and that the attempt to place an Austrian king on the Spanish throne should be treated as a "side show." The Tories stressed the importance of the Spanish adventure. It is to be feared that both views were based on political rather than military strategy. Marlborough in Flanders commanded for the Whigs, Peterborough in Spain for the Tories. It followed that the passage through the Lords of a motion censuring the late Whig military proceedings in Spain was a distinct victory for Tory Ministers in a House generally hostile to them.

That the triumph was only a temporary one was proved by the action of the Peers over the attempt of the Government to repeal the Naturalisation Act. The repeal was to be a sop thrown to the inherent dislike, still active in the twentieth century, of the Tory Party of foreign emigrants, whether Dutch or French. The Naturalisation Act, though perhaps excessively loose and generous in its terms, was in itself a wise measure. Unless a country proposes to exclude foreigners altogether on the system of ancient Japan and Korea, it is better to absorb them into their new citizenship as rapidly as is prudent. In a word, while there is much to be said for a policy of exclusion or restricted immigration, to allow aliens in and refuse to naturalise them is folly. But to the Tory mind that Act was mixed up with William's Dutch courtiers, with the ultra-Protestantism both of Dutch emigrants and the Huguenot refugees, and with a natural fear of the displacement of British labour, for which Toryism has always had a jealous regard.

The Bill for repeal passed the Commons and was thrown out by the Whig majority in the Lords, who naturally had no objection to the spread of European Nonconformity and little care for the interests of the working class. The division was an embarrassing blow for the Government, and one portending yet graver difficulties to follow when the full Tory peace policy should be developed in the Upper House.

The debates and position of the Lords from the late seventeenth to the late eighteenth century have received less attention from the historians than their intrinsic importance deserves. This omission tends to obscure both particular political positions and even the general drift of party development over long periods of time. It is perhaps not uncharitable to suppose that the Whig and Liberal historians who dominate the period were instinctively rather than deliberately averse to too close an examination of the subject, when intimate knowledge must have had a destructive effect on many of their set theories of history, and explanation must have uprooted many of the pet prejudices about the Upper House which dwelt in the minds of their contemporary public.

We have seen that in William's time the peers, engaged in a fierce conflict with the Commons, were continually giving alternate Whig and Tory votes by narrow margins suggestive of the existence of a small balancing party swayed by the influence of the Crown. One might elaborate this thesis. The relation of the Lords to the Williamite Crown was not quite normal. Most of the great peers, including the Whig ones, had had a hand in seating him on the throne. The Tory nobles, though hurt by the necessity of changing the succession, were not so much wounded in their feelings as to allow their natural sympathy for the Crown to be overborne. And the strict impartiality of the monarch encouraged the feeling that the Tories would not suffer by supporting the monarchy. The Whig peers, on the other hand, regarded that change in the succession with particular pride as their chief title to fame. They disliked the idea of embarrassing the new Crown they had created. In addition, the Whigs approved William's foreign policy, while the Tories did not. As the net result of these various and conflicting factors, the ordinary position of the Tory minority of the peers defending the more absolute aspects of monarchy, and the Whig majority continually attempting to keep the influence of the Crown in check, ceased for a time to operate, or operated only very uncertainly.

With the death of William these cross-currents passed away. Anne was near enough the legitimate succession to be hailed by the Tories as Queen *jure divino*. She herself was a Tory. If not herself a strong character, she was capable of being manipulated in conjunction with Tory sentiment in the country in a way very embarrassing to the Whig magnates. The solid if small majority of Whig peers thus consolidated itself once more in opposition to a Tory Crown, and the battle of the prerogative was renewed by Whig objections to the royal nomination of High Church Bishops. The Whig majority in the Lords had already given a taste of its temper by the continual and consistent rejection of the Occasional Conformity Bill throughout the earlier years of the reign.

The majority of the great landlords had always been hostile to a strong Crown, which limited their own influence. The Upper House was by nature Whig and anti-Royalist, unless the Crown was a puppet in its hands. The Revolution might deflect this tendency, but could not alter it for long. The ideal of the House of Lords was therefore the condition finally attained under the first princes of the House of Hanover. The Crown was to be a cipher. The influence of the King in the small boroughs which the monarchy had created was either to pass directly into the hands of the local magnate exercising his power on the urban and trading population, or was to be transferred indirectly from the monarch to the Minister who operated in his name. The country squires and their dependents were to be depressed with the Crown itself, and the big territorial magnates backed by the moneyed interest and the town were to be exalted at the expense of the country party.

It will be seen at once that the Administration of Harley and St. John, backed both by the Crown and a popular majority in the country, was utterly inconsistent with any such Whig ideal.

The danger was so manifest that the Whig lords were able to compact themselves into a solid voting majority in the Upper House sworn to the thwarting and destruction of the Tory Ministry. In the long run either the majority in the Lords would have to be negatived or the Administration must founder.

But here, as in the case of foreign policy, the greatest caution was imperative for the Tory leaders. To move before Harley had squared the Court would have been fatal. Yet the Tory majority of 1710 no less than the Radical majority of 1906 were stung to the verge of revolt by any delay in forcing their favourite measures through the Upper House. Ministerial circles were made profoundly uneasy by their contemplation of the difficulties which beset them in the policy of going slow. It was at this moment that the attempted assassination of Harley by a cosmopolitan spy called Guiscard, who, infuriated by bad treatment on the part of his employers, plunged a penknife into Harley and was run through by St. John, turned the tide. Instantly Harley became a hero, a victim of the usual Papistical plot. He got an earldom for a penknife and, what the Tory Party needed far more, a respite of popularity for his sorely tried Ministry.

At this point it is possible to return to the fortunes of the peace with France. Harley got his popularity and his earldom in May 1711, and in March Swift was writing in his private diary, "We must have a peace, be it a good one or a bad one." But already in January 1711 the Abbé Gaultier "had been told to inform the French Government that England desired peace." In May the Tory leaders thought it safe to advance on the top of the wave of opinion.

In June 1711 Parliament was prorogued. The Government was reconstructed on an even stronger basis. Robert Benson became Chancellor of the Exchequer; the Duke of Buckingham Lord President. Rochester's death had removed Harley's only serious competitor; Harcourt gave no trouble, and even active assistance. The appointment of John Robinson (Bishop of Bristol) as Lord Privy Seal was the last instance of a Bishop holding secular office, but, said Swift, " it will bind the Church to him (Harley) for ever."

In July the great determination was taken and Mathew Prior was despatched to Paris on a definite peace mission. He was undoubtedly an admirable selection. Like Mr. Lecky or Mr. Gosse in our own time, he was a man who combined distinguished literary gifts with undoubted excellence as a Civil Servant. And he could be trusted, which was the essence of the whole matter. No party has been better served than Toryism was by Prior, because while careful and discreet he was yet able to co-operate cordially with the tempestuous genius of Bolingbroke. Marlborough was not informed of this departure, though at the time he does not appear to have been adverse to peace. On this point one suspects on both sides a good deal of diamond cut diamond: either party might hope to profit from an open declaration of hostility on the part of the other. In any case the peace negotiation was begun.

Mr. Hassall, whose admirable and comprehensive life of Bolingbroke is the principal detailed authority on the politics of these four years, believes that the alienation between Bolingbroke and Harley began in the months which succeeded the latter's elevation to the earldom. That all the elements of such a split existed is obvious—with this proviso. There could be no open quarrel till the Treaty of Peace had been signed. Such resentments or jealousies as existed were therefore nursed in silence and did not affect the immediate issue. In fact Harley handed over to

St. John almost unlimited responsibility for conducting the negotiations with France. The Prime Minister deliberately took out of the hands of Dartmouth the powers of Foreign Secretary which properly belonged to him and gave them to St. John. More than that, the Lord Treasurer, who was not given to running an over-straight course, gave his subordinate loyal and unflinching support in the difficult task which lay before him. The negotiations which preceded the peace were prolonged and tortuous. But the cardinal fact is this. Both France and England, for different reasons, wanted peace desperately. The inclination of the Emperor and the Dutch was to continue the war. The struggle over the terms was therefore less that of the Allies against Louis than that of Louis and Bolingbroke against the Allies. As a consequence the French were able to demand far more than they did in the abortive Conference of 1709.

It is easy to declaim against the conduct of the British representatives in entering into secret compacts with the official enemy while sitting at the Council Board as members of the Alliance. But so long as diplomacy stands for national interests, and not international morality, it has to deal with realities. The reality was the Anglo-French entente, not an alliance whose *raison d'être* had passed away. The Allies themselves entered into the conferences with no special claim to disinterested integrity : they were trying to make England go on bearing the brunt of the fighting and the expense in a war for Dutch and Austrian interests.

The general view of the treaty, apart from partisan bias, will probably be found to agree with that expressed by Mr. Lecky. That historian considers that the terms obtained by England were on the whole good, even if not quite so good as her victories entitled her to. In a word, she had to pay something for being in a hurry. France, again, gave rather less to the Dutch and the Emperor than she would have been compelled to grant if the Allies had been unanimous. Yet on the whole rough justice was accorded to their claims. So far Mr. Lecky thinks that the terms of the treaty were justified. His argument can be reinforced by the consideration of what would have happened if the Whigs, the Dutch and the Emperor had been allowed to continue the struggle indefinitely. France no doubt could have been ruined, but England would have been bled white in men and money and yet received no substantial improvement in her terms. Here general consent of judgment stops. Mr. Lecky goes on to attack the weak elements in the English case as conducted by the Tories :—

(1) That she abandoned the Catalans, who had been her devoted adherents in the Spanish war.

(2) That her secret diplomacy with France, without the cognisance of her allies, was a dishonourable or at least an unscrupulous form of procedure.

(3) That her actual withdrawal of the British army and its subsidised allies from the front in Flanders while operations were still in progress left a deep stain on the honour of the British arms.

These are weighty accusations against the Tory leaders, for no peace, however desirable, ought to be purchased at the price of national dishonour. To estimate correctly the amount of blame or innocence which attaches to the Tory Party in these grave matters, it is necessary to consider briefly the course of the negotiations and the circumstances under which they were conducted.

We have seen that in July 1711 Prior had departed to Paris to open formal negotiations. On his return he was arrested in a somewhat ludicrous manner by the Customs officials and the secret of his visit leaked out. Parliament was due to meet in November, though the actual date was postponed till December in order to give time for Swift to get to work, and the Whigs, now thoroughly alarmed, exerted themselves greatly to influence public opinion in favour of the war and to secure a majority in the House of Lords against any projected peace. The first menace in the Press was met by Swift's greatest political pamphlet, *The Conduct of the Allies*, published on the 27th

November, 1711. It is impossible to find any modern parallel for the influence exercised by this brilliant publication. It resembled in its results a prolonged newspaper campaign carried out by several journals. But it was more than an argument: it was a semi-official statement proving that the Government intended to proceed with their peace policy at once and to the bitter end. Confirmation came from the Speech from the Throne in December 1711: "Notwithstanding the acts of those who delight in war, both the time and place are appointed for the opening of a treaty of general peace."

Indeed by the end of September 1711 the Government was already committed to peace by the secret signature of the preliminaries to the treaty with France.

The title of Anne to the throne was to be recognised by Louis. Gibraltar, Port Mahon, and Newfoundland were to go permanently to England. The fortifications of Dunkirk were to be destroyed. The "Assiento" on the privilege of selling negro slaves in Spanish America and other places was to be transformed into an English monopoly. In return England gave up the claim of Charles to the Spanish Crown on condition that the crowns of France and Spain should never be united. It cannot be denied that these were good terms for England. She secured certain immense and positive benefits. She only ran a highly speculative risk of some great Franco-Spanish combination being engineered against her and the rest of Europe at some future date. Such a combination was very improbable, and in any event Ministers could reply that it had proved impossible to conquer Spain for Charles, and that even a success in this direction would only substitute the danger of a world-wide Austro-Spanish Empire for that of a Franco-Spanish one. In addition, the Emperor and the Dutch were to have the barrier of fortresses in Flanders, though no terms were named, and the Duke of Savoy would be given back what he had lost on his western frontier and receive an extension of territory in Italy.

The weak point in the Tory case was that these terms were not submitted in full to the other allies, the peculiar advantages given to England being omitted from the version given to the Dutch.

The reason for this omission undoubtedly was the intimate connection between internal and external politics. Eugène and the Dutch and the Whigs at home were all allied in the opposition to the Tory Ministry, and the Government treated them in consequence not so much as friendly foreign Governments as a part of the Home Opposition. This view was substantiated by the part played by the foreigners in their opposition to the treaty. Eugène, the Elector of Hanover, and the Dutch all brought their influence to bear to strengthen the hand of the British Opposition. The Imperial ambassador was compelled to quit the country for publishing a violent denunciation of Ministers in the Press. He had forgotten what a diplomatist described as the eleventh commandment, " Thou shalt not interfere with thy neighbour's internal policy." Bolingbroke as a consequence thought himself justified in dealing with them all as domestic enemies and keeping them in ignorance of his real plans until he could crush them separately. Such a manœuvre was not one which would appeal to a Foreign Secretary with fine scruples, but it had a justification of a kind. Foreign Governments were engaging in internal propaganda to further their own interests against those of the British people : in so doing they abrogated their claim to be considered as Allied Powers totally disconnected with domestic British politics. The needs of the situation were desperate, and Bolingbroke was not the sort of man to stick at trifles of etiquette when all was at stake.

How weak the position of the Government was in 1710 and 1711 has already been pointed out. The moment it became certain that the Ministry was determined to carry through the peace, the Whig majority in the Lords made up their minds to hit back hard and without much regard to the cleanliness of their instruments.

Just before the Houses met negotiations had been entered into by the Whig peers with one who had appeared to have retired finally from politics wrapped in the mantle of his immaculate virtue. Since Nottingham had been dismissed with many compliments by William he had witnessed to his own personal sense of integrity by investing largely in land as a proof that he did not fear impeachment or confiscation. Harley had not included him in his Administration probably because he feared or disliked his extreme High Church proclivities. In this his passion for compromise led him to run a grave risk. Nottingham was about to show that the old dog could still bite. The Whig lords were determined to defeat the Peace Treaty at all costs, but they were doubtful whether they could muster a sufficiently impressive majority to cow the Commons and coerce the country. A small Tory vote would give them the necessary majority. They had something to sell which Nottingham was prepared to buy. The terms and fortunes of the Occasional Nonconformity Bill have already been described. It had repeatedly been rejected by the Lords in the interests of Nonconformists. The Whig lords now offered to sell the pass if Nottingham would assist them to defeat the treaty. The High Church proclivities of Nottingham, to take a charitable view, proved too strong for his sense of patriotism or party loyalty. He agreed to destroy the treaty in return for the Bill. "It is Dismal," wrote Wharton, the Whig Manager, "who will save England at last." With the morals of the Whigs we are not concerned, but it is clear that Nottingham, always a rather impossible person, preferred Church politics to national policy. Perhaps he had been piqued. If so he tried to take his revenge through his immense private influence with the Church.

In this way one of the most discreditable bargains in politics was struck. On December 7th, 1711, a motion was moved in the Lords declaring against any peace conditions which allowed a Bourbon king to retain the Government of Spain and the Indies. With the help of Nottingham it was carried by 64 votes to 52—a large majority where the Lords were concerned. Since the main platform of the Tories was to abandon the idea of an Austrian king in Spain as a condition of the peace, such a motion spelt in advance the death-blow to the treaty. The House of Commons replied by rejecting a similar motion by 232 votes to 106. It was clear that some solution would have to be found to the opposition of the two Houses on a matter of life and death. But while this issue still remained in suspense Nottingham demanded and got his price in advance of the delivery of the goods. On the 15th December, 1711, the Bill against Occasional Nonconformity had passed both Lords and Commons. The Whigs had been bought: Harley, half Puritan at heart, disliked the measure but had not the means or the courage to fight it. Nottingham therefore finished his career with a triumphant right and left. He annoyed and defeated the Prime Minister, who had left him out, and as it turned out he was never able to pay the Whigs their price for the passage of the Bill. Harley felt irritable; the October Club triumphed; the Whigs looked foolish. The October Club had the best of the argument and of the upshot. Without compromising their own peace principles they had reaped the advantage of the intrigues of Nottingham. And on the main point they were perfectly right. It might or might not be wrong to exclude from office a man who would not communicate with the Church of England: it was monstrous to appoint to office a man who communicated in bad faith.

But this manœuvre of Wharton and his friends, which promised so well and turned out so badly, had further results of a fatal character to Whig hopes of defeating the treaty. It thoroughly frightened Harley. He was too deep in the treaty to retreat. He foresaw it rejected by a combination of Whig peers with a small Tory dissident party. The Court had been allotted to him as his province, and there he had worked with his customary skill. He had got the Queen into his hands by December 1711, and he determined on a terrific counter-stroke against the hostile peers. On the 1st January, 1712, twelve Tory peers were created and the Duchess of Somerset was completely routed. Marlborough was dismissed.

How a man of Harley's notorious indecision of character ever made up his mind to press the Crown to create twelve peers in order to give the Tories a majority in a hostile Upper House must remain something of a mystery. Swift's diary shows that he was absolutely ignorant of any such intention until the stroke had been accomplished. He suffered, in fact, from a paroxysm of nervous anticipation of a complete Tory collapse until the news was announced. St. John, though he subsequently defended the policy, also denied afterwards that he had approved of it or suggested it. The whole credit of the *coup d'état* appears to be due to Harley. Swift agreed that during these anxious days he was unwontedly serene and confident. He must have known that his crime against the Whig landlords was now beyond forgiveness and any further alliance impossible, and yet when the fatal blow had been delivered he still hankered after the idea of a Coalition compromise. History can only speculate on this vexed question. It is said that " the wrath of the sheep is terrible." It is also certain that Harley, who moved with diffidence in the arena of Parliamentary and popular politics, felt completely at home in the atmosphere of Court intrigue. Perhaps Mrs. Masham, whose brother was one of the twelve chosen, stiffened his resolution. Perhaps he only moved in despair. But what may have appeared to him a mere move in the game established an enduring precedent quoted both in 1832 and 1910.

What were the rights of the matter? The Whigs declaimed for nearly a century against this invasion of the prerogative to suit a party end. In 1717 some of them endeavoured to prevent the power of the Crown being ever invoked again to settle a difference between the two Houses. After the creations of Pitt and Portland had transferred for ever the balance of power to the old Whig and Conservative class, the Whig-Liberals hurriedly changed their ground. What had been anathema in the time of Queen Anne became a virtue in the reign of William IV and George V. The Whigs and their Liberal or Radical successors have put themselves completely out of court in their discussion of Harley's action: their motives have been throughout so obviously insincere, inconsistent and partisan as to be unworthy of consideration. Tories who applaud Harley and condemn the threats of 1832 or 1910 for the creation of peers are in the same boat with their antagonists. The question has to be considered apart from all immediate prejudice.

If the British Constitution is to exist or develop along its historic lines, it is clear that the Upper House cannot be allowed an indefinite power of obstructing the wishes of the Lower House. So long as its principle remains hereditary its composition and views are likely to change far more slowly than those of the constituencies. In so far as this fact makes for consideration and delay it is as a rule a great advantage to the State whenever the nation is threatened by hurried and violent legislation for which there is no pressing need. But it is obvious that there may arise conflicts of opinion between the two Houses which must be settled at once if some national disaster is not to ensue. In that case the only mediating power is the Crown, and the Crown can only mediate either by dissolving the Commons or by carrying a popular measure through by the creation of peers, or by using both methods in due order. In this sense the peers ought to be able to force an appeal to the people on a vital issue, and if the people still insist, the Crown must have the right of creation to pass the measure through. (Whether a dissolution is advisable or necessary it is for the Crown to judge.) That Tories should ever have attempted to dispute the prerogative of the Crown on such an issue shows how far the old Tory Party has on occasion drifted from its own popular traditions and become infected by the doctrines of the Whig magnates it has absorbed. The Whigs always hated the popular Crown and its prerogative. The true historic Tory will range himself on the opposite side.

The majority which had been returned in 1710 was one for a peace with France. If a new election had been held in 1711 it is certain that the Tories would have been returned again with an overwhelming majority. The difficulties of the Ministry in carrying out the peace were concerned with the personal position of Marlborough, the obstruction of the Dutch, the Emperor, and the Elector of Hanover, and doubts about the final disposition of the Queen. All these might be and were surmounted, but the final obstacle was an obstinate Whig majority in the House of Lords resolutely opposed to the popular will. To wait for months and years to overcome this opposition while all Europe stood on tiptoe and men were being killed every day was impossible. As the Lords would not yield to the people they had to be coerced by the authority of the popular Crown. Harley may have been half a Whig, but in this matter at least he showed the true Tory instinct.

The Whig peers being for the moment at least crushed, the Government went forward with the intentions expressed in December in the speech from the Throne. Swift had followed up the *Conduct of the Allies* with the *Remarks on the Barrier Treaty*, and it was clear that public opinion was now so definitely set on peace that it was safe for Ministers to make a bold advance. The Commons passed a resolution censuring the Emperor and the Dutch and condemning the original Barrier Treaty drawn by Townshend in 1709, as too favourable to the Netherlands. So the year 1711 closed, and on the 29th January, 1712, the delegates to the Peace Conference met at Utrecht.

The proceedings were desperately slow. In February the death of the Duke of Burgundy threw back the proceedings and caused a renewal of the scare that the crowns of France and Spain would be united. Philip had to be asked to choose definitely between the throne of Spain and the heirdom to France. He took his time to reply, and St. John was so situated that he might have exclaimed with Napoleon, "Ask me for anything but time."

In the meanwhile no armistice had been concluded, and active hostilities were still supposed to be proceeding while the delegates were in conference. Seeing that France and England were, in secret, on the very verge of a complete agreement, it appeared almost farcical that these two armies should go on fighting. The Dutch, the Emperor and Eugène took, of course, precisely the opposite view. It was to their interest to keep up hostilities with a view to breaking off the negotiations; nor were they aware of the length to which the Tory Ministry had gone and the further lengths they were prepared to go, to force a peace. The military situation could, in fact, be regarded by both conflicting interests in the ranks of the Allies as an instrument to be used against the other. If Eugène could bring on a great battle, with the British army under Ormonde, the Tory successor of the Whig Duke, fully engaged, it might render a friendly agreement between France and England almost impossible. If, on the other hand, the Tories could screw themselves up to the point of actually withdrawing their army, they could compel the Dutch and the Emperor to make peace. The ordinary view to-day will be that it would have been at once perfectly safe and far more honourable for the British Ministers to have stated publicly that the British would not fight so long as the Conference at Utrecht was sitting.

Possibly the men at the helm were in a better position than we are to estimate popular feeling and judge the extent of the danger. Yet one cannot help feeling that Bolingbroke had a kind of instinctive passion for the tortuous in diplomacy; as though he revelled in exhibiting his superiority in the game of intellectual chicane. Such an instinct or vanity is rivalled by Chatham's inability or unwillingness ever to state in a few plain words where he stood in a private political negotiation.

Be this as it may, the Secretary determined to hamstring the British forces by devious and secret methods.

In May 1712 Ormonde was ordered "to avoid engaging in any siege or hazarding a battle." In spite of the furious protests of Eugène he followed out his orders by a system of evasion until the undertaking of the siege of Quesnes compelled him to assist the Allies. But Bolingbroke countered Eugène by announcing in June that hostilities between France and Britain were suspended. The position was thus regularised, and in July the British force retired. Even this order was felt by the British troops as a desertion of allies in the field and a blot on the British army. The final screw was thus applied to the Dutch and Imperial authorities, who could not hope to sustain an unaided war against France.

In spite of desperate efforts on the part of the Whigs in the course of the summer, public opinion supported the Government. St. John, both for his diplomatic exertions and for the striking success with which he had led the Commons throughout this trying period, was raised to the Viscounty of Bolingbroke. In August Oxford averted in the House of Lords a Whig vote of censure on the military and diplomatic proceedings of the year, and it became clear that a decent peace would pass both Houses.

But the negotiations dragged on interminably, both the Dutch and the Emperor and the French showing extraordinary obstinacy. Bolingbroke dashed over to Paris in August in an attempt to hurry the course of events, but he achieved little except a private scandal which led Oxford to take foreign affairs out of his hands for a while.

But Bolingbroke was soon back at his post. He was the presiding genius of the treaty. It was his obstinacy of purpose that had driven the diplomats, tricked the soldiers, inspired or bullied the Press, and his eloquence which had sustained the cause in the Commons. It is doubtful whether any other man living would have succeeded in fighting down the obstacles in his path. For succeed he did. In February 1713, after

Shrewsbury, as ambassador in Paris, had delivered an ultimatum, the French Government gave way, and on the 31st March the Treaty of Utrecht was signed. The Emperor alone stood for a short time aloof.

England obtained Gibraltar and Minorca in Europe and Hudson's Bay, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and the French part of St. Christopher in the New World. Bolingbroke thus assisted at the birth of Canada and had indeed recognised its importance in the expedition of 1711, which failed.[1] The other terms on Dunkirk, the recognition of the Act of Settlement, and the expulsion of the Pretender, were the same as in the preliminaries. The immensely valuable "Assiento" rights were secured.

To the Duke of Savoy was restored what he had lost on his western frontier by war, some additional territory and the island of Sicily. Holland obtained a Barrier Treaty, but the terms and territory involved were far less than she seemed about to receive in 1709 and 1710. Her own obstinate folly in backing up the selfish military policy of the Whigs had cost her dear. Statesmen have to pay the price for their errors of judgment. The Dutch believed that England would fight Dutch battles for ever, even though the French power was broken. They were wrong. They received no new fortresses, but a Dutch and Austrian garrison of the Spanish Netherlands as a bar to French aggression. Several of the captured border fortresses went back to France. When the Emperor was finally included under the Peace of Rastadt he secured all the Spanish possessions in Italy. Philip, however, retained the crown of Spain and the Indies while renouncing his right to that of France. The two great wars which we associate with the names of William III and Marlborough thus ended in what appeared to be a tie. But in reality the work of these wars had been accomplished. All the ideas of a Franco-Spanish Catholic domination of Europe vanished like a dream. The power of France was not only broken for a generation, but, although men did not know it for nearly three-quarters of a century, fatally undermined. Her military exertions had been too great for her civil and economic structure. The French Revolution was a direct consequence of the wars of William and Marlborough. England, on the other hand, emerged with her resources strained but her power of economic development not only intact but stimulated. Her face had now been set finally in the direction of commercial and imperial expansion beyond the seas: she came back with these ideas to confront the French Revolution her military successes produced.

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[1] In this expedition Bolingbroke did not so much anticipate Chatham as carry out the perpetual Tory policy of war by sea-power.

The Tories had secured this by the defeat they had inflicted on an Opposition which would have pinned the country indefinitely to the old Williamite policy of entangling alliances and European wars. Such was the main achievement of the great Tory Administration of 1710–1714, and it was no mean one.

But Mr. Lecky's criticisms still remain to be answered :—

(1) The deceptions practised on the Allies.
(2) The desertion of the Catalans.
(3) The orders given to the British army, first in secret and next openly, not to support the Allies in the field.

The first point seems to involve one of those disputes between the relative importance of means and ends on which men will never agree. That the Dutch and the Emperor, whether as allies or as anti-Tory propagandists, deserved no great consideration at the hands of the British Government will hardly be denied. That the Tories were right in desiring peace and ensuing it is beyond dispute. But peace could not be obtained without separating England from the war policy of its own internal opposition supported by its more warlike Allies. To effect this undoubtedly involved diplomatic chicanery not pleasant to contemplate and in many ways unworthy of a great country. The men at the helm were of opinion that a blunt, straightforward policy would not win the whole cause of peace, and they were the best judges of the situation, although to the modern eye they appear unduly nervous. In the main it appears to have been a choice between two evils: to allow British interests to suffer or to imitate in the interest of peace the kind of intriguing selfish methods which induced the Whig Opposition and the Allies to attempt to continue the war. Balancing the issues between wrong and wrong, posterity will, I think, declare that on the whole the Tories were right. Peace and human life are of more importance than a strict fidelity to engagements which the other side have already broken in the spirit. Mr. Lecky's three points of accusation are thus answered :—

(1) Neither the Whigs, the Emperor nor the Dutch deserved much consideration from the national standpoint.

(2) It was impossible to conquer, as Napoleon discovered, a popular monarchy in Spain, and promises made under such a military misapprehension are not binding upon States for ever. But England ought to have obtained better terms for the Catalans in concluding peace. Bolingbroke is to blame for not insisting upon this. Otherwise the Spanish policy of the Tory Party is completely justified. One could not have maintained for ever a large enough British garrison in the Peninsula to hold down an unwilling people.

(3) The third point is of far greater importance both from the ethical and political standpoints. The British troops under Ormonde were forbidden by a secret order of St. John as Foreign Minister to fight whole-heartedly with their Allies in the field. Finally, they were withdrawn without notice in the middle of active operations against the enemy, and the remaining armies might have been suddenly crushed by the French as a consequence. It would appear that while the British Government would have been perfectly justified ethically, if not technically, in informing the Allies that the British armies had concluded an

armistice with the French, both the secret orders and the sudden withdrawal leave a deep stain on the honour of England. No political necessity could justify such a breach of military faith.

The country, however, received the news of peace with joy, and in May 1713 the treaty was ratified amid universal rejoicing. The Tory leaders had won the first great move in the game, but at a terrible price—the price of time. Had the treaty been signed twelve months earlier, as it would have been but for the repeated delays of the recalcitrant parties to it, British political history in the eighteenth century would have told a very different story. For in May 1713 Anne had only fourteen more months to live. Thus were the Dutch and the Emperor revenged upon Bolingbroke.

CHAPTER IX

THE ZENITH OF TORYISM (*continued*)

Part II.—The Commercial Treaty—The Royal Succession—The Downfall

WITH the passing of the Treaty of Utrecht and the utter rout of the Whigs both in the Court and in the House of Lords which had made its passage possible, Toryism seemed to have accomplished successfully all the initial tasks it had set itself. For it, as for Wellington as he approached the battle-field of Vittoria, all the lean years and the heart-breaking troubles which had wracked the nerves and tried the intellect seemed to have been left behind. The pinnacle indeed remained to be added to the structure. The succession had to be assured in a Tory sense. But after the desperate struggles which the last two years had seen and the immense difficulties which the united triumvirate of Harley, Bolingbroke and Swift had surmounted, there seemed little to fear in the future for a strong and disciplined army confident at last in its leaders, supported by the Crown, and master in the Senate. The country had got the peace it wanted; the Whigs were broken; the passage of the Occasional Conformity Bill had been a mockery of the Whigs, who had sold the citadel of Nonconformity and not obtained the price of treason. Looking down the vista of the future, the least imaginative of Tories might in the year 1713 have seen the prospect of a smiling countryside beckoning him forward from the arid devastation of the battle-fields of the past. The remainder of the eighteenth century seemed to belong to him. A triumphant Executive, Parliament and Church would hold the balance in the decision of the succession, and whatever monarch came in he must make his entrance in the light of their favour. The chains might be of silk and the successor garlanded with roses, but he must walk none the less in Tory leading-strings to Tory altars, until the devotion of the people had made the guiding hand unneeded and King and people meet again in that golden halo of reunion which marked the landing of Charles II at Dover.

The vision indeed was sufficiently splendid to be conjured up to mortal eyes by the arts of a mediæval magician. Yet it contained a sure foundation of cold reality. There was no essential reason why it should not have been realised in the greater part. But as though some voice had uttered a word breaking the spell, the whole vision vanished "with a heavy sound," and the Tories were left to contemplate for half a century the broken rubble of this magnificent palace of their dreams.

The failure of the Party to turn the triumph of 1713 into an enduring victory in 1714 must remain a subject of perennial interest. Why was it that for the first two years and more they could do nothing wrong, and then in the last twenty months they could do nothing right? The explanation must be sought partly in the divisions of opinion on the subject of the succession within the Party, but far more in the difference of temperament and view and in the clashing ambitions which divided the leaders who directed the whole policy of the machine. Harley's character and policy have been sufficiently explained. In the months when moderation spelt the salvation of the Party, his influence had been invaluable. Again, no other man could have done what he did to persuade the Court to back him through thick and thin even to the extent of using the prerogative against the peers. But with this sudden and unexpected spurt of his old Radical fire, veiled as constitutional Toryism, his energies were exhausted after the passage of the treaty. His ambition seemed to have been satiated by his earldom. He was not ready, either through agnosticism, or timorousness, or lack of energy, to fight the remaining yards to the ridge which dominated the political field of the future. And in reality he had no fundamental sympathy either with Swift or Bolingbroke or with the Party which they all led together. He believed in ending the French war, and when the war was ended, what then? Protestantism, which he had savoured in his youth, at all costs.

The second man who had to face the new situation caused by the peace was St. John Lord Bolingbroke. He had led the extremist Tories. In 1708 he had accepted office with Harley as a moderate. As Secretary of State for War he had rendered conspicuous services as an administrator at the War Office. The deviation towards moderation was pardonable in one seeking office to make good. For the rest his temperament was Tory to an extent of which Harley could have had no conception. "Sir," Washington is once reported to have said to one who impugned the loyalty of a member of his Cabinet, "is a man to be judged by his private fancies, or by his public conduct?" It is in the light of the answer to this question that we must judge Bolingbroke. He said in public that he was the defender of the Tory Church and the Tory State—a believer in all the essential Tory doctrines. Is there any reason to doubt his sincerity?

The ordinary Whig view about Bolingbroke has been expressed in that lucid and misleading brevity of which Macaulay was a master: "He was a brilliant knave." The Liberals have indeed always found it impossible to believe that any man of shining intellectual attainment could by any chance be a Tory by conviction. The wisdom which guards the State by the defence of secular prescription; the idea that man lives in his ancestors as well as in his successors; the conception that tradition is the greatest safeguard of popular rights; the belief that abrupt changes in the body politic based on purely theoretic conceptions may produce unspeakable sufferings and put back the clock of civilisation for centuries, appear phantasms to the Radical mind, which will never resist revolution on principle but only by inches. If a man comes out boldly in favour of the Established State he must be a fool. If he defends the view by arguments which cannot be answered by the "intellectuals" he must be a knave. Since no one was ever able to answer Bolingbroke in controversy, it is clear that he was a villain of the deepest dye. Such is the Whig, Liberal and Radical argument, and it proves in advance that a great popular Tory statesman must be deficient either in intellect or in morals. For our own part we prefer to approach the career of this distinguished man from the standpoint of real history. The blemishes on his character are sufficiently apparent, but he was not a scoundrel because he was from start to finish a consistent Tory. In private life it was reported not only that he dealt with wine and women in excess, but that he dallied with the ideas of Republicanism and preached doctrines which, comparatively innocuous to modern ideas, were stigmatised as blank atheism. The first statement is not much doubted. In this he was neither better nor worse than many of his great predecessors, or than most of his eighteenth-century or Regency successors. On the second count he has left essays which show that he was in many respects a follower of Voltaire. His metaphysical conclusions do no great justice to his intellect as applied to theological matters. He lived in a period when vice was usual and speculation crude. But one has yet to learn that the Radicals have condemned Charles James Fox for the irregularity of his private life, or that the Tories have struck Arthur James Balfour from their rolls of honour because he has indulged in philosophic doubt.

Bolingbroke was only at Christchurch for a short time and took no degree. He remained until his first great downfall, the typical instance of a certain class of undergraduate. Brilliancy and loose living became to him interchangeable terms. In the ordinary course of events the harsh experience of early life in which a man is struggling to make good his foothold in his profession contains the correction of these tendencies. In other cases such a correction is not necessary. The younger Pitt lisped Demosthenes and Cicero at his father's knee, and enjoyed in the doctor's port wine the pleasures he had lost at Cambridge. Disraeli, the only Tory whose intellect rivals Bolingbroke's, suffered in his outbreak of ideas the kind of mental rash he might have got rid of to-day in the Canning Club. He was daring enough to think that he knew how to save his Party and the State, and was therefore very properly repressed by Peel.

Bolingbroke, however, did not suffer from any of these disadvantages or correctives. He went straight into Parliament, and almost immediately into power. He did not live in an age which was unduly censorious, and however much his private vices may have exhausted his energies in the final crisis, they cast no special contemporary slur on his reputation as a statesman. A very young man thinks it an admirable idea to court the reputation of being unscrupulous. Napoleon had yet to come as the inspirer of such a principle of action, but Alcibiades and Cæsar already headed the list of prototypes. Such Republican talk as can be ascribed to Bolingbroke—and there is very little of it—springs from the natural idea of the undergraduate that he would like to be a Cæsar. To understand Bolingbroke as a Tory it is necessary to put all this out of mind, and to inquire what the man was as a statesman or as a practical politician. Talk is amusing; action stands for reality.

As a politician or leader Bolingbroke was never anything but an undeviating Tory with a tendency rather to the extreme right than to the middle left. He began his career as an extremist—just short of a Jacobite—hedged awhile to secure his first office, was induced to keep the October Club quiet during the first difficult months of Harley's Administration, tended more and more by his own inherent nature to the pure Tory camp, overthrew Harley in the interests of that camp, and was overwhelmed in the final catastrophe of 1714, before he could entrench it against either Stuart or Hanoverian. For neither of the sundered branches of the monarchy did he care greatly, but for the Tory Party he was ready to give what was left of his soul. And the souls of men of great gifts may leave a residue greater than the whole hearts of men of mediocre attainments. What happened after the crash merely confirmed what had gone before it. Bolingbroke might at any time have earned his pardon by proclaiming himself a converted Whig. He declined apostasy, and on the ruins of his career built up a doctrine which inspired Chatham to break the Whigs and Disraeli to flout and rout the Liberals. He only failed by a piece of bad luck and a momentary loss of nerve in putting the Tory Party into power for half a century. When he had failed and the bitterness of exile and proscription was upon him, he stated the Tory case as it had never been stated, and the echoes of that supreme presentation still ring down the centuries. When the Dominions indicate that their link with the Empire is the Crown and nothing but the Crown, they are talking the language of Bolingbroke as the mouthpiece of the enduring Tory Party. And he looked at home. He saw the end of war—the peace of a people secure from the threat of the Continent—immune from heavy taxation—devoted to a National Church, whose doctrines suited their mind as a well-fitting garment the skin—the mental peace and industrial prosperity of a nation such as had been prophesied of the Golden Age. Therefore he is, with the exception of Disraeli, the greatest shining light of Toryism. What was felt dimly by others he put in the clear light of his style and rhetoric, and translated instinct into thought and style. Moral perversity was no doubt there, and it was this doubtful and selfish background of his mentality which prevented him obtaining the whole-hearted allegiance of Swift. The great writer too had a blacker background still in which the hate of his conflicting thoughts tore each other like rats in the dark. But his own obsessions brought him into no closer touch with the more brilliant and highly coloured nightmares of his colleague.

On the contrary, where every motive of policy, reason and temperament should have made him Bolingbroke's ally in the final effort to displace Oxford before it was too late, his affection for the sunnier and more equable temper of the Lord Treasurer made him for a while half a traitor to the causes he loved more than his life. While he hesitated between his head and his heart, all was lost. He left the fence on the right side only to find the ground beneath him crumbling into the abyss. The great triumvirate of 1710–1714 thus completed each other's ruin. The Coalition of Oxford and Bolingbroke proved fatal to both partners. There are some statesmen whose dissimilarity has been the source of their joint strength. Such were Derby and Disraeli; Salisbury and Chamberlain; Asquith and Lloyd George. Each supplied some quality the other lacked—intellect or respectability, caution or dash, the party machine or the people. Even the years after the German War have shown a similar combination, in Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Bonar Law, and such alliances are the most formidable force that English political life can produce. A single genius is apt to blunder or to weary, but two brains can at once check and sustain each other. There is no special reason why the combination of Harley and St. John should not have been of this character. Indeed, certainly up to Harley's elevation, and probably up to the peace, it was so. Then mutual fear and jealousy, incompatible temperaments, and diverging aims broke up the alliance. All these various motives for dissension were no doubt present in varying degrees. But the motives are less important than the fact. The personalities became antithetical, not complementary units. St. John put Harley in the Tower and Harley drove St. John to exile. The Ministry became such a one as would have been seen if in the 1880's Sir Stafford Northcote had led the House of Lords with Lord Randolph Churchill leading the Commons.

It has been pointed out that Harley's earldom had not been altogether pleasing to his principal subordinate. When in July 1712 St. John himself could secure no more than a beggarly viscounty, oil was poured on the flame. He had dreamt of reviving the ancient earldom of that name once possessed by his family. He attributed the slight to Oxford's desire to keep him in the subordinate position. The quarrel over the visit to Paris in August of that year did not improve matters, but until the Treaty was actually signed in the March of the following year (1713) both parties seem to have thought it prudent to conceal the extent of their resentment or jealousy. But already Swift had had to be called in to use his utmost influence to compose the differences which arose over the Paris episode. At the very moment when the signature of the treaty unchained the dogs of spite and war, the tamer was removed. Swift, despairing of all hope of high preferment in England, and realising that his great friends were quite powerless to shake the Queen's resolution, had in April 1713 accepted the Deanery of St. Patrick's, with a growl at the ingratitude of princes. He actually left for Dublin on June 1st, after the Treaty had been ratified.[1] The great pamphleteer remained at his new post till October of that year, when he returned at the frantic entreaties of the Party to try to reconcile differences which had gone long past the stage where compromise or agreement was possible.

The first ground of political as opposed to personal divergence was the Commercial Treaty with France. One of the clauses in the Peace Treaty had been that a fiscal arrangement of this character should be made between the two countries. The Whigs, as the representatives of the town interest, tended to be stronger Protectionists than the Tories until well into the nineteenth century, when the doctrines of philosophic Liberalism began to make some inroads into Whig ranks. A Tory leader possessed a freer hand in dealing with matters of foreign commerce, and it is therefore no accident that Bolingbroke should have been the founder of a line of statesmen favouring modified Free Trade and commercial treaties represented in successive ages by Shelburne, the younger Pitt and Disraeli. Of course none of these eminent men was a Free Trader in the sense in which Villiers, Cobden or Bright would have recognised the term. Neither Bolingbroke, Shelburne nor Pitt had any conception of free imports as an immutable economic dogma, or as a form of cosmopolitanism in the realm of trade. Such a view of the matter they would have rejected without hesitation. They regarded economic doctrines as the servants and not as the masters of State interests. A change of circumstances would dictate an alteration in policy. They were Free Traders in the sense that Alexander Hamilton was a Protectionist. If a certain necessity indicated one line of policy, or a definite national advantage could be obtained by pursuing another, they bowed to the necessity or followed the advantage. Disraeli, in a speech delivered at Shrewsbury in 1843 when Peel's attitude on Free Trade was still unknown, adopted a precisely similar attitude and after nearly a hundred years of controversy on fiscal questions, some of us may be humble enough to doubt whether the mental standpoint of these statesmen was not a saner and a wiser one than the arrogant dogmatism of the British Free Trader or of the American High Protectionist. The economic results of the war of 1914–1918 have made hay of both abstract theories alike, and taught one generation of statesmen at least in every country of the world that events might still dictate to them the prudent opportunism of Bolingbroke.

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[1] It has been suggested that Oxford and Bolingbroke were reluctant to give Swift preferment lest they should be robbed of his services, and it is true that he only obtained St. Patrick's by a threat of instant retirement. But it is clear that he would have been of much greater use to them as an English Bishop than as an Irish Dean. They gave him the Deanery because they could not induce the Queen to present him with anything better. Anne was surrounded by High Church clerics who shared Nottingham's publicly expressed opinion that Swift was a divine "who is hardly suspected of being a Christian."

In approaching this issue, therefore, the Tory statesman was inspired simply by the manifest advantages to Great Britain of a Commercial Treaty with France. Both countries produced a vast quantity of articles which the one could supply and the other desired. Many of their industries were supplementary and not competitive to each other. To lower harassing tariffs, or to mitigate, by a system of preference, imposts which restricted trade in these articles and brought no adequate compensating sum into the Treasury, was to the advantage of both nations. The main effect of the existing system was to raise smuggling to the dignity of a county industry. The new departure was both enlightened and beneficial. But Bolingbroke, like other Tory statesmen, had the bitter mortification of discovering that in this matter his views were in advance of his age. The Whigs were hostile alike as Protectionists, enemies of France, and opponents of the Ministry. Their object was, as Bolingbroke declared in a letter to Shrewsbury, to be submitted to M. De Torcy, " by their opposition to the settlement of any trade with France, to keep the two nations estranged from each other, to cultivate the prejudices which have been formerly raised, and which during two long wars have taken root." The commercial classes, whose standard-bearers the Whigs professed themselves to be, were equally hostile to what appeared to them, wrongly enough, to be an invasion of their interests. Hatred of the French, venom against the Tory Ministry and the fright given to the vested interests were a formidable combination. But all these the Minister might have overborne by the weight of a solid majority in the House of Commons. The foes he had to fear were of his own household.

Anyone who has persevered so far as to study the mentality of the Tory Party from 1660 to 1713 as presented in these pages will perceive that the Commercial Treaty was not likely to find much favour in their eyes. Here the October Club would have no sympathy with its darling champion. Even the fact that the moneyed interests were making an outcry against the Commercial Treaty would hardly reconcile the Tory squires to a more liberal importation of French goods. They had not made peace with France because they loved her or wished for closer intercourse with her, but because they saw no further object in fighting a beaten enemy. Their views on trade matters were of the crudest character, and they probably imagined that every pound of French goods sold in this country meant a direct drain on the national wealth. That intense localism of the patriotic idea which was for centuries the fundamental conception of the Tory creed was against the departure. Bolingbroke was removed from an assembly where his magic eloquence and the memories of the old victories won might together have carried the day. As it was the Tory ranks showed remarkable constancy to an alien cause and an absent leader. The motion for the Commercial Treaty was only defeated by nine votes. Sir Thomas Hanmer led the Tory dissidents into the Opposition Lobby. He appears to have been one of those people, well known in the Tory ranks, who have excellent principles and who always compass the destruction of the causes they cherish. The treaty was lost and the results of the division ramified far beyond the failure to carry a valuable measure. Bolingbroke attributed his defeat to private intimations on the part of his official leader that he would not much care if the motion was rejected. There is probably some truth in the supposition. At any rate the animosity between the two men was greatly exacerbated—and Swift was in Ireland. But an even more fatal consequence followed which the intriguing mind of Oxford may well have perceived. Bolingbroke was becoming the avowed leader of the Tory rank and file against their semi-Whig Prime Minister. By a delicious stroke of political strategy Oxford put himself forward over the Commercial Treaty as the real defender of True Blue interest, against that dangerous innovator, the Secretary for State. The manœuvre might appear as a joke. The result helped to produce the tragedy. Bolingbroke's influence with the Tories was badly shaken at the very outset of the last desperate year, when the race for power against Oxford meant the whole difference between Tory triumph and Tory ruin. The episode gave Oxford a few more days, weeks or months of the leadership of his Party, and the time lost could never be recovered. Hanmer, with his characteristic and honest stupidity, had, like Lord Carnarvon on another occasion, " played the very devil."

It remained for Bolingbroke to reconsolidate his position, for the last and final issue was now approaching. It was known that the Queen could not live very long, and the prospect of her demise cast a cold shadow over the most ambitious dreams of the politicians of both parties. What was to come after? The question of the succession could no longer be deferred or avoided. It was to gain time to create a prepared position against this ill-omened event that Oxford and Bolingbroke had sunk their dislikes and run such desperate risks to push the Treaty of Utrecht through. Such at any rate had been Bolingbroke's interpretation both of the policy and the compact. But when the first step had been successfully taken, at the cost of fearful risks and of actions which might be made the basis of charges of impeachment, it appeared that Oxford was not prepared to take the second step which alone made all the proceedings in the first one intelligible or permissible. He still desired to stand on the isthmus between the two parties, as Swift called it, rather than plunge into the sea. After blundering with Hanover time and again, he still hoped for the Elector's favour. After crushing the great Whig peers with the weight of the prerogative, he yet believed it possible that Shrewsbury, Argyll and Montague would coalesce with him and save him both from the orthodox Tories and from the wrath of the Whigs to come. And at the very same time he was sending to the Pretender the usual rather meaningless assurances of English statesmen faced with an alternative succession, that he was on his side after all. It was obvious that to entrust the future of Toryism to such a man in the very crisis of its fate could only lead straight to ruin. *Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis,* could the Party avoid the destruction the Whigs were already planning for it at Herrenhausen. Some other method had to be adopted and some other leader found.

The problems of the higher politics are not unlike those of the higher strategy. Both consist in a study of the final aim to be attained and in a calculation of the resources available for the purpose. If the resources are insufficient the ideal of attainment may have to be modified, or, on the other hand, the material must be strengthened to bring the end within reach. But if there is no clear thinking in grasping the final objective, or no activity in providing the material, it is certain that both in the field of war and politics a disaster or at least a defeat must ensue. Bolingbroke in 1713 stood in the position of a military commander who has executed with success the first of a very hazardous series of manœuvres to accomplish a strategic aim. His final objective was perfectly clear. It was to put the Tory Party in such a commanding position that before the demise of the Crown it could bargain with either of the two claimants, impose its own terms, and insist that the successful competitor should only succeed to the throne on condition that the Tory Party remained in power. If either Stuart or Hanoverian boggled over these terms the prize would go to the other. In order to carry out this delicate operation it was necessary that the claims of the contending parties should be as nearly as possible equalised. As long as the Pretender was both an enemy in the ranks of the French King and a Catholic, the Elector of Hanover had such an obvious advantage in English public opinion that it was impossible to hint openly at setting the Act of Settlement aside, and therefore difficult to put pressure on the designate under that Act.

With the Peace of Utrecht the first difficulty had been removed. The religious one yet remained. But even if the Pretender declined Protestantism, as he finally did, the real aim of Bolingbroke might yet be attained. The man who controlled both Houses of Parliament, and the army and the magistracy, who was in effect the Executive of the day which witnessed the Queen's decease, would be in the position of Regent and hold the scales as General Monk held them in the year 1660. Even if such a Regent knew at the bottom of his heart that he had not the power or even the will to impose a Catholic sovereign on the people, and that his own Tory officers, senators, magistrates and clergy would not run the risk of another James II in the person of James III, his position would still be almost impregnable, unless his opponents dared to call his bluff. How could a foreign prince be sure under these circumstances that the country, as a whole, would not rally to the exiled house of Stuart? Of one thing at least both he and his more skilled Whig advisers could be sure—that the dismissal of the *de facto* Regent and the landing of a German prince admittedly hostile to him could only be carried into practical effect by a Whig rising, a Dutch invasion (already planned), and the recurrence of that type of civil war which all classes, out of the bitter experience of the past, had learnt to hate. Under these circumstances there would be no alternative but to come to some terms with Bolingbroke, if only to avoid an uncertain issue and a greater evil. This part of the Tory programme, as it took shape in the mind and activities of Bolingbroke and was outlined in the unpublished scheme of Swift, was no chimera. If the control of the Executive was a bluff, it was one which could not be called save at too high a price. George I could no more afford to reach Westminster over the dead bodies of Tory militiamen than could William III. The shade of Cromwell had told both aspirants that a blood-stained Crown has no continuance.

Such was Bolingbroke's strategic conception of the end, and it was a sound one. What were the resources by which he could hope to secure it? The first thing demanded, to continue the military metaphor, was a single person in complete command. The next necessity was a united party ready to follow this single leader with a general idea of, and agreement with, the plan propounded. The divided authority of Oxford and Bolingbroke, so long as it lasted, was an insuperable bar to the united command. What of the attitude of the rank and file of the Tory Party who must support the plan if it was to be in any way effective? The general sentiment of Toryism, which was representative of the great bulk of popular feeling in the nation, would undoubtedly have supported such a scheme of settlement if it had been possible to explain the plan publicly, or if time had allowed of it being carried into effect privately. The mental standpoint of Toryism was consistent, almost in its entirety, with the aims of Bolingbroke. It would accept the Pretender as a member of the Church of England, or the Elector as a supporter of Toryism. It desired, in other words, the continuance of the *status quo* under Queen Anne. It disliked the idea of a German prince controlled by Whig advisers almost as much as it hated the notion of a Catholic sovereign. But in the incertitude of the last months of the reign, and in default of any clear guidance from its leaders, it began to split into sections at the very moment when unity was the only hope. The number of professed Jacobites in its ranks was extraordinarily small, and the only reasonable definition of a Jacobite at this period is a man who would have accepted James III *jure divino*, and without civil and religious guarantees. The statement that every man who would rather have had James with conditions than George without them was a Jacobite is inherently absurd. Consequently the fact that the ranks of the army and of the magistracy were on Bolingbroke's plan steadily filled with strong Tories is misunderstood by Mr. Lecky when he describes all such appointments as an effort to fill the army and the Executive with Jacobites, ready to welcome the Pretender on any terms. Tories were appointed to be ready to stand on their own legs.

The Jacobite wing of Toryism was, as usual, very active and very small. On the other hand, a far larger section of the Tories, but still only a section, were so insistent on the succession of a Protestant sovereign as to protest in season and out of season that they would stand by the Act of Settlement. Their views were consulted in the terms of the Queen's speeches. In the middle stood the great bulk of the Tory Party, ranged under their ancient standards and clinging to their ancestral faith, ready to follow any man who would show them a clear way out of the entanglements of religious faith and political instinct which now seemed to surround them on every side.

It is clear that such an army was not an ideal one to lead through a series of difficult operations, needing the most implicit confidence and obedience on the part of the rank and file. But two steps alone could give any hope of salvation—the removal of Oxford and a strong appeal to the central body to rally round Bolingbroke as the defender of the Party and the Church. The removal of Oxford, fighting inch by inch for his position at the Court, contesting a field of which he was the most accomplished master, was a matter of months when even days might prove fatal. The real pressure for his dismissal could only, and did only, come from the feeling of the Tory rank and file, and from a movement in the Queen's mind consonant with the tendency thus expressed in the people. That pressure could only be exerted in time by a frank statement of the dilemma in which Toryism found itself over the question of the succession. Once again, as in the Treaty of Utrecht, one feels that Bolingbroke suffered from a perverted instinct for private diplomacy as opposed to popular appeal. If he had declared publicly that the people of England and their duly elected majority in the House of Commons desired a particular form of Government in Church and State under any prince of the Royal House who would accept their terms, who would have gainsaid such a proposal? If the Whigs had denied such a right they would have proclaimed themselves for what they were in fact, a minority backing a tame man for the sovereignty. The Tory Party in welcoming William III had already declared themselves in favour of the mediæval doctrine of kingship which gave the people the choice between a bad heir and a good one. The Jacobite dissidents would have found themselves in a miserable minority; the Hanoverian Whigs would undoubtedly have come into line; and the October Club, which, in spite of its follies and the rebukes those follies incurred, represented a true Tory instinct, would have supported the second-in-command against his half-hearted chief. Who would have denied a Tory people the right to choose a Tory king?

Bolingbroke chose another course. He played chess with kings and queens and bishops and knights and left the pawns in the background. It was a fascinating game in 1713. The Queen dominated the board until death took her. The two kings, Hanoverian and Stuart, remained protected in the background; while the knights and the castles moved backwards and forwards to protect their potential majesties. Even the bishops were mobilised in the conflicting interests, and Atterbury's promotion to the Bench was hailed as a triumph for the Pretender. But the game was not played on a scientific chess-board, but in the realm of human loyalties, fears and ambitions. The passions of political mankind were let loose in those decisive months like a race down a millstream. Suddenly the dam broke and one side whirled to perdition, and the floating débris of great European reputations was found years afterwards anchored against the banks. Such is the penalty for mistaking the chess-board for the river.

And yet, when all is said and done in the realm of criticism, Bolingbroke stood on the very brink of success. Cæsar took greater risks in the road which led to Empire, and the man who by renovating the ancient world founded modern Europe has been forgiven his daring in the light of his success. The comparison, though too flattering to Bolingbroke, who lacked the cool head of Julius, is not altogether inapt. Bolingbroke too meditated a Tory democratic *coup d'état.* To establish any party as predominant in the State by the act of a temporary majority is against public policy and contrary to the spirit of the constitution. This view has been frequently expressed in previous chapters. But the Tory leader in 1713 stood in such an exceptional position that much latitude must be given him when he devised a scheme to tide over the crisis which must supervene when one Royal House succeeds another. The measures he proposed must in their essence have been purely of a temporary character. They were designed to prevent a minority, in open alliance with one of the claimants of the Crown, overwhelming the views of the majority of the people. How well justified such measures of protection were was fully proved by the event. No tyranny designed by Bolingbroke could have been more effective than the tyranny actually exercised by Townshend and Walpole. But whereas the one tyranny would have been exercised by a majority, the other was wielded by a minority of the people using corrupt influence and the divisions of their opponents to establish an anti-popular power.

The events of the last fourteen months of the reign of Anne which led to the Tory *débâcle* must now be described briefly. The Commercial Treaty was defeated in the Commons on the 17th June, 1713, and the rivalry between the two Tory leaders in the Lords broke into open flame. The shock to the prestige of the Ministry was severe, not merely because it is always a serious matter for a Government to be defeated by the help of the votes of its own supporters, but because it at once let loose the latent forces making for disunity within the ranks of Toryism. Faced with these dangers, an attempt was made to patch up some sort of truce between the leaders and to reconstruct the Administration. Letters were exchanged between Oxford and Bolingbroke on the 25th July, and as a result Sir William Wyndham, the latter's brother-in-law and lifelong friend and follower, became Chancellor of the Exchequer in November, and Dartmouth was made Privy Seal at the same time. Mar, a strong Jacobite, was given control of Scotland as a single area, Bromley became Secretary of State for the Southern Department, which relinquished Foreign Affairs to Bolingbroke, and Ormonde was placed in command of the Cinque Ports, where the new sovereign must land. The general effect of these changes for the summer and autumn of 1713 was to strengthen Bolingbroke's hand, and to carry out his policy of filling all important posts, civil and military, with strong Tories. The same tendency was evident in the Church appointments—Atterbury being promoted to the See of Rochester and Robinson to London. In the meantime Parliament was prorogued in July, and in August Ministers appealed to the country with a view to reconsolidating their position. It was regarded as significant that in the Prorogation Speech no mention was made of the Act of Settlement. The country returned them to power, largely owing to the sustained support of the Church, with a slightly decreased majority, but the mischief of internal strife was increased rather than allayed in the new Parliament. Hanoverian Tories, Jacobites, Centre-men, the disciples of Bolingbroke and the supporters of Oxford, clashed openly with each other as soon as Parliament met in February of the fatal year 1714. In the House of Lords the Whigs had almost regained the predominance which had been taken from them two years before; and even the Bishops began to show signs of defection. The Upper House, on the motion of Wharton, actually passed a resolution inviting the Queen to offer a reward for the apprehension of her brother, " dead or alive "—an insolent request subsequently modified into a demand for a reward to be offered for the apprehension of the Pretender, should he land in Great Britain. Several motions in favour of the Act of Settlement passed through both Houses without resistance on the part of the Government, which, however, opposed a resolution moved in both Houses, "that the Protestant succession is in danger." The motion, however, was carried in the Lords, the Archbishop of Canterbury and several Bishops voting in the majority against Oxford and Bolingbroke. It was lost in the Commons by 256 to 208 votes, the strength of the minority being entirely due to the Hanoverian Tories led by Hanmer, one of those mediocrities whose singleness of purpose enables them to influence great events profoundly, and yet leave hardly a memory behind.

It was quite clear that the situation was rapidly becoming desperate. The severe illness of the Queen in the Christmas of 1713–1714 made it obvious that her life could not be expected to last much longer. Yet nothing was really ready for the contemplated *coup d'état* which was to place the Party in the position of arbiter between the claims of Hanover and Stuart. Harley could not be induced to remove at one blow the great Whig magistrates in the counties —an essential part of Bolingbroke's policy of Thorough.[1]

The stalwarts of the October Club made one final attempt to stir the Premier into action, and, receiving nothing but vague assurances, turned finally to his rival.

Bolingbroke immediately responded with the Schism Bill, an appeal to Church sentiment which united nine-tenths of the dissident elements in the Party and compelled moderates and extremists on the question of the succession to lie down together with the amity of the lion and the lamb. In May 1714 Sir William Wyndham, whose integrity and standing with the Party were unimpeachable, introduced the Bill—a measure which made it illegal for any man to act as a public schoolmaster, or even as private tutor, who would not take the Sacrament of the

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[1] Bolingbroke had succeeded in procuring the dismissal of the Whigs Argyll and Stair in Scotland.

Church of England. The education of the people was thus to be entrusted to the professors of the Tory faith—with certain exceptions. The Bill reunited the Ministerialists in the Commons and recaptured the errant ecclesiastical dignitaries in the Lords, and became an Act. But in the light of after events it must be regarded chiefly as a brilliant political manœuvre. Oxford, the chief of the Government, hated the Schism Bill, but dared not oppose it; Bolingbroke at one stroke recaptured the position he had lost by the rejection of his Commercial Treaty at his chief's instigation. The return match went triumphantly to the subordinate and sealed the Premier's doom. So obvious was this that Montague (Halifax) thought the occasion opportune for a renewed attempt to split Oxford off from the Tories. But the Lord Treasurer still clung desperately to his position, though the hostile pack was now close on his trail. His position with his Party was lost: it only remained to shake him with the Court.

Another set of circumstances which dominated the early months of 1714 quickened the pace at which Bolingbroke was overtaking Oxford in the Premiership race. Just as the older man could never really cut himself off from the fascination of tampering with the Whigs in order to hedge for security, so he could never bring himself to believe that he might not yet snatch Herrenhausen from the hungry jaws of the Whigs, even at the last moment. He had endeavoured to pass a disputed payment, urged by the Whigs, for the Elector of Hanover's troops in the war by the connivance of his cousin Harley at the Treasury and without the knowledge of his colleagues. The trick was discovered and Bolingbroke called a meeting of the Cabinet, which disavowed the action of its head and stopped the payment of the money. After such an episode Schutz, who had been appointed in April 1713 to look after the Elector's interests in England, might well question the value, as he undoubtedly distrusted the sincerity, of the Premier's protestations of friendship towards Hanover. But the unfortunate Oxford, in the course of his vacillations, was about to neutralise even the merit he might have acquired at Herrenhausen by his abortive attempt to pay the Hanoverian troops.

Lord Hamilton, as a Jacobite, declared that in the prevailing confusion and uncertainty "he who would be first in London would be crowned." This view accounts for all the stories and rumours of the presence of the Pretender in England, and of his interview with the Queen, so brilliantly enshrined by Thackeray in the novel *Esmond*. The Whigs were of exactly the same opinion as Lord Hamilton, and they determined to try to secure the presence of a representative of the Elector's house in London against the demise of the Queen. The step was a risky one, for it was certain to offend the sovereign, but then the position was desperate—or seemed so in those months of strained nerves, when the fate of England appeared to depend on any accident of circumstance. They induced Schutz in April 1714 to demand of the Lord Chancellor, Harcourt, the right for the Duke of Cambridge (George II) to take his seat as a British peer in the House of Lords. There was no legal means of evading the request.

The Queen, however, was furious, and an indignant series of remonstrances despatched at the end of May to Hanover put an end not only to the project, but, according to general belief, to the life of the Electress Sophia. Again Harley made the worst of two worlds in his attempt to make the best of both. He dared not support the project and so lost his little remaining credit with the Whigs and Herrenhausen, but his opposition bore no relation whatever to the flaming indignation of this last outburst of will and temper on the part of his sovereign.

Bolingbroke, on the other hand, who had been steadily strengthening his position with the Queen and Mrs. Masham since the New Year, fell on the Hanoverian correspondence *con amore*, and put Anne's anger into biting diplomatic form. The Whig move was probably a mistake; it never had any great prospect of success. It further depressed the influence of Harley, whose retention in office was the best hope of salvation of the Whigs; it threw the Queen into the arms of their great opponent, who had destined them to destruction. By the beginning of June 1714 the Schism Act had transferred the allegiance of the rank and file from the Lord Treasurer to the Secretary of State, while the Hanoverian correspondence had almost done in the Court what it had done in the Commons. The end seemed in sight—but would it be in time?

But while two of the great protagonists of Toryism were rending one another and ruining each other's policies, what was the third about? Swift's departure for the Deanery of St. Patrick's in June 1713, immediately after the ratification of the Treaty of Utrecht, was possibly a great misfortune for his Party. His influence with Harley might, in these critical months of his absence, have dragged the hesitating Treasurer further and faster along a road he did not wish to traverse, and postponed the inevitable split with Bolingbroke. If he had gained Toryism only six weeks of time, he would have turned the scale between victory and defeat. And yet one doubts his will to do it. Swift, with all his talk of lashing the Minister, had a love for Harley which seems for once to have invalidated the sternness of his judgment. From the very formation of the great Tory Ministry of 1710 he knew that Bolingbroke was right in his remorseless campaign, and yet he never gave him unstinted support until that last moment—which is Too Late.

Swift did not long enjoy the horrors of quiescence in Dublin. In the September of 1713 he was summoned back to London by the appeals of a distracted party to reform a front and to reconcile the warring chiefs. He attacked at once with the *Public Spirit of the Whigs* a fierce assault which called down upon him the wrath of the Whigs in the Lords. Then he made a final attempt to induce the two leaders to agree to a common programme. The meeting took place in Lady Masham's lodgings, but never got beyond the preliminary stage of negotiation. Bolingbroke expressed himself ready to come to terms: Harley merely gave an evasive reply and said that "All would be well." Swift's conduct after the negotiation was extraordinary. He immediately left London in May 1714, predicting ruin within two months, and retired to the remote parsonage of Letcombe Regis in Berkshire, lying in the shadow of the Berkshire Downs. Under these pale, lofty and sweeping altitudes he drew up a monograph[1] on the attitude and procedure of the Party in the crisis, which is not only a brilliant exposition of practical statesmanship, but a complete justification of Bolingbroke's whole policy on the Succession, except his dabbling with the Pretender. The Tory Government was to sweep out of office every Whig and schismatic and demand of the Elector a complete acquiescence in the policy in Church and State of their own Party, and a public disavowal of the Whigs. Swift did not state the alternative to a refusal on the part of George. No doubt Bolingbroke could have supplied that. Bolingbroke, with his usual and, as I believe, mistaken mania for secrecy, persuaded Swift not to publish an appeal which might have saved the whole situation. But what is amazing in the attitude of the man of letters is, that he should have withdrawn himself from London at the height of the crisis, while he was yet ready to write out a remedy against the danger. Tenderness for Harley might be one explanation, the first symptoms of dawning insanity another.

Swift's relations, both personal and political, with Harley and St. John must always remain a subject of profound interest, both from the purely human standpoint and from the influence they exerted on the course of history. They are a political example of the eternal triangle. In policy, pure and simple, Swift should have stood with Bolingbroke, as indeed he did when the ultimate wrench came. Both were men who were terrible in the strength of their convictions, from whatever source of inspiration, self-interest or patriotism, those convictions might come. Both were men who might be expected to adopt the plan of Thorough, out of a clear intellectual concept, and then die in the last ditch out of the courage which animated the plan. None of those intellectual scruples or moral fears which restrain the average man from bold courses and clear-cut schemes could be expected to deter the master cynic in thought, or the great cynic in action, even from desperate expedients, when the supreme moment of their own and their Party's fortunes rose before them. However diverse the arguments from which their convictions might spring, in temperament they were one.

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[1] "Free Thoughts on the Present State of Affairs."

And it was obvious to far lesser intelligences than these that from 1712 onwards, as the Queen's health failed, and the life-and-death struggle of the succession came ever nearer and nearer, that nothing except clear-cut decisions and bold expedients could save the Party from final and irremediable disaster. In the path to such a policy Harley was the obvious stumbling-block. Unless he could be removed there would be nothing but Tory wreckage left floating on the political sea. Swift and Bolingbroke both knew this better than anyone living. Yet Swift loved Harley in a way he never cared for St. John. His affection for the man deflected him during some fatal months from the only course which safety allowed to the politician. The real path to victory lay in uniting Bolingbroke and the extremists of the October Club into a solid mass which, backed with the momentum of Swift's pen, would have given them complete control of England for a year or six months before the Queen died. Intellectually Swift would not have disputed this proposition, and in the end he advised precisely this course himself. But he allowed Harley in the earlier years to persuade him into discouraging the efforts of the Tory extremists. It was a personal matter. The union of two personalities in politics often produces strange developments in the course of national history. Two men of very diverse views happen to like each other. Two men whose mentality ought to bind them together find some little rift of dislike which prevents their cordial co-operation. Harley was a Puritan doubter engaged in constructive treason to the Party of which he was head.[1] Yet somehow Swift, with all the immense and overpowering influence of his innate Toryism, and his passionate love of his Church, preferred him to Bolingbroke. Something in Harley's character, a kind of good-humour, personal honesty and an irreproachable life appealed more to the so-called misanthrope than all those brilliant qualities which made even his enemies compare Bolingbroke to Lucifer.

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[1] *Defoe and Harley.*—The best test of Harley's sincerity and staunchness as a Tory is to be found in his relations with Defoe who was in his secret employment both before 1708 and from 1710 to 1714. In so far as Harley did not directly inspire Defoe's pamphlets during these periods it was simply because the agreement in standpoint between the two men was so close as to make such direction unnecessary. Defoe could publish openly what Harley thought secretly, in the form of tracts directed against the opinion and policy of the majority of the Tory Party. Defoe, though something of an hireling owing to his perpetual financial difficulties, had a very fairly consistent and intelligible attitude towards politics. He was a Whig—so much so that he gladly acted the spy and pamphleteer for a Whig Ministry after 1708 and again after 1716.

He hated the Tory zealots and High Churchmen. So did Harley. He stood strongly for the Hanoverian succession without caring a straw what effect it might have on the Tory fortunes. So did Harley in his heart, though he wavered sometimes as the dynastic question affected his own fortunes. But Defoe was a Whig who disliked Foreign wars and so felt himself free to sever himself at times from his party. This, too, was the precise position of Harley. The proof of this intimate connexion of view and interest between the two men lies in the fact that while Defoe was writing his pamphlets against the High Churchmen, against the official measures of the Government like the Schism Act for putting down the Nonconformists, and in favour of the Hanoverian Crown at any price, he was all the time in receipt of moneys from Harley as the head of the administration he was denouncing and imperilling!

The Lord Treasurer's mentality is best illustrated by the fact that at one time he was inspiring simultaneously Swift and Defoe, who hated each other like snake and tiger, and were divided by differences of political principle as wide as could possibly separate any two individuals.—Cf. *Life of Daniel Defoe*, by Thomas Wright.

That statesman, partly from conviction and entirely from self-interest, was the destined instrument for the salvation of Toryism. But his morals, his speculations on the Divine order, not confined to its connection with kings, his very fanatic earnestness did something to Swift which no other man had been able to do: they frightened as well as repelled him. Harley would count cats against Swift on the road to Windsor, while Bolingbroke indulged his blazing fantasies of power. The head of Swift was with Bolingbroke, but his heart was with Harley, and during nine fatal months the heart so far betrayed the head as to help forward the ruin which Swift, of all men, had least cause to desire. In the sombre meditations of Dublin Deanery he must have appeared to his own diseased fancy as an intellectual Judas with St. Patrick's as his Aceldama. Pure in purpose he had been throughout; but he aspired to govern the State, and had betrayed his intellectual beliefs to his personal predilections. There is only one sense, and that a literal one, in which a statesman is allowed to lose his head.

Thereafter events march swiftly towards the precipice. The whole nation was distracted by hope and fear and doubt. There was idle talk of a French invasion to support the Pretender, and a real plan to send Marlborough from his exile in Holland to lead a Dutch army into England to support George I. The two aspirants to the throne seemed far more indifferent to the issue than their respective supporters in England. George declined to subscribe a penny to the secret service money which his Whig allies declared essential to his assumption of power, and contented himself with worrying Parliament for grants and pensions. On the other hand, the Pretender absolutely refused to palter with the question of his Catholic faith. Ever since 1711 he had been assured at intervals that if he would join the Church of England the Tory Government could, and would, bring him in. His replies, the only fine things in his life, were unswerving. He would assure full toleration to his subjects, but he was born a Catholic, and would die one, nor would he even for the throne of his ancestors pretend anything to the contrary. The last and final refusal came in the spring of 1714, just as the new Parliament met.

Bolingbroke, therefore, had to go forward all through that spring and summer knowing that he might, in certain circumstances, be compelled to support a Catholic prince for the throne—a prospect sufficient to daunt the bravest—and once again, as in the case of James II, the Tory Party had to pay dearly for the religion of the legitimate line.

Meanwhile the struggle between the two leaders over the body of the dying Queen continued to rage all through June. "I will plague you a little," writes Dr. Arbuthnot to Swift, "by telling you the Dragon (Harley) dies hard. He is now kicking and cuffing about here like the devil" (June 26).

On the 9th July Parliament was prorogued and all interest centred on the Court. On the 27th, Oxford was dismissed and the Queen resumed the White Staff. Bolingbroke was not made Lord Treasurer, but acted as the quasi-head of the Government. He was far, however, from being yet in supreme control. The Queen and Council sat until 2 a.m. on the 28th without completing the list of the new Government. On the 29th Anne was too ill to do business. Early on the 30th she had a stroke, and the Extraordinary Council, at which Argyll and Somerset appeared unbidden, ended in the appointment of Shrewsbury as Treasurer and the collapse of the whole Tory movement. On the 1st August Anne died and George was proclaimed King. Such in brief outline are the events of four of the most exciting days in our political history. Two principal questions are raised by this crisis. In the first place, was Bolingbroke really meditating a Jacobite restoration which only failed through the sudden demise of the Crown? Further, what was the reason for the immediate and complete collapse of the Tory Party and the Tory chief? The two questions are to some extent interdependent.

It has been pointed out already that neither Bolingbroke nor the great mass of his supporters were in reality Jacobites. It is equally clear, from the mass of evidence accumulated from every source by Mr. Hassall,[1] that Bolingbroke, far from having any definite scheme for a Restoration, was in no way committed, and never had been committed, to the Pretender. Mr. Lecky takes the contrary view, partly because he draws from the Whig tradition, which sought for over a century to identify its opponents with a ruined and unpopular cause, and partly because he is not sufficiently interested in Toryism to analyse its component elements very closely. To his mind every high Tory is a Jacobite, which is very far from being the fact; he only excepts Swift because his plain declarations to the contrary and his eminence make it impossible to doubt or pass over his position. But Swift was an absolutely typical high Tory, and far more representative of his Party as a whole than either Harley or Atterbury. And Swift definitely denied that any scheme for the Restoration of the Pretender existed or could have existed without his knowledge.

The first essential in the controversy is to define a Jacobite. No one could be fairly so described unless he was a believer in the Divine Right of Kings, held that Charles Edward as the Lord's anointed was the legitimate sovereign, and that to make conditions with him for his return, whether in religious or civil matters, was treason and blasphemy. Mr. Lecky, on the other hand, describes as Jacobites all that vast mass of Tory opinion which would in a general way have preferred Charles Edward as King because the Queen's brother was better than a distant German cousin, and because he was a Tory, while his rival was a Whig. And even this preference was again subject to strict conditional limitation, such as that a Restoration must not spell civil war; that James III must join the Church of England, or at least give ample guarantees that he would not repeat in Church or State the errors of his father. All this is not Jacobitism. Since, however, Mr. Lecky treats it as such, he is equally forced to suppose that every high Tory elevated to office was morally bound to be plotting a Restoration at any cost and unconditionally. That Buckingham, Atterbury, and to a lesser degree Ormonde, were Jacobites is undoubtedly true, yet even Buckingham wanted his sovereign of St. Germains to abjure his religion as a condition of support, and the parson alone was prepared to go ahead at any cost and without reservations. But arguing from the premisses that a high Tory was a Jacobite, a Jacobite Government was in power on the 27th July, 1714. Is it reasonable to suppose that under such circumstances not the slightest preparation should have been made to prepare the return of the Pretender in the two days which followed, or to proclaim him King on the death of Queen Anne four days later? No such effort was made for the simple reason that the Ministry was predominantly Tory rather than Jacobite. Mr. Hassall's documentary case, which proves Bolingbroke absolutely uncommitted to either side as late as the 27th, is powerfully reinforced by what actually happened in the course of the following three days. If Bolingbroke and the majority of his colleagues were really prepared to commit high treason by disregarding the Act of Settlement and proclaiming James III, they had enough time to take the decisive measures for a *coup d'état* between the 27th July and the 1st August. With the death of the Queen a Jacobite Council of Regency would immediately have been appointed and all the prominent Whigs arrested. What made action difficult was the fact that nothing of this simple and drastic character was in the minds of the Tory chiefs. They were not prepared to set aside the Act of Settlement by unconstitutional action. Their idea had been, as set forth by Swift, to grasp the monopoly of executive power in the course of a few weeks, and then to embark on a resolute negotiation with Herrenhausen. Only in the event of failure in this direction would they have turned to negotiate with St. Germains. But a few days did not allow, or they thought it did not allow, of so elaborate a plan.

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[1] Hassall, *Life of Viscount Bolingbroke*, chap. iv.

What really troubles the mind in considering these days is not a phantom Jacobite plot, but an uneasy suspicion that the Tory leaders lost their nerve and their heads, and that, to put it plainly, Bolingbroke turned coward at the crisis of his own and his Party's fate. The Executive in England had immense powers; it is hard to believe that it could not have used those powers to secure its position for a short time. What was to prevent Bolingbroke, if, as Mr. Lecky thinks, he really became Prime Minister, even though not Lord Treasurer, on the 27th, from warning his military and civil supporters and commanders throughout the kingdom, from appointing his own Regency Council when the sovereign became incapable of acting, and from arresting Argyll and Somerset—and Shrewsbury if necessary—when they broke into the Council on the 30th? On the death of the Queen, George might be King—in Hanover—but the Regent would have been in control of Great Britain. That such a course would have been constructive high treason is undeniable, but only if it failed. If it succeeded, an accommodation with George or the action of Parliament must have regularised the position, as had happened more than once in the past of English history.

Mr. Hassall suggests that Bolingbroke was far from possessing such absolute leadership as would allow him to take any vigorous action; that since he did not become Lord Treasurer he was not *de facto* Prime Minister; that his control over the Government was by no means assured, and that he was fighting all through the 27th and 28th to get his own reconstructed high Tory Cabinet settled, with Ormonde as Commander-in-Chief of the army, Buckingham Lord President and Atterbury as Lord Privy Seal. Certainly at 2 a.m. on the 28th the Commissioners of the Treasury had not yet been appointed after hours of wrangling. Finally Shrewsbury, who had acted as the Tory ambassador in Paris, utterly deceived Bolingbroke and betrayed him at the last minute.

If this view is correct, as it may possibly be, a defence or at least an explanation of Bolingbroke's extraordinary inaction and tame surrender would have been made out. The amazing fact that on the 27th he dined with the inveterate chiefs of the Opposition, Walpole, Townshend, etc., and offered them some sort of abortive accommodation, was hardly the act of a new leader sure of his ground and his Party.

And yet somehow the defence does not ring true. Every leading politician knew that the overthrow of Harley signalised the triumph of the policy of Thorough for which his rival stood. Every member of the Cabinet was aware that the dismissal of the Lord Treasurer spelt the predominance of the author of his overthrow. Surely if Bolingbroke had called his own friends, associates and backers in the Government together and urged them to act boldly and swiftly, even though the hour of action had come upon them prematurely, like a thief in the night, they would have responded to his call. It was a grave risk, a doubling of the stakes, but the other way lay inevitable ruin. Up till then the protagonist's career had been such that there was one thing of which he could not have been accused—a reluctance to make a hazardous throw for a great stake. Why then did he refuse? Not certainly from those fine scruples about risking men's lives or provoking a civil war such as would have restrained men like the great Lord Halifax or even Walpole. It seems a clear case of a sudden failure of moral or immoral courage coming as the result of months and years of overstrained nerves. The crisis which he had timed for six weeks later suddenly rushed over the horizon and confronted him with the risks and uncertainties of mobilising his half-created forces and risking his head. He shrank back from the issue. Yet he had posed to his contemporaries as the incarnation of audacity; and by this revelation of fear the mantle of that virtue was stripped from him in an hour, and for the rest of time.

The last scenes in the Council Chamber: the irruption of the Whig magnates invited by no one but the treacherous Shrewsbury; Bolingbroke recommending the betrayer for the White Staff which he received from the dying Queen; the arrival of the rest of the Whig Junto; the military measures taken to ensure the triumph of Hanover, and the proclamation of George I make painful reading. The reign of Toryism was over.

So ended in a catastrophic gloom the brilliant hopes of 1710. For four years the Tory Party had enjoyed undisputed predominance. A great opportunity had been offered it, and the architects of triumph had brought the whole edifice down in one crash of ruin. Henceforward the river of Toryism creeps underground, a silent current still endued with its own latent strength, not to emerge to the surface till the days of the younger Pitt, never to enjoy undisputed predominance until Napoleon had been fought and had fallen. A hundred years separates the utter fall and the complete recovery. And yet even the vanquished can never look back on those brief four years of power without a certain sense of pride. It is only once in a century that a party produces a great man of ideas and action in the sphere of politics. It is only once in the long course of the ages that a country produces a great man of letters who will yoke his intellect to the service and leadership of a political party. In this brief blaze of splendour these two rare occurrences were united. Whether the man of genius in letters inspired the man of genius in action, or whether action dictated to the pen, must remain a subject of speculation, but at least the comet and the planet met, and after one terrific exhibition of intellectual fireworks plunged together into the abyss. In the long years of darkness which followed, what had been said and written in those four years remained an abiding source of consolation. The men themselves were broken or exiled. They lived to survive both power and intellect. Their minds were haunted by the vision of a supreme opportunity lost and of the flaunting insolence of a triumphant foe. But the purgatory endured in France and Dublin, while it brought little peace to the frustrated genius of Bolingbroke, or to the tormented mind of Swift as it sank into the darkness of insanity, was not a travail devoid of fruit. In the years of discomfiture which oppressed the country squires they still held firm to the ancient faith. When they were condemned to insignificance as the stupid Party they still remembered that Bolingbroke had made their speeches and Swift had written their pamphlets. In this way the torch of Toryism descends from hand to hand, and the genius of one long-dead leader speaks across the centuries to his destined successor.

CHAPTER X

THE TWILIGHT OF THE PARTY

THE flight of Bolingbroke and his subsequent adhesion to the Pretender were the crowning strokes of the ill fortune which brooded over the Party during the great crisis. Its consequences were felt in the impotence of nearly fifty years. In the first place, it was taken as a plain confession on the part of the Tory chief that he had committed himself and his followers to the plan of restoring the Pretender. We know now, in the light of the evidence, that the charge was untrue, and that Bolingbroke was no more committed to St. Germains than any of the other English leaders who since the flight of James II had reinsured themselves against a possible change of dynasty. His policy, in fact, had been to present the crown to either of the rival candidates who would give satisfactory guarantees that the religious and political views of the majority of Englishmen would be respected. But to the plain man—and the new King was an excellent type of the plain man—to fly was to plead guilty, and the whole Party was immediately tarred with the supposed treason of its chief. There is some reason to suppose that Bolingbroke was deliberately frightened out of the country by astute Whig statesmen, just as William III had expedited James II's flight by hints of possible severity. But such a fact is no excuse for either of the refugees. If Bolingbroke's moral courage had been equal to his genius he would have spared himself and his followers many of the evil days which ensued. But he was that not uncommon type of character which will show unflinching bravery in action and attack, but whose imagination robs them of that fortitude which allows calmer natures to sit down and await the worst which fate or man can do to them. This yellow streak in the great man was fatal. Harley, with all his faults, stood to his guns, and thus secured, at the cost of two years in the Tower, what was in effect an acquittal and a peaceful and not unhonoured old age. There is very little reason to suppose that any more evidence of treason than failed to convince in his case could have been brought against his colleague and subordinate. The latter had been the more active agent both in arranging the peace and in negotiating such tentative offers to the Pretender as were made; Harley, on the other hand, had, as his technical superior, the graver responsibility. There is not a jot of evidence that any proposal for a Restoration was put forward during the few feverish days between the fall of Harley and the death of the Queen.

The flight was bad enough; the actual adhesion to the Pretender's Court, which began in July 1715 and terminated in March 1716, was sheer insanity. No man knew better than the refugee how faint were the prospects of the Tory Party being either willing or able to secure the return of the House of Stuart by force of arms. If in the plenitude of their power, with all the executive resources of the State in their hands, the Party leaders had not wished, or, to put it at the lowest, had not dared, to strike a blow for a Catholic successor to Anne, how bleak was the outlook now for such an attempt!

It is impossible to forgive Bolingbroke for the consequences of his action. His inevitable attainder deprived his Party of the services of the only man who could have rebuilt it anew out of its ruins and guided it along the path which might have led it within a reasonable period of time to office and power regained. As it was, during the long years of his enforced exile irreparable mischief was done. The leaderless host was utterly overthrown at the election which followed the demise of the Crown. In that contest they were branded as the opponents of the Act of

Settlement and of the Protestant succession. How unjust the charge was has been sufficiently proved, but it was just because the great bulk of Toryism resembled the mass of the nation in its fidelity to a Protestant succession that the charge of Jacobitism was so fatal to it. The defeat at the polls completed its despair and confusion, and the passing of the Septennial Act assured the Whig majority of seven years instead of three years of power. Looking round, Toryism could see nothing but a hostile Crown surrounded by a Cabinet of its implacable enemies, and a people two-thirds of whom believed it had been trafficking with the Scarlet Woman. Even the Church was shaken in its allegiance, and its most distinguished son, Nottingham, had divided its influence by seceding to the Whigs as the price of the Occasional Conformity Bill. Harley was in prison; Bolingbroke at St. Germains; Swift sat cursing impotently in his Dublin Deanery. Men or women who have been expelled from society more from misfortune than from fault often seem to justify the original charge by their subsequent actions. In despair they assume a vice if they have it not. Some such fate overtook Toryism. Many members who were sound Hanoverians became Jacobites because no one would believe they were anything else. All other roads seemed barred. Sir Thomas Hanmer and his Hanoverian following lost their influence with the remains of the rank and file. These rallied to the leadership of an honest but undistinguished Jacobite called Shippen, and the atmosphere of the Party became far more friendly to the exiled House than it had ever been since the Revolution. But the conversion was the result of circumstances, not of conviction, and a strange air of unreality therefore pervaded the whole movement. Men drank the King over the water, but would not draw the sword for him. At the bottom of their hearts the majority still preferred the existing order in Church and State, even though it seemed to destine them to perpetual opposition. Hence the fiascoes of 1715 and 1745.

For this illusory recrudescence of Jacobite opinion the policy of George I was much to blame. We have seen that his throne would have been quite safe with the Tories from the date of the Act of Settlement if he had put himself in any sort of connection with them during the reign of Anne. Harley's approaches were, however, rejected, and the Elector from first to last put his whole trust in the Whigs. His views on the Continental war had ranged him with Marlborough's supporters, and he had no means of gauging how strong the Hanoverian element on the Tory side actually was. If even to-day a few sane writers believe that only the sudden death of the Queen prevented Ministers from calling in the Pretender—on his own terms—it might be natural for an alien prince of no marked capacity to hold the same point of view.

The quarrel between the Tory Party and the new Crown was therefore largely the result of a misunderstanding, but it none the less weakened both Crown and Opposition.

Under the circumstances the only wise policy for the Tories to pursue was one of unswerving loyalty to the new *régime*. Time in that case might be trusted to heal the breach. But it required a statesman to see this truth and to impose it on a body smarting under a sudden and unexpected fall from the height of power to the depth of impotence.

Had Bolingbroke kept his presence of mind and remained at home he would have been the first to advocate a course which agreed not only with wisdom but with his own views on the Succession; and he would have had the authority to check the movement in the direction of Shippen's group. Instead, at this most critical juncture he was, from the Pretender's Court, instigating the two remaining Tory leaders, Ormonde and Wyndham, to implicate the Party in a Jacobite rising. Ormonde, the grandson of the famous Cavalier, instead of staying in England to organise the revolt, fled to France, and when, after the death of Louis XIV, the ill-omened expedition of 1715 took place in defiance of Bolingbroke's advice, he proved utterly unable to raise the West Country. Wyndham was promptly arrested the moment the invasion plot was known. All this completed the ruin of Toryism.

After this irreparable blunder the Party remained for nearly ten years without any commanding leadership. When Bolingbroke had been dismissed by the Pretender in 1716 it took him this full period to repair his mistake and to procure in 1725 a reversal of his attainder which enabled him to reside in England.[1] But Walpole was determined not to allow the one great loose force in politics, which might throw him down, re-entry into the House of Lords, and it is difficult to conduct the policy of a political party from within the walls of a library. Wyndham's oratorical capacity gave the leader behind the scenes a mouthpiece in the Commons, but the shadow is not the same as the figure which projects it. Toryism had by this time degenerated into a party without hope. It continued to exist because of the solid country vote which was the enduring source of its strength, and remained loyal, as it did again in 1846, in the face of every conceivable form of adversity.

Bolingbroke after 1725, as though in atonement for what he had wrought, set himself with heroic energy and patience to reconstruct an Opposition. The main tactics of the leader faced with such an overwhelming and well-entrenched majority can differ very little from century to century. He can do nothing but oppose—but this with the most acute circumspection. He must attack to rally the spirits of his own supporters—yet a series of frontal assaults against a Ministry with the nation still behind it will only recoil on the assailants. He must whittle away the props on which the Ministry stands; he must look for all divisions in their ranks and drive the wedge in; finally, he must restore such discipline among his own followers and gain for them such a measure of public confidence that when some great new question bursts upon the scene and transforms the political terrain on which he is operating, he may be in a position to grasp the opportunity and turn the tables on his opponents. The chance may not come in his time, but it will come some time. Such was the course that Bolingbroke set before himself and pursued for over twenty years.

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[1] Bolingbroke's previous visit to England in 1723 on his pardon, and his attempted intrigue with Walpole against Carteret, were efforts purely directed towards securing the reversal of his attainder.

On its constructive side his work was the restatement of the Tory creed in the light of the new conditions; in its destructive aspects it consisted of two great attempts to unite a sufficient number of the groups opposing the Ministry to overthrow it and replace his followers in power. In the intellectual presentation of a creed he succeeded, though he did not live to see the results of his exertions: in his efforts to return his Party to office he failed time after time.

An unaided Tory effort would, after all that had gone before 1725, have been foredoomed to failure. But Walpole, out of the avarice of power, was the best recruiting agent for Bolingbroke. As all the shining lights of Whiggism—Townshend, Pulteney, Carteret, Chesterfield—were one after the other hurled into outer darkness to satisfy one man's ambition, the material for an effective attack accumulated. But an Opposition, to be respectable, and therefore effective, must have some common ground of action. The recalcitrant Whigs based their hate of the Walpole *régime* on the fact that they had been denied their share of office by a man in many ways inferior in intellect to themselves; but they had no idea of overturning the dynasty. The Tory ranks, on the other hand, were divided between an allegiance to a Crown which never could be and to one which regarded them with aversion. Bolingbroke, with a Napoleonic simplicity of conception, went right to the heart of the whole matter. Toryism had in the days of his triumph possessed three central conceptions: to protect the Church; to avoid all foreign wars save for the purpose of defence; to support the Crown. The Church was passing for a time out of the area of controversy. No great question of European war disturbed the peace Walpole maintained, for the Whig minister had calmly appropriated Bolingbroke's Foreign Policy. There remained as a battle-cry only the Crown, and the Crown was hostile to Toryism. It would be impossible to conceive a situation more hopeless for the adventures of a chief whose object was to reanimate his followers and link them with the dissident Whigs. Bolingbroke solved the problem, in so far as it could be solved, by joining intellect and imagination to a just recollection of history. He revived the conception of the popular Crown as a bulwark standing between the people and the oppression of the nobles and Parliament. The monarchy had been born free: it was everywhere in Whig chains. Out of the shadowy past and the tenacious memories of the race he evoked the recollection of what the Tudors and the Plantagenets had been to the nation at large: the shepherds of the people—the protection against the local oppressor—the firm wall against foreign aggression. Ever since Henry I appealed to the arms of the Saxon conquered to defeat the rebellious aristocracy of Norman conquerors this conception of the Crown had by event after event in history been impressed on the popular mind. It was the root idea of Toryism, and the many monarchs who had betrayed it could not tear it from the soil. Hereditary right had been impaired, but the Crown as the Crown remained. Such a call has always rallied vast masses of the British race from the time of Henry I to that of George V. The policy was equally well devised for catching the fancy and the interest of the ejected Whigs. They differed from Walpole on one point only; they desired the power and emoluments in which he had made a corner. They needed a better excuse than this for a quarrel, and Bolingbroke supplied it by his accusations of corruption and tyranny against the reigning clique. Some of the younger adherents of Pulteney and Carteret, the

Patriots and the Boys, were no doubt sickened by the Walpole *régime* of corruption and had some faith in the fiery philippics they delivered. Among them Chatham at least retained till towards the end of his life and career some of these Tory principles he had imbibed in his youth. The older men knew better, as they showed by their own practice when at last in 1742 they ran the old fox down and killed him in the open.

So despotic was the influence exercised by Walpole from 1721 to 1742 that the general policy of the British Government at home and abroad does not fall within the province of the historian of a discredited Opposition so weak and hopeless that it often hardly troubled to attend the House and seldom challenged a division.

I shall therefore confine myself to a description of the two attempts made to form a working coalition of Whigs and Tories opposed to Walpole and of the fate which overtook them. The first campaign began with Bolingbroke's return in 1725 and finished shortly after the General Election of 1734. It consisted in uniting the malcontent Whigs under Pulteney, the Hanoverian Tories under Wyndham, and the fifty-odd Tory Jacobite members who followed Shippen in an attack upon practically every phase of Walpole's policy. As the Ministers had reversed the Whig policy of war abroad in favour of a peace-at-any-price policy in Europe, Bolingbroke did not scruple to join with the dissident Whigs in advocating a spirited attitude in foreign affairs. Men like Pulteney and Chesterfield were, of course, perfectly consistent in taking this old Whig line of criticism. Toryism was on far weaker ground in this sudden reversal of its historic principles. Here the only common motive of the two sections was the desire to assail Walpole. In home affairs the general assault was delivered on the main line of the doctrines associated with the theory of the Patriot King. The impotence of the Crown, the despotism of the Minister, the corruption of Parliament and the destruction of electoral freedom, the increase in pensions offices and sinecures, the evils of party, the favours shown to Nonconformists by the repeal of the Occasional Conformity Act in 1716, the elevation of the commercial interest at the expense of the country districts, all figured in the indictment. In such a profuse bill of fare there was something to tickle the appetite of all the sections angled for. The trouble was that no section cordially believed in the whole programme. But since that is a difficulty innate in all Coalitions, it is useless to blame Bolingbroke for its presence in this one. His only choice lay between concocting a platform on which all the various elements could at least stand so long as they were not called to office, and abandoning politics altogether.

In this first combination the malcontent Whigs were the most obstreperous factor. It was to conciliate them that in 1733, just when a General Election was approaching, Bolingbroke published the *Dissertation on Parties*. His main thesis here is that the Tory conception of the Crown is not in conflict with the principles of the Revolution. And he was undoubtedly right. The power exercised by William III and to a lesser degree by Anne was unquestionably very similar in character and degree to that contemplated for the Crown by the author of *The Patriot King*. Nor had Toryism ever acquiesced willingly in the assertions or extensions of the prerogative by which Charles II or James II sought a greater independence of Parliament and people than that accorded to William III. The truth of the matter is, that the immense diminution of the royal authority effected since 1714 might well evoke as hearty a protest from an orthodox Whig of 1689 as from an ordinary Tory of 1733.

On one point, however, which flowed from these doctrines Bolingbroke was personally then, and remained to the end of his life, on less logical ground. The abolition of the rigid party system and a *régime* under which the Crown selected a mixed Ministry of "the best men" were in many ways defensible and even admirable doctrines, but they could be preached with very little grace by a man who had attempted or intended in his own plenitude of power to secure a temporary, if not a permanent, tenure of office for an exclusively Tory Ministry. The only difference between him and his Whig opponent was that what Bolingbroke had contemplated doing by legislation Walpole achieved by corruption.

Such in main outline was the joint programme of the Opposition. Its strong point lay in a certain imaginative vagueness which attracted to it honest men of very divergent practical policies. Its weak point was that the nearer the Opposition came to office the greater risk of some breakaway in the imposing edifice. Bolingbroke described this danger after the events of 1735 had shown how real it was. "While the Minister was not hard pushed nor the prospect of succeeding him near, they appeared to have but one end, the reformation of the Government. The destruction of the Minister was pursued only as a preliminary. But when his destruction seemed to approach, the object of his succession interposed to the sight of many and the reformation of the Government was no longer their point of view."

Walpole, however, was his own best defender, as well as the most potent recruiter of opposition. Had his government really been for the mass of the people the despotism it was for his Parliaments, or the tyranny it was painted by the opposing rhetoricians, it would not have endured for twenty years. After the Marlborough wars the country wanted peace, and Walpole had stolen the Tory peace policy. The Church, though declining, was still a latent power, and Walpole forbore to offend it more than he could help or to persecute it at all. Atterbury alone, an avowed and brilliant Jacobite, felt his hand. And Atterbury's exile was due not to his religious convictions, but to his treasonable activities. On the contrary, the Minister pursued the more subtle method of emasculating the Church's influence and corrupting its orthodox rigidity by the steady appointment of Whig and Latitudinarian prelates. To the other formidable body of opposition, the country gentry, from whose ranks he himself sprang, he paid peculiar regard. The very Excise Bill which in 1733 was assailed so vigorously by the Opposition was intended to afford a relief to the classes which paid the Land Tax.

While then in Church and State every inducement was offered to a man to become a convert, no step was taken to lash him into a frenzied hostility.

It was out of such intractable material that Bolingbroke was forced to weave his ropes of sand. Even before the election of 1734, on which high hopes were based by the Opposition chiefs, he suspected the fidelity of his Whig allies.[1] If they succeeded in breaking Walpole, would they not simply try for a new Whig combination?

As it proved, the General Election, though it showed a certain weakening in the Ministerial position and was fought with considerable energy, utterly failed to return the allies to power. A rupture precipitated by Pulteney ensued between the defeated chieftains, the Coalition split up, and Bolingbroke, the sole connecting link between the sections, returned to France in a fit of despair. His first attempt had failed.

The unity of the factions had proved too unreal. The dissident Whigs had never had any intention, as their subsequent conduct proved, of doing anything but displacing Walpole and continuing his system of government. They could not heartily subscribe to Bolingbroke's definition of the Opposition as one opposed "not only to a bad administration of public affairs, but to an administration which supports itself by means, establishes principles, introduces customs repugnant to the constitution of our Government and destructive of all liberty."

For the next three years the struggle becomes one for office between the Whigs who are in and the Whigs who are out. Henceforward the older dissidents, though they did not cease to attack Walpole with weapons borrowed from the armoury of the Tory leader, moved further and further away from his constructive Tory principles and from any definite alliance with his followers. They were of opinion that the alliance had served its purpose and looked rather to some turn of events which would destroy the Minister or terrorise him into admitting them into a partnership with office. It is a sufficient commentary on the position to which the Crown had been reduced in this epoch that it has not been necessary to state that George I had died in 1727. The momentary excitement caused by the demise of the Crown passed into indifference as soon as it was perceived that George II, through the medium of his Queen, was as deep in the toils of the Whigs as was his father.

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[1] Bolingbroke had written to Pope in 1733: "I shall continue in the drudgery of public business only so long as the integrity and perseverance of the men who with none of my disadvantages are co-operating with me make it reasonable for me to engage in it."

The collapse of the Opposition in 1735 did not deter the Tory leader from making another effort. He returned to England and to the attack in 1738. The political situation which now unfolded itself to his view was slightly different from that which had confronted him in the previous decade. It was obvious that Pulteney and his friends aimed at nothing but carrying on the old business of corruption under their new names. Shippen's Jacobites, less numerous as the Stuart cause died in the country, were all the more intractable as their hopes sank towards despair. On the other hand, the dissident Whigs had themselves thrown off a sub-group of their own diversely known as the Cobham faction, the Patriots, or the Boys. Of these William Pitt was the greatest and yet quite a typical representative. That there was an element of personal hatred against Walpole and private ambition for themselves in the mental composition of this group is not to be denied. But men of the type of Pitt and Lyttelton were not talking Parliamentary purity with their tongues in their cheeks. They came of a younger generation nurtured on the political theories of Bolingbroke. They called themselves Whigs, but were sufficiently Tory to co-operate cordially with the followers of Wyndham and to sit in private society at the feet of the great Tory politician and pamphleteer. Pitt's mind indeed, as we shall see, carried up to the outbreak of the American War many of the hall-marks of Toryism imprinted on it in those early days. His conception of the popular sovereignty and of the evils of party government remained unchanged till towards the end of his life. And when he thundered against foreign wars and Hanoverian subsidies he was speaking the language of the older Toryism more vigorously than did the arch-Tory leader himself.

The centre of this new grouping was Norfolk House, where Frederick, Prince of Wales, following the tradition of the Hanoverian kings, was living at violent enmity with the reigning monarch. Contact and sympathy with the Crown have always been to Toryism what touch with the earth was to Antæus, and even the reflected rays shining on it from a worthless heir-apparent stimulated the Party into a renewed vivacity. The health of George II was uncertain and the demise of the Crown might at any moment produce a party revolution. It was in this atmosphere that in 1739 Bolingbroke produced *The Patriot King* for the private reading of the prospective monarch and his following. We must reserve for a later stage the consideration of one of the few books which have exercised a direct and overwhelming influence on the politics of the century which witnessed their production.

In spite, then, of the abstention of Pulteney and Carteret and the sullen attitude of the Jacobites, the prospects of the centre opposition party seemed to shine fair. Walpole's popularity was sinking before the new war desire of a generation which had forgotten the blood-baths of Flanders. The sentiment was all the more dangerous to the Minister because it emanated chiefly from the commercial interests which were the backbone of his Government. It was also sufficiently widespread to be a potent weapon in the hands of the Opposition. It seemed almost impossible that the imminent collapse of Walpole did not foreshadow the creation of a broad-bottomed Ministry, including a strong Tory element, which would have at once readmitted Bolingbroke to his seat in the Lords and made him the most powerful member of the Administration.

Once more a sudden death dashed the cup of achievement from his lips. Wyndham died in 1740, and it was only the vacancy that showed how valuable the presence of the second-in-command had been. His figure in history is that of a fine orator, a great gentleman, and an honest patriot. Despair had for a moment driven him to Jacobitism, but he had quickly recovered his sense of proportion. He possessed, in addition, two qualities which do not always go with Parliamentary eminence and a pure purpose. He had to an extraordinary degree the power of conciliating individuals who were repelled by the transcendent gifts and glittering arts of Bolingbroke. And he was ready to pay the rare tribute of first-class ability to undoubted genius; to make himself the mouthpiece of his chief; to accept his advice and to enforce his decisions. There was nothing petty or jealous in his soul. He might have said, "There is but one whose being we do fear; and under her our genius is rebuked; as, it is said, Marc Antony's was by Cæsar's." And there was no one to take his place. It was then seen how prudent had been Walpole's inveterate determination that his great antagonist should never more address a Parliament. You cannot lead a distracted party by talking to people in a private house.

Instantly with Wyndham's death the whole elaborate card-castle built at Norfolk House fell into ruins. The Ministry was falling: it was a mere question who should push it down. But the Tories and Jacobites, instead of pressing to be in at the death, at once began to run riot. On the 13th February, 1741, a vote of censure was moved on Walpole. Many Tories voted with the Government, and Shippen, who seems to have felt for Walpole some of that veneration Sir Stafford Northcote had for Mr. Gladstone, induced the bulk of his Jacobite Party to abstain. Bolingbroke's judgment on the division indeed recalls, allowing for the language of the age, the kind of correspondence which used to take place between Lord Salisbury and Lord Randolph Churchill on Stafford Northcote's similar performances in the Commons. "The conduct of the Tories is silly, infamous, and void of any colour of excuse"; and again, "if he (Wyndham) had lived he would have hindered these strange creatures—I can hardly call them men—from doing all the mischief they have lately done."

The respite for the Ministry was a short one. Walpole fell in 1742, but the power and the glory and the corruption went to Pulteney and Carteret, who at once made terms with the less hated members of the Administration. Walpole not only saved himself from the impeachment with which his successors in office had threatened him for years, but actually arranged with the King the composition of the new Ministry.[1] His strongest advice was that all Tories should be excluded from the Government. Thus Walpole in his own ruin pulled down his principal destroyer with him. The Tory kingdom Bolingbroke had planned for over fifteen years was taken away and given to the Medes and Persians. The young Patriots were excluded from any serious part in the new Administration. The procession of Whig corruption re-formed and went on exactly as before.

There is one aspect of this change of Government which is apt to be occluded in the narratives of the Whig and Liberal historians of the period. It is usual to represent the contest of Walpole and his opponents as a mere struggle for place between greedy gangs of office-seekers and to contrast the professions of the men who opposed with their practices in power. All this is perfectly true, but it applies only to the Whig dissidents who used Bolingbroke's doctrines, as he himself said, "as a scaffolding for their edifice."

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[1] See Lord Rosebery, *Chatham: Early Life and Connexions.*

The accusation is untrue if it is directed against the younger Patriots, who reaped little power by the change, and absurd if it is directed against the followers of Bolingbroke, who reaped none at all. It is impossible to say whether a Ministry led by Bolingbroke and consisting of the Patriots and the Tories would have carried out its professions of improvement and purity, since it never attained to office.

With the failure of this second attempt to restore to Toryism at least a moiety of power the active political life of Bolingbroke comes to an end, and with it the only source of life, energy and inspiration in the Tory ranks. For the remaining ten years of his life he is nothing but a Moses forbidden by his sins the promised land of power, but pointing the host onwards from the top of Pisgah. Nor can it be said that the host was for a time particularly appreciative of the vision.

There remained, indeed, another sphere of activity in which the ideas of genius could still breed and multiply a host of assailants against an unshakable Whig majority in the Commons. The Press has passed through many forms and vicissitudes before it would assume anything like its present shape. The news-letter, the scurrilous broad-sheet, the serious political pamphlet, the issue of such periodicals as the *Spectator* or the *Rambler*, were destined to merge finally into newspapers which contained both news and opinion. But great as is the power of the modern Press on political opinion, it is doubtful whether even to-day it exercises a stronger influence than did the writers of the age of Queen Anne. Their circulation and their publication were restricted, but so was the effective opinion to which the authors had to appeal. There are three great ages of the Press: the first when Swift, Addison or Steele could by a circulation of 30,000 copies of a brilliant pamphlet reach all the political opinion which was effective in Great Britain; the second when the *Times* represented and dominated the middle-class Victorian voter who ruled the roost; the third when the modern popular Press gained the ear of a democracy which began at last to realise that it was enfranchised. The pamphlet and periodical were for the aristocracy; the *Times* was for the bourgeois; the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily News*, the *Daily Express* for the people.

But with the accession of Walpole a kind of blight fell on the fortunes of political journalism. On the Government side, as Macaulay has pointed out, Walpole himself had come to the conclusion that some of the misfortunes of his opponents were due to their intimacy with men of letters. Standing foursquare, with his hands in a pocket full of Treasury Bills, he regarded the assistance of men of ideas with that kind of contemptuous impatience which a Ministerial Whip with a secure majority bestows on back-bench speeches in favour of the Government.

Bolingbroke, with a far deeper insight into the life-and-death struggle of 1710–1714, took the contrary view. In the *Craftsman* he kept up, with the assistance of Pulteney and the editor, Caleb d'Anvers, a continual stream of vitriolic criticism on the Administration. The mere attack as an Opposition move failed, but the doctrines administered went home to the heart and mind and conscience of great masses of Tories and Whigs alike. *The Patriot King* was merely the expression in a more extended and reasoned form of those fleeting essays, and long after Walpole had passed from power, and when Bolingbroke had been ten years in his grave, the doctrines of the old Toryism thus grown new sprang into life and vigour, and began to flourish in practice "as the barren rod the Pilgrim bore, bloomed in the great Pope's sight." We shall see what strange consequences flowed from this intellectual revival, in the middle of the eighteenth century, of the old Tory doctrine of the Crown.

The thesis of *The Patriot King* is that "good government depends under our Constitution on the unity of interest between the King and his subjects." The words were written elsewhere by Bolingbroke, but they sum up the later work better than any others. The Crown should be at once hereditary and limited and in direct contact with the popular will. It follows that Parliament ought to be a Grand Council of the nation under the direction of, and yet giving advice to, the King. It ought not to be a body under the influence of an organised majority, ignoring all opinions which happen to be inadequately represented, and dictating terms to a helpless Crown to which these popular minorities look as their natural protector.

Anyone who studies the history of Parliaments from the Magnum Concilium of the Barons, through the Landowners' Parliaments of Elizabeth and Charles I, down to the narrow, oligarchic Houses of Commons which dominate the middle eighteenth century, must admit that there is a certain rough justice in Bolingbroke's contention. Parliament has been too often in English history a body representing nothing but a few vested interests and oppressing the people even in the name of liberty. Up till 1714 the vast mass of subjects had certain appeals to the prerogatives of the Crown against the oppressions or encroachments of Lords or Commons. But with the advent of the Hanoverians an iron curtain dropped between Crown and people. *The Patriot King* sought to break down the barrier the great Whig Parliamentary forces had created and to establish the Tory-Democratic doctrine of the essential unity between Crown and people—forces which if united would be strong enough to hold in check the privileged classes which bullied or ignored both in turn. A certain element of political mysticism entered into the conception, and it is not so easy to see how the doctrine in its completeness could be worked out in practice with any invariable prospect of success. Indeed, we shall see both the strong and the weak points in the argument illustrated by the attempt of George III to put the theory to the test of reality. For while the sacrosanctity of the Crown depends for the very authority which would enable it to do the work on the principle of hereditary right, its successful accomplishment would depend on the King possessing a genius, or at the lowest considerable powers, for sympathetic statesmanship. The great kings in

English history never failed to exercise such a power and influence; the bad, foolish or weak ones used it badly, foolishly or not at all. Bolingbroke's appeal must be taken, in fact, partly no doubt as a definite plan for remoulding the Constitution, but more still as a protest against the reduction of the monarchy to a serfdom which was incompatible with contemporary ideas of its dignity, and as a voicing of a general feeling of resentment against the authority assumed by a small group of Whig nobles pretending to speak for the people of England. The cry of the reformer with a genuine grievance is not the less real because his remedies are in themselves liable to serious objections. Anyone looking back from the Walpole *régime* could see that as a mere matter of fact the influence of William III and Anne had been a power for the good of the realm as opposed to the purely factious policies of vindictive and contending parties. Just so one may see in the light of history that the appeal of Henry I to the people against the Norman Barons or the struggle of Edward I against Simon de Montfort had been issues in which the Crown and the people had united against the selfish domination of a small class. Bolingbroke therefore expressed a general longing in vague and rhetorical terms, which were yet intended to subserve a practical purpose. But because the grievance was there and the desire was real his words lived after him: "He (the King) is the most powerful of all reformers, for he is himself a sort of standing miracle, so rarely seen and so little understood that the sure effects of his appearance will be admiration and love in every honest breast, confusion and terror to every guilty conscience, but submission and resignation in all."

This is the old Tory doctrine of the popular Crown. But Bolingbroke, like most of his predecessors and successors in the Party, was unable to see that the popular Crown could only be established by a reform of the electoral system. The Whigs took their ground on small and therefore easily corruptible electorates, on infrequent General Elections, and on stifling the

Crown much after the manner in which the March Hare and the Mad Hatter were ready to unite in order to put the Dormouse into the teapot. The immediate practical remedy was a definite challenge by a programme which should consist of a demand: (1) to extend popular representation to a point which would make corruption very expensive and very difficult, and would therefore give the Tory sentiment full representation; (2) to revert to Triennial Parliaments; (3) to restore to the Crown all the prerogatives that it possessed at the time the Revolution was accomplished. Bolingbroke advocated the second point, and George III put into practice his theories on the third point. Both ignored electoral reform, without which the two other reforms tended to be impracticable or dangerous.

Bolingbroke died in 1752, and as his life sank towards oblivion the feeble remains of Tory energy seemed to flame and gutter to an end like the last inch of a candle. Over the portals of Toryism were written the words, "Abandon all hope of office, ye who enter here."

How are we to estimate the career and personality of one of the two great men of practical capacity joined to intellectual genius which Toryism has produced? Lord Randolph Churchill said of Disraeli that his life might be summed up as "failure—failure—partial success—failure—complete and overwhelming triumph." Bolingbroke had success—complete victory—absolute disaster, and then failure, failure, failure. Whether it is better to drink deep of the sparkling wine of power in youth at the cost of a lifelong headache or to postpone the draught of elixir till mind and body are almost too exhausted to respond to it, is a question which the two great shades may be left to discuss in the Elysian fields.

But if ever a man did penance both for the good fortune of his youth and for the lapse of judgment and courage he displayed when, at the very height of life, fortune struck him down, it was Bolingbroke. Endowed, like Charles James Fox, with a physique and temperament which enabled him to combine a life of excess with the practice of statesmanship, he even surpassed the darling of the Whigs in the energy which he could transfer in a moment from wine and women to the conduct of political affairs. Born of the ancient Barons of England, overflowing with vitality, furious in debauch, and terrible in intrigue, eloquence and sheer brains, he conceived and nearly carried out a tremendous stroke of statesmanship which would have placed Toryism in power throughout the eighteenth century. But the mediocre and temporising Harley clung like a cannon-ball to his leg, and his overstrained judgment could not stand the test of the final crisis. Bolingbroke, therefore, stands for us, as he stood for the generation which witnessed the last thirty odd years of his life, less as a man of action than as a man of thought. But because he had seen the innermost core of politics at an early age, his views and judgments are of far more value than those which spring from a study of library walls. What he projected from his mind, therefore, long survived the fall from power and the death of the body. The ancient instincts of Tory faith transmitted to him through a long line of ancestors were brought to the surface and fixed for all time to the flash of his literary genius, and it was the after-glow of the fire which destroyed the Whigs who outlived him. Chatham was not too proud to accept half his doctrine; George III so misread it as to plunge the realm into confusion; the Tory Party re-arose for a long period of power as the result of the chaos; and Disraeli, both in the dreams of his youth and in the long, cold days of Opposition, turned for inspiration to his sole intellectual counterpart. So in the twilight of his Party perished one of the greatest of its earthly gods. Eight years afterwards George III ascended the throne.

CHAPTER XI

CHATHAM—THE TRANSITION

Bolingbroke's successor was in effect Chatham, however much the latter might have disliked the description. They had in Norfolk House and Frederick William, Prince of Wales, whose gentleman usher Pitt had become, a strong link of connection. Chatham had indeed drunk deep of the fount of inspiration to be found in *The Patriot King*, though he was no more inclined to acknowledge Bolingbroke as his exemplar than Randolph Churchill was Disraeli. In fact Pitt quarrelled violently and irrevocably with his sister Anne because she insisted on accepting the hospitality of the new Bolingbroke *ménage* in France. The Earl's personality by the sheer force of its genius either attracted irresistibly or repelled violently. In Pitt's case it had the latter effect. The two were perhaps too much of a trade to agree easily. But he accepted the doctrine while disowning the preacher.

It will be necessary to study with special attention the earlier career of a man who was the principal architect of the ruin of the old Whig domination, who persuaded Toryism to accept the Empire as a living creed, and who assisted George III to knock the heads of the Whig factions together so as to jumble out of the confusion a new Tory *régime*. The Tory side of William Pitt, the Elder, belongs to Tory history, his other aspects can be safely left to the tender mercies of the Whigs and Radicals.

Pitt entered Parliament in 1735 as a youthful member of the strictest sect of the Patriots, in the very year when Bolingbroke had made one of his despairing retreats to France. In spite of his distaste for the elder statesman, he was, both through his sister Anne, his brother Thomas and his cousin Lyttelton, in close connection with Norfolk House and the Opposition led by the heir-apparent. Far too little attention has been paid to this aspect of Chatham's career, and to the Toryism which he imbibed from this source. His first important speech was an amazingly clever piece of irony in a congratulatory address to the Prince of Wales on a marriage which was disliked both by the King and Walpole. It was an open declaration of war on the Whig Crown in existence and an equally clear declaration in favour of the Tory Crown to be. He was instantly dismissed his cornetcy in the army—an act of recognition or vindictiveness on the part of the Premier which first called the popular attention to one who wore with equal ease the insignia of victory or the halo of martyrdom, so long as there was a sufficient crowd to look on and applaud.

But the prospective Toryism of " the boys " had one fatal defect—it was a gamble on the lives of two men. " They staked their all," says Von Ruville, truly enough, " upon a single turn of the cards, relying upon the Prince and his succession to the throne to the exclusion of any other possibility. However, George II, far from making room for his son, lived on for another twenty years, and the young men found themselves in a most unsatisfactory position." As it was, the King outlived the Prince by nine years, and the Prince ratted on his friends, adherents and sycophants long before his death. Tories and dissident Whigs who placed their hopes on Frederick William were therefore no more fortunate than the Foxites who put their trust in George IV as prospective sovereign.

The second disappointment which overtook Pitt was both personal and political. The fall of Walpole in 1742, to which his rhetoric in the House of Commons had in no small degree contributed, brought no profit either to him or to his political ideas. He failed to attain office—which he undoubtedly desired if only for financial reasons—and the Walpoleon system survived its author. Pulteney and Carteret had used the enthusiasm of " the boys " : they had not the faintest intention of putting their Opposition pledges into operation and purifying a Government they now expected to control.

The consequence is a change of front on Pitt's part. His claims for office had not been supported by the Prince of Wales, who had made a kind of half accommodation with Walpole, now Lord Orford, and the disillusion of the discovery that there was no patriot King and that he had merely substituted one old gang for another was strong upon him. For a moment indeed he seemed to contemplate becoming a Die-hard leader of Opposition against the betrayers of his ideals and interests, Carteret and Pulteney. Carteret's foreign policy was one of vigorous action abroad and a subsidy to the Hanoverian troops. Pitt immediately cast back to the old Tory objections to European wars and assailed the Hanoverian subsidy with his wonted vigour. But while Carteret, backed by the King, seemed to be the official enemy, the Minister himself was being steadily undermined within his own Cabinet by the extension of the Pelham and Walpole influence. If anyone says of Pitt that he did not run a straight course in his early political career, the answer is that you cannot ride straight in a course which consists of nothing but corners. The main feature of the period (1742–1744) is the steady rise of Pitt's purely Parliamentary reputation. He attained the oratorical summit only by means of a long climb.

But it was Pelham and Newcastle and the old gang, not Pitt, who threw Carteret and his spirited foreign policy downstairs, although in order to do so they had to come to terms with the remainder of the Patriots still left in opposition. In 1743 Bolingbroke returned to England and was reconciled in some sort with Pitt. A deal, of which he approved, was suggested between the two sections in order to secure the fall of the Minister. At this point Pitt turned right face about, abandoned Die-hard Little Englandism, and suddenly inclined to Whiggery, dashed with cynicism and stiffened by self-interest. The story is that the deal was not a very creditable one, and that by a vote of five to four the Patriots decided not to include a Place Bill—in other words, a policy of anti-corruption—in the terms which would induce them to support the Pelhams, Pitt voting in the majority. In November 1744 the intrigue succeeded and Carteret had to resign. Pelham succeeded him and on his death, ten years later, was in turn succeeded by his brother the Duke of Newcastle. Pitt henceforward sheds a part of his purely Tory doctrine and leaves the Prince of Wales, who in effect had long since left him. But his unpopularity with the King continued. It was not till after another violent political crisis that in 1746 he became Vice-Treasurer for Ireland, and subsequently Paymaster-General. The price of these offices was silence, broken by a few official speeches in defence of Government policies, most of which he had previously denounced. In effect he became by degrees an increasingly strong support to the Pelham and Newcastle *régime*, but always on the understanding that he was to be rewarded in the long run with Cabinet rank and a Secretaryship of State. Finding himself disappointed of this hope, he retired into an almost complete Parliamentary silence until 1754. For eight years he had in effect been nothing but a placeman. Then came his outbreak against Newcastle, his resignation, his brief Secretaryship of State in 1756, and finally his joint return to power with that politician in the great war crisis of 1757.

The full story of the great man's slow and tortuous rise to power, now allying himself with Tories and now with Whigs, will be found fully set forth in Lord Rosebery's *Early Life of Chatham*, and in Von Ruville's full-length biography. Fortunately we are not concerned in detail with this Walpurgis dance of Whigs and heirs-apparent, the story of which is about as intelligible as that contained in the Sonnets of Shakespeare. One thing only is clear, political principle had very little to do with the issues involved.

The old epoch had come definitely to an end. Frederick William had died suddenly in 1751. Bolingbroke had followed him to the grave in 1752, having outlived all his contemporaries. A kind of paralysis seemed to have seized British politics under the successive rulership of Pelham and Newcastle.

Five years after Bolingbroke's death, Pitt, who had since 1754 remained a menacing figure in the background, disturbing the dreams of peaceful possession enjoyed by Newcastle and inadequately bought off and reduced to silence by minor office, strode suddenly into the middle of the stage. The brief period of his unquestioned glory, lasting from 1757 to the accession of George III, offers an opportunity for a review of the earlier stages of transition by which the victorious Tory Party of the age of Anne became once more the triumphant Tory Party of Pitt the younger and of 1784. For Chatham himself represents more than any man the yielding and melting process, the transfusion of ideas between the Tories and one half of the Whigs, the reconciliation of opposites, which marks the middle eighteenth century. He has been claimed as a Tory and recruited as a Whig, but he was in truth neither and both. Nominally he was a Whig all his life; actually he spent the greater part of it in violent opposition to Whig predominance, and in the convulsive and meteoric efforts of his career broke that predominance for ever. As a Whig allied with the Tories he had sat at the feet of Bolingbroke and imbibed the major part of his ideas; in his old age he struggled vehemently against the popular Tory policy of coercing the American colonists into submission. He adored and fought the Crown by turns. Whether Newcastle bought the constituencies in the Commons for him, or whether in later days he sat in hopeless opposition in the House of Lords, he appealed equally both in Radical and Tory terms to the popular judgment of the people. Both sides have therefore a perfect right to claim a part of his mind and genius as their own, because he was the almost solitary instance of a great man who can divide his allegiance equally between divergent principles. In the first chapter of this book it was suggested that there exists one final test between the born Liberal and the essential Tory. In the ultimate resort will a man prefer the freedom of the individual to the unity and safety of the State? If he will sacrifice the Commonwealth to the right of individual action he is a Liberal though he call himself a Conservative; if he puts the unity of the State beyond all other considerations he is a Tory though he call himself a Socialist. Yet Chatham's views and policy defy this test completely. He was no intellectual trimmer, shifting from doubt on one side to doubt on the other, but a man of action and passion rather than of thought, hurling his whole weight into alternate scales. The disciple of the author of *The Patriot King* ends by inciting the American revolutionists to defy the Crown. In all these respects he represents the age of broken and partial lights in which he lived, and his multiple refractions reflect as in a mirror the changes which were taking place in the Tory mind. Outwardly Toryism after the death of Bolingbroke ceased to exist except as a small, silent minority in the Commons. Internally the views of professed Tories and of men of Tory inclinations who called themselves Whigs were undergoing a profound change. So any organism strives to adjust itself to modified conditions of existence. It clings to what is useful in the old; it accepts what is inevitable in the new. We cannot take a more crucial instance of this gradual change than the attitude of the respective parties towards foreign policy. Before 1714 the Whigs had been all for war and the Tories all for peace in Europe. The line of divergence on this subject had been drawn fairly definitely ever since the accession of William III. After 1714 Walpole became the apostle of peace abroad. The dissident Whigs utilised the privileges of opposition to assail him on this ground, and in so far as they formed alliances with the Tories, the strictness of Tory doctrine on non-intervention became impaired. The result was a slow break-up of the old attitude of the parties on these issues. It became increasingly difficult for a man to say that he objected to the policy which led to the battles of Minden and Dettingen because he was a Tory, or that he liked it because he was a Whig. Orators, and especially Chatham himself, more and more used these appeals to old party prejudice just as happened to suit the exigencies of debate. The complete divergence of view between the two parties was destroyed and every man did what seemed good in his own sight or what suited his immediate interest in discussing foreign affairs. Hence the apparent inconsistency of Chatham in denouncing the subsidies to Hanover in opposition, and pouring out from the pedestal of office the lavish subsidies to Frederick the Great. The old Toryism known to Bolingbroke before 1714 would in the Seven Years' War have risen to a tremendous and outraged protest against the subsidising of a campaign in Europe for ends so complex and so tangled in the skeins of European diplomacy that no plain man could understand the issue then, and no one but a student can understand it to-day. Yet no Tory voice spoke against the conquering *régime* of the great War Minister. No Tory said that Chatham's campaigns enriched the commercial profiteer at the expense of the landed gentry, which as a matter of fact they did. The main voices which are heard in protest as Chatham falls are those of the Whig financial purists, declaring that the commercial classes can no longer stand the increasing burden of the National Debt.[1]

The explanation of this lack of opposition from the historic advocates of peace is to be sought partly in a distinction which had always been dear to the Tory mind. It was Europe alone that the Party had originally considered beyond the pale of armed intervention. Toryism was perfectly free to assail Walpole for his lack of resistance to the commercial and maritime pretensions of Spain. Never a word had the party ever said against the Fleet and the extensions of British interests abroad. The Tudors and the Stuarts had founded colonies, given charters to merchant companies, and supported the mercantile marine with the entire concurrence of the country squires. On this single point the feud between the mercantile and the rural interests was hushed. Chatham disarmed Tory reluctance to his European campaigns by appealing to its belief in naval predominance and all that the mastery of the sea implies. He converted it insensibly to the creed of Empire by the simple process of founding one.

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[1] This was the decisive argument used in Chatham's last War Cabinet, when he and Temple resigned alone. But it is also true that at the time of the Peace of Paris Toryism was tired of the war and was reacting towards its old policy of peace. But its influence was small and its feeling devoid of passion.

The doctrine of national unity centring in the Crown as preached by Bolingbroke formed a strong element in the Corinthian mentality of the young Chatham. And in his career as War Minister in middle age he turned those doctrines to an extended purpose. Like the ancient gods, what he had sucked up in incense in the 1740's he returned in rain on the barren fields of Toryism. His campaigns across the seas turned the Tory mind in a congenial direction and widened sympathies apt to cling too closely to the soil of the home farm. He exposed the shining prospect of world-wide conquest to a Toryism which had never questioned or disliked an Empire based on the sea, and narrow minds expanded to the appeal. The root of the Tory objection had been to sacrifices devoted to the Moloch of European war. Part of this prejudice had been eaten away by time and political exigency; the remaining part fell to the argument that you could conquer America on the Rhine. Even the Tories of the 1750's realised dimly that England's future lay across the water. Chatham was indeed eminently qualified to teach them this new lesson of opportune tergiversation! He had followed the Tory doctrine of denouncing subsidies and armed support to Hanover. He himself had later set out

coal making history!

to create the foundations of the British Empire in Canada, the West Indies and India, and had defended his own subsidies to Frederick the Great as the movement of a pawn in the Imperial gambit. In the course of his career he had boxed the compass of inconsistency and yet scored a brilliant triumph. The sound core of Toryism, which is opportunist, bowed to the verdict which genius secured. It did so in despite of the fact that the conquests of Chatham produced the Indian Nabob, and in spite of its inherent belief that its deadly enemies of the commercial class were battening on the spoils and contracts of war.

Through all these elements of misunderstanding there blew a salt breath of the sea. A proud and insular people living in remote and fertile counties responded to the pictures presented to it of men smashing down resistance through the portholes of hostile battleships and spreading the fear of the English name through unknown lands in the Orient. Chatham's gold boxes were rained on him by the Whig traders of the great cities who saw their dividends increase as the result of his efforts. But side by side with this enthusiasm of the commercial classes there went on a steady process of conversion among the country squires, who honoured any man who could add a lustre to the glory of their national history. This change of attitude produced for the moment no effect on practical politics, but it laid the basis of the Tory Party which in the years to come supported William Pitt the Younger and stood by George III. The conception of insular Toryism was undermined. From his time onwards the Tory Party has become more and more identified with the conceptions of Imperial expansion and Imperial unity. Chatham's views were to Toryism like a wind before the dawn, but the dawn followed as the sun follows that wind. It will be seen later in the struggle over the American War of Independence how vital a factor the new doctrine had become in the Party creed, and how the tenacity exhibited then by the Tory classes and masses in face of the military disasters of that struggle was due to a linking up of the old conception of maintaining the unity of the dominions under the Crown with the new idea that the kingdom did not stop at the Channel. The Imperial development in the Party mentality was natural. But it might never have taken place had not Chatham, with his half-Tory ideas and non-party military appointments, played the rôle of interpreter.

In home affairs the chief educator of the Tory Party in this transitional stage was Bolingbroke, both in his later life and in the written works which survived him. *The Patriot King* was not published till 1749, three years before his death, but it had been privately circulated before and worked powerfully in many minds, including that of Prince Frederick William and his son, the youthful George III, who became by the death of his father in 1751 heir to the crown.

Bolingbroke eliminated from Toryism the last taint of Jacobitism and restated the case for the Crown and the Party in a form which made possible the Tory revival in the reign of George III. Disraeli, writing in 1835, describes this work with his usual vigour and vagueness. "He eradicated from Toryism all the absurd and odious doctrines which Toryism had adventitiously adopted, clearly developed its essential and permanent character, discarded *Jure Divino*, demolished passive obedience, placed the abolition of James and the accession of George on their right bases and, in the complete reorganisation of the public mind, laid the foundations of the future accession of the Tory Party to power and to that popular and triumphant career which must ever await the policy of an Administration inspired by the spirit of our free and ancient institutions."

Chatham, himself immersed in his life-and-death struggle within the inner Whig circle, was able to give little open assistance to the work of Bolingbroke. None the less he attempted in his first open battle with Newcastle in 1756 and his consequent resignation to give the Administration a tone hostile to the old

Whig gang. He failed, and in 1757 returned to office and to the conquest of the world in the secure embrace of the arch-corrupter. It remained for George III to put the new doctrines to the test in his own peculiar manner. In doing so he was greatly assisted in his own method of restoring personal monarchy by Chatham's Tory dislike of pure party administration. But it is to the antecedents of George III's monarchy that we must now turn.

It has been demonstrated in the last chapter that the refusal of the Elector in 1714 to have any commerce with the Tory Party, natural enough in a man completely ignorant of English politics, was an unmitigated disaster to the State.

The result of this virtual destruction of one of the great parties produced in 1714, as it did in 1918, a whole crop of political mischiefs. It led to a corrupt dominance of the Whigs so secure that the robbers soon started to quarrel over the spoil. Apart from the abortive efforts of Bolingbroke to found a real Opposition, Parliament became the scene of a mere faction fight between groups in which it was impossible to detect the slightest difference of principle. As a consequence men ceased to believe in Parliamentary politics altogether. The reaction naturally came in a renewed belief in the Crown as the old and tried preserver from the mismanagement of the ruling families. Could not the monarch purge this den of thieves? The consequence of the counter-experiment was the personal government of George III and all the complexities of politics which followed.

It is easy enough at the present day to show on the grounds of pure logic how impracticable are the doctrines of *The Patriot King*. History and experience have declared against them. But it is by no means certain that, if George III in 1760 had possessed as much wisdom as he did courage and energy, if, in a word, he had been a great man like William III, he might not have restored the monarchy to the position it had held in William's day, to the great advantage of the State. It is at least a little rash to dismiss as pure folly contemporary views held both by Bolingbroke and Chatham.

George I and George II abdicated the historic rights of the Crown partly because they were foreigners, partly because they had destroyed the only alternative party which could rescue them from their Ministers, but chiefly because they were frightened. They were in the grip of the fear which springs from ignorance, and they clung to a Walpole or a Newcastle as a man might cling to a guide in the wilderness. The natural affinity of the Crown was with the Tories, but the King had become the leader of the Whigs. From this unnatural alliance sprang a bastard constitution under which eighteenth-century England groaned.

Bolingbroke therefore found ready listeners when he preached the restoration of the old power of the British Crown, and all that he wrote was sound Tory doctrine. It was partly an accident of personality which gave " the Whig dogs the best of it." That accident was the intellectual density of George III. He had read *The Patriot King*, but he had not sufficient knowledge of history to enable him to interpret it aright. With his German origin to put him wrong he did not understand that the British monarchy was a democratic force depending for its power and popularity on a correct interpretation of the wishes and a jealous regard for the interests of the people. The personal views of the King were only one factor in the problem, not, as in the case of the French monarchy established by Richelieu, the decisive one. It followed that the policy of the Crown had not only to be right, but to be popular. George was supported by the people over his American policy, but in domestic affairs he attempted the impossible—at once to fight the big Whig landlords and to ride roughshod over the democracy. He came into power under the most favourable circumstances, and if he had played his cards properly he would probably have won his game and Bolingbroke's work would have been hailed not as a fanciful dream, but as in part at least the prophecy of approaching reality. St. John in that case would have earned in sober truth the name given to his later eighteenth-century successor, "The Baptist."

At the moment when George III ascended the throne the country was coming towards the final stage of the great and successful war which founded the British Empire. The great statesman who after many bitter years had fought his way into power and conquered the aversion of George II was at the zenith of his glory. We have seen how impossible it is to class Chatham in any political party. Yet almost all his life he preached and practised the views set out in *The Patriot King*—that fixed parties with definite principles were a snare and a delusion, and that men ought to make up their minds on the merits of each question. Chatham was therefore not only a believer in a theory which should have commended itself to George III, but he was also so enthusiastic a disciple of monarchy as to indulge on occasion in language which may be regarded either as subservient or ridiculous. True he had swallowed Newcastle—but out of compulsion, not from choice. He was in essence the mortal enemy of that tyranny of Parliament which had succeeded the dominance of the kings. His boast was that he always looked outside Westminster for his public opinion, and if the King was going to free himself from the despotism of Ministers he could only look for support to a similar source. There he would have found it. The Tory Party had recovered from the prolonged fit of compulsory sulks it had indulged in ever since the catastrophe of 1714. Jacobitism as a living creed had died of sheer inanition, and with an English-born King who possessed indeed many of the mental qualities and defects of his subjects, Toryism was ready to return to its historic allegiance to the Crown. The Party indeed had been supremely unhappy in its disastrous exile from royal favour. It had been placed far too much in the position of a dissident and revolutionary minority conspiring against that very unity of the realm which its whole temperament and doctrine urged it to defend. The first levee of the reign was therefore thronged with the Tory notables.

It will be obvious that in this set of circumstances there lay the opportunity of an irresistible combination: an English King determined to break the dominance of the Whig houses, who in their turn dominated Parliament; the greatest English Minister of his century, who had only to lift up his voice to find an instant echo and response in the country; an immense popular Tory force outside loathing the corruptions of Walpole and Newcastle and destined, in fact at no distant date, to control the State with only brief intermissions until 1832. It is clear that George III might have put himself back into the position occupied by Charles II or at least by William III. Unfortunately his narrow mind had no conception of the popular monarchy which had so often governed England since the Conquest. To be King meant to him to occupy the kind of position which the two great cardinals had bequeathed to Louis XIV, or that occupied by Frederick the Great. Instead of using Chatham as his mouthpiece, as the great Henrys or the Edwards or even the Tudors would have done, he instantly dismissed him from power and thus threw away the only possible instrument for achieving his purpose. Just as the Whigs who overthrew Walpole merely imitated his policy and his methods, so George III determined to fight fire with fire, like a reformer in New York who starts to overthrow Tammany by bribing the machine. He took the whole system of patronage and corruption away from his Ministers and into his own hands. He adopted the theory of Bolingbroke and the practice of Walpole, and therefore combined all the disadvantages of a divorce of strategy and tactics. He should have thrown himself directly on Chatham and his people, instead of degrading the Crown by prostituting it to buy the Parliament. At the same time, when Mr. Lecky suggests that this policy of bribery had anything to do with the Tory Party he is making a profound mistake. There had been at nearly every stage in our history a "Court Party," consisting of placemen, or royal borough holders, in the Commons. The Place Bill long before in William's reign had been directed against them. This third party had no more connection either with Whigs or Tories than had the Irish Nationalists of the 1880's, and the policy of the King in recruiting them in stronger force had no connection with party politics. The great majority of the original "placemen" of George III were, as a matter of fact, Whigs for two sufficient reasons. The Whigs held the small royal boroughs *en masse*, having been placed there by Walpole and Newcastle, and their minds were in any case more attuned to corruption and influence than those of Tory squires sitting as popular members for their own county. Toryism proper tended to support the King in a general way, but it had little to say in a Government which continued to consist almost in its entirety of the various rival factions of the Whigs. Lord North's Ministry was only a Tory one in a very limited sense of the term, and a new and united party only gradually came into being under the administrations of the younger Pitt. None the less it is only just to admit that the narrow temper of the King had in its turn a baneful influence on the mentality of the Party. The average Tory member in the early years of George III undoubtedly thought that he was playing the game by supporting the King and his friends in the House, and, as men are inclined to agree with those whom they support, the Party gradually found itself committed to all kinds of oppressive and narrow acts which were totally foreign to its principles. But this is a development which long anticipates the period which witnessed the early Governments of George III.

The immediate cause of Chatham's dismissal was the question of peace or war. The country was not so agitated as it had been (1710–1712) just before the Peace of Utrecht. Then there had been a violent and unmistakable movement for peace. But the movement against Marlborough's war had been caused by economic distress following on heavy taxation, by the casualty lists, and finally by the dislike of the

Tories for the Dutch Alliance. None of these grounds of criticism except the financial ones applied to the wars of Chatham. Trade was flourishing even though the amount of the war debt appalled the more timorous or thoughtful minds. Immense sums were made by the men who supplied the necessities for the armies, and Ireland in particular, as in the period of the Napoleonic war and the German war, went through a period of extravagant prosperity. The death-roll in the main was on the scale which accompanies fighting with savage tribes as opposed to the butcher's bill which attends a European war. And everywhere on land and sea victory shone upon our standards. Toryism, no doubt, was mildly in favour of peace, but instead of being, as it was in 1710, an immense and powerful party led by two men of genius, it was a helpless remnant just on the edge of struggling back to power, without a single man of distinction in its ranks. Bolingbroke was dead and Wyndham was dead and William Pitt was yet to come. Bute, who succeeded Chatham as Premier, was called a Tory, but if so he was a Scottish Tory, a type which had little connection with the ideas of English Toryism. In fact he was simply a courtier. It was in reality neither the Crown nor the Tory Party which enabled Chatham to be overthrown in the middle of his triumphant war. It is a tribute to Chatham to say that the fate of Europe and the world was largely decided by his strange manners. He was one of those individuals in whom the nervous temperament inseparable from genius took the form either of arrogance or rudeness or an almost fawning humility. When he bowed to a bishop "you could see his nose between his knees," but that did not prevent him making Anson of all people sign as First Lord of the Admiralty orders which he had never read. Against all this way of doing business the whole Cabinet simply rose up in revolt the moment the King was foolish enough to give the signal, under the absurd impression that he was helping to assert his ultimate authority by dismissing the great Tory-Democrat of the age. George, instead of turning to the Tories and the country, as Bolingbroke's political testament had advised, and asking them to free him from a corrupt servitude, did exactly as Carteret and Pulteney had done when they threw Walpole down. He imitated the errors of the oppressor. He bought and sold and trafficked just as shamelessly as Walpole or Pelham or Newcastle. In all this the Tory Party in the Commons, still a hopeless minority, had neither part nor share. It stumbled finally into power through the errors both of its allies and opponents, simply because the doctrines of Bolingbroke, Chatham and William Pitt were preferred by the country to the corruption which had infected what of idealism originally underlay the Whig creed of the Revolution. The curtain now goes up on the reign of George III.

CHAPTER XII

GEORGE III—EARLY YEARS : 1760–1766

The period intervening between the accession of George III in 1760 and the rise of Pitt in 1784 opens up a period of great difficulty for the historian of the Tory Party. None of the recognised authorities faces the problems it involves squarely, but all cut the Gordian knot by assumptions which the facts will not support.

Thus Sir George Trevelyan absolutely and Mr. Lecky with an occasional qualification, the homage paid by truth to preconception, assume throughout that from the date of the dismissal of Chatham in October 1761 everybody who supported the King or his policy was a Tory and that all who took the opposite view were Whigs. This is a very simple way of writing history and appealed to a generation accustomed from 1868 to 1886 to clear-cut distinctions of party. Unfortunately the picture has little relation to reality, and it is necessary to examine with a far more rigid scrutiny the initial steps by which the miserable Tory remnant of 1760 was set on the path which led it through 1784 to the final consolidation of 1793, when it emerges victoriously in a form which we should all recognise to-day.

If we wish to see the facts clearly we must try to recognise how permanent and powerful a force the "Court Party" has been in the sphere of Parliamentary politics. People often talk as if the placeman was an invention of George III to restore the authority of the Crown. In fact it is a force as old as the Tudors, and from the Restoration onwards it is seen in perpetual operation. The Crown or the Minister who managed for the Crown commanded in the members of the Government, in those whose offices, sinecures, patents, or pensions depended on Government favour, and in the members whose boroughs were practically within the gift of the Crown, a considerable and mobile army of reserve which in every crisis could be hurled at the danger point, and depress or elevate the fortunes of either party. In the later seventeenth century it was often estimated as a hundred strong. Charles II and James II[1] used it to support the regal power and to crush the Parliamentary opposition; William III constantly employed it to maintain his mixed Ministries and his balancing policy between Whigs and Tories, and to free himself from the fetters with which each side was always attempting to bind him. When Walpole grasped this royal patronage under George I he succeeded in establishing this power more completely than any monarch or statesman had done in the past. He was the leader not only of the Whigs, but of the mercenary bodyguard, and it was this fact which enabled him for so long to resist the assaults of the large and dissident section among the Whigs. After his fall this patronage passed finally to Newcastle. Since, however, the Janissaries were paid to protect the Minister rather than the Crown, the term "Court Party" fell into desuetude. But the thing was there all right, and its strength was increased by the Act of Union in 1707. The forty Scottish members took but little interest in British politics except in so far as they affected the perpetual game of the Campbells and the Edinburgh Crown lawyers against the Highlands, and could generally be purchased by the predominant power of the day. There were then practically continuously from 1660 to 1784—and even later—three parties in the House—Whigs, Tories, Placemen. All that George III did on his accession was to reassert the old right of the Crown over patronage and to seize by one bold effort the machine on which Walpole and Newcastle had spent such lavish care. When the stroke succeeded he became at once the leader of one of the most powerful parties in the House, but that Party was not a Tory one, and indeed might be said to have no politics at all. The majority of the "King's Friends" had been Whigs of one tabernacle or another, who preferred the Crown and office to Chatham or Rockingham and Opposition. Since the death of George II had removed the official ban on Toryism, a few men of this Party had crept into office here and there. But Bute as Prime Minister, if he was a Tory at all, was of the Scottish variety, which was always a thing apart from the English school. In effect he was a Scotchman with a "tail," a courtier without politics. Henry Fox, who was deputed to capture the Whig machine for the Crown and break the Whig leaders, was simply one of themselves with a blood feud against his sometime colleagues.[1]

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[1] Cf. the resignation of municipal charters to James II, which gave him the nomination of members for all these towns (Ch. V, p. 59).

But no purely Court Party, however powerful, could hope to control the House of Commons by itself. The scandal would have been too flagrant. An ally of some kind was a necessity, and since the main object of George was to smash the Whigs and break up the Venetian constitution, he turned naturally to any Whig or Tory who would serve his purpose, including the small but solid nucleus of Tories standing mainly for the counties. There was no reason why he should not. He was only reviving the projected alliances of Bolingbroke which had failed in the last two reigns. In many ways his views marched with Tory conceptions, though his ambitions for the prerogative outstripped theirs.

And what of the attitude of the other and junior partner to the projected alliance? It is unfortunate that for the ten years preceding the King's *coup d'état*, and for many years afterwards, the Party produced no voice sufficiently powerful to impress its views on posterity. The intellect of Toryism had died with Bolingbroke in 1752; the oratory of Wyndham had been quenched by death twelve years before. The counties continued to send up their small but solid phalanx of squires, hopeless of victory and impervious to defeat, but the rest was silence. So the Opposition might have sat after 1846 but for the existence of Derby and Disraeli. North was by origin a Whig follower of Chatham. Later as leader of the Commons he was the last kind of man in his century, with the exception of Walpole, to give a reasoned account of his creed, and by the time that he had reached this eminence he was simply the tame man of the King.

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[1] In launching this proscription he is generally accused of wanton cruelty in carrying the war down to the very smallest holders of Crown appointments. But this policy, whether it sprang from his brain or his master's, could hardly be avoided. It was necessary to create a reign of terror to secure in a few months an organisation which had belonged to enemies for nearly half a century.—Cf. Trevelyan, *Early History of Charles James Fox*, p. 32.

In forming one's conclusions of this silent epoch one is therefore reduced to pointing out the general line which the recollection of the past, always intensely operative with such tenacious community of interests and idea as the counties stood for, indicated to the Party, and to see how far it squares with such admitted facts as exist.

When Toryism fell in 1714 it stood for the unity symbolised by the Church and the Crown: it was opposed to foreign wars, to Dissenters and Catholics, and to the moneyed classes in the towns. In the long, cold night of Opposition which ensued most of these convictions were modified and weakened, but still subsisted as the basis of faith. From the existing Crown it was cut off by the Jacobite elements and by the solid wall that Walpole and his successors built round their special preserve. From the resurrection of the old dynasty it was debarred by its constitutional wing, its religious views and by a reluctance to stake life and fortune on the issue of a civil war—a thing abhorrent to all Conservative minds. The rising of 1745 proved conclusively that the Tories of England would not fight for the Stuarts, and Jacobitism faded and perished of sheer inanition. But deep down in their hearts lurked the old adoration of the monarchy out of which their Party had sprung.

Even on the accession of George II the great bulk of the Tories were ready to be reconciled to the existing *régime.* The accession of George III—"a Briton," as he described himself in his first King's Speech—removed the final bar, and the loyalty given to the ill-fated House of Stuart was transferred to its more commonplace but more practical successor.

So far then the Tories had every right to make an alliance with the King. The second and later love of Toryism had been the Church. But by this time the Church neither needed assistance nor inspired intense devotion. The Church as an institution was admittedly safe, while its moral position had deteriorated in a sceptical age. The parson had prospered: he was neither so subservient to the rich, nor so powerful an influence with the poor, as he had been during Harley's Premiership. The Church and Toryism had settled down to a happy marriage from which the tenser emotions were excluded. No storm broke out in this field till the question of Test Acts was re-raised. An Establishment thus secure with all parties did not enter violently into political issues.

But there remained two other great issues, where interest and principle are so closely intertwined as to make their separation impossible, the justification of waging war abroad and its inevitable consequence on increase of taxation and expenditure and of debt at home. It is self-evident that the tradition of Toryism was opposed to such wars. Its insularity was not aggressive, but defensive: it wanted to be left alone, and would only strike back on the Continent when some monarch was foolish enough to menace the island independence. Furthermore, it was convinced from the times of the wars of William III and Marlborough that the counties paid the main cost in blood and the Land Tax, and that the commercial classes reaped the benefit out of contracts and the interest on the debt. It has been pointed out in the previous chapter how greatly this hostility to foreign wars had been modified by the Imperial aspect of

Chatham's campaigns. But so deep-rooted a sentiment cannot be exorcised in a single generation. And Tory hatred of the moneyed interest was as strong as ever. It was clear to the Party that when Chatham founded the British Empire he made an immense addition to the wealth of the commercial classes. Even during the contest itself trade increased by one-fifth—later the wealth of India and the West Indies was poured into this country—and the whole scale of expenditure was driven up against the country landlord who sat in the Commons, much as the American millionaire set the example of extravagance in London Society in the last decade of the nineteenth century. All this was anathema maranatha to the men who formed the bulk of the Opposition, and it was easy to say of the war Seven Years' War still raging when George ascended the throne in 1760 that here was another Whig war being pushed beyond all the needs of national safety to make money for the fund-holders and to preserve in power one "too powerful subject."[1] If the King wanted peace as the inevitable prelude to getting rid of the domination of Chatham, the Tory Opposition was prepared to concur, partly, no doubt, to please the King, but more because it thought the war had secured all its legitimate objects and was not ready to crush France for ever in order to enrich an English class that it loathed. There is, therefore, a close resemblance between the circumstances and feelings which brought about the Peace of Utrecht and those which produced the Peace of Paris. In both cases the British Government was anxious for an accommodation owing to internal motives of policy; in both cases it was right on the broad question of national interest; in both cases it lost certain points in the diplomatic game owing to this political anxiety; in both cases it secured the essential fruits of victory.

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[1] These arguments were employed in a contemporary pamphlet, which attracted great attention, called *Considerations on the German War.* The writer was obscure, but he drew a distinction which appealed forcibly to the Tories between the Colonial and the Continental aspect of the struggle. When the French Colonial Empire was practically destroyed, why should Britain go on fighting a dubious battle on the Rhine?

This review of the opinions held on the one side by the King and his followers, and the Tory group on the other, both explains and justifies the original working alliance between the two forces which developed into an organisation sufficient with brief intervals to keep the official Whigs in subjection for over twenty years. But one must never forget the vital distinction of origin between the Tory Party and the King's Friends. Indeed it may be doubted whether, if the Tory Party had been given a vision of the future and foreseen, down the track of the years, the Wilkes agitation, the persecution of the Press, the American imbroglio, and the rising clamour and tumult against the Crown and the Commons, it would have entered quite so readily into the obligations of a partnership in which policy was always decided by the stronger Whig and royal element. But these were developments that even a great leader could not have foreseen, and Toryism could not even show a decent mediocrity. For the moment at least the long bad days seemed over, the Crown was reconciled with its national adherents, and the sun of royal favour seemed about to break through the cloud which hung so heavily over castle and manor.

With so much of prelude it will be easy to understand the steps by which George III asserted himself. He succeeded his grandfather in October 1760 and at once began to make significant changes in the Cabinet. In the General Election which followed in the spring of 1761 the royal patronage in the return of members for such places as the Cornish boroughs was distributed by the Crown, and not handed over in the usual way to Whig Ministers. The Tory Party, raised out of its hopeless lethargy by the first signs of the coming reconciliation with the Crown, made a real effort to obtain something more like the representation in the House to which its numbers in the country entitled it. The result was a House of Commons far less under the dominance of the great

Whig families than its predecessor had been. In October 1761 Chatham fell, and the Ministry was reconstructed under the Premiership first of Newcastle and then of Bute. Within a little over a year Henry Fox had finally broken and captured half the Whig machine, and the Treaty of Peace with France was signed in Paris (1763).[1]

The method by which what was in effect a peaceful revolution was carried out in so short a space of time reflects great credit on the practical sagacity of George III and of his advisers. The King indeed was a master of political tactics: it was in the higher strategy of statesmanship that he was at fault. The plan of destroying Pitt and Newcastle in detail was masterly both in conception and execution, but it would no more have succeeded than George II's last effort in 1745 to free himself from the Whig machine by recalling Carteret to form a "mixed Administration" if the Whigs had stood together. By this time, however, the evils inseparable from the domination of a single party for half a century had robbed the Whigs of the virtues of cohesion. Mr. Churchill has wisely remarked of the later nineteenth-century Liberalism that the prestige of a great party which has long been the chief power in the State attracts to it masses of men who have little sympathy with many of its principles. From 1714 to 1760 the Whigs were recruited by the even stronger motive that a political career was debarred to any man who would not take that name. These swollen majorities robbed Parliamentary life of all its excitement unless the Ministers were assailed by their own nominal adherents, made party loyalty unnecessary, and ensured that there were never enough offices to satisfy the vast army of followers. The gangs which surrounded Bedford, Newcastle or Cobham are equally instances of the laxity of party discipline and of the determination of small groups to fight their way into office by attacking their own side. By 1760 these various forces had eaten into Whiggism like worms into the wooden beams of a house, and the imposing structure crumbled into dust at the first push. But the blow did not come from the Tory camp.

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[1] The preliminaries were passed in the House of Commons by 319 to 65, in the Lords without a division, and the battle was then over. [illegible]

It has been pointed out in the last chapter that the real policy of the "Patriot King" was to use Chatham as the popular instrument for breaking the Whig ascendancy and securing a return to the mixed Governments of William III and Anne. This course might have involved the continuance of the war and so might have caused some difficulty with the Tories. But it is extremely unlikely that this disheartened remnant would have refused the chance of a new lease of life and power for such a cause. The whole attitude of Toryism towards the Chathamic wars is one of conflicting impulses easily directed one way or another. In any case the question never arose in George's mind. With the combination of Chatham and a war the Minister would, to his narrow view, have been the half-master of England, and it was precisely this disputed supremacy that the King was minded to destroy. He was determined to get rid both of the popular Minister and the oligarchic ring, and he turned on Chatham first. His motive in making the Peace of Paris was one with Bolingbroke's in forcing through the Peace of Utrecht—to throw down a man who was essential so long as fighting continued. It was the fear of Marlborough and Chatham which made two British Governments so pacific. The move was open to George III because the Cabinet itself and both parties in the country were getting sick of a struggle in which enough had been done for honour and profit, and which only involved heavy debt and taxation. It will be observed that this is a normal example of the relations between George III and Toryism. The Party wanted the peace for its own sake, the King for quite ulterior purposes.

The opening gambit of the new Crown was some alterations in the personnel of the Government, while Chatham was still in the Ministry. Grenville, an opponent of the war, was promoted into the Cabinet. Northington was moved up from Lord Keeper to Lord Chancellor to ensure his subservience. In March 1761 Bute became a Secretary of State, and Legge, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was a friend of Chatham's and an enemy of Bute's, was dismissed, and his place taken by Barrington, a courtier. With the very doubtful exception of Bute not a single one of these men was a Tory. It was this Cabinet in which Chatham and Temple found themselves in a minority of two in the autumn of the year. Pitt's autocracy had disgusted some of his colleagues; a second group were in the plot for his overthrow; others were frankly alarmed at the financial cost of the war, and Newcastle and the old Whigs were skilfully led by Bute to believe that they would profit by throwing over a statesman whom they had never really liked.

In this faction fight between the Whig Ministers, carefully fomented by the King, Toryism had neither part nor lot. It stood for the general policy of peace, but its influence on the negotiations was nil. It is not, therefore, germane to the subject of this book to discuss the rights and wrongs of the Treaty of Paris. It will be reasonable to accept the usual verdict of history, that Chatham wanted too much from France and that the rest of the Ministry were, in their haste, ready to accept too little. One judgment on the treaty is at least beyond suspicion: no one could accuse Carteret (Earl Granville) of a lack of sympathy with great adventures and high national ambition abroad. As the old President of the Council lay dying he had the clauses of the treaty read out to him one by one and blessed them all.

On the 5th of October, 1761, the strained relations between the War Premier and a hostile peace Cabinet had come to breaking-point. The explosion was caused by the fact that both Chatham's prescience and his Intelligence Department told him that Spain was about to throw in her lot with France. The Prime Minister proposed to act on this information at once without waiting for formal proofs, but though he proved right and his opponents wrong, his Government refused to follow him. Chatham and Temple resigned alone.

Newcastle succeeded as nominal head, with Grenville as leader in the Commons. A single Tory, Egremont, entered the Government as a Secretary of State. His lack of ability and his early death rendered him a cipher in the Administration. He is only important as the son of Wyndham and the first English Tory Minister since the death of Anne.

Pitt once out of the way, the King wheeled round promptly on his Whig dupes. The Bedford faction was bought over, the whole of the patronage was taken out of Newcastle's hands, and the poor old gentleman, deprived of all that made politics attractive to him, resigned in May 1762, a victim to the kind of treachery he had so often practised himself. Bute promptly became head of the Ministry, and the exchange of power only waited for Henry Fox to make it complete.

If these events have been treated at some length it has only been with the intention of illustrating how little influence the Tory Party exercised on the opening years of the new reign: it neither destroyed the old gang nor constituted the new one. It remained still aloof and leaderless, but with a general vague tendency to peace with France and to the support of the Crown.

In the face of these undeniable facts it is amazing to come across, as only one instance of the kind, the following comment of Lecky on Bute's Administration:—

> "The history of this Ministry is peculiarly shameful. During two reigns the Tory Party had been excluded from office, and during all that time they had constituted themselves the special champions of the Parliamentary party. In the writings of Bolingbroke, in the speeches of the Tory leaders,

in the Place Bills they had repeatedly advocated, the necessity of putting an end to political corruption was given the foremost place. . . . At last the Party had risen to power, and in ten months of office they far surpassed the corruption of their predecessors." [1]

Comment on this passage is almost superfluous. The presence of one inconsiderable Tory in a Ministry composed entirely of Courtiers or renegade Whigs who continued to do for the Crown the dirty work they had always done for their own party is used to brand Toryism with the mark of tergiversation and inconsistency. Such a gross misrepresentation of the facts (by one who possesses the bland but austere virtue of Mr. Lecky) would be quite incomprehensible if he had not explained his view of the period between 1760 and 1784 in a subsequent passage of his history dealing with the Grenville Ministry, which without alteration of principle succeeded that of Bute :—

" There was some undoubted truth in the assertion of Pitt, that this Government was not founded on Revolution principles, but was a Tory Administration. It was not simply that Grenville had seceded from the great body of the Whig Party, that he had supported the ascendancy of the Tory Bute, that he had advocated with the Tory Party the speedy termination of the French war, that his leaning on every topic was strongly towards the assertion of authority; it is also certain that he came into office with the definite object of carrying into action the Tory principle of government. The real and essential distinction between the two parties at this period of their history lay in the different degrees of authority they were prepared to concede to the sovereign."

Let us examine this statement in the light of fact. It amounts to the contention that anyone who after 1714 believed that the Crown should enjoy the powers it held under William and Mary and Anne was a Tory, and that anyone who was opposed to mixed Governments and held that the ascendancy of a small group able to make the Crown a cipher was a Whig. Such a view makes ironical reading in the light of the history of the eighteenth century. It turns out that Pulteney, Chesterfield, Carteret, Chatham, Lyttelton, Cobham, Grenville, Bedford, Grafton, a list one could continue indefinitely, were all at one time or another Tories. The only Whigs who would be left were the great corrupters Walpole and Newcastle. For Bath and Granville, "The Boys," "The Patriots"—had all sheltered behind the genius of Bolingbroke, taken his ideas, and made fugitive alliances with him, while Grenville, Bedford, Henry Fox and the rest had actually put some of these ideas into practice on the accession of George III. If the acceptance of the Patriot King as a convenient gospel in seasons of opposition constitutes a Tory, then this country found the majority of its Ministers from the ranks of men who were Tories either in theory or in practice during the greater part of the eighteenth century. It is curious that all these rulers should have called themselves Whigs and have excluded from power or office every man who called himself and was a Tory. The truth of the matter is that while the Tory Party was earnest in these beliefs, it was never given an opportunity to put them into practice; that the majority of the dissident Whigs were dishonest in the acceptance of these doctrines, and when they reached power were careful to exclude from office a Tory Party which might have compelled them to carry out their professions. The dissident Whigs in opposition talked Bolingbroke in 1734; the dissident Whigs in 1761 and onwards put a tithe of his views into practice. What have the Tory Party got to do with all these fallings out and hypocrisies among the ranks of their enemies? We shall now be able to perceive how much truth there is in the accusation that in 1761–1763 the Tories in office went back on the declarations against corruption they had made in opposition.

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[1] Lecky, Vol. II. chap. x.

There is one simple answer to the charge: the Tories were not in office.[1]

It is an ungrateful and unpleasing task to expose a glaring error made by a gifted historian and a famous man of letters. The truth of the matter appears to be that it was convenient for the contemporary politician to tar the Tory Party with all the mistakes of George III and all the subserviencies of the Whig courtiers, just as a previous generation of Whigs had poisoned the wells of Toryism in 1714 by inducing the public to believe that every Tory was a Jacobite. "I do hear," wrote Governor Pitt from India to his son, the father of Chatham, "that you are consorting with that villain Bullingbroke, who but for the mercy of Providence would have murthered the whole Royal Family in their beds."

A good deal of this kind of contemporary fiction has become embalmed in history.

It will be more interesting to discuss the actual attitude of Toryism towards corruption in the eighteenth century in the light of fact. The Tory Party has never been entirely composed of angels, and being well aware of this, has never been so anxious as its opponents to wear a kind of headpiece composite of an earthly coronet and a heavenly halo. But as a matter of fact its record through the greater part of the eighteenth century is comparatively free from the baser side of political corruption. For fifty years after 1714 it had no opportunity of being bought by the Crown and no necessity to buy its seats in Parliament. The 100 county constituencies which were all that an inadequate representative system allowed to the greater part of the population of England were in its hands, save where, as in Yorkshire, the Whig peers were predominant or in the Eastern Counties. As a set-off a small number of Tory peers could command the adhesion of certain boroughs, and a few towns were definitely Tory. But the county seats were the stronghold of Toryism, and they could neither be bought nor sold to chance comers as the boroughs were, nor could these vast areas be subdued to a system of personal bribery. Like sand islands hardly standing out against the advancing of the tide, the counties still resisted the flood of Whig impurity. They could not produce brains, but they could stand by honesty, and in the hamlets of the home counties, in the broad acres where Somersetshire and South Gloucestershire slope towards the west, on the Downs of Wiltshire and Sussex, in the plains of the Midlands, over the March counties where the mountains of Wales rim the horizon, and in the great Catholic and Tory strongholds of Lancashire and Cheshire, the heart of old England still beat strong irrespective of the price of the political market at Westminster. Some member of the local gentry was sent to Parliament, not out of any hope that he could obtain place or effect legislation, but because he was the obvious representative of popular opinion. The Tory peer attended listlessly in his place to see the views of a whole countryside voted down by the nominees of Walpole or the Countess of Yarmouth. The idealist might proclaim that this utter lack of power represented the halcyon days of Toryism. The Party might commit the heresy of praying to be led into temptation in order to show its power of resistance, but fate refused alike office and temptation. It so happened that the Party was struck off the list of effective forces early in the century before corruption had fully matured, and again that its power for corruption at the fountain head was largely neutralised almost at the very moment when, towards the end of the century, it once more emerged as a predominant party independent of the Crown. By 1784, when William Pitt threw down North and Fox in one terrific shock, many of the opportunities for corrupt government had been removed from the heads of the State. The younger Pitt as a Tory, Burke as a Whig, Grenville as a Georgite Whig had succeeded in removing between them many of the worst vices of eighteenth-century government—the sinecures had been pruned, the pensions abated, the small Civil servants made secure in their offices, the trial of election petitions removed from the partisan verdict of the whole House. But the accidents of party fortunes cannot avert the verdict on the evidence. The Whigs were the soul of corruption; the hands of the Tory Party are by comparison clean. Tussets tiresome! Crap! ← Whig

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[1] Is it likely that a Tory Ministry would have imposed a special tax on their own supporters in the counties and produced a violent anti-ministerial agitation, as the Bute Ministry did, by imposing the cider duties? The biographer of Lord North, Mr. Reginald Lucas, actually thinks that Lord North's action in opposing the repeal of the cider duty by Rockingham in 1765 proves that he was a Tory. It proves, on the contrary, that he was a Whig. Bute may or may not have been a Scotch Tory—he was certainly no English one, or he would never have made himself responsible for a measure that every country squire in England loathed. The only explanation of such a ridiculous mistake is the dominance of the Whig tradition that every measure which was unpopular must of necessity be Tory in origin. The Whig oligarchs could do no wrong.

It is so easy to dissipate a fable, it is so hard to arrive at the exact truth. What was the responsibility of the Tory Party for the policy of George III? That it desired with the King the Peace of Paris is as obvious as that its wish was right and its influence on the event inconsiderable. But how far as a supporting though independent party did it connive in later years at the systematic corruption the King had inherited from and turned against the Whigs? What was its attitude towards the Middlesex election, the reporting of debates in the Commons, the persecution of the printers and the American War? North has been called a Tory Prime Minister, but what claim had he to the title? These are questions which have to be answered often in the light of insufficient evidence; and it will be best to take them in the sequence of time and to try to see how the Party confronted the successive problems set before it.

In 1763, immediately after the peace of Paris had been carried, Bute resigned in a panic at his unpopularity, and Grenville succeeded him. The main episodes of the latter's two years' Premiership were the prosecution of Wilkes for libel in 1764 and the

American Stamp Act of 1765. For neither of these actions had the Tory Party any special responsibility.

Let us imagine that the Tory Party in 1761–1765 was being led, not by some genius like Bolingbroke or Disraeli, but just by someone of the sound intellectual calibre of Wyndham or Salisbury. To any such leader it would be as clear as day that he could support the King and the King's Friends, give them a large majority in the Commons and respectable backing in the country, or he could stand aloof and leave them to their own devices. If he chose the first alternative, he would be conniving at the corruption practised by the King. If he preferred the other course, the King would be at once thrown back into the hands of Newcastle and Devonshire, his own Party would be deprived of all influence on affairs of State, and the nation plunged once more into the cesspool of the official Whig Administration. The choice was not a pleasant one, but the Tory Party preferred to be ruled by the Crown rather than by the oligarchy: without intelligent guidance it followed its instinct to uphold the symbol of national unity even though the flag was splashed in the mud.[1] In the course it had set itself it had much to endure, but on the throwing off of its tradition of aloofness it qualified itself for the long period of office which lay before it in the future. "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and the Toryism which emerged under Pitt from the domination of the Court Party had contracted some vices of the intellect which were not natural to its mind. Nevertheless the Tory Party survived to drag the Empire victoriously through one of its centennial periods of peril.

In 1765, after the Stamp Act had passed both Houses, George III fell out with Grenville and the dissident Whigs almost as badly as he had fallen out with the old gang. All question of a Tory

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[1] The Party might have quoted Chatham as setting an example not condemned by the Whig writers when he knowingly and haughtily connived at the malpractices of Newcastle in order that he might save a kingdom and found an empire.

Ministry was as absurd as it had been at the beginning of the reign, and the King was compelled to turn to some other Whig combination which, plus his own hired nominees and the semi-support of the Tories, would give him a working majority. Grenville was one of those estimable and industrious individuals who may be met any day at the commercial or Chancery Bar, a type whose instructive conversation over the port will reduce the most brilliant assembly to silence. George III was not brilliant, but there was a limit to his toleration of a bore. None the less for all his pedantry Grenville had in him the making of a strong man, and consequently left his mark on his time. The best points in the Peace of Paris, the origination of the stamp duty in America and all this move involved, the Act for purifying elections, must for good or evil be placed to his score.

By the time of the dismissal of Grenville the group system had replaced the old Whig majority in the Commons. There were the Whig followers of Grenville, the King's Friends, the orthodox Tories, the old official Whig Party led by Rockingham, Devonshire and Newcastle, the Bedford gang, and the few personal adherents backing the immense popular influence of Chatham. The complexity of intrigue produced by this situation was fearful. There was a new Ministry practically every twelve months in the first five years of George III's reign, and any Government tended to be a mere mosaic of opinion. The Crown was like a boy wrestling with a picture puzzle, and trying the pieces in all sorts of combinations to get the desired result. There is no doubt that the King made a considerable mistake in dismissing Grenville and his variegated colleagues, for in a general kind of way Grenville, the King's Friends, and the Tories could stand together against the official Whigs, and were in some sort of sympathy with the policy of the Crown.

On their dismissal, therefore, the King fell of necessity into the hands of the old gang—the one thing he had sworn he would never do. The whole proceeding savours of a fit of temper, for the fact that the

Premier has bad manners, lectures, and bores his sovereign is hardly a sufficient reason for a change of Government.

In July of 1765 the old Whigs came back to power under the titular leadership of Rockingham, and reversed practically all the measures their predecessors had carried out with the King's approval. The cider duties were withdrawn; the American Stamp Act was repealed; officers whose commissions had been taken from them for opposing the Government were restored to their places. Long before twelve months were out the King, who had realised his error, was even more anxious to get rid of Rockingham than he had been to expel Grenville. In the debates on the repeal of the Stamp Act on the meeting of Parliament in 1766, the Opposition was reinforced by the King's Friends, many of whom revolted against the King's Government. The death-blow was finally struck by the resignation of Grafton, and the revolt of Northington, the Chancellor, both of them King's men. George III, having found the temper of Grenville and the policy of Rockingham equally intolerable, now discovered in the very man whom he had bent all his energies to destroy at the opening of his reign the only remaining resource. Chatham, in spite of urgent solicitations, had refused to join Rockingham the year before. This decision of his has been much lamented by the Whig historians, and with some reason. Had he consented, and had Burke succeeded in his scheme for reuniting the Bedford gang with their old party, a combination would have been formed which Grenville, the Tories and the King's Friends would have struggled against in vain. George would have been back in the position of his grandfather, and the old weary round of corruption and oligarchic supremacy tempered by the genius of Chatham would have begun again. Whether this development would in the long run have proved a worse disaster to the State than the alternative fate which actually overtook it must remain a mere matter of conjecture. Chatham's permanent objection to this form of government, which he had compromised with by accepting Newcastle in order to defeat France, had reasserted itself: he disliked the party machine and refused to bear up the pillars of the exclusive house of Whiggism. When Rockingham fell in 1766 he consented to form his second Administration on the basis of a union of all sections save the Whig groups of Grenville, Bedford and Rockingham.

When one considers all these bargainings and traffickings so typical of the age, one is inclined to turn away in repulsion from the whole long central period of the eighteenth century. The men of the Restoration and the Revolution at least sinned on the great scale. Their immoralities, their treacheries, their intrigues, their acts of high daring, were concerned with the fate of dynasties and the rise and fall of religions, not merely with pensions and perquisites. The grim shadow of the Tower and the scaffold stands as a dark background which throws these glittering figures into the high relief of colour, form and action. Some respect is due even to a scoundrel who plays a game of hazard with death as the penalty.

The age of Anne, though milder in its ferocities than the iron period which preceded it, saw combined all those energies which make life the shining thing it may be to men of genius and imagination. The glamour of a cultured society, the first recognition of men of letters both as a force and as a charm, the fierce antagonism of men of action, still famous for their genius in war and debate, wondering what fate any dawn might bring to Crown or party, give to those fourteen years a triple fascination which can never fade. Again, the age which fought Napoleon to a finish exhibited a tenacity of purpose and a calm courage no defeat could quell which raises even its mediocrities to a certain height of grandeur. Like their descendants of the fourth generation, they stood with their backs to the wall and never looked over their shoulders.

The Victorian age, with all its hypocrisies, its false claim that an impurity which is hidden does not exist, its despisal of the men of arms who had given it a liberty to practise on the battle-field of industry cruelties far worse than those of war, its belief in the fundamental alliance between God and Mammon, was yet a period of great stir in the human mind, a shaking out of the standard of intellectual freedom, a reaching forward to better things and to a more rational conception of what the life of the State ought yet to be. Its statesmen were incorrupt even when uninspired, and in letters, art and science it showed an untrammelled brilliance which was no brief and concentrated exhibition, no bloom come suddenly to flower such as Anne and Elizabeth witnessed, but lasted for fifty years before it withered in the glare of the modern day.

But few of these attractions of previous and subsequent periods can be claimed for years which witnessed the rise and fall of the Whig oligarchy. It was immoral without being amusing under two monarchs who liked their mistresses old, stupid and fat. Letters were barren under an illiterate Prime Minister who, just before the Press again began to exhibit a vital influence on politics, ascribed the failure of Toryism to the patronage of great literary ability first introduced by the magnificent Dorset. The long years were full of nothing but a sordid scramble for office between groups who might make divergent professions, but whose principles and practice were identical. Religion, like politics, became largely a matter of money, and a Churchman might prefer the exaggerated enthusiasm which made a martyr of Dr. Sacheverell to a time when the mask of Voltaire too often grinned at the communicant across the altar rails. It is said by the apologists, and with some justice, that Walpole, Pelham and Newcastle gave the country a fairly good Government, and that the material wealth of the country increased as fast as its mental energies decayed. This is perfectly true, and therefore may Heaven preserve this country from a fairly good Government which ends in the state of political and social affairs which the Whigs had produced both before and after the accession of George III.

The rise and exploits of Chatham alone redeem the age from insignificance. But who can read Lord Rosebery's *Early Life of Chatham* without blushing at the tortuous sycophancy which alone enabled the great man to struggle through to power or even to survive in the bewildering labyrinth of purely personal intrigue which is the characteristic of the whole age? And the exploits which make Chatham glorious were dictated by his single intellect and performed by a handful of men in the uttermost corners of the world. The military appointments of the great Minister incurred indeed grave censure because he selected his officers quite apart from their political views. His victories were won by the irrepressible genius of the race, not by a party who had striven to strangle the conqueror at the outset of his career, and most of whom rejoiced heartily at his downfall. During all this epoch any man of honour and principle must have envied the Tories, who could do no harm if they could do little good, and were the only popular party returned to the Commons by an unpurchased electorate. But Whiggism in its corrupt decay infected for a brief period of years a renascent Toryism with its own disease, and the country gentry too began to hanker after pensions and peerages.

It is now necessary to return to the renewed struggle between the various Whig bidders for preference in the royal auction.

CHAPTER XIII

CONFUSION

Rockingham's Ministry had lasted just over the year, and in July 1766 Chatham succeeded him as Prime Minister. The second and last Ministry of the great man was more like a menagerie with the keeper away than a Government. Every conceivable point of view was represented in it, and Ministers expressed the most divergent views and followed the most contradictory courses. Its support came from the Chathamic Whigs, the Court Party, still rapidly growing in numbers, until it began to approach the figure of 200, and the independent Tory vote. On the Opposition benches were now ranged for a few months most of the various Whig connections which had recently been in office, but the hatred between the Grenvillites and the Bedfords, and the dislike of both for the Rockingham section—a dislike returned by hearty contempt—made any real permanent combination against the Government impossible. The Ministry continued to exist simply because there was nothing to take its place. The real danger to it lay in its own dissensions; and when its Budget was brought forward by Charles Townshend as Chancellor, the Tories assisted at a Government defeat. A Whig Opposition motion for reducing the Land Tax from 4*s*. to 3*s*. in the pound was carried against the Government by eighteen votes, so slight were the links of alliance that united the Tory Party to the Cabinet. Either because or in spite of this division a considerable number of minor posts were distributed to the Tories when the surviving official Whigs created vacancies by going into opposition. The name and influence of Chatham alone gave any semblance of prestige or direction to the majority, and in 1767 even this aid was withdrawn. Chatham, like many men who are capable of high exaltations of feeling and terrific outbursts of nervous energy, suffered from terrible reactions. In these moments of gloomy retirement he could not bear to hear a sound, and the mere mention of business was an agony to his tortured nerves. The modern world is sufficiently conversant with these symptoms, but a more robust age regarded these collapses as the forerunners or marks of insanity—an impression heightened by the touch of drama which the statesman could give even to his lack of action. The youthful, well-meaning but not very competent Grafton acted as a temporary substitute. The existence of a weak chief intensified the wild confusion in the Cabinet. Ministers did what they liked, and most of their desires and policies ran counter to those of Chatham. The personnel of the Ministry was perpetually changing in what might be described very vaguely as a Tory direction. North, who, though not a Tory in name, had something of the Tory temperament, became Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House on the death of the Whig Townshend in 1767. In January 1768 Shelburne, Chatham's right-hand man, was extruded from his chief's Government, and his place as Secretary of State taken by the Tory Lord Hillsborough. As a set-off, however, the Bedford connection was once more brought into the Ministry about the same time. Still the steady process of a slow transference of ministerial influence from one party to the other goes on all through this period.

In January 1768 the King at last accepted Chatham's continually proffered resignation, and Grafton became Prime Minister. With the Duke as leader in the Lords and North as leader in the Commons, and Chatham in abeyance, the King regained once more much of the position he had held for a few months at the beginning of his reign. He became, in fact, the real leader of a loose Coalition majority, of which the composite parts were his own personal following, the official Tories, and a few independent Whigs. But, as I have pointed out, there is a general tendency to exaggerate the extent to which the Tory Party was in the King's pocket; this is to antedate a unity between the Crown and Toryism which only became complete as the cleavage with America widened and deepened. Writing of the position in 1771 (three years after this date), even Mr. Lecky uses the significant phrase, "The Tory Party, who in the earlier stages of the Government had given it only a partial and hesitating support, now rallied in all their strength round Lord North." More conclusive still is the opinion of Dr. Johnson, who was very early converted to an unquestioning acceptance of the new monarchy. Writing in *The False Alarm* as late as the early 'seventies, he gives vent to this complaint: "Every honest man must lament that the Government has been regarded with fixed neutrality by the Tories, who, being long accustomed to signalise their principles by opposition to the Court, do not yet consider that they have at last a King who knows not the name of party, and who wishes to be the common father of all his people."[1]

Open proofs of this group divergence in the ranks of the majority are perpetually shown in the correspondence addressed by George III to North during the debates on the Middlesex election and the prosecutions of the printers. North is found in the position of driving in the same team two horses who do not go well together. While the King is urging his own personal party to take the extreme view, the leader of the House is continually conscious both of the difficulty and the necessity of carrying the county members with him. His own mind is a microcosm of his own majority—the inclinations of the Whig courtier always struggling in it with the instincts of a Tory squire. His success as a leader in the Commons may be largely attributed to this very division in his sympathies.

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[1] *The False Alarm* was a semi-official pamphlet which represented the views of Ministers.

The General Election of 1768, which took place under the Septennial Act, did not modify the position of parties to any marked degree. Two facts alone are noteworthy: Charles James Fox got in for a close borough; Wilkes, though still an outlaw, reappeared in England, made a good fight as candidate for the City, and was actually elected as the member for Middlesex. Otherwise the country seemed in no wise stirred by the "abominations," or one might add the success, of George III's attempt to establish a personal control over his successive Cabinets.

So many pages of excellent narrative have been devoted to the case of "Wilkes and Liberty" that it would be superfluous to tell the old story again. The controversy only affects the subject of this volume in a remote degree. The monarch and some of his courtiers and Whig adherents fastened a vendetta on Wilkes, whose moral weaknesses seem to offer a wide field for attack. In pursuing the quarrel they used unconstitutional weapons, and from start to finish were utterly in the wrong. The ejection of Wilkes from the Commons produced a series of formidable riots in London with which the existing police system was utterly unable to cope. The Tory Party as an independent body began by giving a half-hearted support to the extreme measures which its allies insisted on.[1] But Tory squires are not particularly fond of being hustled in the streets, and no member of the Commons has ever failed to resent an attempt to coerce Parliament by violence. The Ministerial majority therefore tended to harden. The House of Commons had, in fact, got an exaggerated idea of its own relative importance among the Estates of the Realm, and it was quite ready to mete out to the fourth estate of the Press, or the fifth estate of the people, the measure it had once dealt to the Crown, and was yet to deal to the House of Lords. But whose fault was that in 1768? Whence came the insolence of the Commons? Not from any Tory source of doctrine, but out of the direct wellsprings of Liberalism, from the men who boasted themselves the descendants of Pym and Hampden. The Whigs had made no complaint of Parliamentary disregard of popular rights and interests while through the whole middle period of the eighteenth century they held a corrupt, misrepresentative and predominant power in the Commons and used this instrument for the annihilation of their opponents. But when a House of Commons no longer allied to the great Whig houses assimilated the lessons of privilege the Whigs and the Roundheads had taught it—their faces assumed the pained expression of a groom whose favourite horse has kicked him in the stomach. It was true indeed that the Duke of Richmond came along to give them the toast, "Our Sovereign—the People," a Cinderella monarch whose interests from 1714 to 1760 had been represented and cared for only by an oppressed Tory minority. The Whig Opposition indeed found salvation in espousing the cause of Wilkes, Liberty, and the Press, but it was the deathbed repentance of one who, having supped all his life with the devil, thinks it will pay him to make his peace with God.—meaning Whigs?

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[1] It is significant that C. J. Fox, who was foremost in the attacks on Wilkes and on the printers, was pure Whig courtier by family affiliation and sympathy, and never had the trace of a Tory connection or mental attribute. His conversion was not from Tory to Whig, but from Grenvillite Whiggery to the Whiggery of Rockingham and Burke.

The real interest of these controversies from the modern standpoint is of quite a different character. What was the precise meaning and value of a popular movement in the later eighteenth century? How far, to use the cant phrase, did the will of the people prevail? The layman in history is at once confronted by the acknowledged experts with what appear to be on the surface two contradictory propositions. He is told, on the one hand, that Parliamentary representation was so corrupt that it had little relation to national opinion, and on the next page he is informed that some universal wave of feeling swept Chatham into his first war Ministry, or overthrew at the polls

This is an example of Tory modesty, & fairness, let us be Whig.

the coalition between North and Fox. Anyone who enters into an examination of these two conflicting statements starts to tread a maze from which there may be no exit. But one or other statement in its blank entirety must be false.

There were only two great popular constituencies which reflected public opinion directly—the 100 members from the counties, and the representation from the great shipping and commercial towns like London, Bristol, Exeter, Norwich and Southampton, which dated from the era of the Plantagenets and the Tudors. If the whole of these two forces had been thrown unitedly in the scale they would never have commanded more than 130 votes on a division. But even so it was rarely that they were ever united at all. The secular hostility between the agricultural and commercial interests cut too deep. It follows then that any sweeping change at a General Election was due to the boroughs. It is by no means true that every borough was a close borough. There existed many small county towns with the right of returning members of Parliament whose independence was well able to assert itself in a great national crisis, even if its franchise remained far more restricted than the growth of its population justified. Money and interest might play a part, but they would not necessarily be of sufficient force to control the majority of the electorate—so long as the issue did not appear to them to be indifferent. And at the same time local territorial power just outside or inside the borough constituency was also not immune from the general sway of national sentiment. There is a tendency to talk as if the holders of such influence had, in the act of becoming borough-mongers, ceased also to be Englishmen. This is not the case. Any great national movement would catch up on the wave of opinion people in all classes and ranks of society.[1] This at least is the only rational explanation of the various fortunes of the two great parties between the Restoration and the Reform Bill. The skill of Walpole lay in the fact that he never stirred up a national opposition strong enough to override his Prætorian system of membership.

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[1] The great changes of party majorities in the later eighteenth century were often obtained when very few seats were contested. The borough holder, in fact, changed his mind with the patron.

But when we have made all allowance for the real strength which the constituencies could show in their temporary control of Parliament and so of the Government, it is necessary to distinguish closely between the "popular" movement of the whole nation—a thing which comes but rarely in our history—and the "popular" agitation of a small section of the community. It is so easy to forget how totally distinct the electoral conditions of the eighteenth century were from those which exist at the present day. Interest was separated from interest, and district from district by the difficulties of slow communication; the art of electoral agitation was in its infancy; the power of the Press, whether for disseminating news or political opinion, only took effect, outside London, on small circles of readers in the provinces. To create a formidable agitation in the counties required either a big grievance of a tangible kind, such as the Excise Bill of Walpole or the cider duties of Bute, or some irresistible movement of ideas such as a sense of national disgrace which made Chatham Premier, or else great skill, enthusiasm and power among the local aristocracy, such as were shown by the Whigs in their stronghold of Yorkshire.

On the other hand, in a few places like London or Bristol, where strong common organisations had existed ever since the Middle Ages, and where a great aggregate of population could be easily assembled and stirred into activity, it was as easy to get up an agitation, and more difficult to suppress it, than it is to-day. The great commercial magnates of the towns could proceed with all due forms and ceremonies to draw up resolutions and petitions, and present them to the Crown. If these failed of effect a very little incitement was sufficient to turn out a large mob of "brisk boys," some animated by a real public enthusiasm, others victims to the delight which smashing other people's windows must always possess for the natural man. There were no mounted police to be encountered or baton charges to be feared: in the last resort the Government could only call out the Guards, a procedure to which any Ministry must be averse. The population and the opinion represented by the petitions and by demonstrations or riotings in London bore as a rule very little relation to the view of the vast majority of the nation. When it coincided with, or gave the lead to the general verdict of wider areas, it was of great importance. Otherwise it was a flash in the pan. The adhesion of London to the cause of the feudal tenants-in-chief decided the issue against King John, and the popularity of Edward IV was based on the support of the City. But in both cases London was a make-weight thrown into the scale. There is no evidence that Wilkes was a popular hero outside the City, Middlesex, and pronounced Whig circles throughout the country. His general appeal left the nation utterly cold, and three years after he was refused admittance to Parliament on his return from Middlesex at the election of 1768, foes and friends alike admitted that the agitation in his favour had died out.

The same observations apply to the agitation for the freedom of the Press, the demand for Parliamentary reports, and the protests against the prosecutions of writers and printers—a movement which followed on and was closely associated with the Wilkes controversy. To judge from the Whig historians one might imagine that the whole mind of the country was given up to no other topic between January 1770, when Junius was prosecuted, and 1771, when the controversy was settled and the American menace began to trouble all minds. As a fact, the whole nation was probably no more burning to read Parliamentary reports than it is to-day, and the affair, important as its ultimate results were on the national mind in education, was merely the occasion for a sound faction fight between the Whig Opposition in

Parliament and the Court Party, and the City of London and the Crown.

The phases of popularity and decline which the reputation of Chatham went through at one time or another must be subjected to a similar test. Chatham reached the height of his glory when George II bowed to his authority as the representative of not only London and Bristol, but of all the large boroughs of England. But this influence in itself would not have been sufficient to overcome the King's distaste for his Premier. Newcastle's aid was necessary to do this, and yet the electoral arts of Newcastle had obviously failed in that very crisis to defend an incompetent Ministry from the popular wrath against the failure of a foreign war.

To sum up, in the latter eighteenth century it required a rare combination of circumstances to create a wave of opinion sufficient to produce a political convulsion and a sweeping change in the composition of Parliament and the relative strength of parties. Popular feeling had to be not merely universal in extent and confined to no class, but almost to reach the point of fury before it could become effective.

The Governments of Grafton and North never had to face such a tempest in the seven years which elapsed between the retirement of Chatham from the Government and the outbreak of the American War in 1775. The main result of the struggle over Wilkes and the Press was to create a more radical Whig opposition inside and outside Parliament, and conversely to drive the courtiers and the Tories into a closer alliance, born of the joint necessity of repelling the continuous assaults in the Commons.

The year 1770, which has now been reached in the course of the narrative, witnessed many events of first-class importance, and not least among these a recrudescence of the demand for reform, as a palliative for this lack of ready connection between popular opinion and the action of the Executive, of which Chatham appears as the spokesman. But to understand the freedom of his attitude on this and other questions, from 1770 onwards, it is necessary to describe the changes which took place in that year in the composition of what was, after all, the legitimate successor of his own second Administration. In that year Grafton, Granby and Dunning resigned, and Camden was dismissed from the office of Lord Chancellor. All four were Chathamites who had long overstayed their tenure of office in a Government which was rapidly ceasing to have any connection with the policy of the chief who had founded it. Conway, who even before Chatham's illness had occupied the amazing position of a leader of the House of Commons who declined to notice either the opinions of his Prime Minister in the Lords or the decisions of the Cabinet, went out with Grafton, and something like normal Parliamentary conditions were restored by the appointment of North, already Chancellor of the Exchequer, as at once Prime Minister and leader in the Commons. The Chathamic purge was practically complete, and the Government henceforward tends more and more to consolidate itself as a powerful union between Courtiers and Tories, constantly reinforced by fragments or leaders of the various Whig sections, as all hopes of a Whig reunion and victory gradually passed away. But the seceders such as Wedderburn came in not to modify the policy of the Ministry, but to defend it. George III and North began to build up slowly a united and coherent party out of the elements at their disposal, and something in North's temperament, its caution, its good humour, its genial wit, made the kind of appeal to the Tories in the Commons which Walpole's methods had made to the Whigs of the preceding generation. Thus between 1770 and 1775, and even before the American question had begun to create an issue which compelled a clear division between sheep and goats, the air was clearer and a Government and an Opposition were beginning to evolve out of the chaos of the previous ten years.

Chatham on his return to active life in 1770 recanted the opinions he had received from Bolingbroke and practised in his late Administration. He went straight out for opposition, denounced the Crown in language whose violence far surpassed that of the orthodox Whigs, and seemed ready for a straight fight on a party platform. The best contemporary opinion thought that all the Whig sections would shortly be reunited, and that North's Government, which was destined to last for another twelve years, was "a forlorn hope." Two factors utterly disproved the prophecy. The dissension of the last ten years, and particularly of the last three years, had bitten too deeply into the minds of the Whig sections. No real trust or reconciliation was possible between Chatham, Rockingham and Burke, the survivors of the Grenvillites who had outlived their chief, dead in this year, or the adherents of the house of Bedford. Each had sold each other in the Ministerial mart too often. While then the acumen of the King and his Minister enabled them to draw their own armies into even closer union, the Whig forces, operating each on lines of its own, failed continuously to reunite on a common battle-field.

In the second place, the agitation about Wilkes and the liberty of the printers showed the final signs of a more or less sham excitement. It failed to sustain itself, and the blind eye turned by North on the activities of the Press gave it a final quietus. By 1771 the air is thick with private Whig lamentations that the British are a craven, slavish people, who will endure anything from the oppressor and that the whole movement is as dead as mutton.

But the most interesting event of 1770 is undoubtedly the forward move of Chatham in the direction of reform, the dislike of the orthodox Whigs to his plan, and the apathy of the Tories. Its result worked in harmony with the general tendency of events, for it divided the Whig opposition and failed to drive a wedge, as it should have done, between the Tory county members, who stood to profit by reform, and the King's Friends of the rotten boroughs, who stood to lose by it. It is characteristic of Chatham's absolute catholicity in selecting items from the programmes of both parties that his Tory scheme for redistribution should have synchronised with his wildest attacks on the Crown and a Government supported by the Crown.

The time for a rearrangement in the electoral system had been overdue for a hundred years, when the last of the Crown boroughs had been created in Newcastle by Charles II. A procedure which had some justification under the Tudors had ceased to represent the realities of the situation even before the seventeenth century had closed, and it was an unmitigated disaster that the Redistribution Act passed under the Commonwealth was not maintained in its main outline instead of being absolutely repealed at the Restoration. No one perceived this more clearly than Chatham, and no one stood to gain more by an improvement than the great popular tribune. No one would have profited more by a Redistribution Bill than the Tories at any time between 1660 and 1782, and probably an even later date, and no party was so incapable of perceiving this obvious fact. The Party had stood idly by whenever, at rare intervals, the proposal was put forward to give the counties adequate representation in Parliament at the expense of the rotten boroughs. So it proved again in 1770, when Chatham signalised his return to activity by bringing forward a motion for reform in the Lords. His scheme indeed might have been introduced by a Tory leader if any such had existed, for it proposed to transfer thirty seats from the rotten boroughs to the counties. It was therefore as friendly to Toryism as it was inimical to the Court interest to which that party was now becoming more closely allied. Had there been in 1770 a Danby, a Bolingbroke, a Rochester, a Wyndham or even a Harley, to seize the occasion, the influence of the Tories in both Houses might have been exerted to see Chatham's measure through, by coercing the courtiers and defeating the Whig opposition in favour of a step in the direction of returning to the old Tory conception of popular government. But the long night of opposition had left the party tree sterile of all intellectual fruit. Not having the brains to conceive that it had anything but a choice between the corruption of the oligarchy and the corruption of the King, it was under the force of circumstances drifting steadily in the direction of the latter, who never had any real sympathy with the Tory conception of the Crown. It is hardly necessary to state that the Rockingham Whigs and their great intellectual henchman Burke, who had entered Parliament in 1765 as Private Secretary to Rockingham, and fought zealously for the true orthodox faith in the Commons, were resolutely opposed to reform.

Chatham got no support from the mass of the Whigs, and wrote letters showing that he knew his own temerity in even proposing reform.

Burke stands in his relation to the Whig chiefs in some sense in the same position as Swift had occupied towards the Tory leaders. Yet the differences are very marked. Swift was a journalist standing outside the actual fray of debate : he was pre-eminently a writer and made no attempt to be an orator. Further, he found in Bolingbroke a collaborator who excelled him in the practical arts of statesmanship and at least rivalled the fire of his genius, and in Harley a veteran statesman far surpassing the amiable mediocrity of Rockingham and his fellow-peers. The circles of belief shared by Burke and Chatham only intersected each other in a narrow segment, and the star of Charles James Fox as the ally of the Whig intellectual had not yet risen above the horizon. Burke was not merely, therefore, an outside adviser and expositor like his great predecessor, but an actual protagonist in the battle, and fought with the best in the heated debates of an unruly Commons, at first with no great chief to aid him. And yet he was at heart a man of letters. In consequence his pamphlets resemble the most gorgeous of speeches, and his speeches the most brilliant of pamphlets. Inevitably, in neither sphere has he scored an untrammelled success. The *Thoughts on Present Discontents* are not as good as *The Conduct of the Allies*, for they are too overloaded with the oratorical manner to go straight to the heart and mind of the ordinary reader, as did Swift's pamphlet. On the other hand, Burke's amazing flow of imagery, only rivalled and even then hardly approached by Cicero in the whole history of civilisation, was, as all contemporary observers tell us, not suitable to a packed and fiery Commons, eagerly awaiting a division, which it was his fortune to address. His oratory, therefore, tended to be something of a practical failure, and its fragments left to the enjoyment of subsequent generations. His wealth of phrase and imagination, compacted in sentences as terse as those of Tacitus and Thucydides, stupend the imagination, yet if in this respect he defeats the Roman orator, it may be that Cicero would not have been at such request at the Bar if he had not known how to put a curb on his own powers for rhetorical exuberance.

Of Burke's theoretical views and practical abilities as a statesman it will be necessary to write more in the future.

In 1770 he stood firm against Chatham for no reform and the Venetian Constitution. Here for the first time he demonstrated that innate, intense and consistent Conservatism which was to have such an immense influence on the fortunes of British parties and the fate of Europe twenty years later, when the French Republic was in the throes of birth. His action in 1770 was directed to the continuance of a corrupt and reactionary system by which his own political friends and patrons profited. But no one would attribute to him anything but a pure motive. It is a joke that Newcastle once warned Rockingham that Burke was a Jesuit in disguise. And yet the old man was in a sense not so far wrong. Burke believed that the system of dominance by the great Whig houses planned at the Glorious Revolution, and carried into effect in 1714, was designed by Providence as the ideal method of governing the British race. The end being perfect thus justified the means, however imperfect, and even the rotten borough became the instrument of God.

Chatham's proposals were of necessity still-born. Neither the Whigs nor the Courtiers wanted Reform, for obvious reasons; the Tories were not interested, and the activities of a new Radical Party led by Horne, and demanding equal electoral districts, and most of the other proposals of the Chartists, further served to discredit the movement.

This is the last internal controversy of any importance which marks the period between North's accession to the Premiership and the outbreak of the American War in 1775. Henceforward the march of events turned men's thoughts across the Atlantic. The litter of intrigue and counter-intrigue of group government after group government which fills the ten years dealt with in this chapter sometimes almost defies analysis. But two clear achievements of principle stand out from the general welter. The dissensions of the Whigs have enabled the King to break the dominance which held his grandfather and great-grandfather in vassaldom. The Tory Party has by slow degrees recruited something of its pristine strength, though it has failed to produce a leader; and that strength is being brought more and more every year into closer connection with the party of the personal Crown. It has been shown that Toryism has practically no responsibility for the earlier policies or Ministers of George III. But from the North Premiership onwards it must be regarded as a definite factor in the Royal Coalition. That it lost something of its old-time popularity of tone from its contact with a narrow-minded King, whose conceptions of monarchy were too much drawn from Germany, too little from Bolingbroke, and from association with a group of 200 placemen, is undeniable. That it was frequently restive under the alliance, and resentful of the policy of the predominant partner, is clear. But at least it is becoming once more an active force in the State. As 1775 approaches it ranges itself once more on one side, and that comprising the majority of the people, over an issue in which all men take part. The policy ends in a hideous disaster, but it is the Courtiers who vanish in the crash, while the Tory wing, after one internal convulsion, resume once more the seats of power.

CHAPTER XIV

THE TORIES AND AMERICA

It was the controversy with America which, in the course of its development, and even more in the rebound from its failure, cemented the loose alliance between the Crown, part of the Whigs, and the Tories, and led to the re-creation in force of the Party, which the younger Pitt was destined to lead from 1784 to 1793. The tangles of the old Whig group system almost vanish for a time in the light of a predominant issue. Here was a clear difference of political opinion vital both in principle and in practice.

In the last thirty years a careful and dispassionate examination of the rights and wrongs of this famous controversy has been made on both sides of the Atlantic. The old myths current both in Great Britain and the United States have been partly dissipated, and though there are points connected with it on which opinions will always differ, a large ground of common agreement has been reached. The nineteenth-century version as given by both English and American writers reads more like an extract from a little moral text-book of fables written for the edification of the young than a sober attempt to present a historical reality. We read how a very wicked king called George III determined to oppress and enslave an American people, every one of whom was as virtuous as Mr. Gladstone and Lord Althorp and George Washington rolled into one. After this the morality play must work out to its inevitable *dénouement.* Liberty must triumph over tyranny, virtue over vice, and the last scene shows the Republican hero looking down with folded arms on the prostrate form of the Imperial villain. How astonished Washington and Alexander Hamilton would have been at this picture of the State politicians with whom they had to deal in Congress throughout the war! It is strange that such a perversion of the truth should have held the field in history for over a hundred years. The explanation must be sought in a fact too much neglected even in the present day. The War of Independence was not regarded at the time so much as a contest between two separate Powers, but simply as a form of civil war. Many of the Whigs in Great Britain were in open sympathy and alliance with the insurgents; the Loyalists in America were heart and soul with the Crown and the Tories. The complete victory of the Whig view in both parts of the sundered Empire was, therefore, greeted with pæans of delight both by the writers of the successful faction in the United States, who had ruined their opponents, or driven them into exile, and by the Whig historians of Britain, who for several generations had captured the history professorships in the Universities. Only if this allowance is made for historical partisanship is it possible to understand the unanimous support given by the Tory Party in Britain and America to the policy of George III or the resolute manner in which British opinion supported the King.

The facts cannot be disputed: the number of Loyalists in America was estimated by their opponents as varying in the different States between a third and a fifth of the population. They represented, in fact, the same kind of proportion to their opponents as the Ulster men do to the Catholic population of Ireland. On the British side the King's Government made a no less significant admission of the civil nature of the conflict. Officers holding the King's commission who had a conscientious objection to fighting the insurgents were neither compelled to serve in the war nor to resign their commissions. An identical question of conscience arose in the case of the Curragh incident in 1914, when an admitted threat of civil war was menacing the United Kingdom.[1] It is clear that no such latitude of choice could be left to His Majesty's forces when the opponent was regarded as an external enemy.

It would be beyond the scope of this work to enter into a long disquisition on the moral, legal and political aspects of the American question, except in so far as to explain the Tory attitude towards it.

George Grenville, a dissident Whig serving the Crown as a legalist, a moralist and a Chancellor of the Exchequer, was of the opinion, which few impartial men would dispute, that the American Colonies ought to bear a share of the burdens of the Chathamic wars, which in the Peace of Paris had given them far greater advantages than any other part of the Empire had secured. To borrow a phrase of more recent date, "The Colonies ought to pay for their own protection." Both in defeating the French and in the perpetual task of keeping off the Indians, the Colonists had chiefly to rely on the British regulars, and on the British Exchequer. Their temperament, their economic necessities, and their lack of central organisation, made the Colonists, like the Highlanders of old, incapable of keeping the field for any great length of time. Grenville therefore proposed to abolish the system of sending small expeditionary forces across the Atlantic to help the tiny garrison to meet a particular crisis, and to establish instead a permanent force of 10,000 regulars to protect the country. A third part of the upkeep of this force was to be paid for by the

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[1] A somewhat similar incident occurred when James II asked a few selected regiments at the Hounslow camp to volunteer to support his policy by arms. All but a very small minority refused, but the recalcitrant regiments were not disbanded nor the officers broken. The basis of the principle is that, while a soldier can be compelled to fight against the King's enemies, he cannot divest himself or be divested of his moral responsibility as a citizen in matters of internal conflict. In these cases he is not the blind instrument of the executive any more than in a case of firing on rioters he can plead a superior order as a justification against a prosecution at law.

Colonists as some relief to the taxpayer at home, groaning under the burden of the debt Chatham had left behind him. Here the claim of moral justice was entirely on the side of the Imperial Exchequer. The legal question was more complicated. The proposed Stamp Act placed direct taxation on the Colonies at the bidding of Parliament. All the highest legal authorities, with the exception of Camden, thought the claim good in law. The Navigation Acts and the whole Colonial system were a form of indirect taxation. In practice, however, Ireland and the Colonies had been allowed to impose their own direct taxes for purposes of local administration. The best contention on the American side could therefore only be that the right of imposing direct taxes had lapsed by desuetude. To which again the answer must be that the money demanded was not being asked for purposes of local need in any particular part of the Empire, but for a general scheme of Imperial defence, and that this situation had not heretofore arisen. So far then, both on grounds of justice and legality, the Home Government had far the best of the argument. There remained to the Colonists only one strong card—the great electoral poster, "No Taxation without Representation." By a curious stroke of irony the American revolutionaries based their strongest appeal on the ancient precedents of the nation from whom they were about to separate. Like most other controversialists, they ignored British law and precedent where it told against them, but zealously upheld those parts of it which suited their argumentative needs. None the less this was the one and only strong point in their case. It is against the whole current of our constitutional development that one estate of the kingdom, or one portion of the Empire, should impose arbitrary taxation upon another. In fact a situation had arisen which the old insular constitution had never contemplated.

Two solutions of the difficulty were proposed at one time or another. Before the crisis arose Colonial jurists had put forward the view that the Colonies were not subject to Parliament, but were directly under the Crown—as Scotland was in the interval between the accession of James I and the Act of Union in 1707. The King would then have asked them to make independent grants for Imperial purposes through their local legislatures. It is probably unfortunate that the Colonies finally abandoned this contention. It anticipated the direction in which the modern British Empire has developed. It was certainly a view to which no sound Tory of any period could object, for it places the Crown in that central position in the constitution of kingdom or Empire which underlies all Tory beliefs through the centuries, and justifies itself by its works more completely year by year in the evolution and devolution of Imperial authority. But the Whig ascendancy of the eighteenth century, holding the Crown as a cipher, frowned on the doctrine, and it perished prematurely.

The alternative suggestion, made when the first signs of the coming storm were visible, was the inclusion of American representatives in the Imperial Parliament. This policy was approved by Burke on the English side and put forward tentatively by the Americans in the earlier stages of the negotiations. The Colonists, however, dropped the idea quickly, and very probably they were right from the point of view of their own interests. There was no Federal body in the Empire except the Crown to which they could send a delegation. American members at Westminster meant, therefore, union after the Scottish and Irish pattern. The distance in time and space was too enormous to make such a union practicable, and what would have been the influence of a dozen American members of Parliament on the Government of Grenville or North? Just about as much as their own power would have been of making their disparate States, who could not even make a union among themselves, honour their pledges and support their policies.

The truth of the matter is that a problem had arisen which even the wisdom which comes after the event can hardly pretend to solve. It was not a conflict between right and wrong, but between right and right and wrong and wrong. Nothing but a happy and accommodating disposition on both sides of the Atlantic and some singular exhibition of wisdom at Westminster could have saved the situation. Both were lacking. England had thrown down the Colonies haphazard under private charters all differing in character: in other cases the American shore received the exile of political or religious faith *egentem litore*. Britain had never taken the slightest trouble to govern them with a firm hand, to co-ordinate their constitutions, to give them a unity of direction, or to inspire them with that general belief in the advantage of good and ordered government—the best heritage which an ancient people can bequeath to a new one. As a consequence the bulk of the Colonies, especially in New England, had produced a society which tended to ignore all legal and moral obligations which did not happen to suit the humour of the moment or the interest of the individual. The conquests of Chatham suddenly aroused Britain to a sense of her Imperial responsibilities for home country and Colonies alike. But by this time the Colonies as a whole had themselves lapsed into a state of mental and constitutional anarchy. The north would look on calmly while the south-west was being butchered by the Indians; the southern States did not care a fig whether the French overran Maine and took Boston and New York. The main interest of every locality and every individual was to look after number one. Patrick Henry is typical of the period. In Virginia he was the thorn in Washington's flesh, and the famous phrase of this oratorical windbag, "Give me Liberty or give me Death," was directed not against George III, but against Washington and the Union.

Every stage through which a community passes is liable to its own particular defects. The ancient civilisations are apt to perish by a too great concentration of power in the hands of a police, an aristocracy, a bureaucracy, or a theocratic power. The weight of tradition becomes too much for the impulse of the individual. The ceremonials of the Church breed the polite acquiescence of semi-faith out of the original impetus of religious fervour. It ceases to be good form for the entrenched oligarch to exert himself or his mind unduly. The middle classes, again, may prefer to leave politics alone as a dangerous and unprofitable form of amusement. Let the Governors govern. A similar fate will await the first community which ever erects the logical system of State Socialism. As Plato long ago predicted of his own Republic, it will fail because at some time it will cease to breed the right kind of rulers.

The vices of new communities, such as the American Colonies were in 1770, are of exactly the opposite character. They have no history, and no traditions to steady them. They do not understand the importance of the doctrine of the State. Each man is for himself, each province's hand is turned against the other. In default of the example of an assured aristocracy, which need not cheat to live, the standard of commercial and legal morality is low.[1] You need not pay a foreign creditor if he cannot enforce his claim by law. Something of the ethics of the Stone Age belong to the early French, Russian and American republics alike. To repudiate the National Debt, to issue paper money so valueless as to be fraudulent, to starve the army which is protecting you against the consequences of evading your just legal obligations, to persecute and plunder your political enemies, are all the marks of a community in its first stages of development. When any writer blames Grenville or North or George III for their failure to deal with the intractable temperament of a whole people—like that of children quarrelling in the nursery, and then screaming when the governess smacks them—he had better study the correspondence of Washington with Congress when he was Commander-in-Chief, and remember what Hamilton went through in his effort to force on the separate States a Union which yet remained so imperfect, that ninety years after it took five years of civil war and tens of thousands of dead to make good the holes which the anarchic spirit of separation had left in the instrument of government.

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[1] Cf. Lecky, Vol. IV, ch. xi.

George Grenville, despite his pedantry, did not handle the American case in an unsympathetic spirit. He gave a year's notice of the introduction of the Stamp Act; he consulted the agents of the various Colonies; he told them that if the Americans preferred some different form of taxation, they could have it, or that, alternatively, they could raise the required money themselves; but could each Colony agree to the proportion of its contribution to the whole? The agents could only answer this question in the negative.

The constitutional difficulties involved in the problem were so great and the temper of the American people so utterly unreasonable that nothing remained but to be ready to proceed *vi et armis*, or to leave the whole matter alone. The advocates of a forward policy argued with cause that equity and law were alike on their side, and that to abandon the claim to tax the Colonies for their own defence was equivalent to Imperial abdication. But statesmen must be guided not merely by principle, but by expediency. It is useless to assert a claim which you cannot enforce.

The opinion of the ordinary man in England in 1774 on the prospects of putting down the Colonies by an army of occupation were about as valuable as would be those of his descendant to-day on the practicability of marching a large army through the Khyber Pass in order to conquer Turkestan. There was no general Imperial Staff to point out to the Ministry that the permanent conquest of the American Colonies was almost certainly utterly beyond the strength of any army which the England of the day could supply. Even a guerilla warfare such as that practised by the Spaniards against Napoleon must in the long run render the position of such an army almost untenable. The scale of Nature in the western hemisphere, the very unorganised and scattered condition of the society to be attacked, condemned the enterprise to the risk of ruin. It was not a question of defeating an army or seizing a capital and then accepting the surrender of the vanquished, but of keeping the whole available British army out of Europe, when a Continental Power might attack Great Britain at any moment, for an unspecified but certainly prolonged period of time. Even if the enterprise succeeded at the outset (as it might have done if Wolfe had lived and been in command), the effort could not be sustained. It was impossible to hold America down indefinitely by a perpetual display of bayonets. The expense in money and energy would be utterly disproportionate to any advantage that the Empire could hope to reap from it. From start to finish the only chance of a final British victory lay in the hope of an internal American collapse. How nearly that last end was attained let the correspondence of Washington witness.

Chatham alone of living men could have had the military insight to understand these facts and the authority to secure their acceptance by the militant section of the community. Unfortunately, however, the great man had only recovered from his nervous collapse to fall a victim to an acute attack of Whiggism. The Bolingbroke fever of forty years' duration had passed. His appeals for peace were directed not to the obvious grounds of expediency and common sense, but to justifications of the American legal position more extreme almost than those put forward by the Americans themselves—and here he had the vast bulk of home sense and sentiment against him.

The Tories had not started the quarrel. It was Grenville and Townshend who had taken the initiative, but when the prospect of rebellion became imminent they at once rallied to the side of the Crown. They could not do otherwise in the light of their traditions. The Tory view was a very simple one, and held unanimously. (1) In the mere legal and ethical case against the American Colonies Great Britain was in the right. It was not reasonable that the Land Tax on the English country districts should be increased in order that vast new territories should be presented to Americans who declined to pay for these conquests or their protection. If America was such a separate entity that it could not be taxed by the Imperial Parliament it ought to fend for itself in war. If it was part of the Empire it ought to pay its share to the Imperial Exchequer. (2) The Tories did not hold that America was such a separate entity. If they had done so they might have been prepared to let the whole affair slip or even to have opposed the conduct of the American War of Independence on the ground that it was a foreign war and so a violation of the traditional policy of the Party. On the contrary, they regarded the American Colonies as a part of the British Empire suffering from rebellion against the Crown. As has been pointed out already, the Whigs took the same point of view. They did not imagine that they were committing treason in supporting the resistance of the Colonies. To their minds they were simply reiterating the doctrines of Pym and Hampden in an extended part of the Empire. The division of opinion in America itself ran on precisely similar lines. The only difference was that in England the bulk of opinion supported the Crown, and in America the majority were for the insurgents. To the Tory mind, therefore, the whole struggle was one between a central authority which was right in equity and a rebellious section which was wrong. And England supported the Tory view. Whether the Tories, as I have suggested, would themselves have forced the issue is doubtful, but once it was raised their line was clear.

A brief outline of the important dates will bring the story up to the actual outbreak of war in 1775. The Peace of Paris, which put an end to any fear of a French conquest in the Colonies, was concluded in 1763, after the fall of Chatham. The Stamp Tax as America's contribution to Imperial defence was planned by Bute before his retirement in that year. Grenville, who succeeded him as Premier in 1763, took up the whole question with his customary thoroughness in 1764. In that year he embarked on active steps to suppress the contraband trade which defied the Navigation Laws, and put the question of the Stamp duties before the Commissioners of the Colonies in London. Since they were unable to make any alternative suggestions for raising the money, the Stamp Tax was passed by the Imperial Parliament in 1765. Immediately after this Grenville quarrelled with the King, and on his dismissal Rockingham became Premier in July 1765. As the result of protests in America and the impossibility of enforcing the Stamp Act without using armed coercion, the Rockingham Ministry withdrew the Act in 1766. They accompanied the withdrawal, however, with a statutory declaration, strongly objected to by Chatham as a Whig free-lance, that the Imperial Parliament had the right to tax the Colonies. Rockingham fell almost immediately after this, and the whole controversy seemed likely to pass into the background with the advent of Chatham's second Administration, for it was not conceivable that the new Premier would re-raise it. But, as we have seen, a readily conceivable attack of nerves and gout combined sent the Premier into a retirement which his critics believed to be that of a padded cell. His withdrawal was at least as effectual a bar to controlling the Cabinet as lunacy would have been, and produced the inconceivable. The meteoric Whig Charles Townshend as Chancellor of the Exchequer was suddenly stirred, doubtless by the King, to assert a revival of the American claims without the authority of Premier or Cabinet. On the 26th January, 1767, Grenville, with his usual doggedness, moved that America, like Ireland, should support her own military establishment. Townshend got up, and to the surprise and consternation of his colleagues said that the distinction between direct taxation and indirect taxation, as imposed on the Colonies by the Navigation Acts, was absurd (as indeed it is), and that he would find a revenue from America for the army. The Duke of Grafton, who was acting Premier, repudiated Townshend privately, but declared that he could not dismiss him in the absence of the Premier (or, one might add, in the presence of the King). Shelburne, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, wrote to Chatham "relating the circumstances and expressing his complete ignorance of the intention of his colleague."[1] Unfortunately the New Yorkers had just refused to obey an Act of Parliament for billeting troops, and the news of the refusal coincided with the speech of Townshend. Chatham, instead of dismissing the Chancellor of the Exchequer or resigning himself, contented his tottering morale with writing gloomy letters to Shelburne in reply. "A spirit of infatuation has taken possession of New York. The torrent of indignation in Parliament will, I apprehend, become irresistible. New York has drunk the deepest of the baneful cup of infatuation, but none seem quite sober and in full possession of reason." A just criticism, but an amazing one from a titular Premier who was standing idly by while a subordinate Minister was openly engaged in reversing his own violently declared policy. Men talk about the responsibility of George III for the American revolt—what of the responsibility of Chatham? On the 13th May, 1767, Townshend brought in his proposals as the accepted measure of the Government. Indirect taxation, including the famous duty of 3*d.* on the pound on tea, was to take the place of the Stamp Act. The money, only estimated at £40,000, was to go to make the Government and Civil Service of the Colonial Executive independent of local votes, a badly needed reform. By the end of September Townshend was dead, just as he stood on the edge of the Premiership, and Lord North took his place at the Exchequer. Heretofore the whole American controversy, whether for good or evil, had been in the hands of the Whigs, and the Tories had no part or lot in it. Toryism only begins to take on its share of the responsibility when the Chathamite contingent, including their revered chief, have left the Government successively and North became undisputed Grand Vizier under the Crown in 1770. George III then took the bit between his teeth, and events marched progressively from the Boston Tea Riots of 1773 to the Bill which closed the Port of Boston in 1774, to the attempt to nominate the Massachusetts Council in the same year, and to the despatch of further troops to restore order under the Crown. In 1774 the first embryo of Congress met to devise measures of resistance or accommodation. In 1775, just as Chatham and Burke and the London and Bristol merchants were moving peace resolutions, the storm broke in April at Lexington. Immediately it became a question both in Great Britain and in America of who was ready to support the Imperial authority of the Crown within its own dominions and who was ready to fight against it. Faced with this question, the Tory Party in England no more hesitated than the Loyalists of the United States. The sacrifice of the latter was the greater, for the Tories in America were a persecuted minority, while Toryism in Great Britain immediately rose into the ascendant. In England the extreme or scrupulous Whigs justified rebellion on the same ground as their ancestors had done, but many of the Whig members did not believe that the American cause justified armed resistance, and the great bulk of the Tories, standing once more after long years for the mass of the nation, were not prepared to witness the disruption of the Empire without a struggle. They engaged, therefore, strongly in a quarrel which was not of their own making. Chatham, employed in encouraging the rebels, had taught the Tories to extend their vision of the unity of the Commonwealth beyond the shores of the island, and his lessons bore fruit.

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[1] See Lecky, *History of the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. IV. chap. xi. p. 180.

It is an interesting if perhaps a vain speculation as to what the Tory Party would have done had it been given the sole handling of the American question from the Peace of Paris onwards, without the drastic interference of the Crown. That it would have repeated the consecutive advances and withdrawals by which the Whigs and later the Whig–Tory combination under George III, with the best of paper cases in their hands, stumbled from blunder to blunder until the Colonies were in open revolt, is almost inconceivable. Apathy, common-sense and opportunism would probably have delivered them from pressing a legal claim too hard. A real Tory chief would have made some accommodation at an early stage and shrugged the whole matter away as of less importance than the interests of the Church and the Nonconformists or of an election petition in Westmorland or Somersetshire. Further, he could have found an intellectual defence for a policy of Parliamentary inactivity by declaring that the Colonies owed allegiance only to the Crown and were outside the regimentation of Parliament in the strict letter of the law. Such an attitude would indeed have been a form of evading the whole issue, but such evasions are often the best forms of policy. The Liberal Governments of the nineteenth century, who ignored the Empire because they were dying to be rid of the burden, were the advance agents of Imperial unity. But once committed to the strife by other influences than their own Toryism, they could only choose between battle and disgrace.

It is no part of this work to recapitulate the military history of the American War. Great Britain threw up no soldier of genius or even one of sufficient ability to adapt the tactics learnt in Germany to the necessities of a Colonial war. If such a genius had arisen he would either have brought the war to a swift conclusion in its earlier stages, or he would have had to advise Ministers that nothing but the occupation of coastal positions and a naval blockade would meet the situation, and that it was impossible to predict success even from this modified policy, except by that kind of collapse of popular morale under blockade and sustained military pressure with which the German War has made us familiar. In the opening period of the struggle such advice to King and Ministers would have been tantamount to resignation. The Americans, on the other hand, threw up in Washington a General quite adequate to the situation, for he refused to be perpetually hurried into battle against well-trained regulars, and let the difficulties of the enemy do most of the fighting for him. But all this might have availed the cause of independence little had not Washington and Alexander Hamilton been statesmen of the first calibre in intellect and will. By these qualities they simply forced some kind of unity and determination on a disgruntled and factious Congress and on the faint-hearted and selfish majority of the insurgents. Finally, their persistent diplomacy dragged France into the struggle, and once they had secured European intervention their cause was in effect won. Yet even these stout hearts almost despaired time and time again, and their letters are the best, if not a complete, justification of the persistency of George III and of the immense Tory and Whig majorities which stood steadily behind the Prime Minister despite failure after failure in arms. It was always possible up to the date of French intervention that the rebellion would collapse through sheer exhaustion of men, munitions, money and morale.

North, whether Whig or Tory, was a faint-hearted fellow from the start. The policy of coercion was not his, but a legacy from his predecessor. Being without illusions he was probably well aware that his skill as leader of the Commons did not make him a great War Minister.

The American War of Independence lasted from April 1775 to November 1782, when the preliminaries of peace were signed. The turning point of the war was not the disaster of Saratoga in October 1777, for England, so long as she commanded the Atlantic route, could have sent another army to replace that lost by Burgoyne, but the successful naval entry of France on the scene in February 1778, backed later by the fleets of Spain and Holland. The surrender of Cornwallis, no mean soldier, at Yorktown in 1781 was the direct result of a combined operation between the American land army and the blockading French fleet. It meant that England had for the moment lost the command of the sea and could no longer depend on rescuing or supporting her American Expeditionary Force. Although Rodney had destroyed the Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent in 1780 and later smashed the victorious French fleet of De Grasse in 1782 in the West Indies, and the command of the sea was thus regained, the military position in America was clearly impossible so long as British reinforcements depended on a doubtful naval situation. The very existence of Great Britain was bound up with a naval concentration in European waters. The burden of war had become well-nigh intolerable to all classes in the country, and the Americans were in the same plight. The two sides had fought each other to a standstill, and the argument for an accommodation became irresistible. There were two obstacles to peace—France and George III. The former, seeing the British Titan staggering, desired to go in and finish him off, so recapturing all the conquests of Chatham. America pushed her allies rudely aside and entered on separate negotiations. George the Third showed his usual qualities—absolute constancy and courage accompanied by a complete inability to realise the facts of any situation which did not fit in with his desires. But he was beaten by the almost universal revolt among his own Ministers and their supporters.

Before proceeding to discuss the management of the peace negotiations it will be interesting to consider what developments of the party system had taken place during the long seven years of the American War. The text-book view, that during and at the end of that struggle everybody who was for the war was a Tory and everyone who was against it was a Whig, is, of course, merely a crude error. The nearest approach of fact to this statement is that *all* the

Tories and *all* the King's men were for the war, and that the most powerful and representative Whigs were opposed to it. But there were also Whigs like the followers of Grenville and Bedford who were against the Americans. Not only, therefore, was there no clean-cut party division, but the issue—as all war issues must be—was a temporary one not vitally affecting the structural concepts of parties. You might be a War-Whig or a War-Tory, but when the war was over the prefix would be struck out, leaving you plain Whig or Tory, unless, of course, some process of fusion had taken place during seven years of alliance.

The first question which has to be considered is whether any such process of fusion had taken place in the composite majority of Tories and Courtiers, largely of Whig origin, led by North. On this point the only direct evidence can be found in the behaviour of the groups after the fall of North and the end of the war, a period dealt with in the next chapter. But this much may be said here. It would appear that, though the two groups had modified each other's ideas, no real fusion had taken place.[1] Most of the King's men abandoned North and supported the Shelburne Administration. A few Tories did the same, but the bulk of the Party appear to have passed into a sullen and bewildered Opposition until North split it into two halves by his amazing Coalition *démarche*. Too much importance need not be attached to the fact that the ex-Premier was able to carry seventy Tories in his vest-pocket to fight with the Radical leader against the Crown, since an official leader with a decade of patronage behind him will always find a certain number of followers who would join him in a coalition with the devil—until they saw that the league was not going to pay. Nevertheless, it is clear that in the main the war left the war-parties much as they were in outward appearance, while the peace had actually a fissiparous tendency.

It is in the realm of ideas alone that we can perceive dimly that Toryism, already touched by the world ambitions of Chatham in the middle of the century, had been further wrenched from its insular mentality by having fought a prolonged contest across the ocean with soldiers as well as ships. It was the Tory preparation for the Napoleonic wars. In another respect the education of the Party had been less beneficent. Constant association in the division lobby with the King's placemen, redolent with the rotten borough, had not improved the electoral morale of the Tories. And this again was a form of preparation for their closer association with the same section under the Government of William Pitt, from which the Toryism of the Napoleonic era sprang.

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[1] See chap. xv. p. 287.

The Whigs had been divided before the war, were divided during the war, and remained divided after the war, so that they also seem to have been little affected by the prolonged struggle. Indeed the controversy almost emphasised, if that were possible, their subdivisions. It did not even work for the fusion of the anti-war section; for the pro-Americans were by no means unanimous or united in aim and method.

The large and respectable section of the Whigs led by Rockingham and inspired by Burke were the most cautious in their handling of the topic. Burke's views on constitutional issues must always be treated with the respect due to a man of penetrating insight, immense knowledge, possessed of a judgment calm except in the heat of controversy, and of considerable political experience. His definite view was that the Imperial Parliament was wrong in its claim to impose taxation on the Colonies. Nor did he exhibit in this matter any of the temper, almost rising to madness, which marred his conduct of the Regency controversy and some subsequent affairs. Many of his suggestions were of great practical value. He was far from committing himself to the wild exaggerations of Chatham or to the whirling words of Fox. His case is, in fact, the best that has been made for the Colonies. In adopting this standpoint the Rockingham Whigs smoothed the way for their return to power should the militant policy fail.

The militants again belong to two groups—the ancestors of the Radical peace-at-any-price party, and the forbears of Liberal Imperialism. The first group chiefly consisted of Charles James Fox, a host in himself—fortunately for him, for he had no other. He displayed on the American issue a spirit quite new in British politics. The Tories had said that the policy of Marlborough was wrong, but they had never prayed aloud—and probably never even wished—that Louis XIV would beat him. The Whig merchants who had grumbled at the expense of Chatham's wars had never considered the idea of giving comfort to the enemy. The crime of James II in the eyes of all parties was precisely the " Internationalism " of his relations with the historic enemy, France. Fox was the first British statesman to glory over British defeats. He had the excuse in this instance that the struggle might be regarded as a civic one; and in consequence he was forgiven—except for his intemperate language, which recoiled on him with deadly effect when he made his pact with North, who had so far been the chief sufferer from a reckless tongue which was to prove the ruin of its owner. It was not clear to the public then, as it is to history, that Fox, like the Tories, was being educated too for the Napoleonic wars, when he was to prove that his love of the enemy and his prayers for national humiliation were not confined to internal disputes.

The next section were the supporters of Chatham, who died before the final shot in the war was fired. He carried his own group of followers with him almost to a man in espousing the American cause.

The head of the Neo-Whig Imperialists, the disciple of Bolingbroke, and the instrument by which Toryism was induced to begin the abandonment of its too insular standpoint, might have been expected to stand by the Crown once war was declared, however much he might have disapproved the method of a policy which led to the crash. On the contrary, he proved himself something of which he had been falsely accused in the distant past, " the trumpet of sedition."

His action was indeed peculiar. His own Government, without a word of protest on his part, had embarked on the final fatal plan of taxing the Colonies. Yet even after war broke out he indulged in claims for Colonial rights which outran those made by the most ardent " Independents " in America and encouraged the insurgents to fight on. " If I were an American as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country I would never lay down my arms—never, never, never "—advice which he might have better addressed perhaps to the French in Canada or to the populations in India which fell before his victorious arms.

But that great man was always full of the most glorious surprises. His last dying speech in the Lords was a protest against " the dismemberment of this ancient and noble monarchy "—a process he had been actively assisting. How can one reconcile all the inconsistencies of Chatham's later career? He was a man born to govern and to direct the affairs of the State. For opposition he had neither taste nor ability except as a method of forcing himself into power. And the physical failure of the power to govern was made manifest in his last Administration. His opposition, therefore, became of that reckless character which feels that the time for office has passed for ever. Chatham was cruelly ill used by fate. It is quite probable that his brain and body would have lasted their appointed term so long as the sense of power and the responsibility of office buoyed them up. If George II had lived he would have settled the American difficulty for his time at least by his understanding of the outskirts of the Empire and by the immense weight of his prestige. But, as in so many other cases among those who possess the sensitiveness of genius either in business or in politics, the sudden stroke by which he was overturned at the very height of his power seems to have upset the balance of his mentality. Men under these rebuffs seem to shrivel like a gourd. Chatham lived indeed, and on occasion his perorations still re-echoed from the tapestries of the Upper Chamber in all their wonted majesty. But the enthusiasm tempered by judgment, the keenness of instinct necessary for the leader of a united people facing some great crisis of destiny, had vanished for ever. The occasional appearance was like a half-hearted resurrection. He could hinder, but he could not help, and his sun set behind clouds. And yet in a way his historic advocacy of the American cause against that of his own people may enshrine the last and most subtle stroke of the great political dramatist.

As the great War Minister and Imperialist, the saviour and inspirer of his country, his fame was safe ever since his first Administration.

Now in the last few years of his life he paid his tribute to the new school of Radicalism rising into the ascendant under the powerful genius of Fox—the school which was to declare the encouragement of national enemies a virtue, Napoleon a philanthropist, and self-defence a crime. He has remained, therefore, eligible for canonisation either in the school of Imperium or Libertas. He died in 1778, and immediately a link with history was broken. He was the last of the generation of giants, of Bolingbroke, Walpole, Pulteney and Carteret. The greatest disciple of *The Patriot King* had died in reaction against its doctrines and left to his son the task of fashioning a monarchy which should be neither absolute in the sense of the House of Tudor nor impotent in the sense of the early House of Hanover.

No man of such a duality of mind—always carried to extremes—ever achieved such a success. He had defied George II as a Whig and denounced his foreign wars like a Tory. He had suffered a long period of groping in the undergrowth of junior office and personal intrigue with his lightning held back as the final threat in reserve. Then came the great Administration, Tory in its extension of the Empire by means of the Fleet, Whig in its support of Frederick the Great in Germany. Thus he mixed throughout the brandy of Radicalism with Tory port and found the complex suited his constitution. It is idle to defend or explain his conduct by any standard of intellectual consistency. He seized on a doctrine here or there as whim or opportunity dictated and picked up a General like a bird pecking among seeds. In war he was terrible, for he understood a military situation better even than the Generals of his choice, and could not have said why. His method in debate was not that of convincing by argument, but of crushing all potential opposition by an overwhelming display of personality.

Therefore it seems to be almost useless to pry behind the curtains of these manifestations in search of some fundamental conception of his intellect. Here his contemporaries found themselves baffled, and posterity must admit to a similar defeat. One might as well point out of Isaiah and Jeremiah that their foreign policy was a lamentable failure. Some demonic force was there let loose by Providence for the salvation or damnation of a people. It does not suggest pellucid skies or the clarity of unimpassioned intellect, but great thunderstorms brooding over wide spaces and sending down a sudden flash of lightning or an outpouring of rain. Chatham was indeed born of the storm and the tempest, but his genius refreshed and fertilised the tree which was to grow into the British Empire.

CHAPTER XV

THE FALL OF NORTH AND THE RUIN OF FOX (1780–1784)

The political events which lie between the General Elections of 1780 and 1784 constitute one of the three great crises in the history of Toryism during the course of the eighteenth century. Both in the excitement of the incident and in the permanence of the result they are strictly comparable to 1710–1714, which witnessed the dominance and downfall of the Party, and to the anti-Jacobin reaction which in the last decade of the century committed to Tory chiefs, powerfully reinforced by the old Whigs, the death-grapple with France. Within the four years dealt with in this chapter three Governments in succession are overturned; the Tory Party is apparently riven in two and yet the wound inflicted heals almost magically; the Crown falls into its reasonable and allotted place under the new dispensation, while the figure destined to dominate the scene for the next twenty years strides obtrusively on to the stage. When it is all over the signs and omens seem to point to a long period of mild Tory rule under the control of a semi-Tory, semi-Whig Prime Minister, bent on nothing so much as the practical task of restoring to a people shattered by a disastrous war those blessings of peace and prosperity innate in the Tory mind.

Lord North's War Ministry did not go down without a struggle. When Burke moved his elaborate plan for economic reform in the spring of 1780, the Premier's majority dropped on one occasion to two. After the stunning majorities of the early days of the American War this was a proof positive of widespread disaffection in the Ministerial ranks.

The Tories and their Court allies had not given up conviction, but they were giving up hope. In April Dunning carried his celebrated motion against the growing influence of the Crown by a surprise majority of eighteen, and it looked as if the end had come. North, however, rallied his forces painfully and succeeded in defeating a direct vote of censure by ten votes.

At this moment of June 1780, Providence in the form of the Gordon Riots came to the rescue of Ministers. Lord George Gordon, part fool, part egotist, part fanatic, had put himself forward as the exponent of an anti-Popish scare of the Titus Oates variety. Why the material for such an agitation should have existed at this particular moment is a matter of crowd psychology which defies analysis. But the reason for the original demonstration in London soon vanished when the riff-raff which always follows in the train of "revolutions on principle" took the matter in hand. London would have been half burnt and wholly looted if the King, who was the only man who kept his head and his courage, had not informed his trembling Ministers that if they would not act he would lead the Guards out in person against the rioters. The moment the military were employed order was promptly restored, most of the mob being too drunk to offer resistance, or even to save their lives from the flames of their own kindling.

This horrible orgy and its suppression reacted directly on politics. The King gained in prestige, while respectable opinion began to think that the "People" Fox and Burke and the Duke of Richmond were always talking about were represented by this Bolshevist outbreak in the capital.

George III seized the occasion to dissolve Parliament in September. The General Election of 1780, so far from returning the anti-War Whigs to power with an immense majority, as the Rockingham Party had anticipated, left the distribution of parties very much as it was before. Burke lost his seat and William

Pitt, standing as a Whig, was rejected by Cambridge University.

Thus encouraged, the War Party determined to struggle on. Their difficulty was that their strength in Parliament necessarily depended on the course of events throughout the world. A War Ministry must succeed in war. Yet the external position was far from favourable. Ireland was in a state of suppressed mutiny, and no troops could be spared to put down the Irish volunteers. Rodney's victory off Cape St. Vincent in 1780 had not restored to the British Fleet the effective control of the sea. In 1781 the Dutch declared war on us, while Hyder Ali invaded the Carnatic and penetrated almost to the walls of Madras.

The criticism in both Houses was unsparing, Shelburne attacking Ministerial policy in the Lords, and Pitt, who was returned for Appleby, a close borough of Sir James Lowther's, and took his seat on the 23rd January, 1781, reinforcing Fox and Burke in the Commons. As a side issue, which yet appealed strongly to the country, Burke was pressing his demands for a reduction in royal and ministerial patronage under the title of economic reform. It was on this subject that Pitt made his first speech on the 25th February, 1781.

The ministerial majority was melting away. The placemen like Selwyn were trembling for their sinecures and wondering whether it would not be better to make terms with the enemy before the fortress fell. The Tory gentlemen, weighted down with war taxation, were beginning to see that they might continue the war in America if the French, the Spaniards and the Dutch would leave England alone, or that, on the other hand, if peace were made with the Colonies, England could concentrate against and defeat her European enemies; but that the double task was beyond the strength of the Empire. France and Spain were also of this opinion, hence their frantic efforts to prevent America concluding a separate peace. North himself had long held the view that American resistance could not be overcome, and his nose was only held to the grindstone by his royal master. The combination of dissident Whigs, King's Friends and Tories was thus suffering from a deliquescence of voting strength at both ends. The Bedford Whigs had already left the Government to swell the Opposition, and the remaining Chathamites were quickly drifting into a working alliance with the orthodox Whigs.

Under these circumstances the news of the surrender of Yorktown (October 19) came on 25th November, 1781, as a bombshell to the ministerial majority. It was not the mere capitulation of a British army, but a definite proof of a loss of the command of the Atlantic—of that pre-eminence at sea to which the Tories had always clung. Twenty Tory members from the counties seceded from North immediately. The Government was only saved by adjourning on the 21st December for the Christmas holidays.

On the 22nd February, 1782, the Opposition issued a direct challenge on the American war policy, and North's majority fell to one. On the 27th February the Government was defeated by 234 to 215. North was threatened with impeachment and resigned on the 20th March.

The King some days before had opened a negotiation with Shelburne, but was brought reluctantly to realise that Rockingham, as the head of the large and orthodox Whig Party, was North's inevitable successor. But he declined to see the new Premier, and conducted the entire negotiation through Shelburne. This insult Rockingham swallowed on the advice of Burke and Fox—indeed there was always something slightly indecent in the latter's haste to seize office. But the Whigs were firm enough about their terms: peace with America, and no royal veto, economic reform, and the Bill excluding contractors in a modified shape—in fact the entire Opposition programme. Under Rockingham were Shelburne as Secretary of State for Home Affairs and Fox for Foreign Affairs.[1] Burke took minor office as Vice-

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[1] The third Secretaryship of State had been abolished.

Treasurer for Ireland. Thurlow remained Lord Chancellor as representing those King's Friends who now deserted North. Portland became Viceroy of Ireland. The weakness of the new Ministry was that the Cabinet was divided almost equally between the Chathamites and the orthodox Whigs, who differed materially on their general outlook on policy. It was easy for a keen eye to detect a fissure in such a combination and for a strong hand to drive a wedge into the weak spot. The problems of the new Government were twofold. First, to make peace not only with America but with France, Spain and Holland, and secondly, to carry out a policy of internal reform. But the internal reformers were themselves in two opposite camps, as had happened so often before. Burke was all for limiting the power of the Crown to make elections or corrupt members, while he regarded the representative system which had been handed down from the Restoration and the Revolution as the Ark of the Covenant on which no man might lay a rash hand. It may be added that by a curious stroke of irony his view that the existing system still gave the English people a fair chance to express their opinion was powerfully reinforced subsequently by the crushing disaster which overtook his own Party in the election of 1784.

Pitt, on the other hand, who had declined junior office in the new Government now formed by Rockingham and yet gave it independent support, was primarily concerned to bring Parliament into closer touch with the electorate—a course which to Burke savoured of blasphemy. On the 7th May, 1782, Pitt made a very moderate speech asking for an inquiry on Parliamentary Reform. He indicated the main lines on which he would move forward—a disfranchisement of notoriously and permanently corrupt boroughs and an increase in the representation of the counties and the growing industrial centres. This, as has been pointed out previously,[1] had always been the attitude taken up in the past by the Conservative electoral reformers, and it was only the inert stupidity of the Tory Party which had prevented them supporting a popular national policy which was essentially in their own interest. For Toryism was the popular party of the late seventeenth and the first nine decades of the eighteenth century. Fox, indeed, on this very motion of Pitt's said, with commendable frankness, that the counties, the stronghold of Tory sentiment and the possessors of a wide franchise, were in favour of the motion and the boroughs against it. But Pitt's early effort, like his later one, was foredoomed to failure. He had to contend against the Whig lords with their close boroughs; against the Nabobs with their bought boroughs; against Burke, who had evolved a glittering theory that the Constitution of 1689 represented the ideal State. The Tories, who should have been Pitt's natural supporters, were not only a minority reeling under a crushing defeat, but had been already partially corrupted during the long duration of North's Government by their association with the placemen who sat for royal boroughs. They responded feebly to the blast of the reform trumpet. Once again a great Tory opportunity for redistribution was let slip. Pitt's motion was rejected by 161 to 141, and it may be noted as an ominous fact for the future character of Toryism that this was the best division reform ever had in the House of Commons up to the cataclysm of 1831–1832. Ten days later Pitt followed up his campaign by a motion in favour of shorter Parliaments. The Whigs under the Walpole *régime* had abolished the Triennial Act of the reign of William III and substituted a septennial period for the sitting of Parliament, a measure which remained in force until the Liberal Parliament Act of 1910 reduced the period to five years. Walpole's object was notorious. The longer members were removed from trial by their constituents the more amenable they were to ministerial corruption. Pitt, therefore, was putting himself in the straight line of intelligent Tory tradition in demanding more frequent appeals to the people.

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[1] See chap. v. p. 54 : Debate of 1692.

Burke, however, opposed him in a speech of great power and the motion was lost.

Burke's attitude might be more difficult to understand if it were not for the history of all previous movements for the reform of Parliament itself and of the constituencies which elected it. There had always been two schools of thought on this group of cognate subjects. There were the men who turned their eyes back to the struggles of Parliament with the Crown, and the men who looked forward to an ultimate sound relationship between the Commons and the electorate. The Whigs throughout the ages, inheriting direct from the tradition of Pym and Hampden, could never clear their minds from the obsession of a predominant Crown. Therefore they could think of nothing else but the exclusion of courtiers or placemen or even Ministers from their assembly. The House of Commons became a thing in itself—something which all men must fall down and worship quite irrespective of its claim to represent the public. Reform was an insult; more frequent appeals to the electorate a form of blackmail levied on the pure and noble representatives of the people.

The contrary school, which comprised both intelligent Tories and advanced Whigs, were not much worried about royal influence so long as they could get adequate popular representation (which must and did in any case weaken that influence) and frequent appeals to the constituencies. The only difference in 1782 was between Pitt, who as a Tory-Whig believed in gradual reform, and the Duke of Richmond, who as a Radical wanted manhood suffrage. Burke, on the other side, was simply suffering from the inherited conservatism of the Rockingham group, which thought that William III had made England for them as a freehold to be held in perpetuity.

However, the Government faithfully and manfully carried out in the early summer of 1782 that part of the reform programme to which they were pledged. The Government contractors were excluded from Parliament; the revenue officers, an incredibly large proportion of the electorate,[1] were disfranchised and £70,000 worth of sinecures and pensions were abolished. The prospects before the Ministry seemed to the outside view fair, in spite of Cabinet dissensions, so long as Rockingham lived, but that important nonentity died on the 1st July.

The quarrels within the Cabinet which the late Premier's existence had alone kept in check were already just about to burst out at the time of his death, and that event rendered them uncontrollable. They were partly concerned with questions of domestic reform, but the vital cause of strife was the negotiation of the peace.

Fox and Shelburne were from the outset like oil and vinegar, and the conflict over external affairs was intensified by the accidental fact that their functions overlapped. Fox was Foreign Secretary, but America, being still technically a Colony, remained within the province of Shelburne. An immediate conflict on the tactics of the peace thus gave Shelburne a certain *locus standi*. Fox, who was unquestionably right, wanted to recognise American independence frankly and conclude a separate peace with Congress. Great Britain could then have turned on France and Spain and frightened them into accepting terms far better than those to be obtained by a general agreement. For no enemy country was in a condition to continue the war when the strength of Great Britain was no longer bleeding away in America. Shelburne and the King, on the other hand, insisted on a general all-round peace as the best method of procedure.

But worse was to follow. In April 1782, before the other two American Commissioners empowered to treat had reached Paris, Shelburne decided to enter into a private negotiation with the third, Franklin, permanently resident in France, without communicating his intention to the Foreign Office. He chose for this purpose a merchant called Oswald, who had estates in America, and appears to have been a horrid example of the amateur playing with diplomacy. Whether from a desire to secure compensation for his American property or from sheer weakness, folly and vanity, his method was to agree to the most preposterous demands on the part of Franklin, to carry them back to Shelburne, who treated them with reserve, or refused them, and then to explain to Franklin that Shelburne was really well disposed to these ideas all the time. A better method of encouraging an enemy diplomatist to persist in his demands it would be difficult to imagine. It will be observed that the whole proceeding was absolutely opposed to the very theory on which Shelburne had already differed with Fox, viz. "No separate agreement with America." More amazing still, when the Home Secretary partially disclosed these facts to the Cabinet they supported him against an indignant Fox, and agreed that the Oswald Mission should continue, while the Foreign Secretary sent a separate envoy, Grenville, son of the ex-Premier, to deal with Vergennes, the French Foreign Minister. A parallel case would be found if in 1919 Mr. Lloyd George's Cabinet had instructed the Foreign Office to arrange terms of peace with all the enemy countries and then permitted a representative of the India Office to go separately to Versailles to suggest to Turkey that she would get far better terms out of the India Office than would be offered by the Foreign Secretary.

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[1] From 40,000 to 60,000 in an electorate of 300,000.

Nothing except good chance averted a diplomatic disaster of the first magnitude.

Fox was naturally in a state of furious indignation, and he was undoubtedly in the right. During his brief tenure of office he exhibited, as later, in 1806, a marked talent for practical administration, common-sense dealings with officials, and for foreign diplomacy. The proceedings of Shelburne, on the contrary—almost inconceivable in a statesman of his experience of affairs—explain why no politician could ever work cordially with him for any length of time.

The proposal put forward by Franklin to Oswald was nothing less than the cession of Canada, which the revolting Colonies had failed to take by force of arms, to the American Republic. By the sale of Canadian unoccupied lands a fund was to be raised to pay reparations for damage done on the American continent during the war, both to insurrectionists and to the Loyalists of America, and to compensate the latter for confiscated property. Shelburne never showed this proposal to the Cabinet, and indeed refused to consider it, but Franklin got a very different impression of the attitude of the British Government from Oswald. In the meantime Grenville was empowered to approach Vergennes with the suggestion that all conquests should be restored on the basis of the treaty of 1763. He met with a stiff reception. Finally, on the 23rd May the Cabinet returned to Fox's original opinion, that the thing to do was to break America off from the Alliance and do business with her separately, and " to propose the independency of America in the first instance, instead of making it a condition of a General Treaty." The dual negotiations in Paris were kept up all this time, with disastrous consequences, Oswald continually stiffening Franklin against Grenville. Shelburne utterly declined to keep his finger out of the diplomatic pie, and the Foreign Secretary in consequence found every move of his own in the game ruined by this incalculable element.

Such were the reasons which had already driven Fox to the verge of resignation when Rockingham died on the 1st July, 1782. It was unfortunate for him that when his resignation actually did take place he was unable to explain the real reasons which had goaded him into his fierce antagonism to Shelburne.

On the death of Rockingham the King immediately sent for Shelburne. It is difficult to see how any monarch could have done otherwise. The Secretary of State was far the most distinguished and experienced statesman in the Ministry. He had already once refused the Premiership; he had negotiated the creation of the Administration; his influence alone had induced the King to agree to American independence. That many of his colleagues disliked him and would be unwilling to serve under him was obvious. It was equally clear that the King was right to ask him to form an Administration, and, should he be unable to do so, to send for someone who could.

But at this point the orthodox Whig leaders made the first of those blunders which were to reduce their Party to impotence for half a century. Instead of giving Shelburne his chance or even his certainty of failure, one-half of the Cabinet announced that it was going to appoint its own Prime Minister quite irrespective of the wishes of the King. This was, of course, a marked reversion to the doctrines and practice of the Venetian Constitution—such a humiliation having been undergone at least once by each of the last two monarchs. But things were very different in 1782. While George III had failed to establish the mastery of the Crown over Parliament, his struggles had yet freed the monarchy in the eyes of the public, and in reality, from the pure tyranny of the old Whig control. " The constitutional right of the Sovereign to select the person who was to be entrusted with the task of forming his Ministry was incontestable," writes Mr. Lecky.

The orthodox Whigs in the Cabinet thought otherwise. Fox, Cavendish, Keppel, Richmond and Burke announced to the King that they had chosen as Premier the Duke of Portland, a nobleman distinguished for nothing except his obstinacy. " The King at once answered that he had made Lord Shelburne First Lord of the Treasury, and Fox and several other members of the Rockingham party resigned."

If the Foxites had all gone together something might have been accomplished. As it was they resigned in echelon. The first clear issue was now put before the people. Had the King the right to ask one of his Ministers to form a Government or must he accept a Premier at the hands of a group in the Cabinet?

The Whigs once more exposed themselves to the old accusation of desiring to govern the country by a small clique exercising the power which rightly belonged to the Crown. Shelburne accepted the task of forming a new Administration and did not fail to take full advantage of the error of his opponents. William Pitt became Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The first duty of Lord Shelburne's Ministry was to make peace. Although he was undoubtedly in a minority in the Commons, it was difficult for any Opposition to form itself against the general idea of pacification. The Foxites had been clamouring for it for years and had been committed to the preliminary negotiations in Paris. Shelburne could depend on a large loose force of Tories who had abandoned North in despair on this very issue. If there were any War Die-hards among the Northite Tories they were too dispirited to show fight against the general idea that American independence must be recognised. And peace with Spain and France and Holland must follow such recognition, since it was well known that the European Powers would not continue the struggle in isolation. One thing at least had been gained by the ministerial crisis—there were no longer two envoys of Great Britain representing different offices in Paris.

Shelburne on the whole made the best peace that was possible,[1] and the preliminary articles were signed on the 30th November, 1782, with America and on the 20th January, 1783, with France, Spain and Holland. He was greatly assisted in his diplomatic task by the fact that, as in the case of the Peace of Utrecht, the official enemies were often intriguing with the other side against each other. On the one hand, Vergennes as representing the Bourbon interests both of France and Spain was by no means anxious to extend the American power in a threatening manner all over the new continent to the danger of the Spanish dominions there. On the other hand, the American Commissioners were shrewd enough to see that they would get better terms by dealing direct with Great Britain and so forcing their European allies to fall into line. This last development had been the true British diplomatic method of attack all along.[1] The American Commissioners, therefore, defying the express instructions of Congress, signed the preliminaries of peace with Great Britain without consulting Vergennes. The idea of the cession of Canada was abandoned, but the American frontier was advanced to within twenty miles of Montreal and a valuable district ceded to the new Power. The attempt to secure reparation for the American Tory Loyalists failed in essence, and it was left to Great Britain, after many heart-breaking delays of the usual red-tape variety, to pay compensation. In the long run, however, the British Government installed the exiled American Tories in Canada at the cost of over a million pounds. What they had lost in the old Dominion they partially regained in the new. As Tories they had been the predominant social and political force in the revolted Colonies; as hunted Loyalists they ruled Eastern Canada with a rod of iron for three generations. The action of the American Commissioners in making good terms for themselves in November forced the hands of their European allies and compelled them to a preliminary agreement in the following January (1783). Rodney's victory in the West Indies in 1782 and the successful defence of Gibraltar by Elliot made an almost bankrupt France all the more ready to agree to terms. Still the fact could not be concealed that Great Britain had waged an unsuccessful if not a disastrous war. Under these circumstances the suggested terms were not unreasonable, nor unfair to either side. These terms can be best expressed in a tabular form.

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[1] Lecky, ch. xv. p. 236.

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[1] It is curious that this return of Shelburne and George III to the sound method first advocated by Fox became a ground of suspicion that Shelburne was trying to break off negotiations by proposing the impossible, *i. e.* Recognition of Independence before terms. Lord Rosebery rightly acquits the Minister of any such intention, but points out an obscure passage in one of the King's letters which might indicate that George had some desperate hope of this kind.

France	*Great Britain*
Recovers St. Lucia and gains Tobago in the West Indies. Regains its former footing in St. Pierre and Miquelon, which assists its hold on the Newfoundland fisheries. Senegal and Goree returned to France and also existing stations in India. Spain gets West and East Florida and Minorca. Dutch recover Trincomalee.	Recovers Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Kitts, Nevis and Montserrat in West Indies. The Bahamas go to England. Gibraltar retained. Recovers Seringapatam.

But while the plenipotentiaries might arrange these preliminaries of peace, the British Parliament had yet to ratify them. Shelburne's Ministry had been let alone, partly in order that it might incur the odium of negotiating the peace and partly because there was no combination ready to take its place. But Ministers depending on Chathamites, some placemen, and some Tories were in a hopeless minority. Either Fox or North must be brought in to secure the ratification of the peace terms.

There ensued a triangular duel between the three parties, which were about equal in strength, almost unexampled in history. On the 11th February, 1783, Pitt saw Fox and endeavoured to persuade him to rejoin the Government. On learning, however, that Shelburne's retirement was the preliminary condition of union, the younger man withdrew haughtily from the interview. Two days later Dundas, who had left the official Tories in order to attach himself permanently to Pitt, tried to induce North to come in. There would indeed have been nothing unnatural in an alliance of Tories and Chathamites now that the American issue of peace or war was definitely settled, while the difficulties of a Whig reunion were really purely personal. But the issues between North and Fox covered the whole field of politics. Dundas, however, also failed with North, and on the very next day (14th February) the famous or infamous Fox-North Coalition was formed. The agreement was based on a general compromise by which each extreme party forfeited its general convictions. They may be summed up as: (1) No more Economic Reform; (2) Parliamentary Reform to remain an open question in the Cabinet; (3) the Crown to be reduced to the position it had held under Walpole and Newcastle; (4) the terms of peace to be used as a lever for attacking and turning out the Ministry.

Historians have already exhausted almost the entire vocabulary of invective on this profligate bargain. The Tory writer is not particularly concerned with an indictment or defence of Fox.

Charles James Fox, with all his personal charm and immense natural talents, inherited from his father, that great ruffian the first Lord Holland, an extraordinary bluntness of moral perception. Lord Holland spent his old age in whining in the best Barry Lyndon style about the ingratitude with which his friendship or his services had been rewarded by his old political associates. He was quite unable to perceive the light in which his political career was regarded even by the most hardened professors of the political morals of the Newcastle epoch. His son, though he was above whining and faced adversity with a serene countenance, could never understand how the British people regarded his amazing performances—his professions of purity and his greed for office, his violent denunciations one day of men with whom he was ready to make allies the next, his puritanical harangues on politics and the irregularity of his private life, and last of all the anti-British bias which always seemed to make him the deliberate enemy of his country's interests unless he happened to be her representative against the hostile power. I do not say that this is a complete description of the career and mentality of Fox, but what I do say is that this is the impression which his moral insensitiveness working out in his public actions forced on the minds of that respectable and balancing element in the British Commonwealth which ultimately decides the fate of statesmen. Possibly he was too great a man to practise hypocrisy, or he may have felt, like certain sects of the Calvinist Church, that, having once abjured the damnable heresy of persecuting Wilkes and the printers and come to believe in the true Whig Faith, the purity of his motive made him one of the elect whose salvation no dabbling in the mud could destroy.

Fox at any rate had for his action in 1783 the excuse of a bitter animosity against the Shelburne Ministry, and not without reason. North's conduct in taking part in the transaction remains almost inexplicable if the ex-Premier is regarded as an orthodox and convinced Tory. Mr. Lecky observes with justice that his conduct was far more blameworthy than that of Fox, for a senior statesman with a wide experience of public office of the highest rank should possess a greater sense of responsibility and of decency than a junior politician only recently advanced to power. Nor had North any public grievance against the Shelburne Administration. For years he had believed that peace with America and Europe was necessary. Nothing but the insistent demands of the King had retained him in office for his last period of the Premiership.

Power had been to him an agony and his release like a successful operation. The King told him in his last message that he resigned of his own desire and departed against the royal will. Why then should he grudge his successors the power to make the peace he himself willed, any more than a man hates the surgeon who removes a tumour from his body?

Several explanations have been put forward. The first is that he resented William Pitt's resolution as second-in-command in the Government never to serve with him, but to take in his followers while excluding the principal. Yet as a matter of fact North, who was not a self-seeking man, showed at this time and in the future a complete indifference to such personal considerations. The second view is that North suffered from what our ancestors called a process of "conversion"—that he repented of the wickedness of his ways in bowing to the royal prerogative for a decade and regarded all the evils which had overtaken the realm as the result of his compliance to George III. He certainly said something to Fox in the course of the negotiations which might lend a colour to this view. He remarked on this occasion that he had never believed in the idea of mixed administrations in which each chief of a department was primarily responsible to the King without a united Cabinet control. Such a system, he said, he found in existence and continued it without approving it. In other words, he discarded and condemned at this interview the practice of William III, the doctrines of Bolingbroke, the earlier theory and practice of Chatham, and the method of George III of which he himself had been the principal executor. It follows that North had either been living a lie for years or was now telling one, and since all agree that Lord North was an honest man, either conclusion is equally distasteful and improbable. I think it is clear that he was merely advancing insincere reasons for a course on which he had determined beforehand.

The third explanation is that certain individuals like Lord Loughborough and Eden, one already and the other to be a notorious pervert, gave the ex-Premier bad advice on this occasion and that he succumbed to it—a poor excuse for a consummate man of the world with an unrivalled knowledge of political life, who had for years held the highest office in the gift of the Crown.

The best explanation of North's strange vagary would appear to be somewhat different. He had been brought up and introduced into politics in an age which regarded the transference of one political group from Government to Opposition or back again as a natural event in the political world. The heritage of the age of confusion which succeeded the dominance of Walpole was strong upon him. And he never had been and never was a true Tory. As has been pointed out in a previous chapter, the leadership of that Party came to him by accident. He had, therefore, in 1782 not the slightest conception of the strength of the real Tory sentiment in favour of the Crown, or indeed of any principle at all. He really imagined that he could persuade the whole Tory Party to combine with Fox in reducing the King to subservience without a single protest or defection, as if he were shifting chessmen on a board. He had been fused with Toryism incidentally by the heat engendered in the American War, and had mistaken that accident of circumstance for a permanent union and a real leadership. If, therefore, North had been a genuine Tory with a deep devotion to the Crown he had so long served he would have been guilty in 1783 of a gross betrayal of faith. But as a matter of fact he was merely a Courtier-Whig who had been trained to regard the necessities of the monarch as his own opportunity. Such a man would see nothing particularly startling or bad about his action. It was because this was North's mental attitude that immediately the Coalition was formed on the best traditions of Walpole, Carteret, Pulteney, Lord Holland and Newcastle, the Tory Party melted away from under his hand. They moved towards Pitt with the sure instinct of the rank and file who know the real leader from the false one.

The moment this unholy compact had been signed it was clear that the Government must fall. It would, however, have been far better tactics to have let Shelburne take the responsibility of passing the peace terms—which were inevitable and yet bound to be unpopular. Fox himself, from his experience at the Foreign Office, must have known perfectly well that nothing better could be got. However, with his reckless disregard of moral appearance, he and his ally agreed to overturn the Ministry by objecting to the ratification of the peace on the ground that it was too disadvantageous to England. Great play was made with the abandonment of the American Tories—a disgusting piece of cant in Fox, who loathed them bitterly—and on the cession of Minorca, almost the only advantage the hapless Spaniards got out of the war.

In the debate on the address on the 17th February, 1783, Ministers were defeated by sixteen votes. They struggled on, however, until the 22nd February, when they were beaten by seventeen votes on a direct vote of censure on the issue of the treaty in spite of a fine effort of Pitt's. Shelburne, however, got the treaty through the Lords by a majority of thirteen. The second defeat in the Commons clearly terminated the existence of the Government, and Shelburne resigned.

But the King would not accept the inevitable when it took the form of Fox, whom he had always hated, and North, whom he regarded with justice from his own standpoint as a turncoat, and a traitor to the personal monarchy. To be reduced to impotence by such a combination was worse than succumbing to the old Whig domination. All through March the country was practically without a Government, while George sought desperately for some alternative Premier and Administration. After two long interviews Pitt, who was the obvious choice, declined the dangerous honour as the result of a careful consideration of the balance of forces in the Commons. With his usual judgment he bided his time. Finally, on the 2nd April, 1783, George bowed to fate. The Duke of Portland became titular Premier, with North and Fox as Secretaries of State, and the latter as leader of the House. Lord Loughborough, once known as Wedderburn, " a man," as Mr. Rose remarks, " apt in betrayal," became First Commissioner for the Great Seal, since Thurlow, after a desperate struggle, was extruded from the Chancellorship. All the other important posts went to the Foxites. It is an amazing fact, which seems to indicate that North's parliamentary mind must have been failing him, that although his personal following was larger than Fox's, only one single other Tory was included in the Ministry. Burke and Sheridan, the latter rather against his better judgment, took minor offices. The King let it be known that he would grant no peerages on the recommendations of Ministers. This was rather amusing, because the new-comers were known to be greedy for the spoils of power. The country on the whole seems to have regarded this sudden transformation of the Parliamentary scene with a dazed surprise. The public, like a man hit with a bullet, wanted time to estimate the extent of the damage. If during this interval the Ministry managed to establish itself on a sound basis and produce the fruits of successful administration, their coup might yet succeed. In the other direction lay absolute ruin: nor was Fox himself under any illusions on this subject. The difficulty was to find any common ground of consistent legislation.

Pitt opened a well-placed battery on the new Administration on the 7th May, 1783, by renewing his motion for reform both parliamentary and economic. Ministers were compelled to speak against each other, but the main bias of the majority was shown by the fact that the resolution was thrown out by 144 votes.

But the signing of the peace they had denounced was the first big task of the Government. On the 3rd of September the Peace Treaty was formally signed at Versailles without any alteration of the preliminaries worthy of comment. The Coalition had thrown down Shelburne for negotiating the terms they now accepted. It was impossible that such a blazing piece of cynicism could make anything but an unfavourable impression on the country. Modern parallels for ancient events are dangerous, but they will sometimes assist to the understanding of a situation. Let us suppose that the South African War, 1899–1901, had ended in a complete military fiasco and that a European naval combination had partially destroyed our sea supremacy and compelled a British army to surrender at Durban. To reduce the Boers to submission would be gradually recognised by the Conservative Party as beyond the power of the Empire. Lord Salisbury's position would then have been that of Lord North's in the autumn of 1781: he would have been bound to resign on the final confession of failure, but his resignation would simply have signalised the defeat of a policy the vast bulk of the nation had endorsed.

The alternative Ministry selected to make a humiliating peace with part of South Africa and the European Powers must have consisted (for there would be no alternative choice) of avowed pro-Boers, of whose past speeches the electorate would be reminded as conducing to the national humiliation, and of a certain number of Liberal Imperialists, men who could at least sign the terms of peace without public witness to their own incompetence. Under these circumstances the King must have formed a Ministry of Liberals united on the single ground that peace must be made at any reasonable price. It would have included Liberal Imperialists and pro-Boers alike. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman would have become Premier, and Lord Rosebery, Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey would have found themselves in the Cabinet with Lord Morley, Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Labouchere. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman would stand for Rockingham, Lord Rosebery for Lord Shelburne as the real inspiration of Crown and Government, and Mr. Lloyd George represent the extremists as the successor of Charles James Fox.

Such a Ministry might be able to conclude peace, but it must obviously from the very start consist of two semi-antagonistic halves ready to fly apart on the first real strain. In most of the Cabinet discussions the two elements vote solidly against each other and a single waverer turns the scale. Before the peace negotiations are over the nominal head of the Government dies. The King summons Lord Rosebery to the Premiership and the pro-Boer and extreme Radical element in the Cabinet resign. The new Premier manages to fill up the vacancies somehow out of non-party men and a few Tories, and goes on with the negotiations for peace. The country remains Tory, but in a state of sullen acquiescence with the inevitable consequence of defeat. The preliminaries of peace with General Botha and the Kaiser are arranged, but they still remain to be ratified. Lord Rosebery's Government has been dependent for a majority on a considerable Liberal vote and on the general consent of the Conservative Opposition. What happens now? The extreme Conservatives, led by Lord Salisbury, make a deal with Mr. Lloyd George to throw down the Government before peace is signed on the ground that the terms are not good enough. The combined forces are for the moment in a majority in the House of Commons; the Ministry is expelled, and Lord Salisbury and Mr. Lloyd George form a joint Administration. They then ratify the peace arranged by Lord Rosebery! One can hardly imagine that such a performance would commend itself to any electorate. What the country would have thought of a Salisbury–Lloyd George combination after a South African *débâcle* in 1902 was what our ancestors thought of the attitude of Fox and North towards the peace negotiations in 1783. There could be only one epithet for such a performance—it was simply dishonest.

CHAPTER XVI

THE MAKING OF THE NEW TORY PARTY

Both the reform debates and the signing of the peace had thus been disastrous to the prestige of Ministers. Some great constructive feat of statesmanship was necessary to repair the damage. What form would it take? The answer was the Coalition India Bill. Fate thrust on Fox and North at this moment the problem of the government of an India which was rapidly passing into a state of chaos. The legislation of 1773, while it gave Parliament certain powers over the policy of the India Company, had omitted to make this control really effective. One of the results was the scandal of the situation at Calcutta, where the Governor-General, Warren Hastings, in a minority on his own Governing Board, was, with the backing of the Court of Proprietors, defying a vote of censure passed by the Commons in the previous year, and declining to obey his recall by the Court of Directors. No one, least of all Pitt, as his own measure showed, denied that the authority of Parliament must be made paramount over the Company in matters of policy which might involve the whole nation at any moment in war. The question was simply as to method, so that the problem need not have raised any question of vital principle between the Whigs and the Tories.

The defects of Fox's measure—for its impetuosity and lack of regard for the decencies of politics make it far more his than the product of the cautious Conservatism of Burke [1]—were the hasty brushing out of the way of the old Company in favour of a purely parliamentary Board of Control sitting in London and exercising an administrative autocracy in India, and secondly the staffing of that Board, with all its immense patronage, by the admitted partisans of the Government. In a single measure the sanctity of contract seemed to be violated, to the alarm of all corporate bodies throughout the kingdom, while an immense new weapon of corruption was to be handed over to the Government. Pitt seized with marked exaggeration on these two lines of attack; but it was not so much his eloquence as the public character of Ministers which made the assault fatal. North had proved himself an instrument of corruption and Fox politically unscrupulous—now corruption and lack of scruple stood combined. The nation believed evil because it had seen evil done. It was ready to swallow any rhetorical exaggeration of the danger of the measure because flamboyant denunciation chimed in with its own suspicions of the Government. North, who would have been a better guide in this matter than his two chief colleagues, behaved to them in the same pusillanimous manner he had practised so often on the King. He did not protest, but he absented himself from Parliament on the plea of ill-health.

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[1] Lord Morley in his *Life of Burke* ascribes the measure to him, but only on the ground that Burke disliked the methods of the East India Company.

In any case the King saw, as the popular agitation against the India Bill developed, that the hour for revenge had struck, and taking a big risk with the weapon he chose, he hit back with all his power.

More than once in the early days of the Wilkes and the Press debates the King had let it be known in the Commons that to vote in a particular sense would be to incur his displeasure—once at least in flat and open opposition to the views and tactics of his own Prime Minister. The majority hostile to the Crown in the Lower House over the India Bill was so big as to make such an attempt hopeless, but there still remained the House of Lords. There, as we have seen, Shelburne had succeeded in carrying his Peace Treaty by a small majority after the formation of the Coalition and just before his resignation. The peers can never be regimented in the same way that the Commons can by the machinery of party discipline, especially in a case like that of a sudden union between two long-hostile forces. The junction of Fox and North in the Commons did not, therefore, by any means imply that nearly all Whig lords were prepared to support the Government and nearly all Tory lords to take sides against the Crown.

The ground was clearly favourable for royal action, and Earl Temple, Pitt's brother-in-law, just ejected from the Viceroyalty of Ireland by the Coalition Ministry, was selected as the intermediary. He was permitted to go round showing a card on which was inscribed, possibly in the King's own handwriting, "that His Majesty allowed Earl Temple to say that whosoever voted for the India Bill was not only not his friend, but would be considered by him as an enemy." This message undoubtedly exercised a decisive influence. The India Bill was thrown out in the Lords by nineteen votes on the 17th December, 1783. The King immediately called on the Secretaries of State to deliver up the seals; the Coalition was out and Pitt became First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer two days later.

This action of the King has been almost universally condemned on the high constitutional ground that it was a violent interference by one factor in the Constitution with another. But this is to state the case too high. The epithet violent is justified, but not the statement that it was not and is not the practice of the Constitution for the Crown to bring its personal influence to bear on the peers to reject a measure in preference to falling back on the royal veto, or to pass one rather than involve the Crown in a wholesale creation of peers. The form of George III's note is indefensible, suggesting indeed a kind of blackmail. But as a matter of constitutional practice, to go back no further than the Restoration, which saw the birth of the Tory Party, Charles II constantly attended the debates in the Lords as a listener whose presence must have influenced the speakers. Further, at the Parliament of Oxford he exercised in private the whole weight of his personal persuasions to induce the peers to throw out the Exclusion Bill. Nor was his action regarded as in any way peculiar at the time. After the Revolution William III constantly appealed to leading peers to reject Bills to which he objected and might have felt himself bound to veto. In fact throughout his reign there existed a small and effective if loosely defined group of lords who acted in the interests of the Crown, and whose weight thrown from one side to the other was often decisive in those days of narrow majorities in the Upper House. In the next reign the wishes of Queen Anne privately communicated exercised a marked effect on the voting of the spiritual peers. George III was therefore simply reasserting a right which had been in abeyance during the eclipse of the Crown under the first two Hanoverian kings, and it may be said without much fear of contradiction that to this day in moments of grave constitutional crisis the right of private persuasion of the peers is still inherent in and practised by the Crown.

The point is of more than academic importance in considering the action of Pitt and of the Tories in the course of 1783–1784.

The secret could not be hid when scores of people had seen the written card. Fox denounced the transaction publicly and with great violence in the Commons, and though Pitt, who was obviously speaking the truth, said at the time that he knew nothing of the matter, he must have been informed of Temple's part in the business soon afterwards, and it is shrewdly surmised that his refusal to bestow on his brother-in-law the expected dukedom of Buckingham was due to this after-knowledge. Either from motives of annoyance or of decency he faced Temple's resignation, which nearly destroyed his nascent Ministry, and a marquesate did not eventuate for over a year.

Yet Pitt took no action when he did know the facts, and one can only surmise that however much he may have disapproved of the royal method, he did not consider that his Ministry was the fruit of a breach of the Constitution. Indeed his whole subsequent attitude towards the question of the validity of the personal influence of the monarch reinforces this conclusion.

Again, the wide publication of the story did not prevent the Tories in increasing numbers from abandoning the standard of North and reinforcing the ranks of Pitt. It is probable, therefore, that those historians who believe that if Fox and North could or would have forced a dissolution on the issue of an abuse of the royal prerogative while the events which had led to the downfall of their Administration were still fresh, they could have carried the country, are mistaken. In the first place, Fox and North had no power to force a dissolution unless it had been proved that no alternative Government could carry on, for until this stage had been reached the decision to dissolve lay absolutely with the Crown, which was waiting its own convenience for the appeal. In the second place, the Tory voters would certainly have stood by Pitt and the King on this issue. What is of interest in this connection is the fact that the Coalition was born out of a struggle with the monarchy on the right of the King to choose his own Prime Minister, and fell in a renewed conflict over the question of the prerogative. As we shall see, Fox's next declaration was that the Crown had not the right to dissolve Parliament against the wishes of a temporary majority in the Commons, quite regardless of the possible opinion of the electorate. It was the choice or accident of these issues following hard on one another which exercised such an immense influence on the Tory mind in the election of 1784, and led to its vehement repudiation of North as a safe guide to the Tory conscience in matters affecting the prerogative of the Crown.

Pitt entered on office in the last month of the year in a hopeless minority, and with a weak personnel.[1] Dundas in the Commons and Thurlow in the Lords were the only decent speakers on the Ministerial benches. Otherwise the Premier must step into every breach which the Opposition heavy guns could open. His accession to power was greeted with ridicule not only by his professed opponents, but by impartial observers. The Administration looked exactly like one of those attempts, which had failed so often before, to construct a Ministry of King's Friends and a few Tories with a respectable figure-head drawn from the school of Chatham.

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[1] The omission of Shelburne from the Cabinet has been much discussed. But it is generally agreed that his personal unpopularity was thought to outweigh the advantages of his talents.

But Pitt, though no doubt playing a desperate game, held many more cards in his hands than his critics thought—the moral disrepute of the Coalition, the loyalty of the Tories towards the Crown, the possibility that these two factors would turn the tide in the country in his favour, if his own Administration could show power and political purity. Like a great pugilist, he had to time the blow of the dissolution to a split second in order to knock the Opposition out. His whole tactical ingenuity was bent on making a picture before the country which would set the popular tide running in his favour. It may be said that he succeeded—with the powerful assistance of the blunders of his opponents. It was the fate of the Whigs in this period to produce eminent tacticians who were no strategists, but no strategist who was also a tactician. No one surpassed Burke in theory; no one could equal Fox in the brief hour of an impassioned argumentative victory. The alliance of these two supreme qualities was fatal, for instead of checking each other's weaknesses, they accentuated them. The great theorist was apt to break into passion and the supreme tactician to hold himself bound in theory to some hidebound principle. The combination was fatal. Pitt, on the other hand, subdued the needs of the moment to the general conceptions of his Parliamentary and popular policy. Parliament adjourned on the 26th December, 1783, and gave the new Ministry breathing space. The King showed his support of the new Premier by conferring four peerages at his request —a boon which had been denied to the Coalition.

Parliament met again on the 12th January, 1784, and in the meantime at least forty Tories, after spending Christmas in their constituencies, had transferred their allegiance from North to Pitt. None the less the new Ministry was beaten on its first division by thirty-nine votes. On the 14th of January Pitt introduced his own India Bill as a rival measure to that of his predecessors. Apart from the necessity of the case, its object was to show that the new Ministers were superior to their predecessors in the realm of constructive policy. Pitt began by negotiating with the East India Company and obtaining its consent to a large measure of reform, instead of treating the Directors and Courts as a set of criminals to be extirpated abruptly while their bishoprics were given to a predominant Government party. (1) Policy came under the general control of Ministers. (2) Commercial arrangements had to be submitted to Ministers, in case they might affect policy. (3) The Government in India was to be carried on in the name of the Company by a Governor and three Councillors in each of the Presidencies; the Governor and the Commander-in-Chief (who was to be next in Council to the Governor) being appointed and recalled by the Crown, while the Company appointed the two other Councillors subject to his Majesty's approbation.[1]

As has already been pointed out, both sides in Parliament admitted the necessity of bringing the policy of the India Company under Imperial control. But the difference in the method applied by Fox and Pitt marks an open breach between the ideas of their respective parties. Fox's plan was harsh in its disregard of existing interests, and dangerous in so far as it left a door open to Parliamentary corruption. Pitt's scheme secured the direction of policy to the Imperial authority, but on a basis of compromise with the Company and of abandoning all idea of giving the Government the right to make all the minor appointments in India. In this way Pitt justified his original criticisms of the Coalition Bill by avoiding the errors he had attacked. But he did more than this. He exhibited the true Tory genius for remedying evils and abuses in practice without plunging a vast system of government operating far from these shores into confusion, either to gratify a hate, to establish a theory, or to strengthen the influence of a Party Whip. He took up a difficult problem and solved it on practicable lines in the best spirit of Tory opportunism. The Whig historian is welcome to the retort that Dundas did in fact by clever manipulation use Indian appointments as a means of securing Scotch political support, for the argument cuts both ways. If corrupt influence could be exercised under Pitt's modified scheme, how much more could have been used under Fox's Bill!

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[1] Rose, *William Pitt and National Revival*, chap. vii. p. 161.

Pitt's Bill was promptly rejected on the 23rd January, 1784, by the Coalition majority by 222 votes to 214, and there were loud cries of "Resign." Yet the supporters of North and Fox had their majority down from 39 to 8.[1]

Some inkling of coming ruin seems to have entered the minds of the Whig supporters of the Coalition at this moment. A party meeting was held hastily at the St. Alban's Tavern, and the leaders were urged to make a reconciliation with Pitt and enter the Government. In a word, Fox and Portland were asked to reverse their whole decision of the previous year when they rejected Shelburne and Pitt and united with North. The negotiation is supposed to have broken down on the point of punctilio—should Pitt resign and a new Ministry be formed, or should he merely accept the new recruits into his Ministry? Portland is generally blamed for his obstinacy in insisting on the latter course. But the truth of the matter is, that the issue had gone far beyond the point where a reconciliation was possible unless Fox and his friends were ready to confess their errors and to pass through the Caudine Forks. This was plainly impossible, and in the first week of February the negotiations were broken off. Those of the supporters of North who were not following their principles or interests by absconding to the other side of the House seem to have gone blindly to their doom. In the same week a vote of censure with a rider "to lay the decision before the Crown" was carried against the Government by nineteen votes. The House of Lords on the 4th February backed Pitt and the Crown by censuring the House of Commons by a majority of two to one for endeavouring to prevent the King from appointing his own Ministers. This brought the vital issue of the position of the Crown, overshadowed by the Indian controversy, once more into prominence.[1] Fox, with incredible folly, did his best to keep it there.

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[1] The India Bill was finally passed into law by the triumphant majority after the election of 1784.

It was obvious that the only justification for Pitt retaining office in a minority lay in the claim that the country was with him. Yet nothing but a dissolution could prove this contention, and his only motive in postponing the appeal was to show his Ministry in a more favourable light before the plunge was taken. It was equally obvious that the tactics of the Coalition must be to defeat his attempt by driving him to the constituencies before this strength could be developed; and the majority in the Commons had a strong constitutional ground for insisting on this course. Fox, as though pursued by some political Atè, actually opposed a dissolution, and, not content with this folly, went on to proclaim that the Crown had no right to dissolve Parliament—a ridiculous contention that must have been gall and wormwood to his own Tory allies and their voters in the country. He threatened further to refuse the Mutiny Bill and Supply so as to compel the Executive to reappoint him and his friends to office without consulting the people. The public could only draw two inferences from this line of policy and argument. In the first place, that the Crown, having been denied by the Coalition the right to choose its own Prime Minister, was now to be robbed of its undoubted prerogative of dissolving Parliament. In the second place, that Fox and North must be afraid of the electorate. The first opinion sent the Tories in the Commons and the constituencies over to Pitt in an ever-increasing volume; the second confirmed the Whig voter in his view that the Coalition was essentially anti-popular and corrupt. This double conviction was the end, and the country swung definitely in the direction of Ministers. Petitions in favour of retaining Pitt began to pour in to the Crown by the end of February. Fox did not dare press the assault to its logical conclusion of refusing supply. The last grand attack by way of an address to the Crown to remove Ministers was carried on the 1st March by twelve votes. Its successor on 8th March found Pitt in only a minority of one.

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[1] It also hinted not too obscurely in which direction many of the small boroughs owned by peers would turn.

Pitt, who had declined the King's advice to dissolve immediately after the rejection of his India Bill, now seized his occasion. The time for the knockout blow had come, and on the 24th March, 1784, Parliament was dissolved. In spite of the efforts of the two party machines, the Coalition was utterly overthrown at the polls, and 160 of its members lost their seats. "The Coalition was defeated by the Coalition"—the Whig constituencies voting against Whig Coalition members, the Tory divisions throwing out the Tory supporters of North—and Pitt was entrenched in office for eighteen years to come.

It is a matter of intense interest, with a view to an understanding of the Tory Party which emerged from this series of cataclysms, to arrive at some accurate conclusion as to the politics of the men who followed alternately Pitt and North during these crucial four years.

The original majority of North which supported the American War consisted, as has been stated, of two elements: Tories representing in the main the counties, and the King's men, chiefly Whigs in origin, representing what in the time of Walpole had been ministerial and after Bute became royal boroughs. The two classes will be found to overlap in particular instances, but the main distinction stands. During this period of intimate alliance, however, a group of common ideas had sprung up between the two sections, as must inevitably happen whenever a majority is long sustained by the collaboration of distinct elements. The Tories became less purely bucolic in outlook, and the Courtiers of Whig origin assimilated much of the ordinary standpoint of the Tory Party towards general affairs and even towards the Crown itself. The departure of the Bedford gang, who followed a Duke and not a King, to the Opposition, tended still further to purge North's falling Administration from the official Whig taint. Had the war succeeded, a definite Tory Party with a strong Royalist bias basing itself generally on the doctrines of *The Patriot King*—because, among other reasons, the new monarchy would have kept it indefinitely in office—would have emerged; and North, as the link between the two wings, would have been Prime Minister for life as leader of a fused party. But the failure of the American War altered all this. Facing the bleak prospect of the approaching ruin of their Party, many of the Court placemen who had started life as Whigs began to reconsider their position and to wonder whether a defection to Shelburne as the head of the Chathamites and a known recipient of the royal favour might not ultimately blot out their offence and prove the true path to safety. On the other side, the Tory squire, with all his natural instinct to lean towards the Crown, had never considered that either his religion or the security of the kingdom, which he would now begin to call the Empire, ought to be sacrificed to the personal predilections of the monarch. As each Tory became convinced that it was hopeless to expect an American triumph, and that the King alone stood in the way of a settlement, he absconded from the Ministerial lobby. North's Ministry, as has been suggested, fell by this dual process of attrition.

Many of the placemen passed over in 1782 to the Shelburne interest in the new Rockingham Government. A large Tory vote remained in the air—having left North without finding any other leader to follow or any other party to join—hence many of the small numbers recorded in the division lobbies during these crucial months. These Tories would not support the men who they thought had lost the war, nor yet the men who had to make the peace. North himself, none the less, passed into Opposition with a solid block of 120 votes.

The Rockingham–Fox–Shelburne Administration was made up in the great bulk of the Orthodox Whig Party, yet the Chathamites, as represented by Shelburne, and the Courtiers, of whom Thurlow is the type, represented a considerable element.

As Fox, Burke, Sheridan, Cavendish and Richmond resigned from that Ministry in sections, and Pitt joined it, the Administration became more and more of the old Chathamic type of the early years of the reign, and the loose Tory forces drifted towards its support. Gibbon gives the figures roughly as 140 Ministerialists led by Shelburne, Thurlow and Pitt, 90 Orthodox Whigs headed by Fox, and 120 Tories under North. But when the Coalition was sprung North did not succeed in carrying the whole of his 120 followers with him into this infamous bargain. In the Lords the Tories and placemen, who may best be described as Royalists, had a sufficient anti-Whig majority from start to finish, which made them the natural medium for turning out Fox and North over the India Bill.

The Party then that Pitt led in the first days of his Premiership was simply one inherited from Shelburne, but constantly reinforced by a flow of Tories from across the floor of the House. War and peace being now alike out of the way, the real issues were simply: (1) the right of the Crown to send for any one it chose to form a Ministry; (2) the right of the Crown to sustain Ministers in power if the country seemed to wish it, or (3) in the alternative to dissolve if the three Estates were at variance or if Ministers were defeated in Parliament.

Pitt's line of defence was in fact a Royalist one, and here he had the placemen naturally, the Chathamites because they were still tinged with the doctrines of Bolingbroke, and the Tories by an overwhelming historic instinct, on his side. North might as well have attempted to dam the Gulf Stream as to prevent a continual flow of desertions from his own ranks to those of Pitt on such an issue. In his bargain with Fox the ex-Premier had deliberately declared for the old Whig system of a subservient Crown, and every fibre in the being of every one of his followers cried out against the desecration of an ancient party faith. The battle was really won in the Commons before it ever came to the country, where those Tories who had been foolish enough to become Northites perished by scores. The only possible defence for the political suicide of North is that he never had been a Tory, and therefore did not understand the party of which he had been the titular head.

Toryism, however, suffered no damage by the event, for the counties simply returned Tory supporters of Pitt instead of Tory supporters of North. The Foxites fell at the hands of their own supporters. Pitt's wavering power in the Commons was thus confirmed and the new Tory Party inaugurated into permanent office.

An eminent Whig has asked why the electoral victory of Pitt, which was in essence a rally of the people behind the Crown against corrupt Whig Parliaments, did not result in a shift of the Constitution in favour of the personal dominance of the King.

The question is pertinent and is well worth answering. Three general replies given have been: the gratitude of the King towards Pitt for freeing him finally from the bullying of the Whig Houses, the diminution in the royal power of nominating to office and Parliament caused by the Economic Reform Bill, or George III's vague anticipation that his mind was about to fail.

Dismissing the last reason, for which there appears to be no evidence, and which is in the last degree unlikely, there is no doubt that the other causes may have exercised a certain influence in producing the new departure by which George abstained for the future from acting as his own Prime Minister in the Cabinet and Chief Whip in Parliament. But all these reasons combined are not sufficient to explain this sudden, final and complete reversal of policy on the part of the Crown. After all, the General Election of 1784, however much it was influenced by the personality of Pitt, was in fact a vindication of the royal prerogative, and George was not a man to let gratitude to an individual weigh for long against an undoubted political gain for his original creed of personal government. Perhaps the best answer to what is a serious historical difficulty may be found by a comparison between the relations of the young King with Chatham and the middle-aged King with Chatham's son. It has been pointed out in an earlier chapter that George III missed the real moral of the Patriot King in his jealousy and dismissal of the Great Commoner. Chatham was against the Venetian Constitution, Chatham reverenced the Crown, Chatham was prepared to bring the support of the people to the steps of the popular throne. In the heat and arrogance of his youthful ignorance George had overturned the Minister who was ready to act as his right-hand man, and what had followed? Nothing but disaster and humiliation to the Crown. Time and again George had been obliged to receive in the closet men whom he loathed. Every time that he seemed to have obtained a mixed Ministry which would acknowledge his absolute leadership it had failed promptly either from defection in the Commons or from intense unpopularity out of doors. Finally, in the appointment of North and in the accession of the entire Tory Party to the side of the Crown in the American War, he appeared to have attained the reality of his theoretic ambition. What had happened as a consequence? His Empire had been dismembered and North, the man in whom he had trusted, had proved a reed to pierce his own hand.

In a word, the system of personal government had failed its author as an over-ridden horse dies under its rider.

George III was an obstinate man, but he was no fool. Looking backwards he must have perceived that the quarrel with Chatham was the beginning of all the evils which had overtaken him, and that the popular King and the popular Minister might have ridden down all opposition. Now in his middle age a second chance was given him in the form of a son sprung from the loins of the genius he had despised. The immense influence of the popular kingship could once more be his. And, like a sensible man, though no doubt with some inward groans, he resigned himself to an alliance on equal terms with the man who could manage the Commons and the country while burning on the altar of royalty all the incense which it could claim as its due and deferring to the monarch on many vital points of policy. The Patriot King became in 1784, as he ought to have become in 1760, the adjunct and intimate ally of the popular Premier. Nor could the converted monarch have had any illusions as to the extent to which he could control his new Prime Minister.[1] The language of Chatham against Hanoverian subsidies for which he had been forgiven by George II was mild compared to the firm declaration by which William Pitt in his first few months in Parliament had denounced the illicit influence of the Crown on Parliamentary politics. And from his very first interview and offer of the highest office the older man knew that the younger man was unbending.

From 1784 onward the Patriot King falls into the line of advance which marks the development of the British Constitution. His power and influence continue to be immense, but he deputes the management of Parliament and the country to his own chosen Prime Minister. By a tacit agreement the debatable land between the two prerogatives is left untouched.

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[1] The precise voting strength the Crown retained is discussed in the next chapter.

The new Tory Party which came trooping back to Parliament after the General Election of 1784, to give Pitt his long-unquestioned majority, differed in many respects from the same historic entity which had supported Bolingbroke and elected yet doubted Harley. The Tories had shrugged North and his betrayal off their shoulders. They were once more, as in the time of Anne, in absolute line with the Crown. But the insular idea of England had faded into mist, and with it something of the popular purity which had distinguished Toryism in the dark days of the eighteenth century. They had rubbed shoulders with the placemen and knew more about rotten boroughs than they did in the golden days of Opposition. Again, the Liberal-Chathamic element of which Pitt was the most prominent representative was present not only in the rank and file, but in the Cabinet. A Liberal flavour, therefore, clings to the Tory Administration of 1784–1793. The Tory majority which re-formed under the shadow of the Crown and of William Pitt had extended its horizon. In doing so it had tasted something of the subtle poison of Whig political practice, but also something of the beneficent drug of Chathamic-Liberal idealism. Part of its accretion was loss and part was gain. The surrender of the Crown to its own friends put an end to the conflict of a generation. Broader views on commerce and finance were grafted by Pitt on the original Tory stock. What was best in the creed of Chatham found an echo in the Tory ranks. The central Tories, who have always in the long run dominated the Party, felt that they could trust their leader to protect the country against the Crown and the Commons, and, what was more important, the Crown and the Commons against themselves. All this was absolutely to the good. Yet something must be said on the other side. As the Tory hosts came pouring over to Pitt from the ranks of the betrayer, North, they united themselves, as it appeared finally and for ever, with a large number of men who despised the popular vote and were opposed to electoral reform. This opposition to Parliamentary reform and electoral redistribution had never been a part of the creed of the popular Tory Party which had survived since the Restoration. It had been sometimes favourable, or, again, indifferent to Reform, but never hostile. And Reform was a cardinal belief of its newly elected chief. It was also the doctrine of the Chathamites who were embraced by the majority. Yet some subtle miasma spread from the ex-Whig Courtiers—holders of the close boroughs—and involved all the excellent, the innocent and the well intentioned in a common folly and a joint injustice. Parliamentary reform had been less rejected than ignored by the Tories against their own manifest interest long ago. It was killed finally, after one single effort, for fifty years when its greatest protagonist assumed the leadership of the new composite Tory majority.

CHAPTER XVII

PITT IN PEACE

Part I.—Economic and Fiscal Reform

PITT was both by nature and circumstance a very lonely man. His lack of childish gaiety, the awful chilliness with which he covered his youth, have passed into proverbial history. Only once was there any chance that a woman might thaw him. As a consequence his biographers are obliged to rake among the embers to prove that he ever had a fire. His sowing of a flower-bed with hats and a tendency to drink port with Dundas prior to debate are quoted with relief to show that the statue could actually come to life. And it is, in fact, as a bust with a long nose standing in the halls of many great country houses in England that many people regard Pitt.

But this is an inhuman view of the living statesman. His loneliness was less an affectation or a characteristic than a tribute to the reality of his position. No one in his own period thought quite like Pitt. It is equally true that no one in his own time thought quite like Chatham, but then Chatham had not only the internal glow of his own fiery genius, but was able to warm himself at many hearthstones, Whig, Tory and Radical. Pitt, apart from his eloquence and patriotism, was the very antithesis of his father. In his brain was no thawing element. On the contrary, the process of his mentality was that of a vacuum pump which freezes air into solid ice. He saw policies exactly as they were. He also saw parties exactly as they were. When he could not make the reality of party conform to the reality of policy he drew back, realising that the preservation of the party instrument was in the long run the greater reality. His methods were those of the empiricist; he preferred the government of a majority whose faults he knew to the schemes and policies which might have emanated from the wild and whirling brain of Fox. Possibly he was wrong, but he and the nation were united on this point at least—they would not take the risk.

The greatest tribute Pitt has received has come from his historical critics. There is hardly a policy, or, to be more accurate, the ideal of a policy of his, which has not received the unqualified approval of posterity. Reform and Redistribution, the commercial settlement with Ireland, the Sinking Fund, the re-establishment of sound finance, the reduction of Customs Duties, the Treaty of Commerce with France, the bluffing of Spain into peace over the Pacific Coast of Canada, the settlement with France over Holland, the removal of penal laws from English and Scotch Roman Catholics—all these policies alike have been approved by posterity. But some were carried through and some were not. And immediately on all sides rises the accusing cry, addressed to the shade of the Minister, "Why did you not carry it through? Why did you not stake everything—office, power, Government, position, the Crown, the country—in order to ensure that what you knew was right and what after time has judged to be right was carried into effect? Were you not at heart a moral coward? Did you not drug yourself into acquiescence with the idea that you were indispensable?" Each shade of historic belief thinks that Pitt ought to have made the stand on its particular brand of policy. For instance, I think he ought to have made it on Redistribution and Reform. But I am prepared to admit that I am fallible and that Pitt was probably the best judge of his own circumstances.

Never indeed was a statesman surrounded with such a halo formed by a consensus of the opinion of posterity. Everything he proposed was right, and whoever defeated him, including himself, was absolutely and demonstrably wrong.

One might almost draw up the desires as against the achievements of Pitt in a tabular form, nor would this mathematical balance be altogether opposed to the bias of the Prime Minister's mentality. He was of all men the most capable in balancing a profit and loss account. On the credit side can be written down at once his reorganisation of the shattered finance of the country, the establishment of the Sinking Fund, a great reduction of twelve millions of debt during the years the peace lasted, the reorganisation of the Tariff and of Customs and Excise, and the abolition of a vast host of sinecures in the machinery of administration. In this, the sphere of executive action, both the King and his own majority gave him an absolutely free hand from first to last, and from his very first to his very last Peace Budget he was able to show a surplus—an amazing phenomenon in the finances of later eighteenth-century Europe. Then there is the India Act of 1784, which, whatever its defects, was an immense improvement both on the old *régime* and on the proposals of the Coalition. Pitt was to reap the fruit of this measure in the great Governor-Generalship of Wellesley. Next, after a series of failures, come the conclusion of the Commercial Treaty with France signed in 1787; the triumph over French foreign policy in Holland, and the expedition to Australia. Two years later the British Premier successfully asserted our rights in the Northern Pacific against the overweening claims of Spain. Finally, in 1790 and 1793, the Roman Catholics both of England and Scotland received substantial relief from penal legislation. The achievement must be regarded as a very substantial one for an epoch which did not regard the passing of a great flood of legislation as part of the normal functions of Parliament. Indeed it probably exceeds in its general scope and effect all the legislation of the previous twenty-four years of the reign of George III. But of all that was attempted only the minor part was done. The debit side shows a long list of failures: the desertion of his majority over the Westminster

Petition—one of the only two points on which it is universally admitted that Pitt was in the wrong; the rejection of Parliamentary Reform in 1785 and of the Irish Commercial Bill in the very same year; the defeat of the plan for fortifying Portsmouth in 1786; the failure to deal with the Slave Trade; the humiliating stampede first of the majority and then of the Minister from the ultimatum over Ozsacow presented to Russia in 1791—the second question where history has condemned the judgment of the Minister. It is hardly possible to ascribe the failure of the various motions for the relief of Nonconformists to Pitt's lack of firmness with his own followers, for he himself was obviously not sufficiently in favour of the proposal to care whether it was carried or not.

Pitt's successes and failures, therefore, form a chequered board of black and white, and the modern rubs his eyes at the spectacle of a Premier remaining calmly in office year after year while his own followers fling out at least 40 per cent. of his programme.

The peculiar conditions under which Pitt was returned to power and the composition both of the majority in the House of Commons and of that House in general which brought about this strange state of affairs will be considered at a later stage. For the moment it is necessary to describe at greater length the actual nature of Pitt's ministerial action and legislation.

The early problems which confronted Pitt were those of peace and not of war: to heal the wounds inflicted on the prestige of Great Britain by the division of her Empire; to restore finances exhausted by that prolonged struggle; to reach some kind of accommodation with a semi-mutinous Ireland; to regain for England some of her lost prestige in Europe; to avoid the discontents of the last decade by bringing the electoral system into closer relation with the facts of population, and to do all with the consent and co-operation of the Crown—such in broad outline was the statesmanlike task which Pitt set before him.

It will be seen at once that, however it was executed, there was nothing distinctively Tory or Liberal about this policy—it was simply one of sublime commonsense. Fox could have agreed with nearly every part of it except that dealing with the Crown, which makes his conduct in declining, because of the difficulty over Shelburne, to come in with Pitt in the winter of 1782–1783 all the more indefensible and lamentable. Indeed the real difficulty which lay in front of the scheme was that it did not prove Tory enough, to use the term in its most extreme sense, for many of the Minister's supporters. Here again England suffered for the crime of the Coalition, for a Ministry guided by Shelburne, Pitt and Fox would not have contained, or would have been strong enough to master, the purely reactionary element, whether of ex-Courtiers or Tories.

The first consideration was finance. Prestige is only potential power, as credit is the certainty or prospect of money, and Great Britain could have no power so long as she was known to have been fought to a financial standstill, was loaded with debt, and groaning under taxation. Pitt had at least the advantage of time before him, for none of our late adversaries was in 1784 in any better plight, nor did they possess the magnificent recuperative capacities underlying British commerce and industry.

The financial experts have fought over the fiscal policy of Pitt as fiercely as the theoreticians of war have scoured the field of Waterloo. Since it is in the main a technical issue cutting across all party lines of division, a lengthy exposition or argument would be out of place in this book. It will be sufficient to describe the actual steps taken by the Minister and to indicate the main points of controversy.

On returning to real power in 1784, Pitt found himself faced with a deficit of six millions—nearly three of which at least had become an outstanding feature of recent Budgets, and an unfunded debt of roughly fourteen millions : Government Stock stood at 57. The nation, in a word, was not paying its way. He met the immediate crisis by borrowing six millions to pay off the deficit and another six millions to fund that portion of the unfunded debt. The first sum was raised at 3 per cent. and the second at 5 per cent. Pitt therefore by some strange chance stumbled at the very outset on one of the great thorny problems of his finance, and by some inconsistency of mind solved it both ways !

Borrowing, of course, could only be a temporary measure. The real task was to set the finances in order by economy in expenditure and administration and by additional taxation; the result to be devoted to the repayment of the National Debt, then standing at what to contemporaries seemed the colossal figure of 250 millions.

War expenditure had, of course, ceased, but the main great sources of revenue were left at the same rate as that of 1783. In addition, the Budget of 1784 included new taxes estimated to produce £930,000 a year, and that of 1785 new taxes estimated to produce £400,000. This taxation can be summarised as: (1) new taxes on carriages, horses, sport, plate, bricks, hats, perfumery; (2) increase or extension of taxes, trade licences, postage and newspaper advertisements; (3) introduction of probate and legacy duties. All these taxes were, however, presented and dealt with in a conciliatory manner. The Coal Tax, for instance, was withdrawn in face of criticism, and in 1785 the taxes on foreign gloves and on maidservants were removed in the light of a year's experience.

It is clear, however, that an increase of less than a million and a half in direct taxation, against which the remission of some indirect taxation had to be set off as a temporary loss, would not make good a permanent deficit of over two millions on the annual Budget. The final remedy had to be sought elsewhere.

The root cause of our financial peril was certainly not a decline in the prosperity of our commerce or even of the necessity of paying the interest on the debt created by the wars of Chatham and North, but the intense and growing incompetence and corruption of the Civil Service and of the whole administration of

Government. The grain of mustard seed planted by Walpole had grown, partly by the natural increase of these services and partly by sheer wickedness, into a creeping plant threatening to strangle the whole people as the ivy does the oak. From 1716 to 1784, save for the flash of Burke's single effort under the Rockingham Administration, it had proved absolutely impossible to check or destroy a system of corrupt and expensive inefficiency which all parties and all Estates in the realm, save the taxpayer, had become interested in preserving. The fall of Walpole merely handed on the evil to Pulteney and Carteret and Newcastle. The collapse of the rule of the great Whig houses left George III as the royal legatee of corruption. Chatham at the height of his power simply turned his back on a force which he knew was too strong for him. The political revolution in 1784—for in this matter no other name is adequate—fortunately found at its head a leader not merely personally incorruptible like Chatham, but a son who possessed a kind of cold passion for public efficiency and economy which the father lacked altogether. Pitt struck at the Upas tree with a will, and it must be recorded to the credit of the Tories, who formed the bulk of his supporters, that they seconded his efforts instead of crying out after the fashion of each succeeding Ministry in the past that the spoils belonged to the victors. The Tories sprang, of course, from a less corrupt ancestry than their opponents. The Tory country squire had always been more sufficient unto himself than the Whig borough-monger, and his experience of iniquity had been the less for his long exclusion from office during the reigns of Walpole and Newcastle. Subsequent communications had indeed somewhat corrupted good morals, but enough of the old creed and stock remained to secure Pitt from a purely Tory opposition to the policy of economic reform.

A succession of practical measures immensely reduced the cost of administering the public revenues. The Customs were entirely purged of sinecures between

1784 and 1799, and in the latter year the expenses of collecting twenty-two millions only slightly exceeded the cost of collecting fourteen millions in the earlier year. The corrupt and wasteful system by which loans and lottery tickets were contracted for under the market value and then distributed before issue to Government friends and supporters was abolished completely. Pitt invited tenders for loans in the open market. Tenders were sent in under seal and the lowest offer accepted from any reputable house. The Post Office was likewise reformed, and the abuse of wholesale "franking" of letters severely checked by compelling members to write their own names and town of origin on each envelope.

Far more important in its financial results was the drastic revision carried out in the system of keeping the national accounts. Up till Pitt's time the accounts of each office were regarded in a sense as the private concern of the Minister or official responsible for them, much as the company accounts in a regiment are kept in the British army to-day. A record of ingoings and outgoings was entered and ultimately would have to be made to square, but there was no definite date fixed for the audit, and in the meantime any balances in hand remained in the private possession of the head of the Department, much as the Company "bag" does in the hands of the Company Commander. But let us suppose that "bag" to contain hundreds of thousands and to remain unchecked for twelve or twenty years, and we may form some idea of the conduct of eighteenth-century finance. The first Lord Holland, as Paymaster, habitually and without concealment used these balances for his private speculations—in fact often re-lending by contracts to the State at interest money which actually belonged to the Government. And his practice was more or less that of all the Government departments. The so-called "Auditors of the Imprest" were sinecure officials who left the work to humble clerks who contented themselves with examining the credit and debit figures of the account and left the matter at that. In 1784 it is said that forty millions of public money was thus left unaccounted for, the interest on which was, of course, going into private pockets.

Pitt ended the whole system abruptly. All moneys in future were to be kept in the Bank of England and only drawn out for service needs; there was to be an annual audit; and five competent commissioners succeed the sinecure auditors of the Imprest. By this single reform the Minister saved the nation millions.

Customs reform was by no means confined to the mere reorganisation of the personnel and the method of audit. The Import duties had been successively imposed on a vast number of minor articles in a bewildering multiplicity. Seven different kinds of duties might be imposed under the old system on a single kind of import. By 1787 Pitt had abolished all this antiquated rubbish. A single duty was imposed on each article; Customs and Excise had been consolidated and the whole revenue from these sources was paid into what was known in consequence as the Consolidated Fund.

But in reconstructing the Customs system Pitt in reality established an entirely new relation between internal and external taxation. Heretofore, apart from the main great sources of revenue like the Land Tax or the Malt Tax, the bulk of other taxation had taken the form of Import duties. Pitt began to reverse the process by imposing minor direct taxation and lowering the Customs duties. The most striking instance was the reduction of the Tea Duty from 119 to 12½ per cent., and a large diminution of the duty on Jamaica rum, both of them the most fruitful contraband goods for the smuggler. The increased amount of tea and rum which would pay duty, and the Window Tax as direct taxation, were calculated to do more than make good the deficit. In these departures, as in his commercial treaty with France, he was in the direct line of fiscal thought which can be traced through Bolingbroke, Shelburne, Adam Smith, Huskisson and Peel—and the contemporary influence of the Glasgow Professor is indeed admitted.

Before dealing, however, with the commercial treaties it is necessary to discuss the immediate results of Pitt's financial schemes and his proposals for dealing with the National Debt. The proof of the fiscal pudding is in the eating, and though many of the Minister's reforms in the services could not be expected to bear immediate fruit, in the Budget of 1785 the Chancellor of the Exchequer was able to show a surplus of £900,000 in exchange for the customary deficit. What was to be done in such an abnormal case? Pitt had no doubts: it must go to the reduction of the Debt. Nor has any financial or historical authority questioned his judgment. Pitt therefore reverted to the idea of the Sinking Fund, which owed its original conception to Walpole in 1716. The Walpole Fund much resembled that of modern days. It was a sum set apart for Debt redemption, but raided whenever the Exchequer was in a difficulty. But Pitt, in putting forward his own proposals, was unfortunate enough to become entangled with a quack theory for paying off the National Debt which bore the same resemblance to financial truth as the search for the philosopher's stone for the transmutation of metals bore to the beginnings of scientific inquiry. A Nonconformist minister called Dr. Price had worked out in 1771 a theoretic system by which the State could ensure paying off its total debt in a comparatively short time by investing an annual sum at compound interest and keeping up that investment even at the cost of borrowing in bad times at a higher annual rate of interest in order to make good a deficit in a year when there was no surplus for the purpose of investment. The idea was, of course, fundamentally and demonstrably silly in the light of modern knowledge of finance, but it nevertheless received as wide an acceptance as the elixir of life, the South Sea Bubble, the settlement of Damien, the pre-war theories of Norman Angell on the finance of war, or many exploded creeds of modern science, have received in their own times.

Pitt must suffer in his reputation as a financier of common-sense in so far as he entered into communication with Dr. Price, and therefore gave some countenance to a fallacy which was not fully exposed till 1813. And indeed it is a poor excuse that practically all the other politicians of all parties and all the economists, except a few miserable writing wretches whom no one took any notice of, were equally deceived. But it has *not* been proved by the evidence that, as far as Pitt's peace finance was concerned, he adopted any of Dr. Price's plans. Certainly he never borrowed to keep his Sinking Fund of a million a year up to its level. There were five or six plans for the Sinking Fund in existence, and it is uncertain which was the child of Pitt's creation or adoption. The question of borrowing to keep up the Sinking Fund never arose, for Pitt's successful economy and management of commerce always gave him the surplus he required so long as the peace lasted. This is the whole truth of a vexed controversy. None the less, the general public and many eminent people continued to believe that the Sinking Fund was a panacea for all financial extravagance, and it has been contended that Pitt himself was not averse to this illusion gaining ground, just as in 1914 the late Lord Kitchener did not deny the story of the passage of Russian troops through England. A myth which creates confidence may do no harm.

The Commercial Treaties put forward by Pitt in relation to France and Ireland are at least as intimately interwoven with political as with financial considerations. It may therefore be convenient to consider first how far Pitt's purely internal finance can be reviewed in the light of party ideas. Broadly speaking, the men of the eighteenth century would hardly have understood what such a question meant. They did not view finance as a branch of social politics as we see it to-day. So much money had been spent, so much money had to be raised. A Government would, of course, have to recognise the fact that the continued and exorbitant rate of the Land Tax had disinclined the country gentry to pursue a war *à outrance;* that the commercial classes often favoured war or peace as it affected their pockets, or that a whole countryside might rise against such a measure as Walpole's plan of Excise. All these things had to be taken into account. But of finance as an instrument for elevating or depressing one class at the expense of another they took no heed. In one sense, therefore, it is fruitless to examine Pitt's finance from a political standpoint. But the temptation to conduct such an inquiry is there, because Pitt is the first of the statesmen of the old days who casts his shadow forwards rather than backwards. Take his measures where you will, India, Ireland, Commerce, Finance, or Europe, and the immediate comparison which rises to the mind is not so much the past which must have dwelt so much in his memory, as the future which links itself with our past. Bolingbroke, Walpole, Carteret and even Chatham must to the intelligence of the twentieth century partake somewhat of the nature of ghosts. The phantasms are there, but it is difficult to clothe their practical problems with the garments of reality. Pitt at last, living his life into the nineteenth century, seems to throw forward into an existence we can realise. Was he not the author of the Income Tax?

Pitt, however, would not have dreamed of describing his financial measures as a series of commercial or aristocratic or democratic Budgets. But as a matter of fact the tendency of his peace finance is fairly clear. The Tory landed gentry obtained little or no remission of the Land Taxes imposed by the late wars. On the other hand, the commercial classes, which in 1784 were generally regarded as Whig in tendency, benefited both directly and indirectly by the lowering and removal of Customs duties, by the negotiation of the Commercial Treaties and by the general restoration of British credit. "Economic reform" was mainly practised at the expense of the governing classes; the chief luxury taxes affected the same class; 300,000 houses of the poor were exempted from the Window Tax.

Pitt's Budgets were therefore of a popular character. But they represented an even more important tendency. They were the first effort, prolonged in later years by Canning, Huskisson and Peel, to rally the middle classes to Toryism by a prudent and enlightened commercial and economic policy.

In another respect also Pitt stood in the direct line of Tory thought in his fiscal and economic conceptions. The first attempt to negotiate a commercial treaty with France was made by Bolingbroke immediately after the Treaty of Utrecht. It failed because the Whigs succeeded in stirring up a formidable agitation against it among the mercantile classes.[1] General political considerations apart, Tory Free Trade in the time of Bolingbroke, was based on the fact that the country districts were the great consuming interest of the nation, having little or nothing to fear from foreign competition. Anything in the way of a general lowering of the tariff by joint agreement, therefore, suited the Tories as importers. At the same time Bolingbroke maintained, and with justice, that British town industry also had nothing to fear from the industries of France, which were complementary to it rather than antagonistic or competitive. And what was true in 1712 was truer still in 1787. Not only did France at the later date afford a far more valuable market, but British home industry was just beginning to go from strength to strength.

This doctrine, which might be described as rational Free Trade Reciprocity, or moderate and opportunist Protection indifferently, can be traced from Bolingbroke and Swift, through Shelburne, who had long meditated a French treaty, to Pitt, and then to Huskisson and finally to Disraeli. It was not Free Trade in the abstract and modern sense of that idea. It did not necessarily contemplate the complete removal of duties between States, though it worked in that direction, but it held that many duties were unnecessary and many too high, and that where there was no dangerous competition the increase in the volume of exchange benefited both countries concerned. Nor, on the other hand, was it Protectionist, either in the jealous old Whig sense of high Protection, or in the scientific sense of modern pre-war Germany. Rather a tariff of some kind was regarded as a necessity, if only for revenue purposes, while its manipulation could be made to serve all kinds of national interests, whether commercial or political. In this matter it is doubtful whether we have lived up to, far less surpassed, the wisdom of our ancestors.

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[1] Cf. chap. viii.

There is no doubt that Pitt came in 1785 to the projected Irish Commercial Treaty, his first venture in this field, by way of politics. The state of Ireland during the final stages of the American War had been an even more serious menace to Great Britain than it was to prove under the Napoleonic Consulate and Empire. The economic concessions which struck some of the fetters off the Irish export trade imposed upon it by the Parliaments of William III were, like the freedom of Grattan's Parliament, granted at Westminster out of a sense of fear and not of justice or policy. In 1782 England was too exhausted to hold Ireland down. An island only attached to the realm by the link of the Crown, seething with unrest and possessing a population the majority of whom were bitterly hostile to Britain and had just seen her humiliated by open revolt, was the same standing danger to the Governments of George III as the armed tribal system in Scotland had been to those of William III. Pitt, who, less than almost any other statesman, not an absolute ruler, was inclined to the vice of leaving evil alone until its violent outbreak compels the attention of a people, turned at once to treat this sore spot in the body politic.

Leaving the Catholic question aside, the grievances of Ireland, which all Irishmen, Protestant and Catholic alike, resented, had been economic. Pitt therefore looked to the realm of economics to provide a cure for old wounds and a firm foundation for better relations between the two countries. For a hundred years the tariff arrangements meted out by the predominant State in the two islands had been one of scandalous injustice. Irish industry was absolutely confined by law to its own home market until the period of the American Revolution. Yet at the same time it had to face the competition of English goods in that home market. Though some of these restrictions had been relaxed, the position was still unsatisfactory, for Ireland could have no surety that the Protectionist forces in England and Scotland might not reimpose the burden when the sister island had recovered her military and financial strength.

Pitt therefore sought by one bold stroke to impose what would have developed, according to his plan, into practically a system of tariff union between Great Britain and Ireland. In return for the great advantage which the free run of the markets of the British Empire would have been to Ireland, that country was to contribute to the Navy any excess of the hereditary Crown revenues beyond a fixed sum. To commercial union was therefore to be added, in the form of joint Imperial defence, a new link with the central executive of the Empire.

This wise scheme, perhaps too ambitious in outline for the first essay of the new Premier, failed. It was assailed in the same unscrupulous manner and by much the same forces as rejected Bolingbroke's Treaty of Commerce with France. The enemies were high Whig Protection, pure faction, and the vested commercial interests. The first two elements played on the last. Rarely was there such a brilliant and unscrupulous opposition as that offered by Fox to this union of commercial hearts and interests. By exciting the passions of Dublin and Bristol alternately, he achieved his object in wrecking another of those fair hopes of friendly accommodation between Englishmen and Irishmen which never lack an evil genius to make them fail of accomplishment.

The defence for Fox is that, knowing nothing of economics, he followed unintelligently the Whig tradition of high Protection. And it is indeed a curious fact that the man who did more than any other to break down Whiggism and form the new Liberal tradition—the cuckoo's egg laid in the nest—should have adhered quite blindly to the Whig economic creed.

But when all this has been said, the Opposition was in spirit and character perfectly reckless. It thus reflected the temper of Fox. The duty of an Opposition was to oppose, whatever the evils it inflicts on England, Scotland and Ireland. The commercial classes, always particularly susceptible to Whig influences, were thus stirred to be the instrument of wrecking a scheme from which they had not in reality anything to fear. Irish industries, in spite of or because of low taxation and a general backward state of affairs in Ireland, never had any chance of competing in Empire or world markets to a dangerous degree with the better organised manufacturing system of Great Britain. The British entry on equal terms into the Irish market would have made good any loss incurred. But the high Protectionist interests in England, once stirred by faction, were beyond all powers of reason. Commissions reported in vain. And these interests were more powerful than in the time of Bolingbroke, both because the scope of British industrial production had greatly increased, and because, owing to the general shift in the balance of parties, they were able to bring a greater direct pressure on the Tory Party and its chief. Fox played his cards with consummate skill: having aroused the selfishness of England to threaten the newly regained independence of Ireland, he then roused Irish independence against English selfishness. Pitt was compelled to reassert the power of the Parliament of Westminster over that of Dublin in the matter of the Navigation Laws in order to soothe his own constituency, and in return the Irish Parliament, which had accepted the original draft of his measure, declined to accept the new terms. The whole measure of accommodation thus fell to the ground, thanks mainly to the instrumentality of Fox, who would be remembered in history chiefly by this huge blot on his record were it not stained by so many deeper dyes and heavier taints.

The French treaty went through in the following year in spite of the Opposition. It was to last for twelve years, and implied liberty of navigation and free exchange of goods where no existing arrangement forbade. Its immediate practical result was a large reduction of imposts on a great number of articles, thus assisting our export into France and helping Pitt to simplify his own Customs arrangements. One of the great objections was the Methuen treaty of 1703 with Portugal. Port had been the tide which had wafted so many young men into high office as their seniors fell in early middle age before the onslaught of the gout. Now this source of preferment was menaced. Pitt, however, met the objection by agreeing to reduce the duties on Portuguese port in proportion as he reduced those on French claret and burgundy. The statesman of the Napoleonic period undoubtedly benefited in political longevity by the reintroduction of the lighter French wines, though Pitt himself still clung almost inordinately to the beverage prescribed by the doctors of the period of Chatham. By means of this treaty British industry secured an opening into a market of twenty millions of people who in no sense threatened its basic industries. In the debates the Premier was strongly supported by Grenville, Dundas and Wilberforce, while Shelburne, now Lord Lansdowne, emerged in the Upper House to support the policy which he himself had first conceived. Fox, Burke and Sheridan naturally made a terrific onslaught on this scheme of lowered tariffs and Reciprocity. They were supported by Flood, a very typical and mischievous Irish demagogue, who advanced the time-worn view that France would ✓appropriate all our gold. The chiefs of the Opposition were not quite so foolish as Flood. But they were ready to believe that France's nascent industries would overpower those of Great Britain, whereas it is obvious that any policy of mutual free imports benefits the established industry against the one which is not yet established. More serious was their contention that France would become the commercial intermediary by which British goods were sold in the Levantine market. But Whig views about political economy are always more or less of a joke. On such an issue they could never hope to meet Pitt in debate. Their real appeal was a political one—the call to the ancient prejudice against France. The French, said Fox, were our natural enemies. We should forfeit our claim to hold the balance of power in Europe if we became entangled with them by a commercial agreement. Thus Fox when it suited him went right back to the old Whig doctrines of William III and Marlborough, and fought the Commercial Treaty of Pitt as his political forbears had resisted that of Bolingbroke. Within ten years the same orator was discovered making an elaborate harangue to prove that no country, meaning France, could be the "natural enemy" of another. Fox, in fact, was always a barometer of the danger which threatened his country from any foreign enemy. In 1785–1787 France was sinking into the gulf of moral and financial decrepitude which ended in the Revolution, and had ceased to be even a potential danger. In the tremendous resurge of that movement she stood up glorious in the strength of recovered effort, brandishing a flaming torch which scattered the embers of disruption among every community in Europe. Therefore to Fox's mind when France was impotent she was the natural foe—when she was really a menace there was nothing to fear. But in 1787 the anti-French cry did not catch on with the commercial classes as the clamour about Ireland had done. Yet if there was any threat to our home production it would have come rather from France than from Ireland. The explanation put forward seems to be sufficient. In Ireland, English industry had special privileges which were abandoned by Pitt's policy, while the Irish market was so small that it held out no compensations comparable to that afforded by the great populations of France. Yet looking backward to 1785 who will not say that it had been better that the Irish Commercial Treaty should have succeeded and the French Commercial Treaty failed? The French treaty was in any case shattered by the war with France, the Irish failure broke another of those policies which seemed to lead to a better understanding between the British and the Irish peoples. How the shade of Fox must gloat over the injury done to his country! He missed the small ship, but he torpedoed the liner.

CHAPTER XVIII

PITT IN PEACE (*continued*)

Part II.—Politics.

THE first great issue of internal politics raised by Pitt was that of Parliamentary Redistribution and Reform. And this was natural whether we consider Pitt's own private record or the nature of the majority he led.

The Reform movement had always been in essence an attempt to redistribute the smaller and more rotten boroughs among the larger under-represented constituencies, first of all agricultural and later, as the cities grow, urban as well. Redistribution in some ways would be a better title than Reform, since most of these measures only contemplate a more popular franchise as incidental to the change. But the term Reform has stuck and must be used. England owed its first Reform Bill, like so many other excellent if somewhat drastic measures, to Oliver Cromwell, who parcelled out the constituencies of his day in a way which gave population a very just degree of representation. Unfortunately this, like so many other of his measures, perished utterly in the general reaction against his *régime*, and the old basis of election which gave a totally inadequate representation to the country districts was reinstated in 1660. This no doubt did not appear to be of any great moment to the contemporary Tory, since the small boroughs vied with each other in the enthusiasm of their attachment to the restored Crown, but Tory blindness to the general trend of disparate sentiment and interest as between town and country, which began to develop in the reign of William III, cost the Party dear. A Reform Bill of the most moderate kind passed at any time before 1714 would have made it impossible for Walpole and his successors to have kept Toryism in blank opposition for nearly fifty years. In 1692 indeed some Tory, more prescient than his colleagues, introduced a Reform measure, but it perished, like so many of its successors, of Whig hostility, representing the town interest, and of Tory indifference or mere dislike of change. One cannot suppose that men like Swift and Bolingbroke were utterly oblivious of the frightful basic weakness which the under-representation of the counties created in the whole Tory structure. But the majority of 1710–1714 seemed so immense and the other issues before the Government were of such desperate urgency that the opportunity for Redistribution was let slip as it turned out for ever. Naturally the question was never raised again so long as the fortress of Walpole-Whig corruption stood intact. It was not till that stronghold lay in ruins in 1770 that Chatham re-awoke the issue in a series of motions. Henceforward Reform became an essential feature of the creed of the Chathamic group, and it was natural enough that Pitt should raise the question in 1782, a year after his first return to Parliament. Again in 1783 Reform, on his motion, got the best division it was to receive till the period of the Great Reform Bill.

Yet neither Chatham in 1770 nor Pitt in 1782, though they preached a doctrine acceptable to their own following, proposed a plan which was manifestly in the Tory interest, and even received a certain modicum of orthodox Whig support from the advanced wing of Fox, could ever collect a majority. The explanation lies in the fact that the Reformers were so scattered among the parties that they never acted cordially together, that the country constituencies, outside Yorkshire, though they may have felt the dull pang of grievance in periods of opposition, were the last places in the world in which a great agitation could be raised, and that nothing but a big agitation linked to united Parliamentary action could hope to carry the day. A little wild rioting in London which evoked no response in the counties was quite insufficient to provide the necessary jumping powder. For the borough holders, entrenched in their majority on the green benches, were very strong. The majority of them were Whigs, but there were also royal-borough holders and a gradually growing number of Tory ones. They did not need whipping nor loud and eloquent speeches. They came down silently into the House and passed unanimously into the lobby, while the Chathamite-Tory and Foxite Reformers found all kinds of excellent reasons for not supporting each other on any one particular measure. The growing schism in the Whig ranks on this subject was nothing but one of the symptoms of the general divergence between the views of the old Whigs and the new, which culminated in the split over the French Revolution and ultimately brought to birth a semi-distinct Liberal Party. But unfortunately as far as Reform was concerned, while many Whigs grew more Liberal in their opinions, many Tories grew less so.

None the less, when Pitt advanced once more to the attack in 1785 the auspices were not unfavourable. He was leading the first joint Chathamite-Tory combination in the Commons which had ever had a clear majority. He had great authority. Though the King, as the owner of the royal boroughs, viewed Reform with a somewhat jaundiced eye, he had promised his neutrality, and there is no reason to suppose that he did not keep his pledge. This joint majority, therefore, should in the main have united on a measure which would have given increased voting power to the Tory counties. The event, however, proved otherwise.

The essence of the proposal was to take seventy-two seats from the rotten boroughs and give them to the counties and the growing big towns. Sufficient compensation was to be paid to the tune of a million pounds to make this extraction painless, and the whole plan was to work automatically in the future by piling up a compensation fund for extinction which no small electoral body could long resist. The cheese would presently smell so strong that the wasting mouse would walk into the trap.

Pitt has been much assailed for the details of his proposals. Yet they seem sufficiently skilful to ensure success. There was something for the counties (Tory); something for the big towns (Foxite Reformers); something for the borough holders—a million pounds.

The chief indictment is, of course, based on the suggestion of treating a public right as a private property to be bought out at a price. The answer is that it had been so treated for the better part of a century, and by none so much as by Fox, his ancestors, allies and friends. Pitt was not creating an evil, he was abolishing one by recognising it as a fact. Furthermore, without some such proposal it is as clear as any historical certainty can be that he would never have got so far as even introducing his measure without breaking his Government. And if to compensate the borough holders and borough voters was to recognise corruption, then to compensate the slaveholders (which Fox did) was to recognise slavery. But Fox, that most impracticable and inconsistent of individuals, would, of course, rather let the chance of Reform slip down a crack for forty years than give a vote with Pitt. He denounced the compensation scheme, whereas without compensation Pitt could not advance at all. There was thus a leakage of votes for Reform at the Radical end. There followed a leakage at the other end which showed how much Toryism had altered in character since 1760. Tory borough-mongering, especially by great nobles who no longer called themselves Whigs, had made great strides already and was to make greater ones yet as the years proceeded. Many of these Tory borough members, though they gave a general support to Pitt, were not elected especially as his tied supporters at the election of 1784, and regarded themselves as possessing a considerable measure of independence of ministerial policy. Add to these the members for the royal boroughs, and it will be seen how strong a Right wing opposition could be organised against

Reform. If Fox would or could have marched the great bulk of his own supporters into the lobby with Pitt to accept the compensation plan, there might have been just a hope for the measure. Once Fox had declared himself hostile that hope was gone. Pitt had both the Right and the Left in the House against him, and the measure was defeated by 248 votes to 174. Such in April 1785 was the upshot of the campaign which Pitt began by declaring to the Yorkshire Reformers in 1784, "that my zeal for reform is by no means abated, and that I will exert my best endeavours to accomplish that important object." Privately he had told Wyvill that he would use his whole power as a man and as a Minister honestly and boldly "to carry the scheme." Whether he could actually have done more remains to be considered. For the moment he accepted defeat and turned to other questions.

The foreign policy of Pitt during this period has also aroused a considerable difference of opinion. Like most of his other efforts, it was blended almost equally of Whig and Tory conceptions and contained his usual admixture of success and failure.

Pitt's fundamental difficulty in Europe was that he succeeded to the control of a nation which had just undergone a shattering reverse and had stopped the war in America out of sheer hopelessness and exhaustion. The European Powers which had fought us in that war were not in a much better case. Yet the fact remained that the Empire had been mutilated and that the fighting spirit was as low in our people as was the balance in the Exchequer. Even in George III himself the temper of pugnacity abroad was wholly quenched. A purely Tory Minister would under these circumstances have retired from European affairs altogether unless he was goaded into action by some dire menace to British interests.

Pitt, on the other hand, retained enough of the Whig tradition as modified by Chatham to desire to re-establish our prestige and to make the voice of Great Britain heard in the councils of the Continent.

His chief instrument in these various endeavours to recover ground was Harris, afterwards the first Lord Malmesbury, a Whig by past political association but a very cool, skilful and determined diplomatist. Both Pitt and Harris were, however, handicapped by the knowledge that they always held weak hands and could only hope to succeed by bluffing. For Britain was utterly averse to war, nor would the Premier himself have dissociated himself from this sentiment or pretended to think that it was not a right one.

Lord Rosebery has pointed out that Pitt's bluff succeeded in saving the independence of Holland from French influence and thus protecting Antwerp in 1787, and again over the claims of Spain to the entire Pacific coast of America, an act which in 1789 preserved to us British Columbia, but that it failed utterly in the third case. This was the threat to Russia over Oczakow and her Turkish conquests when Catherine the Great declined to be intimidated by a joint ultimatum from Prussia and Great Britain. Even this third bluff might have succeeded, in Lord Rosebery's view, had not the House of Commons and public opinion made it instantly clear that Great Britain was not prepared to fight in the Arctic wastes or in the Cimmerian gloom of the Crimea to protect Turkey, to stand in well with Prussia, or simply to show that she was still a European Power.

It might from the Tory standpoint be possible to put a slightly different gloss on the considerations which induced the majority in Parliament and in the country to permit Pitt, without protest, to dispatch a fleet to Holland in 1787, to support the pro-British party of the Stadtholder against the menace of the pro-French Republicans, or to spend three million pounds in 1789 in mobilising the navy against Spain. The neutrality of Antwerp and of the Scheldt has always been a vital object of British policy, and both historic parties have invariably concurred in being ready to defend it by force of arms. And in this case we also had the armed support of Prussia and of the Duke of Brunswick's army. The Tory element in Pitt's majority would therefore unite, however unwillingly, with the Chathamites and their chief for the protection of Antwerp against the predominating influence of a hostile power. They might pray that no war would result, but they would not come out and declare in advance that under no circumstances would they fight. The event was fortunate, since the French Republic might have become heir to the French monarchy in successful claims on the Scheldt, a region in which that Republic was destined to give Britain a sufficiency of diplomatic and military trouble in the future.

A similar argument applies to Pitt's naval threat against Spain. The Tories educated by Chatham were, no less than that statesman's disciples, always ready to admit that a defence of the extremities of the Empire, which chiefly depended on naval operations, was not to be regarded in the same heinous light as a campaign with soldiers on the Continent to bolster up some abstract crusade. When, therefore, Spain laid down a claim to the entire Pacific coast of America and captured two British ships off Vancouver in 1789, the Tory Party could legitimately share the sentiments roused in England by a similar difference of opinion on a matter of right in the days of Elizabeth. By Pitt's action the Pacific coast was preserved for Canada in the centuries which lay ahead. In any case Spain was by now a rotten Power. Her only hope lay in inducing France to fight with her on this issue of a remote outpost of her Empire. But France was already circling round the outer eddies of the current which was to drag her down into the centre of the revolutionary whirlpool. When France failed her Spain withdrew, and Pitt could place a second diplomatic success to his credit.

In both these cases it will be seen that Tory sentiment and tradition inclined it to the support of an offensive–defensive diplomacy despite the deep undercurrent of dislike for the possibility of a new war. Nor would the King, who was the third party to be considered in these transactions, though he enjoined great caution on ministers in dealing with France over Holland, be backward when it came to the pinch in sustaining the national interest or honour. The popularity of George III in his later years has surprised the critics. Something in his temperament antedated the development of the later Toryism of the Napoleonic periods. But in the course of time the mixed Whig-Royalist-Tory Party marched up to and overtook the general conceptions of their royal master. Whether the advance was one for better or worse must remain a matter of opinion.

The crisis of Oczakow was a very different matter. Russia, after a long-swaying struggle with Turkey in the Ukraine, was about to reap the fruit of victory by a large absorption of territory. Prussia was alarmed at the rapid growth of her Eastern neighbour, and England had passed beyond the stage in which she welcomed under Chatham the advent of Russia into European politics as a counterpoise to France. The Whigs, however, still retained for the Northern Empire a traditional friendship which Catherine exploited very cleverly. The fact that the Triple Alliance of Holland, Prussia and England, which had arisen out of the Stadtholder controversy in Holland, had been able to inflict severe diplomatic checks on Russian ambition both in 1788 and 1790 seems to have encouraged London and Potsdam to interfere, with no assistance from Austria, on behalf of the defeated Turks. Prussia and England presented an ultimatum to the Russian Government demanding among other things that she should return the captured armed place of Oczakow which guards the entrance of the Dnieper into the Black Sea. If these names sound a little strange to modern ears, how must they have struck on those of eighteenth-century England? Russia stood firm. Pitt came down to the House of Commons on March 28, 1791, and with hardly a word of explanation demanded a vote for the navy. He got it indeed with a sweeping majority, but his own Foreign Secretary (Leeds) and half his Cabinet were against him. Suddenly it was understood that

British public opinion was hopelessly and inveterately opposed to war for some place with a queer name. The whole war policy collapsed like a pricked bladder—the ultimatum was withdrawn—Pitt's third bluff had been called at the expense of a national humiliation; yet one may admire the swiftness with which the Minister realised the situation and terminated the crisis. For the moment a little drop of his father's blood, a Whiggish love of European adventure, had percolated to his heart. But the indiscretion was retrieved as soon as it was manifest that the Tory Party was, as usual, utterly opposed to a European war.

All these three diplomatic adventures of Pitt have attracted little attention, and this is indeed natural. They were the last manœuvres of eighteenth-century diplomacy before the Revolutionary cataclysm swept the old Europe away. The incident, therefore, faded from significance and memory in the rapid pressure of vast events hurrying on to quite new consummations. How surprised Frederick the Great would have been had he lived ten years longer!

The summing-up would appear to be that if Pitt was a trifle meddlesome in foreign affairs he was actuated by a right desire to restore British international prestige and to protect the vital interests of Great Britain, and that he did this on the whole effectively with very slender moral and material resources. After all, he only burnt his fingers once. As in home affairs, his credit account of success is bigger than his debit of failure.

In domestic politics another set of correlated, though not exactly identical, problems occupied the attention of Parliament at intervals between 1787 and 1793. These were a variety of attempts to repeal the penal statutes directed against Nonconformity and Roman Catholicism. The cause of the Nonconformists had been considerably advanced by the fact that the powerful dissenting bodies of Northern Ireland had during the later troubles of the American War extorted the repeal of the Test Acts directed against them less by argument than *vi et armis*. The Nonconformists of England were protected against the full effects of the Test Acts by the annual Acts of Indemnity, and they had in any case votes at elections and seats in the Commons. They desired, however, fuller and more certain relief, and this was proposed by Mr. Beaufoy, a well-known Churchman, in two successive motions in the years 1787 and 1789. The first motion was lost by 178 to 100 and the second by 122 to 102. The movement therefore appeared to be on the verge of success. In the latter year Pitt no doubt could have pushed a measure of relief through. But he did not care to raise a Church agitation and add to his perpetual difficulties with his majority on a point which he did not think of urgent importance and about which he obviously cared very little. He therefore left his decision in the hands of the Bishops—a tribunal whose advice might easily be anticipated.

Next year, when Fox raised the issue again, the Nonconformist opportunity had slipped. Already the first stirrings of the French Revolution were beginning to produce their reactions in the field of English home politics. The French Church had been the first body to feel the hand of the new movement, and a sympathetic shudder passed through the ranks of the supporters of the English Establishment. The great argument in favour of Nonconformist relief had been that the Church was so strong, that it had never been even menaced since the Sacheverell trial of 1710, and that the repeal of the Test Acts could in consequence have no effect on the joint security of Church and State. Events in France made this security seem less assured. Burke put the matter very pithily when he said that ten years before he would have voted for Nonconformist relief, that in Beaufoy's motions he had abstained, being in doubt, and that now, in view of developments in France, he would oppose the measure as dangerous to the Establishment and the Constitution. Pitt was also hostile, and the motion was naturally defeated.

For this and for the general check to their movements the Nonconformists had chiefly to thank their own leaders. Prominent preachers like Priestley indulged in the most violent diatribes against the Establishment and soon managed to get themselves mixed up in the popular mind with Jacobinism and the support of the growing excesses of the Parisian extremists. The argument that the Nonconformists were good and peaceable citizens well inclined both to Church and State, and that the times called for no special protection for either institution, therefore fell to the ground, and the Tory leaders were not only compelled to reject the demand, but were well justified in doing so. The Roman Catholics, on the other hand, profited by the shift in the winds which blew so cold on Nonconformity. Jacobinism, not Jacobitism, had become the public enemy. The terrors of the Pope faded before those of the Atheist. When the English Catholic Bishops had given satisfactory assurances on the question of Papal Supremacy and the power of Rome to dispense from an oath, legal toleration was conferred by Pitt in 1791 on Roman Catholics; the Bar was thrown open to them and the Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy was modified in their favour. In 1793 the Act was extended to Scotland. But it was significant of future troubles that the opponents of the Bill found support from the Irish Government, which took the view that the precedent thus established might prove dangerous across St. George's Channel.

By the autumn of 1788, King, country, Premier and Commons had all settled down to a kind of working agreement which, though rather too diversified to be absolutely humdrum, had come to be regarded by all as a fixed and continuing way of political life. In matters of policy everyone concerned must take the rough with the smooth, the disappointments and the successes, and by everybody squaring the least that they wanted with the most they could get, Pitt's Administration was to continue for ever.

Suddenly it became known that the King's mind was failing him. There had been rumours of a previous breakdown in the 'sixties, but this time the truth of the story could not be doubted. George III passed rapidly from a mere incoherence to downright raving. The effect of the announcement both on the majority and on the country was like that of a flash of lightning in the middle of a picnic party. It immediately changed all political values. The conduct of the Prince of Wales had been such that no one could doubt that if he succeeded to the full prerogative as Regent he would without the shadow of any public excuse dismiss Pitt and send for Fox. Thereafter the Prince Regent would use the formidable powers of the royal patronage to remove all he could of the royal borough vote from the old Premier to the new one. Whatever the upshot, it was clear that the Chathamite-Tory combination would have to face opposition for a period. This was the purely political reading of the situation as it affected immediate party prospects. But there were also two other aspects, one personal and the other constitutional. What sort of a person was the prospective Regent and what should the nature of a Regency be? All three standpoints acted and reacted on each other.

George IV was the most unmitigated and contemptible blackguard who ever occupied a position of great eminence. Of course there have been men in history infinitely more wicked, but in the middle of their most atrocious crimes they could at least lay claim to courage, to intellect, to strength of purpose. George IV had no brains, no purpose, no politics save the feud with his father and perhaps a hazy Jacobite idea of Divine right as suiting his personal comfort and dignity. Even so he was ready to risk his succession because he could not possess a woman without marrying her. He was a liar, a boaster, a glutton, a drunkard, an adulterer and a fool—a man totally devoid either of physical or moral courage—a false friend, a treacherous politician, a bad son and a bad husband. His personal finance was little better than a vast swindle. He was not even amusing in society, and his boon companions might have said of him, as Charles II said of George, Prince of Denmark, " I have tried him drunk and I have tried him sober, and there is nothing in him."

Of this man Fox and his associates of Brooke's made their chosen companion. Burke, to his credit, was not popular at Carlton House. How far Fox was influenced by a snobbish passion for royalty or how far he regarded his friend as the jawbone of an ass which would prove handy in smiting the Philistines it is impossible to say. He might have retorted to the Premier that Pitt's father had paid court at Norfolk House to a Frederick who was not much better than his grandson George.

But whatever Fox's motives, his conduct stands revealed in all its damning plainness. On the 11th December, 1785, the Prince denied to Fox that he contemplated the FitzHerbert marriage at all. On the 21st December the marriage took place secretly. By the spring of 1787 the Prince's financial position was so desperate that Fox was induced to appeal to Parliament for relief—against the wishes of the King and the instruction he gave to Pitt. The moment the scheme was adumbrated, Mr. Rolle, a Government supporter who probably knew something, indicated that if the Prince asked Parliament for money the question of his rumoured marriage with a Roman Catholic would be raised. Full time was given for this warning to sink in, and when the motion was actually brought forward, Fox, " speaking on the highest authority," gave a full denial to the marriage story. Mr. Rolle was persistent; he hinted that though no legal marriage had taken place, as under the Royal Marriages Act it could not, since the Prince was twenty-five years of age and George III's consent had not been asked or given, still a marriage might have taken place. Fox's denial, again given on the highest personal authority, was explicit. No marriage had taken place either in law or fact. Pitt proclaimed his satisfaction. The Prince got £160,000 for his debts and £10,000 a year more from the Civil List. Within a day or two Fox knew he had been tricked; that the Prince had lied to him and that he had deceived the House of Commons and the country and induced them to pay money on false pretences.

That he never exposed the fraud is understandable even if hardly defensible; that he should have continued to co-operate in a free and friendly fashion with his betrayer shows that the private morals and public scrupulosity of Charles James Fox were very much on a par with those of the first Lord Holland. In fact it may be doubted whether the father would have swallowed such a monstrous betrayal by an associate as easily as the son did.

Such was the character of the Prince of Wales as known to his most intimate associates when the question of the Regency arose nine months later. But if he obtained the full prerogative he would hold the keys of office. Fox appears to have thought that this fact was an ample condonation of past offences and that the liar and betrayer of yesterday would make an admirable King to-morrow, fully competent to hold in trust the estate of the deranged monarch.

So much for the personal side. The constitutional issue was of the very gravest character. It has always been and always will be the case in English history that when the prerogative of the Crown is touched and becomes a burning issue, passions are apt to be aroused far transcending the amenities of ordinary political warfare. So it was in 1641, at the time of the Exclusion Bill, at the crisis of the Revolution, and so it would have been in 1788 had the question ever gone to a final issue. The reason for this is simple. The Crown is the centre of the Empire, the symbol of a thousand years of history, the guardian of the unity of the race, the transcendental form in which political idea after idea has found expression and fulfilment. The ancestral memories and instincts of the race, therefore, stir immediately out of oblivion when the issue of the Crown arises in any shape. The memory of the mediæval monarchy touches one chord which recalls the Parliamentary Crown. The ghost of Richard II walks abroad to remind men of what happens to those who despise the claims of legitimacy. Yorkists and Lancastrians, Cromwellians and Cavaliers make the clank of their rusted armour ring in the ears of generations which respond if only subconsciously to the call. Touch the Crown in any form or shape and you touch England to the core.

There was no exact and reliable precedent for dealing with the madness of the King and appointing a Regent. In the case of Henry VI the Regent had been appointed by the Magnum Concilium of the Barons, though the Commons had subsequently ratified the choice. The heir to the throne was then a small child; the election of the Duke of York as Regent had signalised the outbreak of the Wars of the Roses. Neither did the flight of James II afford a parallel case, though on that occasion Sancroft, Bishop of London, had pleaded that the exiled King should be treated as a lunatic or minor, and that Parliament should make William Regent in his stead. His suggestion was rejected, partly on the grounds that if the King was insane or a minor the next heir and not another must become Regent.

The only importance of the debates on the succession of William and Mary is that they indicate the strong bias of the Whig Party in favour of the Parliamentary Crown—subsequently re-expressed in the Act of Settlement which placed the Hanoverian dynasty on the throne—and the reluctance of the Tories to tamper more than was absolutely necessary with the strict line of the succession. Anyone, therefore, looking back on history in 1788 would have premised that the Whigs would have been very insistent on the right of Parliament to select the person of the Regent and to define his powers, while the Tories, on the contrary, would have declared that the Prince of Wales, being of age and the indubitable heir to the throne, should have exercised the royal functions during the indisposition of his father. In fact, the two parties changed theoretical places. Pitt took the point of view of the Parliamentary Crown and Fox that of *jure divino.* In spite of a great deal of sparring for position, this represented the fundamental difference between the Whigs and the Tories over the Regency Bill of 1788. Some of the strictest Whigs, indeed, thought that the Prince of Wales ought to have executed a *coup d'état* of the nature of 1714: called the Privy Council together, ignored the Houses of Parliament, and announced himself Regent—since the throne was temporarily vacant.

Pitt, though threatened with imminent dismissal, played his cards with the coolness of a man who does not care whether he wins or loses. Fox displayed his usual rashness and that intemperate greed for office which had already ruined his reputation in 1784. By a curious fatality Burke, who was of all men the most competent for draping a case for the unrestricted Regency in the majestic garments of constitutional history and precedent, was suffering at the time from one of his periodic outbursts of mental distemper. Instead of addressing himself quietly to the historic instinct of his opponents to support the indubitable heir to the throne, his language was so violent and his conduct in the House so strange that many of his fellow-members suspected that he was going to be as mad as the King. But when all allowance is made for these personal factors it must be seen that Pitt, as the head of a predominantly Tory and even Royalist majority, was placed in a highly awkward position in declaring that the two Houses of Parliament had a perfectly free choice of a Regent during the temporary disability of the King, and that the Houses themselves should decide on the powers of the stop-gap Crown. When Fox stood up and declared, on the other hand, that Parliament itself had really no existence while the throne was vacant, that the Regent must be the direct heir, and that the Prince only refrained from claiming his right in order that Parliament might decide when the King was really insane and the right operative, he was talking the doctrine of Toryism, and of the Toryism of the extreme Right. Whatever Fox's motives, this fact could not be denied. Would such language not strike a responsive chord? The hardened Parliamentarian might be immune to Fox's appeal, but what would be the effect on the vast mass of Tory and Royalist sentiment in the country which, Reform Bills or no Reform Bills, in moments of great crises held the fortunes of the strongest Ministry in their hands? It was easy enough for Pitt to "un-Whig" Fox for life, but suppose in the very act he be-Toried him for the next General Election! This was Pitt's real risk. He could afford to view with far less concern an abrupt dismissal from office in favour of a Ministry which could never have held its ground long if the opinion of the country as a whole had disapproved of a ministerial revolution based on nothing but the caprice of an individual Regent.

That such a movement in favour of an unqualified Regency did not take place must be attributed to a number of causes. There was the private character of the Prince and his notorious hostility to his more popular father. There was the public character of Fox, who had lost one election in attempting to reduce the Crown to Venetian bondage and was now asking the public to support him on the issue of *jure divino*. There was the fact that King, Minister, majority and public were united, before this sudden stroke, on one main issue—to keep Fox out—and that an unbridled use of the prerogative was now likely to be used to reverse this decision.

All these considerations, however, might have availed nothing if the nature of Toryism had ever been confined within the narrow bounds of a formula. This was not so. The conception of the Crown had always been made to correspond with the realities of the situation. When the Crown, *jure divino*, ceased to represent the centre of national belief, it had been discarded in the time of James II, rejected in the person of his son by the Act of Settlement, and finally abandoned in arms in 1714 and 1745. Therefore, though Toryism accepted the Hanoverians, it was not in the least likely to make to the new dynasty a sacrifice of all its national sentiments and interests which it had denied to the old. Its attitude towards the Regency question was, therefore, not that of romance or history, but of common-sense and opportunism. All it asked was the single question, "What was the best thing to be done under very difficult and trying circumstances?" Fox said, "A succession *jure divino* for the Prince of Wales as soon as Parliament declares the King incapable of acting." Pitt said, "A limited Regency until it is certain that the King is permanently incapacitated." The question of the duration of the King's insanity was, therefore, the crux of the issue. To reverse Crown and Government suddenly every few months as the King recovered or relapsed would be a worse insanity than that of any sovereign. Against such a common-sense contention all the old Tory doctrines advanced by Fox and approved by Mr. Lecky turned out to be entirely unavailing. The whole mass of argument, all the considerations of personal character involved, all the views of present needs, swung conclusively in Pitt's favour. He took a great risk in the speech in which he opposed Fox on the *jure divino* Regency, but once more his consummate eye for public opinion read the nation aright.

The people and the Parliament insisted on the limitation of the Regency until the duration of the King's illness could be determined. Fox and the Prince of Wales alike grew frightened when they saw the way the tide was setting. The Duke of York was put up in the House of Lords to deny that when Fox claimed the right to the Regency he had been inspired by the Prince. Fox himself endeavoured to whittle away the issue and to avoid a division on the claim. Pitt replied coldly that the damage had been done by the mere advancement of the claim. At the same time he was careful to allow to the Regent full powers for dismissing the Ministry. It was the personal household, patronage and arrangements of the King which were bestowed on the Queen and not on the Regent. Pitt's moral courage and cold rectitude have perhaps been exaggerated, for he probably thought, with justice, that the combination of George Prince Regent and Charles James Fox as Premier would not last very long. The matter was never put to the test, and therefore remains still an open question. The King, as Dr. Willis, the only real expert on insanity employed, had predicted, recovered from his malady before the Regency Bill—with all its limitations—was passed. The view that Pitt had propounded to the House of Commons, that it was premature to act as though an actual demise of the Crown had occurred, was amply justified. After this the Prince Regent had the doubtful pleasure of receiving a deputation from the independent Irish Parliament proffering him the unlimited Regency of Ireland. *Solvuntur risu tabulæ.* The doctors whose views had been believed in by the Ministry had proved right, and the doctors whose opinions had been sedulously spread abroad by the Opposition had turned out to be false prophets.

The gratitude of the King to the Minister who had stood up for his interests when he was incapable of defending them; the pleasure of a people who had seen their worst fears falsified; the solid if unenthusiastic admiration and thanks of a majority which had been got out of a very tight corner by the courage and prevision of the Premier, alike flowed to the feet of Pitt. It was many a long day before anyone dared challenge his personal supremacy after he had renewed the triumph of 1784 by the victory of 1788. And yet all the while the persistent voices call out their questions. If Pitt was an absolute Premier in the modern sense of the term, commanding a united Cabinet and a great Parliamentary majority, why did he not pass all his measures or resign if his majority revolted against him? If he was the master and not the mere servant of the Crown, could he not carry his policies even against the wishes of the King?

To decide the precise nature of Pitt's authority it will be necessary to call a considerable number of witnesses, all differing somewhat among themselves. Mr. Lecky considers Pitt as the first real Premier with a Cabinet responsible to him and not individually to the King. "The system of the King's Friends came decisively to an end." And it is true that when Jenkinson (Lord Liverpool) attempted to lead the royal borough holders against Pitt on the question of trying Warren Hastings, he failed decisively. It is also true that when Thurlow as Lord Chancellor, owing his position to the Crown, challenged Pitt in 1792, the King got rid of him rather than of the Minister.

On the other hand, one of Pitt's private secretaries left a document which computes that in May 1788 Pitt had only fifty-two personal followers; that the party of the Crown consisted of 185 members "who would probably support his Majesty's Ministers under any Minister not peculiarly unpopular"; that there were 108 independent members; and finally that Fox had a following of 138 members. On this view the Prime Minister would be absolutely impotent. It would also follow that if the Prince of Wales could add 138 on his accession to the Regency he could give the projected Whig Ministry a clear majority. And there is no doubt that a considerable mass of well-informed political opinion believed that the Regent would be able to do this and so instal Fox in office with as much certainty as his father had given to Pitt. Yet at the very same moment Grenville, who, whatever his faults, was a very shrewd political observer trained in the intrigues and manœuvres of both parties, was writing in a totally contrary sense in private letters to his brother of Buckingham. "My opinion," said his letter written when the madness of George III was known, but before the debates in Parliament had begun, "is that the present Administration will retire (if necessitated) merely to return to power on the shoulders of the nation." This was despatched on the 25th November. On the 30th he continues, "If I am not mistaken, a storm is rising that they (the Opposition) little expect, and that the sense of the country, instead of being as strong as in 1784, will be much stronger." Grenville's opinion, which as a principal member of the Ministry was probably not unknown to and equally possibly shared by Pitt, was that Fox was making the old mistake, and that if he regained office once more in the usual unscrupulous manner by the favour of the Prince Regent it would merely be a case of "back to 1784." In other words, the Prince Regent would not have been able to swing any considerable proportion of the House of Commons in favour of Fox when such a movement was dead against the general opinion of the country. I believe that Grenville was right and that the 185 royal votes were in the main a phantom army. Even the secretary who notes them down admits that their holder would only support a Premier not notoriously unpopular. It is clear that Fox would not fill the bill. He was in 1788 more unpopular than North or Grafton had ever been. It would, however, be equally erroneous to suppose that because Fox was impossible and the influence of the Crown limited, Pitt therefore possessed an unlimited sovereignty in Parliament. The mass of 108 independent members, mainly of Tory predilections, were a loose force capable at any moment of shaking, if not overthrowing, the Ministry. Pitt himself explained in 1788 how transient his majorities were. Like any constitutional sovereign with the powers of William III or Charles II, he governed indeed, but he did not rule absolutely. He had to consider the King on the one hand and his own majority on the other, and in the third instance the point at which these two sections of opinion might unite against him.

Pitt was admittedly an honest believer in all the measures he proposed. His Parliamentary and electioneering judgment was almost unrivalled. It would appear very rash for historians writing over a hundred years afterwards to set up their judgment as to what Bills Pitt could have passed by a crack of the Ministerial Whip, and when such an exercise of discipline would have resulted in a general overthrow, as against the decision of the man of the time who knew the real facts of the situation far better than posterity. Prof. J. Holland Rose points out that the blunder over the Westminster election in 1784 and the choice of the Irish Commercial Treaty, the hardest of all Pitt's nuts to crack as a first issue, weakened him so seriously in 1785 that his prestige was at a low ebb when the vital questions of Reform came up. And this criticism of the Premier's tactics seems justifiable. He was wrong over Westminster, and it was strange that the son of Chatham should not appreciate sufficiently the fierce jealousy of the commercial classes of any measure which seemed to threaten their State protection.

Other critics maintain that Fox proved in 1806 by his success that Pitt had been unnecessarily afraid of tackling the slave trade in the heyday of his power. And this again seems a legitimate criticism.

For the rest, the attack on Pitt's moral courage seems based on a misreading of the circumstances and tendencies of his time. He might, of course, have threatened resignation on any or every issue—and would certainly have had to resign, probably sooner than later. He might then have become a flaming comet of politics, revolving, like his father, through and across the track of all the established planetary masses of his period. But such was not his nature. His bent was for action rather than idealism—for executive power rather than for mere declamation. And how much had Chatham gained by taking the opposite course? His imperishable name springs from the brief period in which he had stooped to traffic with the Mammon of organised party. The rest was nothing but failure and afterglow. Pitt the Reformer chose to do his best with the instruments at his disposal. When Fox rejected the alliance with him and Shelburne, Pitt's path was necessarily set among the Royalists and the Tories. His elevation, though an immense stroke, was also a tremendous fluke. For his Cabinet he had Thurlow as Lord Chancellor, a Courtier rather than a Tory; Camden, President of the Council, a Chathamite Whig; Dundas, Treasurer to the Navy, a Tory; Jenkinson (Lord Liverpool), Courtier and Tory, Board of Trade, William Grenville (Vice-President), an independent Whig with a Tory bias. Both his Secretaries of State, Carmarthen and Sidney, were in the Lords, and their political affiliations were extremely doubtful. His Cabinet, therefore, was anything but a homogeneous body—the majority which had swept him into power even less so. All alike he held by the force of personal influence alone, not by the crushing weight of a well-organised party machine. It is true that that majority did as the years progressed organise itself into a very definite body of public opinion. The Tories and the Chathamites completed the fusion which had been indicated years before. The independent Tories coalesced with the Pittite Tories into a more or less solid mass. The influence of the personal Crown on the holders of the royal boroughs began to become by degrees less operative as the Courtiers found their spiritual home in the new Toryism. Before the French Revolution had become a manifest portent on the European horizon all these various factors were beginning to combine together and to develop a united point of view of which Dundas might be said to be the lowest common denominator. The whole essence of the new Tory movement thus brought out of long gestation to slow birth was in essence static. And it was its very Conservatism which made it popular. Pitt in the mere act of his accession to power had removed the grievances which had been the causes of unrest and of the demand for change. The Crown was free from Whig domination; the sinecures were being abolished; the financial policy of the country was wisely administered; peace was preserved; the era of commercial and industrial prosperity was commencing; why then worry about abstract questions like Reform or Ireland or the Slave Trade when the Government was being carried on to the complete satisfaction of the nation? This was certainly the King's view, and it represented that of the vast bulk of the nation. The Napoleonic struggle merely hardened this tendency, which had begun to develop long before Anti-Jacobinism became a Tory creed. All these currents of opinion united in one single issue. Fox must be kept out, and the only man who could keep him out was Pitt. Pitt in all his schemes for change had the asset and the prestige of being the necessary man. Yet even so there were limits beyond which the King and the new Tory Party would not be pressed in the direction of reform. In each case Pitt had to decide when that limit had been reached. He himself was struggling desperately to bring the machinery of the State, long allowed to rust under Whig and royal domination alike, up to some standard of modern requirements. He was a progressive Premier with a contented static majority. Under the circumstances it is not so wonderful that he achieved so little as that he achieved so much.

But in finance and economy, in the rehabilitation of the national credit, he had been given a free hand. Here Fortune gave him one buffet which knocked him down and another which in the long run raised up the finance of his country for which he cared so passionately. As the menace of the French Revolution grew his very Budgets were endangered. And he fought to the last for the Tory policy of non-intervention in purely European affairs. But Burke, the great Conservative-Whig, was inflaming the country against his neutrality. The Reds of the Revolution piled up the bonfire, the British Conservatives of the Right applied the match, and the Premier was left to wrestle with flames not of his own lighting. And underground the Industrial Revolution produced by the inventions of the age was getting ready to finance the Empire and force

Napoleon to defeat on a peace of exhaustion. War with France broke out in February 1793, and raged with two brief intervals till 1815—ten years after Pitt was dead. Here, then, we must leave Pitt as the shadows of an inevitable foreign war gather round the devoted head of the great Minister of peace and economy, and the Tory Party passes steadily from the left of his desire to the right of pure reaction. When war comes it is a hard master of men, and its servants are not altogether to blame if the iron necessities of warfare enter into their own souls. But when the Tories of the Right are inclined to boast that they "educated" Pitt, let them consider how different would have been their fortunes in the nineteenth century if Pitt had been allowed to settle the Roman Catholic question long before 1829 and the Reform question long before 1832. The remaining chapters of this book will be devoted to a consideration of these and other Tory problems in the light both of philosophy and of the experience of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PHILOSOPHY OF TORYISM

When the philosopher applies himself to politics or the politician borrows from philosophy to inspire or justify his actions the results are apt to be either ridiculous or disastrous. Yet parties have in the past borrowed arguments and principles freely enough from writers like Hobbes and Locke or Hume, and men like Bentham, Voltaire and Rousseau exercised in their day no inconsiderable influence on the course of events. Napoleon was full of contempt for the "ideologues," yet perhaps his own grip of fact would not have relaxed quite so soon had he been of a temperament which was a little more susceptible to the force of general ideas.

While, therefore, it is dangerous to impute as motives to political parties, as they are hurled down the torrent of events, too rigid general conceptions—with which the actors themselves are not immediately concerned—it is also true that we shall never understand the nature of a party unless we pierce through all the layers of its outward manifestations, which seem to alter from time to time in such a bewildering fashion, to its essence, to what Aristotle called the τό τι ἦν εἶναι. Nor without this knowledge is it possible to predict how these groups will react to a given set of circumstances. The fact that the parties themselves may be largely unaware of the central idea or guiding instinct no more disproves its existence than our unconsciousness of breathing stops our breath. And to understand Toryism it is also necessary to grasp the essential nature of the ideas opposed to it. For politics are in essence an antagonism and could not exist without resistance. That is why, whenever one party or combination of parties has attained an overwhelming preponderance over its opponents, evil has nearly always resulted both to itself and to the State.

The difficulty of the inquiry is immensely increased by the fact that parties are always imputing to one another motives and characteristics which do not properly belong to them, with a view to doing them a damage. This misrepresentation would be easy enough to detect but for the fact that the maligned party often seizes on the taunt and erects it into a boast, as the very terms Whig, Tory and Radical were in their origin offensive party nicknames. Lack of patriotism, lack of brains, intellectual dishonesty, failure in adaptability have all been imputed at one time or another to various groups of opinion, and have often actually modified these opinions in the direction of making the imputation less false and more true. The public mind grows horribly confused during this process, and since it is easier to grasp a label than a truth, the exact opposite of the actual state of the case often comes to be accepted as a mere commonplace. Thus a Socialist, owing to the loose political abuse of twenty years ago, has come to be regarded as unpatriotic, whereas, of course, readiness to live and die for the State is the hall mark of the Socialist creed. It is easy enough to see how the confusion arises, but it is a confusion none the less.

Equally possibly, when the imputation has taken a form which some men regard as a virtue and when the subsequent modification has taken place, the original opponents or their successors join a party which is not essentially congenial to them and struggle desperately to distort its creed still further. The most notorious instance of this conversion by opposites is the Whig stampede over to Conservatism after the death of Palmerston in 1865. The Radicals called the party led by Disraeli " The Stick-in-the-muds " and the selfish protectors of every form of vested interest. The Whigs, terrified by Mr. Gladstone's Radicalism, assumed the charge to be true and by their adhesion to Conservatism did their best to make it so. In exactly the same way, owing to conditions in 1832, 1846, 1866, 1874 or 1885, it was easy and convenient for the opponents of Toryism to accuse it of being a mere static force, and for the Tories to retort on Whigs, Liberals and Radicals with the charge of restless innovation elevated into a principle. In each case there was just sufficient substance for the charge to be an effective platform cry, to pass into a commonplace popular belief, and therefore to do something to work out its own fulfilment. Yet in each case the charge is not only ultimately untrue, it is the precise reverse of the truth. No party is completely static or completely progressive in its conceptions, but in the final analysis the distinguishing feature of Toryism is its fluidity and that of Liberalism its rigidity. The schools are as far apart as Aristotle and Plato and divided by much the same differences.

The Aristotelian pursuing the inductive method will reach his conclusion only by the observation of phenomena. Like the Pragmatist or the enlightened man of modern science, he will be perfectly ready to admit that some new fact may emerge in the course of human inquiry which may compel a recasting of his past conclusions; he will always be testing his past facts, and, judging by proved experience alone, he will decline entirely to be guided by brilliant generalisations which may not pass the ultimate tests of observation. The discovery of Einstein, that some of the truths and axioms of Euclid which mankind has believed since the days of Roman Egypt are not strictly true, will not upset him in the least. Whereas to the born Platonist the idea is most disturbing, for it "downs" an abstract truth arrived at by pure reason. Some might define such an Aristotelian as a progressively minded man relying for his judgment on his experience. But this would be something of a misnomer, for he would reply at once that he did not agree either that there must be change or that if so that change must be progress. The Dark Ages had been change, but they could not be described as an improvement on the age of the Antonines. Or, again, Mr. H. G. Wells might be right in his romantic prediction that man would use the weapon of science to destroy the civilisation which forged the sword. Rather would he be called an open-minded man, relying greatly on proved knowledge, building on ascertained facts, and especially, as one of these facts, on the subconscious instinct of what is right and safe and expedient which is handed down to man through the generations, as other instincts are transmitted by the animals. His mind would be that of a pioneer indeed, but one never advancing beyond the reach of a well-stored base, and distrustful of gentlemen of the staff measuring the day's march with compasses on the theory that all surfaces are equally flat. His mind indeed would be a compound of reasoned belief and moderate scepticism as to the future.

In fact, if this Aristotelian or Pragmatist had lived in England in any period since the Restoration he would have been called a Tory or a Conservative the moment he started to apply his doctrines to the politics of his time.

The Platonist, on the other hand, is a far more romantic and conservative individual. To him truth once ascertained stands for ever. But the method of ascertaining truth is not the close observation of phenomena or, in other words, experience. Truth is reached by a purely deductive process of human reasoning which can be carried on *in vacuo*. Out of the throes of logic there will be born the shining goddesses of Abstract Truth, Abstract Beauty, Abstract Liberty, Abstract Man, figures unchangeable and unalterable, though the waters from under the earth overwhelm the earth—ideals sent to us from a past life or from another sphere, and therefore beyond the base fingering of petty human experience. For are not they, as the master himself says, the εἶδη—the ideals—the forms " of which there is laid up a pattern in heaven which whoso wills may behold and beholding set his house in order "?

The Platonist, therefore, is bound to regard the state of mankind or art or anything else as a perfectible object which can be hammered into a certain ideal shape quite regardless of the nature of the thing which is going to be hammered. In fact that nature, which is the essence of the past and the product of experience, is likely to be his worst obstacle in the process of "reform." Plato himself admits this when, at the end of the tenth book of the *Republic*, he predicts the fall of the ideal State because, when man has done his utmost, Nature itself may go on strike by refusing to produce the right kind of men. The attitude of the Platonist to the past will be one of suspicion, to fact one of dislike, and to knowledge gained by induction one of immobility, for since he already knows ultimate truth, what further need is there of research? If Free Trade can be proved valid by abstract reasoning, what is the use of examining the protective policy of Edward IV and its effects on English industry? In a word, if that Platonist had lived in England any time since 1660 he would have been, not perhaps a Whig, but a Liberal or a Radical, and certainly against the Tory Party of the day. But which of these two men has the fluid and open and which the static and unprogressive mind? Obviously the Aristotelian Tory and not the Platonic Radical.

I do not profess to judge finally which is the wiser man. It may yet be proved in the course of experience that static Liberalism was a safer and saner policy than progressive Conservatism. But the fact that I am ready to admit this proves that I am a Tory, and therefore open-minded, for no Liberal could *ex hypothesi* make the same admission on his side. To him the truths of politics would be beyond the rebuttal of experience. That is why Toryism is surely going to live and Liberalism, as history has known it, is probably going to die.

This fundamental distinction between the way in which the natural Tory and born Liberal look at life and the world was in the nineteenth century apprehended, each in a slightly different way, by three men only : by Disraeli, who preached the view and tried to put it into practice; by Coleridge, who asserted it with all his mystic eloquence and hazy profundity; and by the greatest and wisest to be found in the enemy ranks, John Stuart Mill, whose essay on Coleridge should be read by anyone who desires to appreciate the philosophy of Toryism.[1] Mill selects Bentham as the most eminent of philosophic Liberals and opposes his mental attitude to that of the philosopher poet. " By Bentham beyond all others men have been led to ask themselves in regard to any ancient or received opinion, Is it true? and by Coleridge, What is the meaning of it? The one took his stand outside the received opinion and surveyed it as an entire stranger to it; the other looked at it from within and endeavoured to see it with the eyes of a believer in it, to discover by what apparent facts it was first suggested and by what appearances it has ever since been rendered continually credible—has seemed to a succession of persons to be a faithful interpretation of their experience. Bentham judged a proposition true or false as it accorded or not with the result of his own inquiries, and did not search very curiously into what might be meant by the proposition when it obviously did not mean what he thought true. With Coleridge, on the contrary, the very fact that any doctrine had been believed by thoughtful men and received by whole nations or generations of mankind was part of the problem to be solved, was one of the phenomena to be accounted for. The long duration of a belief, he thought, is at least proof of an adaptation in it to some portion of the human mind, and if on digging down to the root we do not find, as is generally the case, some truth, we shall find some natural want or requirement of human nature which the doctrine in question is fitted to satisfy."

" From this difference in the point of view of the two philosophers and from the too rigid adherence of each to his own," adds Mill, with magnificent impartiality, " it was to be expected that Bentham should continually miss the truth which is in traditional opinions and Coleridge that which is out of them."

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[1] J. S. Mill, *Dissertations :* " Coleridge."

In a word, the historical method of judgment is Tory, that of *a priori* reasoning is Radical. Disraeli, looking at the matter from a slightly different angle, added his testimony to that of Coleridge and Mill. "This respect for precedent," he writes in *The Vindication,* "this clinging to prescription, this reverence for antiquity which are so often ridiculed by conceited and superficial minds, appear to me to have their origin in a profound knowledge of human nature." "Action and reaction," he said in a later phrase of more intense insight, "are but words with which to mystify the million—all is race." The idea that there is a force of progress constantly retarded and dragged back by retrogressive powers, but yet constantly advancing in the long run, which is of the very essence of the Liberal creed, is repudiated by the Arch-priest of Toryism. We do not even know in what progress consists. And only God could tell us that. What man can see, not in the light of eternity, but in the light and shadow of history, is a powerful current of national life and purpose flowing down to some unknown sea. The course of this racial development, in all its twistings and turnings, its triumphs and its blunders, can be traced with some measure of accuracy. The race is the force surging on with a resistless impulse; yet that onrush need not be altogether blind if statesmen will study the past, respect its sound traditions and yet cut out the rotten wood, foresee tendencies and realise potentialities, and observe what courses in the centuries have led to peace or ruin, distress or happiness, to smooth or to broken water. By looking back a thousand years the human mind may be able to project itself forward a little in advance of its contemporaries—for twenty or fifty years, but surely not for more than a century. Above all, political man must always be ready to reform the ranks as circumstances break them, and to face each new situation with the courage to see fresh facts with an open mind. But the idea that there are definite principles of progress and reaction, that there is a single pattern of government called Democracy or Liberty or Republicanism or Socialism, or anything else laid up in heaven and to be applied ruthlessly and remorselessly and logically to Frenchmen and Germans and Britons, is a fundamental Radical delusion leading to a fatal contempt for tradition and race alike. You can only build upon the past of character, you can only mould the shape in accordance with the texture of the clay. "The truth is," said Disraeli, voicing the fundamental opportunism of Toryism in 1834, "a statesman is a creature of his age, the child of circumstance, the creation of his times . . . he is only to ascertain the needful and the beneficial and the most feasible measures to be carried out."

Mill, however, himself a convinced if perspicacious Liberal, would not have accepted the Disraelian doctrine on the non-existence of action and reaction. On the contrary, he regards Coleridge's Toryism as in itself "a revolt of the human mind against the philosophy of the eighteenth century. It is ontological because that was experimental; conservative because that was innovative; religious because so much of that was infidel; concrete and historical because that was abstract and metaphysical; poetical because that was matter of fact and prosaic." In a word, Coleridge's philosophy, Disraeli's novels and speeches, Newman's religion, Carlyle's histories were in the broadest sense a Tory protest against the philosophers who launched the French Revolution and English philosophic Liberalism which was that revolution's heir.

Liberalism indeed has inherited from the French Encyclopædists the passion for abstract conceptions, for treating life as a proposition in Euclid and men as if they could be arranged in a geometrical pattern like so many bricks. But Liberalism would not have assimilated these doctrines at the beginning of the nineteenth century if that had not already been the bent of the Whig-Liberal mind. These ideas could never impose themselves on the Tory mentality, because it feels instinctively, out of experience, that they embody a false conception of reality. "Man is born free," says the French philosopher, "but is everywhere in chains." This phrase is, of course, absolutely meaningless unless it is intended to convey the idea that every man has a natural right to freedom; and if such a right is inherent in man as man, clearly all men must have exactly the same kind of freedom, *e. g.* the same political institutions or even equal opportunity of economic conditions. This is the political version of Flat Earthism. It is obvious that no such idea could ever be realised, and that the attempt to realise it would only end in some appalling disaster. For no man is free or born free in any abstract or unconditioned sense which can be taken as the test of what freedom means. His freedom is conditioned by all sorts of circumstances, in his surroundings, in the past, in his relations with his fellows, and therefore varying kinds and degrees of freedom will always belong to varying units of the human race. After the free man, the economic man—the latter being as much a figment as the former—and so we come to Universal Free Trade, Universal Disarmament, Universal Democracy, and the rest of the idols of the Liberal cave—all of which were to be realised shortly after the Great Exhibition of 1851. When these static conceptions had been erected like so many pagan deities on the hill-tops of hope the Liberal army started to march towards them, smashing down in their course not merely any tangled forests which stood in the way, but the long-cultivated fields of men, and burning not merely the jungle, but cities and villages and churches. Anyone who protested against this course of procedure was a reactionary. What would happen if the army ever reached its goal no one has stopped to inquire. The abstract and static ideal having been attained and no more "progress" being possible, presumably the world must have come to an end, on a petition signed by the whole of progressive mankind to Providence. The army never got very far, but the damage done to certain institutions in the nineteenth century was enough to spread the opinion that Liberalism was the party of change and Toryism of resistance to change. Whereas the truth of the matter was, that Liberalism was trying to alter things in accordance with a fixed pattern which should remain for ever, while Toryism was trying to alter things as circumstances demanded and not otherwise, without professing to foresee the ideal state or what humanity would be like at the end of the world.

Philosophic Liberalism would have received a much narrower acceptance but for the accident of the industrial revolution coming up to its support. This portended in itself gigantic changes, and since it brought wealth in its train, the ideas of change, wealth and progress became hopelessly intermingled. In fact the new wealth went to the heads of the Liberals of the middle nineteenth century period. As Mr. Chesterton has observed,[1] even Macaulay, with all his historical bias, writes continually as if Progress consisted in machines continually making more machines in ever-increasing quantities *ad infinitum*, without the slightest regard to what the effect would be on the fortunes or happiness of the human race. In fact he and his school viewed the future as some continually increasing cotton boom which would never stop. When in 1918 the guns had finished with the wealth of nineteenth-century England and the battlefields of the world were littered with the bodies of "the heir of all the ages," the present-day Liberal was left in a position to judge how wise were the founders of his creed.

It is the rigidity of Liberalism which is its fatal defect. The history and destiny of mankind decline to be ruled by a mental yard measure, however highly polished. Sometimes this rigidity of mind defeats its own ends. Liberal dealing with the League of Nations is a case in point. The most typical instance of the difference between the Tory and Liberal method of handling a problem occurred in a debate in the House of Commons in 1923 on the French occupation of the Ruhr. The Liberal Party moved an amendment to the address declaring that the whole question of Reparations and the Ruhr should be submitted to the League of Nations. The Government replied that this was impracticable, because France would not agree to submit the question to the League (as everyone present knew well), and in consequence if the League moved, France would leave the League—and leave it a mere empty shell. The argument was not answered because it was unanswerable. Lord Robert Cecil, a great believer in the League, voted with the Government.[1] Next day he was solemnly censured by Liberal members prominent in the same cause. In a word, to the Liberals the League was just a machine for Peace which had to function and chop out Peace Treaties and Arbitration Treaties irrespective of whether it was trying to chop wood, iron or coal. The fact that to set it to chop iron would wreck the beloved machine for ever had simply no meaning or relevance to the Liberal mind. The League, to return to the Platonic phraseology, was the εἶδος—the world, including France, was to be hammered into a shape which corresponded to that of the form. The fact that France would decline to be hammered and would hammer back and destroy the ideal of the League was of no importance. Lord Robert Cecil, on the other hand, viewing the League with equal goodwill but from the Tory standpoint as a growing organism, the past and powers of which must be considered before it could be asked to function in any given way, refused to destroy it in its infancy because it could not do the impossible—to tear up the sapling because it could not yet give the shade of the oak. It is the Platonist and the Aristotelian over again, and the censured Tory Aristotelian was the wiser man, if he had only stuck to his opinion.

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[1] *The Victorian Age.*

If the conception of Toryism so far put forward in this chapter has any validity it will possess two qualities superficially antagonistic. It will be extraordinarily tenacious and amazingly flexible. It will base itself on tradition and precedent until its creed will appear to be set with the indestructible rigour of Roman mortar. Yet it will also possess all the pliability of a growing plant because its central principle rejects principle; because it claims infallibility in the ultimate resort for no single one of its doctrines, if long experience should prove one false, and declares no institution, however august and venerable, incapable of amendment for the better to suit the alteration of the times. Looking on the State and the Constitution as a natural growth, and not as a theoretical machine, it will always be ready to turn old tools to new uses, to melt the sword into a ploughshare or beat the ploughshare back into the sword. For it knows that the metal is the same. Therefore the party which clings closest to tradition is at once the most continuous in the line of its development and the most opportunist in its treatment of any given crisis. There are ragged holes and great breaks in the line which connects the Whigs of the Revolution with the Radicals of the twentieth century. Theoretic thought has on occasion leapt wide spaces. But the development of Tory policy stands solid and unbroken from end to end. And yet if it was necessary to affix one single predominant characteristic to the party history of 260 years, that word would be Opportunism.

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[1] It must be added that Lord Robert Cecil subsequently recanted his very sound original view. But his first vote was violently denounced by Mr. Lloyd-George, writing as a Liberal on February 2nd, 1924, as a flagrant betrayal of the League of Nations.

A party so rooted in the past and so adaptable to the present will not prove one homogeneous block. It is the diversity of opinion in the ranks which has always so shifted the weights as to bear the strain of each separate emergency. And since Toryism more than any party faith is an instinctive attitude of mind rather than a formal creed, great latitude in divergency can be tolerated without provoking dissension. Generally speaking, though not at all times, Toryism reveals three schools of thought running through it and intertwining like threads in a woven texture. In the first place, there are the men of tradition who will never move an inch. Sometimes they are merely obdurate and silent, passively resisting any change in their world. More often they are extraordinarily shrill, active and vocal, endeavouring by frantic exertions and even at desperate risks to restore a world which has passed away. The quiet type is Clarendon, the first Tory Premier, acting throughout as though he was living in the world before the Civil War, and many a country squire member of Parliament voting steadily in a hopeless minority after the ruin of 1714 or the betrayal of 1846. The violent type finds its first expression in the Jacobites, who regarded the Tories who called in William as little better than traitors, and conducted what was almost a separate Opposition under Anne and the early Hanoverians. The breach, however, was never complete and the Jacobite returned by degrees to the Tory fold as the movement died of sheer inanition. In later days Eldon and the Duke of Cumberland, with their inveterate distrust of Canning and subsequently of the influence of Mr. Disraeli "among our younger Senators," represented the extreme Right. Then came Lord Salisbury in full revolt against the Disraeli Reform Bill of 1867, the group which resented the Chamberlain influence on Conservative policy from 1886 onwards, and finally the Die-hard movement against the successive Coalition Governments, a revolt which began during the War and was intensified after the peace. Active or passive, silent or vocal, this group has always existed within the Party, and has on rare occasions exercised a strong influence on the course of policy from the days when the gentleman who drank ale at the October Club brought pressure to bear on Harley. The objection to this Right wing of the Party is that, though it frequently contains men of undoubted ability and unquestioned sincerity, its objects when desirable are nearly always impracticable, while the violence of its language and the intransigence of its attitudes enable the enemy to ascribe to the whole Party the doctrines of extremism. And no extremist party will ever flourish in Great Britain.

On the left, on the other flank, stands the forward wing of Toryism—equally small in numbers but showing a far longer list of illustrious names. Of these are Pitt, who re-formed the new Tory Party out of the wreckage left by North, and after three-quarters of a century of sojourn in the wilderness and a decade of unreal power led it back to the land of promise and left it there for more than forty years; Canning, the devout disciple who, when the beacon fire lit by his dead master was dying down, strove with the vain hands of his genius to feed the flame. "His solemn agony has not yet faded from him." Half of Peel's mind is there who taught the ideas of trade to Toryism, but the rest is in shadow, and half of Chatham's who taught them Empire; and in the second rank Chamberlain and Randolph Churchill, who in almost any other company might claim pre-eminence, and lastly, master of them all, Benjamin Disraeli, prophet and evangelist of the Tory democracy.

With all their variety of gift and temperament and circumstance, the influence these men exercised on the Party, by conversion from within or by pressure from without, had a great common feature. All alike were dedicated to the task of seeing that the organism did not perish by a failure to adapt itself to a changed environment. The danger of the traditionary party must always be that it will remain inert in the face of some entirely fresh and dangerous condition of affairs, trusting to old proved weapons whose edges have become blunted and to rusted armour against some deadly new artillery. That a complete overthrow of this character should overtake a great national party and that, in the very moment when sweeping and almost revolutionary changes are imminent, the opinion which represents continuity with the past should be rendered completely impotent, is clearly a public misfortune of the gravest character. Yet Conservatism is always running this risk of extinction if it is left to the devices of the bulk of its supporters or to the mercy of its extremist antediluvians. The Tory-Democrats or the Liberal-Conservatives have been the men who, while searching the chart of the past no less carefully and often more intelligently than other men in their Party, have also watched the barometer and scanned the horizon for a coming storm. Nearly always the right man has come in the nick of time. Once in 1832 he did not so come, and the Tory ship nearly foundered for ever.

The lives of this group of statesmen may seem to be in the main a record of failure either in the career or in the policy. The gadfly is not more popular at Westminster than at Athens. Some of them went to utter ruin. The successful were lucky if they attained one-third of what they asked in the contemporary programme of Toryism. But this aspect of the matter is superficial. The fathers stoned the prophets, but the sons enshrined in the sepulchres they built the policies for which the prophets had fallen. Each struggle leavened the mass by a process of permeation until ideas deemed highly heretical became the commonplaces of orthodoxy. The great men who fell in the effort should be the last to whine. They desired to serve the State by preserving their party to it, and if they succeeded almost as well by defeat as by victory, what matter? The Tory Party went on, and as long as it is so served it will go on. It needs the prophet who can see a little glimpse ahead down the vista of the years, but it also needs the vast mass of opinion which bases its political judgment on custom and experience, which is wise in its own generation but whose natural wisdom goes no further.

It is this vast mass of central and moderate opinion which has always proved the decisive factor in the conflicts of Toryism. To it the Right and the Left, the men who look backward and the men who look forward, have always appealed like advocates to an arbiter. The men it supported won, the men it rejected lost. More than once it has been the final court of appeal in the crisis of national fate. It decided the issue of the Exclusion Bill in favour of James II and the issue of the revolution for William III. Its passive obduracy to the pleadings of the Jacobites prevented the return of a Catholic Stuart Prince in the eighteenth century. It decided for Pitt against North in 1784 and so created the new Toryism. It stood in the main for Peel against Canning in 1827 and so doomed itself to the deluge of 1832. It adhered to Disraeli and Bentinck rather than to Peel in 1846 and the years which followed, and so made the revolting lieutenant the moulder of the Party destinies. Lord Salisbury, when he had ceased to be Die-hard, held it against Lord Randolph Churchill. It is probably the most powerful force which has ever existed consistently and consecutively in national affairs. It follows a line deviating rarely to the right and rather more often to the left. Its final judgment is compounded of respect for old opinions and a recognition of new needs at any given moment mixed in the proportions dictated by common-sense. It may be persuaded, but it cannot be rushed. This group can boast many famous names, though it can hardly rival in this respect the brilliance of the constellation of the advance guard of the Party.

Its first and most typical leader was Danby, Duke of Leeds, who was equally opposed to the claims of the Nonconformists and the pretensions of the French monarch. Nottingham might be said to belong to it, save that his views on the Church were too high to admit of his treading any broad middle way, and possibly he should be counted as a renegade who belonged to the Right. Swift was certainly the evangelist of the vast central bulk of the Tory opinion of his time. Wyndham represents the middle eighteenth century, and Dundas was the prop keeping the centre firm for Pitt. Lord Liverpool, of course, was the apotheosis of the type holding the scales between Canning on the Left against Castlereagh leaning somewhat dubiously towards the Right. The history of nineteenth-century Conservatism is full of the names of luminaries of second rank who dealt successfully with successive Prime Ministers, of whom not the least typical or powerful was Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. The late Duke of Devonshire, though he was brought up a Whig of the later dispensation, probably represented this view as ably and sincerely as any man. In the end, when the original fire had faded and the old indiscretions were forgotten, central Conservatism set up a stained-glass window saint in its own image and called it the late Lord Salisbury. If one desired to express their tendencies in current terms one might say that Lord Hugh Cecil stood for the Right, the late Mr. Bonar Law for the Centre, Lord Birkenhead for the left of Toryism.

One great name has been omitted from this list, that of the man who alone challenges Disraeli for the intellectual supremacy of Toryism. Where does Bolingbroke stand? Certainly not in the vanguard. But does he belong to the rearguard or to the Centre? If the Right could claim him, then they could say with justice that they had possession of a name more valuable than that of twenty others. I have given reason for the belief that Bolingbroke belonged by conviction to the Centre, possibly even to the Right Centre, but that he was hurried violently to the Right, though not to the extreme Right, by the urgent and special necessities of 1714. That Swift went with him in a great part of his plan for the Tory *coup d'état* proves the urgency of the case, for Swift was no extremist.

It is in the interplay of these three tendencies in the Party, for they have never really been definite groups or sections separated from each other, that Toryism has found at once its strength and its mobility. When events have demanded a firm stand, as, for instance, on the Home Rule Bill of 1886, the old gang and the moderates have united to take that stand, and the Tory-Democrats, so far from hanging back, have fought in the very van of the battle. Where it has been absolutely essential to re-align the ranks on a new frontage, as, for instance, in 1867, central Tory opinion has almost invariably accepted the advice of the Tory-Democratic leaders, and the dissidents of the Right have been so few as to be unimportant.

The explanation of this fluidity in the Tory temperament is the major principle of the Tory Party, namely, that there is no minor principle, however important, which may not be modified or abandoned in the light of experience. It has been said in the first chapter of this book that the innermost belief of the Party is in the unity of the State and the people, whether that union is symbolised in the personal Crown, the Church or the Empire—a conception gradually widening outwards in the course of the centuries until it embraces all classes and Dominions over which the King rules. Is it possible then that such a deep-rooted instinct could be torn up and such an age-long tradition abandoned simply as the result of experience ? The answer is Yes, if the creed became perverted to evil.

This generation has witnessed an instance of such perversion which will make the meaning of this saying clear. The German Empire of 1871 was founded by rough-and-ready methods not inexcusable, and at last brought the bulk of the German peoples together under a single rule. There was nothing originally in that Empire which a man of Tory temperament, if he had happened to be born a German, could not readily have supported and obeyed. Indeed its unity, its discipline, its social progress would have made a strong appeal to his patriotic enthusiasm. In fact many Tories feared Germany precisely because they admired her for these qualities. But between 1870 and 1914 the German doctrine of the State and of national union under the State and Crown took on a new character. The Generals, the Professors, the Conservatives and the Socialists were all parties to the creation of a new religion. The State, and the Imperial Crown with it, became a thing apart from the homely lives of the men who made up the State and supported the Crown. The Platonic form was set up again, but instead of being an idol of beauty, even though of error, it became a sort of Moloch demanding the lives of men on the plea of national unity or loyalty to the Crown—not for the benefit of the men who were to die or that of their descendants, but to glut the blood-lust of some horrible demon, called the Super-State, controlled by the Superman. The very phrases were a denial of humanity.

If such a creed of the unity of the Crown, the State and the Empire, superficially resembling the creed of the Tory Party, were set up in England, the Party would instantly repudiate it out of the long experience of the past, which teaches in Kipling's view that "that holy State or holy Church endeth in holy war." It would accept in preference any other conceivable theory of government. Again, to take an illustration leaning in the opposite direction, it is possible that in some dim future into which the eyes of this generation can hardly pierce it might prove necessary and wise to modify the whole conception of nationality. Yet nationality, which is only another name for racial unity, is the cardinal doctrine of Toryism. None the less, I have no doubt that if actual experience of the world of the future should prove such a modification wise, the Tory Party both would, and in accordance with its own principles *should*, accept the change.

In selecting these instances one has taken the highest theoretical test of the essential doctrine of a party. In practice no body of opinion is likely to be tried so high. The very nature of the slow development of the British Constitution and of British politics and of world events will strengthen the conviction of Toryism as it surveys the past, that it is never likely to be put upon such a rack and asked to make any such vast denials. Nevertheless, it has been tested in a lesser yet in a very fundamental manner at least once in its early history—in its relation to the House of Stuart. The Cavaliers were the forerunners of Toryism. Their devotion to the personal and popular Crown of Great Britain cannot be doubted, since they sealed it with their blood and suffered the worse hardships of confiscated estates and the ruin of their families. None the less, they absolutely declined to accept the solution of Strafford, which would have saved at once their allegiance and their security without resort to arms—the establishment of a despotism of the European type of the period backed by armies drawn from Ireland.

The political descendants of these men hailed the Restoration of Charles II as the Jews might welcome the advent of the Messiah. Yet, again, they entirely declined to support the policy of the restored monarch when he dabbled in the notions of betraying the national foreign policy in return for French money, or even a French army to secure a British despotism.

Finally, in the case of James II the Party was asked to choose between its doctrines of unity under the Crown and of the Divine right of succession and a sovereign who manifestly intended to break down all the safeguards of liberty observed by the ancient kings in order to impose a faith which had long been rejected by the nation. The loud-voiced theory of the time was that men should fall down before James as the people did before Herod. But the doctrine of passive obedience never touched more than the outskirts of the Party. The theory of Divine right was set up like the Form of Plato. But Toryism looked back to the past in the shape of the popular mediæval monarchy, and, decrying any absolute theory of Government, and particularly that of despotism, it accepted the Whig nominee, William III, rather than sacrifice the well-being of the nation on the altar of principle. The action of Danby in signing the invitation to William was the triumph of a wise expediency, and showed the real spirit which has enabled Toryism to triumph over all its difficulties and to return time and again all the stronger for its defeats.

All these three great refusals were, no doubt, born rather of inherited instinct than of a logical theory, but they proved that Toryism would never be bound by a formula to betray the tradition of the past or to ignore the expediency of the moment.

CHAPTER XX

THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

It will be found that the actual history of the Party will conform to the philosophical tenets ascribed to it in the last chapter, because these principles have not been set up by a process of abstract reasoning as doctrines which a party ought to believe, but have been deduced from a careful study of the way in which that Party has thought and acted in the course of nearly three hundred years under a great variety of circumstances. The philosophy outlined is the only method I can see of explaining how it is that a body of opinion which has maintained an unbroken organisation and tradition, both leaders and followers always acknowledging their immediate predecessors as being of the faith, ever since the later seventeenth century, has held at one time or another opinions which appear to be mutually destructive. Thus Toryism has at one time clung to Free Trade and at another adhered to Protection; it has been the peace party and also the war party. Its ideas have been insular, became Imperialist, and now seem to be tending once more in the direction of insularity. Again, the supposed party of the legitimate succession twice or thrice refused to stand by the Lord's anointed in the day of trial.

It is true that the Whigs, Liberals and Radicals have much the same record on the fiscal question, European wars and Individualism, but they have never claimed a continuity of descent comparable to the Tory apostolic succession. The modern Radical might, and probably would, solve his problem by declaring that the Whigs were wiser than the Tories, the Liberals than the Whigs, the old Radicals than the Liberals, and the Socialists than the Radicals, while the extreme Left would erect Communism as the last word in political wisdom. All these successive stages would be regarded as part of a system of progress towards the light.

But the modern Tory is unable to throw over his ancestors in so light-hearted a fashion. He is compelled to attempt to understand their opinions in the light of the circumstances of their time. He will find the explanation of their apparent inconsistencies not in any profound change of mentality, but in shifts in the circumstances of the world with which that mentality had to deal. The form of the individual mind continues to receive a changing and enlarged content and puts out accordingly a varying result, but the form itself, though it may be stretched or modified by the influence of the content, undergoes no appreciable change. And this appears to be true of the Tory mental attitude. What is astonishing about that Party is not its inconsistency, but its amazing fidelity to type. It has often failed to conserve objects sacred to it, but it has never failed to conserve itself.

I have already endeavoured in this volume to stress this idea of unity of thought between the ages and continuity of development in what appear reversals of policy even at the cost of some repetition, both because of its intrinsic importance and of its utter neglect by the professional historians. It will therefore only be necessary to traverse in a brief fashion the period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and recapitulate the leading ideas of the Party from the Restoration to the period of Pitt.

The fundamental and unchanging conception of Toryism is the racial instinct. It may be called the passion for Unity, the sentiment of Loyalty, the Patriotism of home and country. Its tendency is protective rather than adventurous; its attitude that of one who keeps a guarded happiness rather than risk it abroad or expose it to the winds of change. And since tradition, which is garnered experience, is a strong rock of defence for such a happiness, Toryism clings to the past. The aim of life is the ordered peace and reasonable prosperity of field and village, the preservation of shire and spire or of the market and cathedral town. The sanctity of property is also a part of this creed, at once primitive and enlightened, because nothing breeds such disturbance as the insecurity of goods. An outsider might think that the doctrine would breed cowards, until he started in to rouse its devotees. It has in it an element of selfishness counteracted by the sense of belonging to a corporate body which has the right of demanding sacrifice in the name of duty. It is unalterably opposed to despotic or revolutionary courses, because both are incalculable forces which may operate in an uncontrolled manner against security and precedent, order, life and happiness. The man who comes out of such a community to do battle for its safety either in a civil or a national war will fight with great bravery, but never for fighting's sake, and always with the idea that he or his neighbours and successors shall enjoy what they have protected. There is nothing in them of the fanatical idealist, the robber baron, the militarist or the professional soldier of fortune. At home they look to constitutional means, to strong government—in a word, to the Law to protect them against civil commotion, and they can only be lured out to fight abroad when some overwhelming menace in Europe is about to burst like a thunderstorm upon their ordered days.

They did not make the Empire. It was rather the men of the same stock, who were yet by temperament or circumstance a little out of their picture, who did the adventuring over strange seas and under foreign skies. Yet neither did they hinder; and the touch between the older and the younger son, the man of stability and the man of restlessness, was never completely broken.

It was, however, out of civil commotions that this vast body of opinion first gathered itself together as an organised force. The rural community and its leaders had gone through two poignant experiences before the Tory Party assumed a name and a shape. First of all they had seen the Wars of the Roses, which became very rapidly a contest of mutual murder and a plundering match between the great baronial houses. It would not perhaps be altogether fanciful to attribute Tory dislike of European adventure to the fact that the lawless rapine of the Baronage was largely due to the tastes they contracted and the expenses they incurred during the successive attempts of the Edwards and Henry V to seize the crown of France. But the results of foreign wars and a disputed succession at home alike came home to the more quiet and prosperous class in England. The ancient and unfaded memories of the popular Crown, when the great Norman and Plantagenet kings had been the only shield against baronial oppression, were reinforced by the horrible disorders which followed at intervals the deposition of Richard II and the breach in the direct line. Neither then nor since has the great Baronage or Peerage been the friend or ally of the classes from which Toryism is drawn. To these classes the Crown has been not merely the symbol of Unity and Patriotism, but an active engine of protection against the great Houses. When, therefore, the Tudors broke the Baronage and restored internal order and promoted national prosperity and greatness, they awoke in the minds of the temperamental class described a more lively sense of gratitude than it is possible to describe. This class registered two firm vows. In the first place, they would stand by the Crown to the death against all provokers of the public peace. In the second place, they would not allow the legitimate succession to the Crown to be broken. These resolves were simply the result of their experience of the end of the Middle Ages. They put the second resolve to the test on the Exclusion Bill and the first on the Civil War.

The Civil War was one of those very rare issues which really divide men into fundamental groups. It would be true to say of this dispute, as of hardly any other in our political history, that the men who stood by the King were the fathers of the Tories, and the men who stood by the majority in Parliament were the fathers of the Whigs. The chief reason for this is, that the actual grounds of contention were exceedingly evenly balanced. Parliament was trying to encroach on the prerogative, and the Crown was defending itself by a counter attack. The precise amount of legality which either side could claim was a matter of the gravest uncertainty. The personal factor was also pretty evenly balanced. The scrupulosity of Pym was about on a level with that of Charles—both were aiming at an extension of power and a course of action they did not dare to avow publicly. Men, therefore, divided and drew the sword on one side or another by instinct rather than by logic. Many of the early antagonists felt intellectually the full force of the case of the other side. Therefore the division was a true one. The Tory instinct responded unhesitatingly to the test. The Crown was faced with an uprising—in the ultimate resort there could be only one decision. The fact that they lost the appeal to the sword and suffered in consequence grievous hardships and such a despotism under Cromwell as no English monarch has ever before or since dared to establish, naturally confirmed them in all these views on the necessity for maintaining the popular and hereditary Crown. None the less, after the Restoration, in the very giddiness of the most intoxicating triumph which has ever befallen a party, they still did not confuse the symbol with the reality of which it was symbolic. The Crown stood for the unity, peace, protection and good government of Great Britain. But for this very reason that Crown was not a thing in itself—something apart from the people it ruled over. Like the mediæval monarchy, it was conditioned by the nature and interests of its people. It must be English and it could not be Roman Catholic. It could not serve either Versailles or Rome. This was the invincible determination of the great Tory majority in the House of Commons, and against this conviction Charles II exhausted all his incomparable chicane, and was left the loser. The Crown indeed could have almost any amount of power and money that it liked, but it must use them for purely national ends. Least of all could it be allowed to establish a continental despotism of the ordinary seventeenth-century type.

On the issue of the Exclusion Bill Toryism rightly decided to give the Duke of York his chance. He could not be condemned as Duke until he had been tried as King. The lawful heir must succeed. And the outcome of this perfectly correct decision was the glorious Revolution, the expulsion of James and the accession of William III. The Tories had been right in law and State policy, but the Whigs had been wiser in judging their man.

The three decades between the Restoration and the Revolution are chiefly composed of the conflict between the Tory determination to make the Stuarts conform to the idea of the popular Crown and the equally firm determination on the part of the Stuarts to do what they liked with their own. Toryism was apparently beaten on the ground of its own choosing. It had exalted the Crown and that Crown had gone back on it. Immediately, however, when the ultimate wrench came in 1688, the Party exhibited for the first time its decisive capacity for opportunism. Following the mediæval tradition of the monarchy, which allowed, though doubtfully, a choice of heir which the post-Reformation conception of kingship did not, it threw over the old Crown and chose the new conjoint orb of Mary and William. If the Stuarts could not distinguish between ordered central government and a personal despotism, the new monarchs would, and the brilliant stroke of Danby in marching the great bulk of his party over to William's side at once averted a civil war, secured that internal tranquillity which represented at least half of the Tory ideal, and gave the party a new lease of life just as all seemed lost. The Jacobites of the Right wing drew sullenly apart to nurse the sterile doctrine of Divine legitimacy. The Whigs, although they had welcomed the assistance of their opponents in the dreadful moment of crisis when the invitation to William had to be signed, were greatly exercised in mind when they found that they had to sit down at the banquet of royal bounty with men whom they regarded as little better than repentant sinners. For while the Whigs were more in accord with the new King on matters of foreign policy, William, who had the taste to be absolute without the folly of trying to be so, naturally preferred the Tory view of the prerogative. For Toryism was not inclined to deny to the House of Orange or Hanover those powers which it regarded as lawfully belonging to a legitimist sovereign. As a consequence it possessed almost as much influence and as large a share of office under the new throne as under the old.

None the less, the glorious Revolution, though it failed to upset the ark of the Tory covenant, gave it a nasty shake. Many men who accepted William because there was absolutely no other choice yet had no doubt in their own minds, at least so long as James lived, who was the real King. The mirror of national unity as held up to reflect the Crown had therefore a tarnish upon it. The Tory devotee turned away uneasily to find some other object on which he could pour out his devotion, and found another shrine for his passionate loyalty in the Church.

The National Church undoubtedly reached the zenith of its power during the reign of William III and of Anne. While the memory of the Tudors lasted it had always been something of a poor relation of the State. In the time of Charles I it had found its feet, only to be struck instantly to the ground. Like the restored Cavaliers, it came back with a terrific rebound after the persecutions of the Commonwealth. It had been frightened out of any tendency to Low Church views by the excesses and sufferings of the Reign of the Saints. When Charles II had extruded the extreme Protestants and William III the Non-jurors, it voiced pretty accurately in Church affairs the great central body of opinion which Toryism represented in the secular sphere. The disappearance of a

Romanising monarch, who fell largely because he raised an impious hand against her, thrust her into the foremost place. Furthermore, the class of her clergymen was not so far distinct, as yet, from the common people as to turn them in the popular view into a kind of ecclesiastical squire. On the contrary, they both reflected and produced the opinion of the average parishioner, and since their weekly sermon from the pulpit was the only political instruction the villagers were likely to receive, they possessed an overwhelming influence as Tory-Democratic orators. A similar influence in a lesser degree extended to the smaller boroughs, which had not yet in this period become entirely the proprietary domains of the Whigs. Finally, if anyone will consider for a moment what a Church established to stand between a nation and God must mean to a body of opinion which is at once religious and patriotic, he may form some notion of the towering heights of prestige to which the National Church then rose.

The kind of community of thought, life and opinion which I have described at the beginning of this chapter as the original form of Toryism had therefore secured in the new monarchy a large part of what it desired. Order was safe, liberty was secure. The Church could go its accustomed way without menace, save from the Whigs; and when a Whig Government menaced it as in the case of the Sacheverell prosecution, that Government fell like Lucifer. Jacobite pamphlets and plots merely drove Toryism further into the arms of William by troubling the sense of security. If the old King came back with an Irish army anything might happen. There remained, however, a grave cause of discontent. The Tory community were utterly unwilling to spend blood and treasure in fighting France on the Continent unless they were convinced that Louis XIV was threatening their shores and menacing their liberties. For the great Dutch-German vendetta on the Continent against France, in which William had been a protagonist years before he could have dreamt of an English throne, they cared less than nothing. Such a war required great standing armies—the colour of whose coats recalled the blood shed at Worcester or Naseby or the foreign greens and blue of Dutchmen and Germans paid out of good British gold levied in the form of a land-tax from the gentry and the farmers of the English countryside. They had welcomed William as the deliverer of England, and would only support him with reluctance as the protector of Europe. Let him protect England. Why could not this be done with a fleet in the Channel and the militia of the country waiting to repel the invader on the coast? Neither of these arms could be turned into the instruments of tyranny as a standing army had been in the past and might yet be again. The baser sort of Tory made great play with this last argument. The Whigs, following vaguely the aspirations for a Protestant crusade which descended to them from the days of Elizabeth, when all Europe was ranged into two religious camps and it might be urged that those who would not fight everywhere might perish anywhere, and recollecting the terror Cromwell's regulars had inspired abroad, were all for the policy of the European war. At the very end William was obliged to rely on them alone for his supplies of men and money. The Tories, on the other hand, went forward reluctantly and backward willingly as the menace of France grew or faded. And this was a perpetual source of uneasiness in their relation with the Crown.

But it is plain that the very nature and origin of Toryism made this conflict of opinion as inevitable as the subsequent final clash between Marlborough, inheriting the Williamite tradition, and Bolingbroke, voicing the insular creed of his party, which resulted in the fall of the General and the Peace of Utrecht.

It so happened that the recognition by Louis XIV of the Old Pretender (son of James II) on the death of James immediately antedated the death of William III. England was stirred to a fury by this interference of a foreign potentate in the vexed question of her succession. The Tories acquiesced in the war policy; Anne was crowned without question, and Marlborough was given all the powers to carry on the European and military policy of William III. Successive ministries included Tories as well as Whigs. Yet all the time, in spite of his victories or his quasi-victories, the position at home was slipping underneath the General's feet. Nominally a Tory himself, he was obliged to rely more and more on purely Whig support in the Cabinet if the campaign was to be carried on. The dislike of Toryism to European war was inveterate and unalterable, and every casualty list and every annual tax increased it. The country was ripe for peace long before the military ambition of Marlborough or the diplomatic desires of the Whigs were satisfied. Many new forces came surging into the current which in 1710 was to sweep the Tory Party into a position of power unprecedented since 1660.

The accession of Anne had reunited Toryism with its ancient love, the legitimate Crown. Anne was the daughter of James II, and the legitimacy of the Old Pretender was quite honestly disbelieved in Tory circles. It required no great effort of imagination to regard Anne as the heir to the Crown even *jure divino.* And direct contact and sympathy with the Crown were as the life breath of the Party. No other fount of inspiration could quite take its place. The second symbol of unity, the Church, immediately fell into line. For Anne was the first monarch since Charles I who was a zealous and devoted adherent of the Establishment. Add to this an unpopular foreign policy, rejected by the people, as France was seen to be failing visibly, and a great triple wave of Toryism came foaming up the beach. In the General Election of 1710 it swept the Whigs practically out of existence. Old England was to make peace and be itself again under a sovereign who would be Tory but for the Marlborough domination, and was a zealous prop of the Protestant religion as established in Church and State. Peace, security, religion, patriotism, the popular Crown, all the desires and ideals Toryism had cherished even when it lay before its birth in the womb of time, had come to fruition together. The Golden Age seemed to be at hand. Four years later Toryism was hurled out into hopeless Opposition for half a century. It was more cruel than the fate of Moses, for the Party had actually entered the promised land which satisfied all their expectations in 1710, were ejected in 1714, and no authentic Joshua appeared until 1784.

The temper of the Tory majority of 1710 was very militant. Hardly ever perhaps except in the period immediately succeeding 1815 did the bulk of the Party lean so far to the right. The October Club, which represented far more than the usual Die-hard section, began from the very outset to ginger up their leaders to take a bold line both against the war policy and the Nonconformists. A jealousy of and opposition to the commercial classes long latent in the political divisions of the time now flared up, and Tory country was ranged against Whig town. No doubt the October Club represented their constituents, and it was necessary for Harley and Bolingbroke to tremble and obey. Harley was half a Whig at heart, and St. John as Secretary of War in a Marlborough-Godolphin Government had been regarded as a moderate Conservative. His temperament, however, made him in no way averse to taking the more extreme line when the opportunity glittered before him. But the fox-hunting squires, standing for their age-long ideal of peace and prosperity under an ordered Church and State and a powerful and friendly Crown, had no inkling of the difficulties confronting their leaders. Perhaps had they been taken into the confidence of headquarters things might have turned out differently.

What caused the ruin of 1714? In the first place, that all Queen Anne's children died, so that the hope of a legitimist Protestant succession vanished. In the second place, that the Tory leaders were men of divergent temperament and ideas, pursuing different plans and tripping each other up in the process. In the third place, that there was so little time.

The question of the succession had to be settled. Yet how could it be settled without irreparable damage to Tory beliefs and interests? The choice on the one hand was George at Herrenhausen, who had not the faintest pretension to be the legitimist heir, and whom the Tories had no reason to suppose would be a particularly good King from their point of view. On the other side stood the Pretender, who would have suited the Tories, since he might plausibly be regarded as the legitimist successor, but for the fact that he was a devout Roman Catholic. Harley, who was descended from the Cromwellians, leant to Herrenhausen, but his overtures failed, and the Electress and Elector remained in the pockets of the Whigs. The reasons are not far to seek. In the first place, Harley was the principal author of the Act of Settlement, which not only degraded the position of the future Hanoverian Crown, but that in a manner particularly insulting to George I's personal feelings. Secondly, it may have been thought doubtful how far he had the power to make promises for his party. These overtures coming to nothing, St. John decided to plump for the Stuart claimant if he could be induced to renounce his religion. If he would not, as the event proved, the whole situation was left as a huge question mark. The Jacobite wing of Toryism was naturally very active in pushing the claims of the Stuart claimant, but it is now clear that they received little support from the main bulk of the Tory Party, which remained obstinate in demanding a Protestant succession of one kind or another.

The one clear course which lay open to the Government was to make the peace both because the country and the Party demanded it, and because it would be impossible even to consider the claims of the Pretender so long as he was a combatant in the ranks of a French army fighting against his own country. The peace, therefore, was made in 1712, but the Queen had less than two years to live. The matter had now reached the crux. Herrenhausen remained in the hands of the Whigs, the Pretender declined to abjure his religion. The only remaining course for Tory leaders, if they wished to preserve themselves and their Party from utter ruin, was to seize the executive and at the moment of the Queen's death to offer the throne to either aspirant who would come to terms with them. Swift drew up such a plan in writing, and Bolingbroke was of the same opinion. But Harley, always looking for compromise or fusion with the Whigs, would not agree and was not extruded from office till forty-eight hours before the crash. Ultimately the nerves of Bolingbroke seem to have failed in the very crisis of his fate. He would not proclaim the *coup d'état* by arresting Argyll and Somerset when they forced their way into the Council while the Queen lay dying.

Swift's scheme was very much like that proposed by Danby in 1675.[1] It was to hand over all the military and civil commissions to convinced Tories. To make one party in the State permanently predominant by law is clearly against the spirit of the Constitution. But there is no reason to suppose that the plan of 1714 was intended to be permanent. It was rather a desperate expedient to meet a particular emergency. There is no doubt whatever that while the country wanted a Protestant Crown, it wanted it in conjunction with a Tory Government, and there was therefore some justification in taking extreme measures to enforce the popular view. As it was, the counter-revolution of Shrewsbury presented the nation with the Crown it desired, but along with a Whig Government it did not. But the Tory ranks crumbled at the stroke. Bolingbroke put the climax on the ruin by flying in panic to the Court of the Pretender. The whole of his Party was unjustly tarred with the brush of Jacobitism and even of Romanism. In the election which followed the demise of the Crown all the patronage of the royal boroughs was turned against them, and from a colossal majority they were reduced to a miserable remnant. Thereupon the Party itself split in two, many who had never been Jacobite going over to this creed in despair and following a separate Opposition leader called Shippen. With the light of the Crown withdrawn from it and the Church in the grip of Walpole, who put it to sleep by declining to attack it and by stocking the Bishops' bench with Low Church and Erastian prelates, Toryism, as once again in 1846, shrinks back into the rôle of a purely country Opposition. It accepted its fate and, never Jacobite at heart, declined to rise for the legitimist heir either in 1715 or 1745, thus robbing these adventures of their only chance of success. Always secure of the greater part of 100 country seats, it seems when reunited under the leadership of Wyndham to have looked on stolidly at the successive attempts of Bolingbroke to weave his ropes of sand into a semi-Whig, semi-Tory Party which should replace Walpole's Government. In the face of an alien and hostile Crown and a Church which, as it grew richer, became steadily less zealous and less political, Toryism, uninspired by hope, seems almost to have lost the desire for power or success. It kept the embers of its ideals still faintly aglow, but it needed some fresh wind of circumstances to fan them into an active flame. Bolingbroke wrote *The Patriot King* which was a rod left in pickle for the back of the Whigs of the next generation, and died in 1752—a great genius and a colossal failure. At the same time the Party was in a sense laying up within itself a store of virtue. It escaped the personal corruption of the Walpole and Newcastle *régime*, nor was it tainted by the disloyalty and cynicism which fell like a blight on the various Whig groups as they struggled ever more fiercely for office as the morale of the Party, corrupted by prolonged and unchallenged success, sank yearly lower and lower.

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[1] Cf. chap. ii.

The Opposition preserved its ideals and its unity. The Tory of 1780 would have been perfectly at home in a party club of 1710 or a convivial Tory gathering of 1660. His views on the Crown and the Church would have been identical with those of his forbears —save that his zeal for George II would not have been that entertained for Anne or Charles II, while the zeal of an old-time Churchman's life and politics might have astonished a revisitant used to the age of the squarson. On one point only would a slight distinction of opinion have been visible, and that not a very marked one—the issue of foreign wars. It was here that the influence of Chatham had made itself felt. Appointing his officers in the Seven Years' War right and left from either party indifferently, he converted Toryism largely through the influence of the Services. The old Tory distaste for the regulars was fast dying away; the Navy had always been a popular Tory arm. The sons of the country squires served with distinction both on the sea and land, and in consequence it was not only the merchant classes who felt a glow of pride at the victories of the great War Minister. Nor indeed had the Party at any time considered expeditions to far countries based on the fleet as meriting the condemnation inherent in a Whig European war. Chatham was therefore forgiven the subsidies of money, but not of men, with which he supplied Frederick, and his own inconsistency as compared with the time when he had thundered against the campaign of Dettingen. For was he not, as he explained, conquering America in Germany rather than protecting the private domain of Hanover with British arms? Therefore by the accession of George III the Empire is beginning to find its acceptance in the complex of Tory conceptions of the doctrine of national unity. It was not so much the planting of a new tree as the grafting of a fresh branch on the ancient stock of patriotism.

In the witches' dance of parties which marked the opening years of the new reign in 1760, Toryism alone stood as a solid political force deficient in outstanding ability, but free from the internal treason which marked Whiggery for its own and from the subservience of the holders of sinecures or the occupants of the royal boroughs. It therefore in the course of time penetrated slowly through this softer and more disintegrated body into a position of power. It was this tradition of unity and loyalty which made the amazing *volte-face* of North in 1784 practically harmless and ineffective. The dissidents of the moment were promptly absorbed in the main stream of the traditionary party.

But the chief cause of the revival of Toryism was the reunion with the personal Crown. The doctrines of *The Patriot King* had spread far and wide in the ranks, and Chatham had lost no Tory favour by his early acceptation of the idea. To the Opposition, nursing the tiny flame on the hidden altar, the book merely ascribed to the King the powers and position he had occupied in the heyday of their party power, when Charles landed at Dover or Anne led an Established Church. When the new monarch avowed himself an Englishman determined to abolish Whig leading-strings and to stand on his own legs, Toryism cautiously approached the temple of a new legitimacy consecrated by four generations of kingship. The advance was natural, but the caution was also fortunate. To the Tory mind the first two Georges had been too little either of patriots or kings; the third George was to the same mind a little too much of both. He had misread his text-book and confused the little German principality with the popular mediæval Crown of England.

In the first decade of the new King's rule Toryism simply operated as support in reserve. It contributed here and there a minor Minister to the Cabinet and was prepared to vote on due occasion for the Crown against the Whigs. For the rest, the new autocrat was left to wrestle it out with the old autocrats. The dance which ensued was certainly of a most enlivening character—and six Ministries in five years produced a ballet not at all suitable to such a staid and respectable spectator as Toryism showed itself. That Party had no responsibility for the personal troubles between Parliament and the printers or the King and Wilkes. The most absurd legend in history is that Charles Fox began life as a Tory and was converted after the Pauline fashion into a Whig. Fox started as a Whig-dissident Courtier of the type of Grenville or his father and became a Whig-Radical. The Tory Party, to put the matter brutally, would never and need never admit the slightest association with or responsibility for the actions either of the first Lord Holland or his son. When, however, Grenville and Townshend had precipitated the American controversy, the issue, being nothing less than the unity of the Empire and the right of taxation without representation, became of such paramount importance that Toryism had to take one side or the other and make a definite stand. Toryism chose the side of the Crown and of the unity of the Empire. Looking back on its traditions and the nature of its innermost beliefs, it could do no other. Chatham had taught the Party to regard the Empire as an extension of the kingdom. Rebels, therefore, were rebels on either side of the Atlantic.

Since the rights and powers of the Crown were therefore being disputed, the whole immense force of Toryism, gathering weight from its more recent experiences of the civil wars and its immemorial traditions, stood behind the King in his effort to enforce the powers of the central executive and the unity of the Imperial realm. Whether a Tory Premier would ever have started such a quarrel is another matter. The country *en masse* approved the Tory decision. The result was a Parliamentary alliance for a specific purpose between the Tories and the Courtiers. North, one-third Tory and two-thirds placeman, led the combination.

The complete failure of the American War led to a temporary break-up of this alliance, which had never become a fusion, however much each partner may have modified the ideas of the other. The Tories, after helping to throw down North in their despair of victory, left office and drew apart. They could hardly be said to have gone into Opposition, since they desired the peace it was the task of the new Government to make. With their withdrawal the King was forced back on one of his old unhappy Whig combinations of Courtiers, Chathamites and orthodox Whigs. Rockingham became Premier, with Shelburne as Secretary of State, leading the Chathamite section, and Fox as the other, leading the Whigs. While the Peace Treaty was still incomplete the Prime Minister died suddenly, and on the King's proposing to appoint Shelburne as his successor, the combination instantly flew to pieces. Shelburne made William Pitt Chancellor of the Exchequer and decided to carry on, but it was apparent that either Fox must return or North must come in if a stable Ministry was to be created. In the bewildering three-cornered negotiations which ensued, the least likely or defensible of all alliances followed—the Coalition of Fox and North. The allied Opposition then turned Shelburne out on his proposed Peace Treaty, took office and instantly accepted from America and her European allies terms which were practically identical.

North's deal with Fox appears to have been consummated with amazing secrecy and celerity. No consultation with the Tory Party was held previously and practically no representation was given them in the Coalition Ministry. Yet North seems to have had no doubt that he could deliver the goods. He proved to be mistaken in imagining that he could march his army over in a body to a policy the main clause of which was to restore the Crown to the Whig subservience it had escaped. In the nineteenth century there would have been a party split like that of 1846. But the parties of this period were less brittle because more individualistic and less disciplined: they did not break so much as dissolve or disintegrate. The Tory members just poured through North's sieve like particles of water and Pitt caught most of the leakage in his bucket. Public opinion, including large masses of Whigs, had also viewed the unnatural alliance with a distaste akin to loathing. When the King saw that this universal unpopularity had risen to a sufficient height, he struck the Coalition down through the instrumentality of the Lords and induced Pitt to form a Government. That young man had become by the unpopularity of Shelburne the leader of his father's party, and by the treason of North the residuary legatee of Toryism. When the votes of the royal boroughs were added he was able to show a fair-sized, if motley, minority in the House of Commons. Fox, however, fought the whole issue throughout in a manner which united the opposing sections and prejudiced him still further with the country. He had begun by denying the right of the King to ask any statesman he chose to form a Government—if he could; he went on to deny that the Crown had the right to dissolve Parliament and appeal to the people. Tories, Chathamites and Courtiers were united against him on both questions, the whole country against him on the second. When Pitt, with his minority continually rising by Tory desertion and accretion, judged that the moment had come he got his dissolution. The Coalition were struck down by a tidal wave: only sixty orthodox Whigs scrambled back under Fox, while the Northite Tories are never heard of again as an organised body.

The great majority which came back to support Pitt and the King proved the raw material out of which the new Tory Party which emerged after Waterloo as a single recognisable body holding power under Lord Liverpool was to be made. But it will be seen at once how far from homogeneous it was in its origins and how singular in its relationship between the leader and the led. The small Chathamite group alone had the same general view on public policy as the Premier. The Tories had come to him because he had stood up for the Crown against the Whigs when their own chief had deserted it. The King's men, in the beginning at any rate, followed the King, not Pitt. It was not even precisely a personal government of King and Premier working on the principle that "he who forbids is strongest," for both together could only just whip a bare majority of the Commons. The balance of the majority was made up by a loose independent vote of 100, largely Tory and favourable to the Minister in a general way, but perfectly ready to take its own line on occasion. In consequence Government from 1784 to 1793 was a working compromise between King, Premier and Commons majority. If one party struck at any policy, that policy had to be abandoned. Wild as the system seems to modern constitutional practice, it functioned because all three factors were determined to let one consideration override all others—to keep Fox out—and all agreed that for this purpose Pitt's Premiership was indispensable. Pitt had the worst of the bargain because he was the partner in the firm who wanted things done, while the attitude of King and majority tended to be static, and each of them had a veto. Hence the constant rejection of scheme after scheme of the Minister and hence also his continuance in office. It must be said in fairness that as a rule the Crown was not the obstacle, but, being often in silent sympathy with the reluctant majority, it would not help even though it did not hinder. In this manner, for instance, Pitt's Reform scheme failed. The commercial union with Ireland was destroyed by the vested interest hounded on by the Whigs. It was the ministerial majority that would not have war with Russia to protect Turkey. The Minister in compensation had a free hand in finance and executive government in general.

Pitt's policy, then, while certainly not Whig, cannot be claimed as being the natural expression of the Toryism of his day. It is only Tory in the widest and highest sense of the term—in that the author of it looked, with a few exceptions, to the actual facts of any given situation, and, without any desire for change as a thing good in itself, propounded the best practical remedy for obvious evils.

But the units of opinion behind him were fusing themselves into a general mental attitude not favourable to moderate or sensible changes, before the Napoleonic wars came to intensify the movement towards pure Conservatism or to turn it into definite reaction with the inclusion of the Portland Whigs in the Government. The old Toryism of the shire and country, of the popular squire and the popular Crown, had been dying steadily away for twenty years before the French

Revolution. The borough-mongers had been moving towards the Tories and the Tories towards the boroughs. There were accretions of new classes and fresh qualities, but also losses of ancient virtues. And all these tendencies were astir in Pitt's majority before the fall of the Bastille began that course of events which produced their final fruition. Pitt was not a Tory of his own generation, but he was a Tory of the children of light.

It would not be true to infer that this development in a changing environment means that the case of Toryism in the country districts is sensibly affected for the worse, least of all absolutely rotted away. A tradition of this tenacity is not so easily destroyed. The natural Toryism of the land, though merged and quiescent within the larger entity which has gathered round it, remains intact. When the *débâcle* of 1832 has shattered the new "aristocratical" party which begins with Pitt's victory in 1784—and when the attempt to repair the breach with the stop-gap of the manufacturing class has come to ruin in 1846—the indestructible residuum of Toryism is still there. The hopeless opposition of country gentlemen led by Bentinck and Disraeli does not differ very materially from the country minority which listened to Wyndham and was shepherded by Bolingbroke. And the men of 1846, like the men of 1714, were also in due course destined to become once more a national party.

CHAPTER XXI

THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

THE year 1792 is a good one in which to break off the history of a British party, because it marks the close of an epoch. When the curtain rises again twenty-three years later on an England which has come through the struggle with revolutionary and Napoleonic France, it reveals such a miraculous change in the picture that the observer might almost imagine himself for a moment transplanted to some different country. The eighteenth century and all that it implies has definitely come to an end. But it has done so not by a gradual process of fusion, such as links the seventeenth century to its successor, but by a violent revolution of its social economics which has taken place almost unobserved politically under the more dominant interest of the life-and-death struggle with the Continent.

Some of the discoveries which linked coal and iron and steam and machinery together in a conjoined assault on the old system of English life were made and utilised before war with France was declared. But this was done as yet on a petty scale. Nor were its implications apparent. The real development took place under the shadow of the war. Behind the valour of the soldiers and sailors or the wisdom of the statesmen, a colossal force of wealth and industry and population was banking up. This, as Mr. G. M. Trevelyan wisely observes, was the "sunken wreck" on which Napoleon's continental system and its architect ran and foundered. One is reminded of the opening of the *Trojan Women* of Euripides, in which the great blind forces of the gods are seen beneath the surface settling the fates of men, while the actors themselves as they come later upon the stage imagine themselves to be masters of their destinies or at least the victims of their passions.

From the moment of the declaration of war Britain was obsessed, naturally and inevitably enough, with a single dominant idea—she had to conquer or perish. The majority of the Whigs accepted this view of the national struggle and came to the assistance of Pitt. Thus were formed a series of mixed or Coalition Governments which lasted from the adhesion of the Portland Whigs in 1794 almost without a break up to the Wellington Government of 1828. These successive Administrations, predominantly Tory in character, have been much blamed by the critics of posterity for their failure to realise the nature of the Industrial Revolution and to cope with it on wise and prophetic lines of social reform. Disraeli and his disciples of the Tory democracy have always upheld this standpoint against Whig and Tory Governments alike, and they have been joined by the modern enlightened Liberal and Socialist. The criticism is slightly unfair, and certainly ought not to be confined, as it often is, to the Tory Party. If these vast economic changes had come in such a period of profound peace as accompanied Pitt's early administration, that statesman was of a type of mind far more likely to realise the new situation and to deal with it than any other politician of his epoch. And this his record proves conclusively. Fox was a mere babe in arms on economic issues and he had the frankness to confess it. The Whigs of the Portland type were the most inveterate of Conservatives—lacking even the Tory touch of human sympathy when it came to dealing with the needs of the poorer or labouring classes. The Whig panacea of whatever variety was ever political and never material or economic. But Pitt, like everybody else, was obsessed by the Napoleonic war. He was like a man defending his house against armed robbers who is told that the kitchen flue is on fire. And having taken the Courtiers in with him in 1784, he had recruited the old Whigs to his standard in 1794. As a consequence Toryism had become a blend rather than a pure spirit. The old humane mediæval conceptions of the relation between gradations of master and servant which had been handed on through the land and the Tory squirearchy were undermined by these alliances. The French Revolution seemed to indicate that the masses in England too might be the enemies of all established order. Add to this the factor of war which must of necessity coarsen the fibre of a nation which is going to win through, and the post-1794 development of Toryism is understandable if not pleasing. While it embraced its old love, the Crown, with renewed enthusiasm and thus secured an immense impetus, while it fought heroically on sea and land to preserve the liberties of its island home and to extend its Imperial domination, it developed in all internal affairs a kind of harshness of tone towards the masses which would have been shocking to the Tories of the generation of Bolingbroke and Wyndham. The Whigs added their quota to this detestable tone, but Toryism cannot be absolved from blame, for it was in possession of catholic truth in social matters, which the Whigs were not, and was therefore sinning against the light. It was far too much inclined, to use the Kipling phrase, to regard itself as a small band of hard-bitten officers commanding a regiment of heroic blackguards, and not only to disregard all other sections of the community, but to treat its own blackguards rather badly. Later historians have indeed maintained that the endurance of England during the twenty years' struggle was a victory for the aristocracy, who alone had the fibre to bear such a prolonged strain, and that a nation more democratically constituted would have collapsed; whereas the German war has proved a British democracy under its chosen leaders capable of much greater sacrifices and an even more colossal effort.

The reaction from the French war, however inevitable, was therefore bad for the morale of the Tory Party. Hence came its punishment in 1832 and an overthrow which gave power not to the democracy, but to the middle classes. For, by a singular fatality, the Tories and Whigs who had failed to sympathise or grapple with the needs of the workers were displaced in power not by those workers or their advocates, but by the Gradgrinds of middle-class Liberalism. These latter found in the philosophy of a Bentham or a Mill an excuse for their own inveterate inhumanity and selfishness. Thus evil sprang out of evil. The Tories had partially deserted their ancestral faith of consideration to all classes of dependents under the pressure of war when the social problem of to-day was yet in the germ. Their kingdom was taken from them by the Medes and Persians of Liberalism, who believed in sending vast classes of their fellow-countrymen to physical and mental perdition in order to support an economic theory which favoured an industrial interest. But all this could hardly be foreseen in 1793.

In dealing with the French Revolution Pitt took the orthodox Tory line. That is to say, he was utterly opposed to any crusade in Europe in support of abstract ideas. If the French Revolution menaced England he would fight, however unwillingly, for self-preservation, as Danby or Bolingbroke had been ready to fight Louis XIV. But just as his political ancestors would not embark on a Protestant crusade in Europe, neither would Pitt rush to arms in order to preserve a Crown or Church, an aristocracy or even the sacred rights of property in a foreign country. The French Revolution was the affair of the French so long as it was confined within the boundaries of that country. Pitt's hand was forced first by the propagandists of France, who had not his dislike of a crusading war, and by the French threat to Antwerp, and secondly by Burke, who, whether Whig or Conservative, was never Tory; who as Whig inherited the doctrine of armed intervention in Europe for an idea, and as Conservative regarded the British Constitution as such a hallowed thing that the ark of the covenant seemed to him in manifest danger from a breath of Republicanism blowing across the Channel.

Burke, for all his attachment to the forms which history had left, lacked the historic instinct. Not being a Tory, he did not understand the permanence of the national character. He regarded the oak as a reed to be shaken by any wind of perverse doctrine. Being himself a man of words and ideas, and of great words and ideas, he imagined all Englishmen equally susceptible to the poison of abstract unreality. Possibly his Irish connection helped to delude him. But such was the power of his written or spoken words that he persuaded more than half the Whig Party to join in his crusade, and, more astonishing still, he eventually so stirred up the Tories that they abandoned their objection to armed intervention on the Continent. This is the third variation on the Tory objection to war. Chatham induced them to fight abroad in order to create an Empire, George III in order to retain one, and Burke in order to give laws to Europe. The great Peace Minister was thus crushed between the upper and nether millstones. He might have withstood Burke and his Whig and Tory converts or ignored the menaces of the new French Republic. But the combination proved fatal. The threat to Belgium and Holland raised the old Tory instinct which had not shrunk from supporting William III or Marlborough when things looked black, and the apocalyptic language of Burke completed the task. Pitt was pushed over the brink of war like a timid bather into the sea. Probably in his heart he knew that he was not born to be a great War Minister. Certainly he must have foreseen the ruin of all his plans for the amelioration of the lot of the British people. For long, so ardent was his desire for peace, he was obsessed by the delusion that the war would be a brief one, and both his financial and military policies were damaged by the fondness with which he clung to this hope. He could not bring himself to budget for a long struggle or to form the cadres of the kind of army which a prolonged contest would demand. The British genius for the sea which was part of the Tory creed asserted itself irrespective of Governments.

In his original conduct of the war Pitt also followed the same Tory tradition which had made him so averse to its inception. He and Dundas, who represented the central cult of the Party, turned their attention rather to Imperial conquest than to war on the Continent. We had the world colonies and fleets of the hostile Powers opposed to us, and assailed them vigorously, while in the main we fought on the Continent by means of the time-honoured and Chathamic method of subsidies to the armies of our allies. For this characteristic Tory policy Pitt and Dundas have been blamed very severely by the eminent military historian, Mr. Fortescue. He imputes to them the desire to score trumpery Parliamentary victories by easy captures of distant islands. Mr. Fortescue, is, however, obviously the repository of the Whig tradition of great land armies in Europe, and therefore may be forgiven for misunderstanding the Tory mentality, which leant naturally to sea power and Empire. His imputation of motive is therefore simply due to lack of historical knowledge of the bias of Toryism.

But a bias, however honest, is no defence for a wrong policy, and Pitt's course must abide the question whether the recruiting and landing of a large British army on the Continent would have averted a protracted struggle. Such problematical questions admit of no decisive answer. But the balance of opinion as expressed by the historians of the epoch would seem to negative the suggestion. The original league of the kings and emperors against revolutionary France was too incompetent and selfish to have been galvanised into resolute military action even by the aid of a large British army. The three Powers had their eye on Poland rather than the Rhine. Finally, when Austria, Russia and Prussia had been thoroughly frightened they had to face the Revolution in arms directed by the autocratic genius of Napoleon. That force was probably irresistible until it had run its course, until its governing intellect was hardening and failing and it struck the greater force of European nationalism. To throw 100,000 or even 200,000 troops, the last figure being certainly the limit of our capacity, most of them of necessity not experienced or trained, directly in the path of this military thunderbolt would have been to have risked a disaster which might have compelled us by the shock given to public opinion into a ruinous peace. For, as Wellington well knew and was constantly reminded in the Peninsular War, England had only one army. When the psychological moment had come and the giant was falling, the successors of Pitt struck with that army, and struck home.

Therefore although many of Pitt's " little packet " expeditions were ill-managed, and, in the West Indies particularly, wasteful of money and life, his instinct for concentrating on the Navy, the blockade and the Empire, and in eschewing some great military throw in Europe was a sound one. He died, worn out with exertion and anxiety, before the time for the counterstroke had come, though he appears at last to have had a Pisgah vision that through Spain his country would come to the promised land of a victorious peace.

It was the combination and succession of the Whig and Tory policies of war, as conducted by successive Governments containing elements of both parties but predominantly Tory in character, which finally overthrew Napoleon.

Against these Governments have been brought a series of accusations none of which impressed contemporary opinion very greatly, some of which gained a certain credence with immediate posterity, and very few of which have survived a critical examination. The first charge, largely set about by Napier, who was a better soldier and writer than politician and a violent partisan, is that Wellington was inadequately supported by the Home Government during his Peninsular campaigns. Sir Herbert Maxwell, the Duke's biographer, and Professor Sir Charles Oman, who has written the final work on those campaigns, have each utterly disproved the charge. Wellington was, of course, in a position of far greater independent power, but also of responsibility crossed by anxiety, than would fall to the lot of a modern commander in the days of telegrams and wireless. Both in Portugal and Spain he was in effect not only the Army Commander, but the British Government. He was anxious not only about arrears of pay, about reinforcements, about staff and general commands, but about the conduct of the Allies, with whom he had to co-operate. Under these circumstances, though he kept his head and maintained his judgment in a marvellous degree, he was sometimes betrayed into momentary expressions of impatience with the home authorities which were eagerly seized on by those of his entourage who had a political vendetta against the Government. But his correspondence with Liverpool and Castlereagh proves conclusively that he received throughout their loyal and efficient support, particularly when in the pursuance of his wise strategy he refused to risk the only possible British army and made retirements which were not understood and therefore ill received by public opinion at home. As to pay and reinforcements, the British Government itself was often in desperate straits to find money in cash for the men it had enlisted or more money for more men. But it responded heroically, as Wellington himself acknowledged, to the calls he made. The General had indeed one real grievance, and Ministers made one bad mistake. Wellington protested vainly against the inexperienced and incompetent staff officers who were forced on him " in the teeth of his indignant protests " by the Horse Guards. These officers indeed tended to form a little kind of " defeatist " clique inside his army and so endangered its morale. But as time went on he was able to weed them out. The serious mistake of the Ministry antedated Wellington. It was an exaggerated belief in the military capacity of the Spaniards, which led to a vast outpouring of arms and money to the Junta and the local Spanish armies at the time of Napoleon's personal invasion of Spain in 1808, money which would have been far better employed in supplying the needs and increasing the numbers of the British regular army. But this policy was very largely forced on Conservative Ministers by the enthusiasm of "Liberals" in Spain and at home, who *ex hypothesi* were possessed with an exaggerated idea of the military and moral qualities of a people "rightly struggling to be free." Sir John Moore would have led his army to complete disaster if he had not rationally interpreted the kind of advice which Frere sent him and his masters in Downing Street from Madrid, and Wellington after Talavera had taken the measure of the Spanish army. The Spaniards were brave enough, but they were badly officered and incapable of manœuvre. But the irony of Napier's attack on the Government for not supporting Wellington adequately, is that his own political friends of the Opposition were doing their utmost to hamper the conduct of the Peninsular campaign. The Foxites were true to the tradition of their dead leader in working for and rejoicing over British disasters. Creevy has left it on record how he and his Radical friends in the Commons tried to magnify Wellington's strategic retreats, especially after Talavera, into routs, and were always hoping something would happen to dash down the fortunes of the Wellesley brothers, even though that something involved the ruin of their country. Their malicious desires were frustrated as wave after wave of victory carried the great Commander ever nearer to and finally over the Pyrenees.

In all this the Tory Ministers played no small part, and it is the considered judgment of modern history that the tenacity and courage of Liverpool and Castlereagh and Canning were the decisive factor in the last agonising period which witnessed the close of the struggle of twenty years. In 1814 and 1815 Castlereagh rose to the summit of his abilities and career. He was able to dominate and reconcile in some sort the jarring Powers of Europe, each eager to claim its share out of the heritage of the fallen Napoleon, by the sheer force of his personality.

He saved France from the disastrous punitive kind of peace imposed on Germany by the Allies in 1919. But in home affairs there was a lack of power to present a good case which weakened his authority in the Commons, and something unpleasing about his appearance and manner which secured him an unpopularity among the masses which he had done little to deserve. Shelley also, with all the bitterness of the self-exiled literary Radical, fastened a vendetta on him in the "Masque of Anarchy," in which he describes him in language which would be almost exaggerated if applied to Attila or Domitian.

Indeed the further charge both against Castlereagh and Pitt is their application of repressive measures at home. This charge must be considered in two distinct parts: (1) measures taken during the war, and especially in the early stages; (2) measures like the Six Acts passed in 1819, five years after Waterloo.

The measures taken by Pitt after 1793 would seem to have been fully justified. Before the war started there had been an alarming spread of Jacobin propaganda in England, to which even respectable men like Priestley had given countenance. Jacobin clubs and associations were formed all over the country. The acknowledged policy of the French Revolutionary Government was the overturning of the existing order of society throughout Europe by propaganda and the sword. The moment war was declared every such association in England became a potential source of Defeatism. The old, old tale would be told by French agents that the war was being made by the aristocrats and the capitalists, and that the true-born British democrat ought to rise against the oppressors and embrace fraternally the French deliverer. Pitt would have been gravely to blame if he had not come down firmly on the whole of this foolish and pernicious movement. No doubt the deliberate traitors and knaves like Tom Paine often got off scot-free abroad and the honest fools remained behind and were caught by the law. But a Minister engaged in a life-and-death struggle for the order, liberty and independence of his country has more pressing duties than to worry about fools who are corrupting the fighting morale of a country in the interests of its avowed enemies. We understand this in England now rather better than critics writing after a long period of security before 1914.

It is said that many of those prosecuted were simply preaching Parliamentary Reform — which was a euphemism for manhood suffrage—which again was a euphemism for the French Revolutionary Constitution. Defeatist organisations, as those who lived through the war with Germany know very well, always camouflage their activities by methods of this sort. It is the only means by which they can hope to dodge a War Government and to carry with them the honest dupes who would be shocked at an open avowal that their object was treason. To the twentieth century manhood suffrage seems a very harmless sort of ambition. It was not so regarded in the eighteenth century, particularly when the consequences of the theory of the natural rights of man were just working themselves out in Paris.

The modern Englishman can best understand Pitt's position in this matter if he will suppose that the Bolshevist revolution in Russia had been transplanted geographically to France; that " Soviets " had been established in certain well-known anti-patriotic centres, attempts made to corrupt the army and navy on these lines, and the Russian Soviet Republic, only separated from us by the Channel, had then declared war. What would D.O.R.A. under these circumstances have said to gentlemen notoriously in touch with the so-called Soviets—and probably, however innocently, with enemy agents—who started going about the country preaching Communism as a political creed? Their meetings would certainly have been proclaimed, and orators who persisted would equally certainly have gone to prison. Nor would the public have had any more sympathy with them than their ancestors had with the Reformers.

Lastly, in such emergencies the Government, which alone has any knowledge of conspiracies, must be the final judge of the steps to be taken, for the evidence for action cannot be published. There is nothing to lead us to suppose that Pitt was given to hysterical and unfounded alarm or that he was by nature addicted to tyrannical methods. On the contrary, he was a well-balanced man and a friend of freedom. When Ministers succeed in suppressing revolution or treason they are at once told that their success proves that no danger existed. When they fail—well, the type of Liberal who reproaches success does not generally live very long to complain of the failure.

The same line of argument does not apply with anything like equal force, if it applies at all, to the Six Acts of 1819 and to the repressive legislation of the post-Waterloo period. The French Revolution was down in the dust; the war was over; English statesmen had simply to deal with their own people, not with a set of agitators acting as *agents provocateurs* for an enemy Power or half-drunk with the original intoxication which followed the fall of the Bastille. Under these circumstances a moderate measure of reform and not blank repression would have been the right policy. But by this time Tory politics had taken a wrong turn.

The political situation for nearly thirty years after the accession of the Portland Whigs (1794) has in it the elements of a confusion of party issues and personalities inseparable from war administrations and coalitions. And this blurring of the lines of strict party controversy lasts well over into the peace of 1815. The confusion of 1815–1828 is not so absolute as in the first six years of George III's reign, when the party system may be said to have disappeared altogether, for there still remain certain well-defined groups of political opinion. But on the borders of each group there are sections and statesmen whose precise status is indefinable, and who retract from one party or melt into another as circumstances and policies dictate.

It was the impotence of the anti-war Whigs, now beginning to be regarded as Radicals, which chiefly produced this situation. As after 1714, so after 1794, and, for that matter, after 1918, the minority was too small to matter, and everybody in the huge majority was more or less eligible for the Government benches and for office. Under these circumstances a stern party fight on strict party lines becomes impracticable and Ministries are formed by all kinds of queer arrangements between the people principally concerned. It follows that the development of Tory principles as shown forth in the policies and actions of the time is difficult to discover. Indeed in practically all these decisions there is the operation and influence of any alien element of some kind or another to be taken into account.

Thus of the ten Governments which intervene between 1794 and 1828, under Pitt (two), Addington, Grenville, Portland, Perceval, Liverpool, Canning, Goderich, Wellington, not one was formed on a purely party basis. The administration of Liverpool was undoubtedly Tory in essence, but it contained Whigs. Canning and Goderich, on the other hand, attracted to their Ministries none of the Tories of the Right, and relied on Whigs and Progressive Tories. Lastly, the Duke of Wellington's Administration of 1828 began with the inclusion of people on the border line like Huskisson, Grant, Wynn, Palmerston and Lamb (Lord Melbourne), whose affiliations might be variously described as Liberal, Tory or Conservative-Whig. It was not till the Premier's quarrel with Huskisson drove these men out of the Ministry that a real Tory Government was formed. We are therefore presented with the queer picture of at least five sections of opinion, Old Tories, New Tories, Old Whigs, New Whigs and finally a group half-way between Old Whigs and New Tories, the members of which last either join and disappear from Ministries with bewildering rapidity, or else, like Palmerston, manage to hold on to office, without any discredit, under almost every or any Ministry. Disraeli indeed scored long afterwards a debating point off Palmerston in his celebrated retort on "desire for office," but it was a good joke rather than a bitter gibe, for everyone knew there was little unpleasant truth behind it. Under these circumstances there is one easy way of allocating praise and blame. It is to pick out the successes in the British policy of the period and attribute them to your own party or section, while fathering the failures on others. That is a method I do not intend to pursue.

It would appear that the main credit for the final victory over Napoleon goes to Castlereagh, Canning, Perceval and Liverpool, who held the principal offices of State concerned with the Continental war and were predominant in the Government. Further, this superior influence in the Administration was maintained certainly up to the death of Castlereagh in 1822 and to some extent up to the death of Liverpool in 1827. It would therefore not be fair for a Tory historian to deal with those points in the policy which have been most criticised and debated, such as Ireland, Repressive Legislation or the failure to deal with the new economic world by simply remarking that many of the Whigs were identified with all these policies. The predominant partner must take the major part of the responsibility. None the less, it is true that the Tories throughout this epoch never had an absolutely straight run, and that in fiscal and social problems especially the Whigs, with their high Protection and class exclusiveness, were a dead-weight round their necks. Toryism had to assimilate in rapid succession the royal borough holders and the Portland Whigs, and the effort nearly proved too much for its digestive capacities.

In the twentieth century the main line of criticism has been launched against the utter failure of the rulers to assist and protect the people, after 1815, when their hands were free, against the worst consequences of that dislocation of their social life which the industrial revolution carried with it. It is true that successive Governments were amazingly indifferent to the sufferings of whole classes of the population both in town and country, who found all the amenities of life and often the very means of living torn from them by a great blind power they did not understand, and for this indifference, and for imagining that social discontent could be met by methods of blank repression, the rulers are greatly to blame.

But to expect them in the twinkling of an eye to find all the remedies for the evils of industrialism, to devise methods which have been slowly forged by the human mind out of a hundred years of experience of what to our ancestors was a novel and unparalleled event, is to ask too much of political wisdom and human nature. Nor did the past of the last two hundred years help them. The men of the Middle Ages indeed would have been far more competent in many ways to deal with the consequences of mechanical invention than those of the early nineteenth century. If they had not put the inventors to death and broken up the engines they would at least have realised that truth which underlies Socialism—the doctrine that the commercial and industrial health and happiness of the individual is a matter of concern to the State. The Middle Ages also had the habit of regulation and long experience of how to control new developments. But this habit and idea, though still persisting to some extent locally, had been fading steadily from the time of Elizabeth, at least from the purview of the central government. Each century saw a progressive weakening in the connection between economics and politics. The problems of the sixteenth century had been mainly religious. The seventeenth century had concerned itself with the battle between the Crown and Parliament. The eighteenth century, in so far as political ideas were not absolutely dead in it, had been struggling to establish a new working relation between King, Parliament and people. Although the question of Protection had been raised once or twice as a party issue, in the main duties had been maintained for revenue purposes and as a generally accepted part of national economics, without much thought or inquiry. The country was prosperous in a static kind of way internally, and was expanding commercially with great rapidity, and both these factors encouraged the policy of *laissez-faire* in social matters.

By 1800, therefore, not only had the old system of regulation fallen into decay by forgetfulness, but a new body of thought was arising which definitely challenged it on first principles. Adam Smith led the way in economics; Bentham followed practically with the assault on the Penal Code, and received philosophic reinforcement for his general views from Austin and the elder Mill. A constructive social reformer in the period after Waterloo had to face not only apathy and ignorance and selfishness, but the active hostility of philosophic Liberalism, which believed in the destruction of existing restraints on human endeavour and freedom of contract, and not in the creation of fresh restraints to replace those which had passed out of date. Furthermore, the refusal of a moderate measure of Parliamentary Reform for over a generation—in which the Whigs were at least as much to blame as the Tories—deprived the new industrial populations of any energetic expression of their needs, desires and grievances in the Commons. The aftermath of the war, which destroyed that fictitious prosperity which accompanies actual hostilities, also struck the new industrialism as soon as the guns had ceased speaking on the Continent. Although we were the only European nation which had not seen a foreign army in its capital, and our industrial development had been uninterrupted by invasion, ravaged Europe, as after 1918, was for some time unable to pay for our goods on an extensive scale. A series of frightful gluts of over-production caused widespread unemployment, while Nature worked against the Administration with a series of bad harvests. The consequent unrest produced a panic among the upper classes and so forwarded the arguments of those who believed in dealing with economic discontent with bayonets rather than ameliorative measures.

Taking all these factors together, it is not surprising that Governments of the period either failed to pay due attention to the evil or were helpless to devise and apply any cure. By the time 1830 is reached this line of defence must be modified. The worst reactions from the war had subsided, prosperity was beginning to advance by leaps and bounds, and there had been time to size up some at least of the terrific implications of the new industrialism. But unfortunately the doctrine of Individualism gathered force at precisely the same moment and ultimately seized on the party which was destined to dominate the middle of the nineteenth century. Neither Whigs nor Tories were altogether individualists or altogether for State control or supremacy. But while the Whigs put the conception of liberty, even if they used that term in a purely political sense and not in an economic one at all, as the highest end of man, the Tory creed in the ultimate resort put the State interest first. Its historic bias, certainly up to the 1860's, when a rising Radicalism seemed to menace many private rights, including those of property, was therefore more in the direction of restraining a purely wasteful use of the national resources for the object of immediate private gain than that of the opposing party. Toryism ought to have been, as Disraeli thought, the champion of the people and of the national interests of health and happiness against pure Capitalism, if it were to be true to its tradition.

But before the Social Reform movement in the modern sense began, two great political questions had been dealt with, with disastrous consequences to the Tory Party—Catholic Emancipation in 1829 and Political Reform in 1832.

The troubles of Toryism over these two issues were due to two principal causes. In the first place, there was the opposition of George III and George IV, both moderately opposed to Reform and violently opposed to Catholic Emancipation. Secondly, there was the fact that the Progressive Tory wing which wished to settle these questions insisted on taking them in the wrong order of time.

Pitt, as we have seen, had failed in his first effort to secure Reform in 1785, and subsequently the war put an end to all his internal schemes of policy. He had, however, taken up Catholic Emancipation, as part of the scheme of the union with Ireland in 1800, which was in itself part of a wider plan for the pacification of Ireland as a necessary war measure. Pitt ran up against the King and traitors like the Lord Chancellor in his own Cabinet, and resigned in 1801. Thus after nearly twenty years the invincible alliance between the Crown and the Minister was dissolved. But the tacit agreement as to the royal powers on which it was based did not disappear. The personal predilections of George III and George IV remained very hard political facts which every politician had got to realise. Rather on the whole the Crown was strengthened by the fall of Pitt and his subsequent death. The system of semi-mixed Government gave far greater influence to such personal considerations, and there was no one left to speak in the closet with the authority and power of the great Premier.

Pitt, however, left behind in the Tory Party not only the tradition of his own enlightened views, but a prominent disciple in Canning, the protagonist of the Left against the more rigid conservatism of Castlereagh. Round Canning there gathered a formidable group of Progressive Tories—Huskisson, Copley (Lord Lyndhurst), Palmerston, and, as most people thought in early days, Robert Peel. Against them were ranged the unbending Toryism of men like Wellington and Eldon. But the advanced group had no common policy and therefore no real cohesion. Peel and Huskisson would have agreed on commercial and fiscal reform, but on the Catholic question Peel was Orange. Canning himself was full of zeal for Catholic Emancipation, but was opposed to Reform. Palmerston was a Reformer. Their domestic opponents (leaving out Peel) had the great advantage of being united on the one point which mattered—no change of any kind. In deference to the wishes of successive monarchs, the Catholic question was left an open one in the Cabinet, while Liverpool successfully preserved for fifteen years (1812–1827) the outward unity of his Government.

It is easy to see now, looking backwards, that the real policy of the forward wing should have been to concentrate on a moderate Tory measure of Reform. If the electoral system of the eighteenth century had been anomalous, that being rapidly produced by the vast shifting and aggregations of population in the industrial age was simply farcical. It was impossible that it should stand, and if Canning and Peel and the others had made a bold advance in this direction immediately after the death of Lord Liverpool they would have saved their Party from crushing disasters, and would in all probability have been able to carry subsequently the other policies on which their hearts were set. Neither was the Crown opposed to Reform in the sense it was set against Catholic relief. But Canning would have no Reform, and Peel went back on Canning on the issue of Catholic Emancipation even before the issue had come to a real test. Lord Liverpool died in 1827. Canning from his prestige and intellect was the only possible successor. Immediately the Wellington–Eldon group deserted the new Premier and were joined by Peel, although Catholic Emancipation was to be an open question in the new Ministry as in the old. Then followed woe on woe: the death of Canning; the return of Wellington as Premier and Peel as leader of the House of Commons in 1828; then the prompt surrender of the "Die-hards" over Catholic Emancipation; a shaken and divided Toryism and a Whig Party at last reunited, if only on the single issue of Reform. The Reform Bill of 1832 seems to doom the Tory Party to permanent exclusion from office. Canning cannot be acquitted of bad judgment or absolved from his share of the blame for the overthrow. His figure, more enigmatic perhaps than any other in our party history except Shelburne, stood midway between the Toryism which began with the rout of Fox and North in 1784 and the new industrial Toryism which now tried to force its way to predominance in the party councils until the split of 1846 drove it out into the opposing camp. On the one side Canning looked backward to Pitt and the memories of the titanic struggle against Napoleon; on the other hand, amid many vanities, inconstancies, inconsistencies and hazy dreams, he seems at least to have been aware that parties cannot live on memories alone, and that a new adjustment of the faith, some fresh reconstruction of the ranks, must be made if a historic party was to meet the needs of a new age. Socially, too, Canning occupied an intermediate position, for while he was sufficiently of the political class to be marked out in advance for high preferment on the strength of his brilliant undergraduate reputation at Oxford, yet his later association was with Liverpool city and with the great middle-class magnates like old Sir Robert Peel and old Sir John Gladstone, the advance guard of the great manufacturing magnates who were to bestride the middle nineteenth century.

But Canning died even as his hands grasped the Premiership for which he had languished so long, and the Philistines triumphed. It is true that the immediate and obtrusive cause of his battle with the Eldonite Tories was Catholic Emancipation rather than the wider issue of town versus country. But in any case it was clear before Canning's death that he had not the power and influence over the Party to secure the peaceful alliance between the old and the new Toryism which Liverpool had maintained. Far less was he able to amalgamate the rival forces. And the dilemma which broke Canning was destined to break Peel too.

What is really singular about the Canning split of 1827 is that it found Peel in the Eldonite camp and opposed to the master in whose traditions he had been reared. Sir Robert, according to any reasonable expectations, was brought up to be the young standard-bearer who should hold up the tattered banner of rational progress as it fell from the grip of his dying chief. Instead, he was engaged, if not exactly in stabbing that chief in the back, at least in firing vigorously into his flank.

It was this feeling that barbed with truth the savage accusations of Bentinck and Disraeli in the debates of 1846. It was felt that Peel's first great political act had been to betray the new Toryism to the old, and that his last great political act was to betray the old Toryism to the new. This was a far more serious charge than that of simple change of mind on two concrete questions of policy, like Catholic Emancipation and Free Trade. Policies alter with circumstances, but any man ought to know fairly definitely early in life whether he belongs to the Left or the Right within a party or within a State.

And Peel's class made the average contemporary of his youth expect him to belong to the Left. He was the first man whose money and standing sprang from commerce and industry to become the undisputed chief of a great political party and Prime Minister of Great Britain. And it is proof of the immense hold that Toryism was gaining over the new industrial class, and that class over Toryism alone, that in the period succeeding the French war there was no Whig-Liberal Premier of other than aristocratic descent till the first Premiership of Gladstone in 1868. But what his contemporaries forgot about Peel is that he was not a business man, but the son of a business man—a totally different thing. It is the second generation overlying the influence of the first which accounts for Peel's amazing political vagaries, and have brought on him the charge of actual political treachery and dishonesty. If old Sir Robert had sent him to Parliament at the age of thirty straight from the counting-house, things might have been different. Instead he sent him to Oxford as a boy, and, as the phrase goes, " made a gentleman of him." As a consequence, the substratum of Liverpool merchant was always in conflict with the " aristocratical " and intellectual side which wealth and Oxford represented. It is along this line alone that any explanation and defence can be advanced for a statesman who made more blunders, betrayed more causes, was forgiven more times and did his Party more harm than any man who started life with such natural gifts and such adventitious advantages in the career of politics. Up to 1832 the aristocratical element was uppermost in Peel's mind, and his alliance with and propping up of Wellington and Eldon resulted in the postponement of a moderate measure of Tory electoral reform which would have given increased representation to all classes and done Toryism good rather than harm. Peel, however, held up the hands of the reactionaries, split his Party and in fact played the fool until the Bill of 1832 gave the middle and new-rich classes a revolutionary preponderance of power. After that the commercial side of his mind seemed to reassert itself over Oxford, if only out of sheer necessity.

But the disaster brought out the best in him. While men like Wellington and Croker sat down in the sulks to brood over the ruins of the Constitution, Peel did not despair of the State. He sat down too, as his letters to Croker prove, to think out the situation and to restate the Conservative creed and reconstitute the Conservative Party in the light of reform. The result of his conclusions as set forth in the Tamworth manifesto was a reversion to the creed of Canning and Huskisson which he had abandoned and ruined. The wealthy middle classes were to be brought within the charmed circle of Toryism, and the aristocratic creed and privileged order of society modified so far as to achieve this object. Peel, in fact, accepted the middle class, after 1832, not as being good in itself, but as an institution discovered to be not essentially harmful and the acceptation of which is necessary to the proper working of social institutions and the continued well-being of the Conservative cause.

But we have proceeded somewhat in advance of the full implication of the great Reform Bill. It was a revolution, though a peaceful one. It represented the violent extremism of natural forces too long pent up by the obstinacy of Whig and Tory Conservatives for fifty years before. It transferred the dominance of electoral power from the country to the towns, and from an aristocracy of birth and land to one of professional talent intermingled with the middle classes and the manufacturing interests. The Whig victors under Lord Grey treated the lower classes in a curious and diverse manner. In the first place the Bill took away some of the more popular franchises belonging to the poor. In the second place, although the Whigs disclaimed, no doubt sincerely enough, " democracy " or the equal right of all men to vote, and declared the 1832 settlement final, yet in the hurry and confusion of the contest with the Lords they actually based the vote not on any balance of interest within the State, which was their old theory, but on a property qualification pure and simple. The only possible consequence was, as Lady Gwendolen Cecil has pointed out in the *Life of Lord Salisbury*, that every new agitation would simply aim at the lowering of the property qualification until " democracy " was reached. The Bill was therefore a bad Bill in the long run from the Whig point of view, and its terms continued to embarrass both them and the more rigid Conservatives for another fifty years. It reduced popular representation for the moment and yet made an immense popular extension of the vote inevitable in the future. Disraeli objected to it in his early writings on the first ground. The second difficulty he, like others, had to realise later. There is no doubt that had the Tories possessed a Pitt or a Disraeli as their leader in 1820 they would have passed a Reform Bill, but one of a totally different character. Less voting strength would have been taken from the aristocracy and the land, and more would have been given to the working classes. As a consequence the middle classes would not have received the preponderance, at once unfair against the other classes in the State and, as it proved, inexpedient from the point of view of social policy, which the measure of 1832 gave them. Furthermore, this distribution of power would have been made definitely on the basis of the representation of interests and classes, and not on *pure* numerical strength only, limited by a property qualification.

However, in 1832 Disraeli was not even yet in Parliament. Peel had spilt the milk before he arrived on the scene, and disapproval of what had been done from 1827 onwards partook too much of the nature of trying to lick it off the carpet. For nine years the older man laboured strenuously to correct the mischief of which he had been part or even principal author. Reform once achieved, the vast Liberal-Whig majority which had been returned by the new electorate crumbled into the atoms out of which it had been created. Two years after the passage of the Bill Peel actually grasped a short interval of unreal power. Seven years later, in 1841, he was Prime Minister with a large and apparently homogeneous majority. The method based on the policy of the Tamworth manifesto by which he re-created Conservatism, as it was now to be called, at Croker's instigation, as a serious force, has already been described. But how precarious was the nature of the union between the manufacturers and agricultural Tories, the new school and the old, who had to be driven in a team!

To the whole of this policy Disraeli was both by instinct and intellect absolutely opposed. And as he was the architect of the reconstruction of a system of Conservative thought in the early and middle nineteenth century, just as Bolingbroke had made a similar intellectual reconstruction a hundred years before, it is worth inquiring very briefly into his original views, since their influence is by no means spent to-day. Taking the early novels, *The Vindication* and contemporary speeches, and making allowance for much which is fantastic or poetical or historically inaccurate, there remains a strong substratum of sane, valid and self-consistent doctrine of what the British polity ought to be and could have been made if electoral power had been differently distributed than it was at the precise period when he wrote. Like all Tories, he starts with the Crown as the centre of a strong and orderly system of government. The central executive is the defender of the laws and therefore of the liberties of the people. Social or political equality in the sense of "democracy" he dismisses as a myth. The aristocracy ought to be, though they often have not been, the leaders and friends of the people. The feudal system, when it worked properly, was in many ways an ideal society, and ought to be preserved at least as an *ideal* of the relationship of great and small, powerful and weak, rich and poor. None the less, the Crown was always needed as a reserve force to be used against an aristocracy which forsook its mission and forgot its duty towards the people. The Commons were the Third Estate, directly representing all the other and various sections and interests of the community. Disraeli seems to have accepted the powers of the Commons as they existed in his time without comment. Nor was he ever much interested in the old constitutional problems of relative powers or in the newer ones of the precise composition of the electorate, so long as they gave popular opinion a reasonable chance. To his mind the exercise of the quality of leadership by the best men and the essential character of the British people would carry the nation through, and powers and voting methods were by comparison trifles. He possessed indeed a complete contempt both for the rigid Conservative notion that a society could be preserved by written "safeguards," and for the essentially Liberal doctrine that the happiness and success of a people depend on paper constitutions. His innermost conception of politics might be summed up as unity in loyalty—all classes working with each other under the Crown and endeavouring to carry out the duties which Providence had placed upon them.

His social and economic views are in some ways of greater interest to-day than his purely political ones, for they are more prophetic. He was the only man of his epoch who foresaw the coming of the social problem as subsequent generations have come to see it. He alone wished to deal with it before the tumour had swelled to an unmanageable size, and to treat it with exactly those kinds of measures that nearly all social reformers, Tory and Radical and

Fabian, have used successfully or wanted to use since —when, alas, the damage had been largely done and the Two Nations of *Sybil* had already come into existence. Other men, like Shaftesbury as a Tory, or Cobbett as a Radical, were moved by pity or anger to devote themselves to the cause of the masses who were at once being created and trodden down into the mire by the new Moloch of machinery at whose shrine Peel and Palmerston, Johnny Russell and Gladstone, Hume and Mill, Conservative, Whig, Peelite and Liberals, did Poojah. Disraeli was by no means devoid either of pity or indignation, but he alone of his period perceived that from a national standpoint Benthamism was bad business. He antedated by fifty years some of the doctrines of Mr. Sidney Webb. His sympathy projected itself, as the natural consequence of his doctrine of feudalism conceived as a service of duty to one's inferiors, towards the poorer classes. His indignation was directed against the industrial magnates who treated men who ought to have been at once their dependents and their friends as " hands "—inanimate machines to be paid the lowest possible wages, to be used to the uttermost, to be cast off when used up, to live in a pigsty and die in the workhouse. " If a rapacious covetousness desecrating all the sanctities of human life has been the besetting sin of the last generation, in our time the altar of Mammon has flamed with a triple flare."

Such was Disraeli's judgment on the new capitalism. But beyond his wrath, like that of a Jewish prophet of old denouncing an unprofitable generation, there existed a cold, intellectual contempt for the fallacies of philosophic Liberalism which taught that by unrestricted competition and free contract lay the way to an industrial and social heaven. On the contrary, he saw very clearly that nothing except restrictive enactments applied to industrial capitalism could preserve the health, happiness, efficiency and contentment of the working classes, and that to adopt any other course was to invite evil. He was therefore in principle, from his first entry into Parliament in

1837, an inveterate opponent of the manufacturers and their middle-class business voters whom his leader was courting so assiduously. Peel might well have replied that no other course was open to him after 1832 if Toryism was ever to return to power. But as a young man Disraeli was content with preaching the true or ideal solution. As, however, his whole conception of what the Tory Party ought to be differed *toto cœlo* from that of the leader, it was not surprising that they found themselves uncongenial spirits, and this natural antagonism long antedated the Tariff issue. Disraeli attacked the inhumanity of the new Poor Law of 1834. Peel defended it; Gladstone praised it. Disraeli, leading a small band of younger Tory-Democrats, joined himself with philanthropists and Radicals whenever any social issue came to the front. In the opposite lobby were found the official Tories, the manufacturers and the official Whigs, and this division was repeated time after time all through the 'thirties and 'forties on every issue of Health, Housing, and Factory Legislation.

It has often been said by fools and even by wise men that young England was nothing but a dream, and its protagonist, therefore, an idle visionary. " A novel," says Lord Rosebery, " is not a programme." But under the dreamer in Disraeli lay a totally different individual—an intellect keen to the point of cynicism —one of the most practical and assiduous workers on the green benches that the House of Commons has ever seen. This practical quality of mind he devoted unremittingly to the support of each Bill for the limitation of factory hours and for the improvement of social hygiene—from 1834 to 1845—and in spite of frequent reverses, year by year the mixed group of reformers continued to make progress.

Such was the position during Peel's last tenure of office from 1841 to 1846. Outwardly the Minister seemed all-powerful. He had broken the Whigs and Radicals and summoned back to the standard of the new Conservatism the middle-class electorate. He had carried, quite in the Pitt style, many useful measures of administrative and fiscal reform. His majority seemed docile and no sign of resistance to the new scheme of affairs came from the Tory country gentry. But Peel, when he reversed engines after 1832 and set out on the middle-class way, had not quite realised the extent to which he had failed to carry the older Toryism and the country section of the Party with him. He had come to the conclusion that they would put up with anything in return for office—and this, it turned out, was true of most of the Cabinet, but not of the rank and file. Being an intellectual half-breed he never quite understood either the followers of Eldon or the disciples of Canning, and had formed no conception in the years of his power of the strength and type of resistance he would have to face. All contemporary accounts agree that Peel was the most tactless of men in the sense that he never seemed able to bring himself into any rapport with the ordinary people he had to talk to.

So the Tories and the Tory-Democrats proved too much for him in 1846. It has been said that if he had entertained Disraeli's application for office in 1841 he might have silenced and secured him. Chatham had had his mouth closed in a similar manner. But it had not prevented the final Chathamic uprising against his paymasters. Similarly, nothing on earth would have held together for long men so antithetic in temperament and conviction as the old leader and his successor. The big fight came on Protection because it happened to be the issue which Peel precipitated in such a manner as to lay himself open to a deadly thrust from a great fencer. Peel had little cause to complain on moral grounds. He and his whole Party had been elected in 1841 to preserve the protective system, and especially in relation to agriculture. Now when his majority had long passed the middle of its term he proposed to use it against his election pledges *without an appeal to the constituencies.* "Ma'am," said old Melbourne, breaking out with an unrebuked oath even in the presence of Queen Victoria, "it's a damned dishonest act." And so it was. If Peel had been converted to Free Trade, it was his duty to resign the leadership of his Party. If he felt that the successful administration of the State required a change of fiscal policy, his duty was to dissolve on that issue and to try to obtain a Free Trade majority from the constituencies. Excuses may be made for his action in 1829. The group system of government then in vogue gave no section any clear majority. Catholic Emancipation had for years been an open question in the Tory ranks. But in 1846 he had a clear majority, and one definitely and clearly elected to sustain the protective system. Disraeli had at that time a perfectly definite and an eminently reasonable view of the fiscal problem. He believed in the maintenance of the principle of Protection and of low duties for revenue purposes, even when British industry or agriculture could not be regarded as being menaced, so that if a threat arose the Government would be able to deal with it immediately should necessity arise. He did not believe in a general system of high Protection on principle. These views he explained to his constituents in a speech at Shrewsbury in 1843. As a matter of fact, at that very time Peel was explaining privately to his favourite subordinate, Gladstone, that he was a Free Trader. Disraeli, of course, could not have known this, but he had watched Peel's industrial middle-class bias shrewdly, and towards the end of his Shrewsbury speech he added that he would not support any Government which proposed to repeal the Corn Laws.

In the battle of 1846 Disraeli was clearly keeping his faith with his supporters and the public while Peel was definitely breaking his. To plead the "higher morality" of State interest for Peel in this matter is jesuitical. If the country wanted Free Trade, as it undoubtedly did, it would have got it after a dissolution and from a Prime Minister and a majority elected for that purpose, but that Premier would not have been Peel. There was no urgency. The Irish famine, which was Peel's excuse, had not the remotest connection with the Corn Laws or with a treachery he had been meditating for years. The truth is that Peel's long tenure of power and the memory of one successful act of tergiversation had corrupted his public morals. The punishment which was meted out to him had a beneficial influence on political life, and it was forty years before his pupil Gladstone attempted a somewhat similar but not half so heinous a manœuvre.

The Corn Laws were repealed; the Minister fell; the Tory Party was rent in twain. Most of Peel's Ministers and personal followers and the industrial element in Toryism had marched away to support Johnny Russell and the Whigs in power. The Peelites were to remain for many years a loose and incalculable force in politics. Few of them, in spite of all subsequent approaches, ever returned to the original fold. The taunts and epigrams of the death-grapple of 1846 had bitten too deep. And indeed since the Reform Bill of 1832 inaugurated modern politics there is only one instance of a successful reunion between wings of parties which have once faced and accomplished a definite severance.

What then was left of Toryism? For it was never denied that Derby, Bentinck and Disraeli represented the fundamental tradition of the Party. It had gone back in a few brief months not perhaps quite to 1714, its last crushing disaster, but at least to 1760. What had been added to it by George III in the way of royal borough holders and by Pitt in the way of the supporters of Modernism had been reft from it in succession by 1832 and 1846. It had become once again a purely country party in an age when the town interest had risen definitely into the ascendant. In the course of these amputations, though it had lost some good points, it had also got rid of some bad qualities. The party of 1760 and the party of 1846 were more united in object, more pure in method and more charitable in outlook than the complex parties which had existed in the interim. In the eighteenth century the Tory county boroughs had been the sole defenders of popular representation and electoral purity. The

Protectionist group was in an exactly similar way less tainted by the horrible corruption, worse because practised on a larger scale than in the time of the old borough-holders, which disgraced the urban contests of the middle nineteenth century. The Tories, being back once more to the land, in contact with their own people, and confronted with a new and hostile age, lost that bullying tone which marks the Whig-Tory-Royalist Governments from 1794 to 1832.

What remained then was an old Tory Party led by two men, neither of whom could be accurately described as an old-fashioned Tory, however much they sympathised with their followers on certain fundamental views. Derby had spoken for Reform, and Disraeli was a Tory-Democrat carrying on, *mutatis mutandis*, into the modern world the traditions of Canning and Pitt. To this combination Derby supplied oratory in the Lords, respectability in the Party and loyalty to his often semi-suspect colleague in the Commons. It was left, however, to Disraeli to do the work. His task was to restore what was really a remnant into the position of one of the great parties in the State, manifestly capable of taking and holding office. Unwearied assiduity, unflinching tenacity, great debating powers, and what Mr. Stanley Baldwin has called "superhuman courage,"[1] were brought into play during the long black years which lay ahead. He put away from him all the generous ideals and the profound prophecies of his youth as a child packs away his toys to a hospital before he goes to school. The day of the Tory Democracy was not yet. It was twenty years before in 1867 he was able to undo a part of the wrong he had seen done to the working classes in 1832, and nearly thirty before he got his electoral reward and was able once more to turn back to a full programme of Social Reform.

As in dealing with the eighteenth century, I intend to pass over all but the main outlines of the long period of Opposition. Derby and Disraeli had four problems to face: (1) the abandonment of Agricultural Protection; (2) the question of taking office in a minority; (3) Foreign Policy; (4) Reform.

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[1] Speech to Canning Club, Oxford, June, 1923.

(1) The leaders had little difficulty in persuading their followers in the course of a few years to substitute a policy of special assistance to agriculture for a renewal of the Corn Laws. It was clear that the battle had gone against them for their generation, that every year increased the town populations, and that to pursue the issue was to doom the Party to perpetual sterility. To this course it may be objected that Derby and Disraeli were merely following the policy of Peel. Perfectly, but the pass had been sold by the defection of the Peelites from Protection, and what was done was carried out in public by an Opposition, not by a Government, and with the consent of its followers in the country. There is a difference between abandoning and betraying a cause.

(2) The question of taking office in a minority, which caused considerable diversity of opinion in the Conservative ranks, was put to the test in 1852, 1858 and 1866. The problem can be put quite simply. The governing majority always consisted of a loose alliance between Whigs, Liberals, Radicals and Peelites. The homogeneous minority consisted of Conservatives, and, in despite of repeated General Elections and a continued improvement in the Conservative electoral position, that Party never could till 1874 procure an independent majority. On the other hand, the Parliamentary majorities which supported successive Administrations under Whigs like Russell and Jingo-Whigs like Palmerston or Peelites like Aberdeen had often hardly a principle in common. The Whigs and the Peelites were against all fundamental changes, while the Liberals and Radicals in one degree or another looked on these Administrations as so many stalking-horses for their progressive ideas. The main reason for this unsatisfactory situation was the conduct of the Peelites. Had they rejoined the main stream of Toryism as they should have done on grounds of principle, when

Peel was dead and the Tory Party abandoned Protection in the 1850's, an Opposition would have been created capable of taking office in a majority when occasion served. A clear-cut division in politics with a balance of alternative Governments would thus have been secured. The Peelites, however, in spite of the most generous offers of office made to them by the official Conservatives, preferred to retain a factious independence. The quarrels between the four dominant sections were constantly overturning Governments. Should the Conservative Party assist this process and take its brief tenures of office as a consequence, or should it wrap itself in a lofty mantle of virtue and abstain from all intervention, vote with the Whigs, and let the world go by?

Disraeli held one point of view very strongly. After repeated offers to the Peelites, in which he had expressed his willingness to stand down for Gladstone in the Commons, had been refused, his business was to create an Opposition party capable in the long run of assuming the control of affairs. To announce in advance that under no conceivable circumstances would the Conservatives take a hand in turning out a Whig or Peelite composite Administration or themselves take office was, of course, to abandon the idea of ever becoming an alternative Administration at the outset. An Opposition which adopted such an attitude might as well commit political suicide at once. It would lose first of all its enthusiasm and next its voters, and it would never gain the experience of administration or the confidence of the public which such experience gives. Disraeli's policy, therefore, was to beat a Government when a reasonable occasion arose, and to form an Administration which would familiarise Ministers with their duties and the public with Ministers, even though he knew that the reunion of sundered opponents would soon turn that Government out. He was thus preparing for a day when the shift of events would give Toryism a chance of undisputed power. Lord Derby was on the whole in favour of this policy, though he was not always prepared to press it to the courageous extremes advocated by his principal lieutenant.

Lord Salisbury, on the other hand, entering Parliament shortly after the fall of the short-lived Conservative Administration of 1852, formed a totally different theory of the Parliamentary situation. Strangely enough, he regarded the Whigs and Peelites as the repositories of Tory tradition and policy. The business of Toryism was therefore to keep these men in power. Any attempt to turn them out simply led to horrid alliances with "foaming Radicals" and a further blackmailing of Palmerston and Russell for more reforms by these same wicked Radicals. Lord Salisbury, in other words, contemplated with equanimity (if his written articles are taken seriously) the permanent exclusion of his Party from office or ultimate power. If Lord Salisbury had been the Tory leader, which fortunately he was not, Conservatism would have vanished for ever in the middle nineteenth century. The men of energy, ideas and ambition would have joined the Whigs and the remainder would have been turned out by their constituents. As it was, Disraeli was permitted by his vigorous Opposition tactics to bring the Party through the depressing and gloomy period of impotence into the full day of a power which Lord Salisbury did not scruple to share.

As a matter of fact Salisbury in the days of depression did not hesitate to make alliances, not indeed with "foaming Radicals," but with frigid Whigs, and so turn out a Government when it suited his general notions. He took a prominent part in engineering the alliance with the Adullamite Whig cave which destroyed the Reform Bill of 1866, and the Russell-Gladstone Administration with it, and made him Secretary of State for India for a year. Lord Salisbury's *Quarterly* articles would have gained in truth what they lost in self-righteousness if they had simply stated that he did not mind getting back to office on the backs of the Whigs, while Disraeli preferred the shoulders of the Radicals as a ladder to the same elevation.

(3) The other broad issues which Derby and his lieutenant had to face were those of foreign and domestic policy. In looking over Disraeli's somewhat meagre hand one might have hazarded that his long suit would prove a "patriotic" foreign policy. The Tories, in the public estimate at any rate, had changed places with the Whigs during the Napoleonic wars and had become the repositories of militancy abroad. People thought of Pitt and Fox as the two protagonists of that period and drew this vague but irresistible conclusion. And indeed when Toryism, largely at the instance of the Whig Burke, drew the sword of the European crusade against Republican France, it *did* forfeit a large part of its historic claim to be called a non-aggressive party. On the other hand, ever since the rise of Fox, a definitely anti-patriotic and peace-at-any-price party had been attaining even greater influence in the Whig counsels—and Liberalism and Radicalism constantly reinforced this movement. Could not Toryism by 1850 have raised a patriotic flag in a generation which had forgotten what war really meant? Such a possibility or supposition was absolutely nullified by the accident of the existence of Palmerston. This statesman had definitely and quite honourably abandoned his Tory affiliations on the question of Reform. After a period of no great eminence on the Whig side he stood forward, when the Tory split had come, as the protagonist of a complex of political ideas which fitted the electorate of the period like a glove and utterly defied the ingenuity of Disraeli. He was a Whig; he believed in Reform, but only in the Reform the existing voters had got; he was a patriot; he believed in dictating to and bullying all foreign countries when it was safe to do so—and, since England was very strong, this course was usually safe. Once or twice, as over Poland and Schleswig-Holstein, he and Johnny Russell slipped up. But on the whole the game was exhilarating without being really dangerous. This

conjoint idea of Liberal talk without reform and of Jingo ultimatums without war exactly suited the temper of the electorate. Not even the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny did the Tory Party any good. So long as Palmerston lived all roads in this direction were blocked. Under these circumstances Disraeli quietly abandoned for the time being the temporary reputation of the Tories as the authors and victors of the Napoleonic wars and fell back on the older tradition of the Party as the advocates of non-interference in Europe. He was able to quote Bolingbroke with considerable effect, but Palmerston was not to be destroyed by quotations. The Palmerstonian Briton, with his money and his umbrella and his talk of Liberty and " Civis Britannus sum," was a pleasant joke to the twentieth century before 1914. Since the German war he has become something of a tragic figure. He had forgotten one war and the military tradition of his fathers, and could know nothing of where his money was going in another war or of the military glory of his grandsons. But such as he was he blocked all Tory prospects in the line of foreign policy. He would have neither the Conservatives nor Bright and Cobden—and he was the voter.

(4) The last problem was that of Reform. That matter stirred but languidly for many years after 1832. The dominant class had secured the government of the country and were perfectly content. But the " final " Whig Reform Bill had let a certain number of the working classes and of " low " Radicals slip through its meshes, and these gradually became as the century wore on more insistent in the constituencies. Worse still, the intellectuals began to join them. For a long time, however, Bright trumpeted in vain and the Whigs, though uneasy, were never put to any severe test of their sincerity. Small Bill after Bill was put forward and allowed to drop or was defeated. At the end of 1865, however, Palmerston, who would never look at Reform, died. Russell became Premier, with Gladstone leading in

the House of Commons, and immediately in 1866 everything broke loose. It was known that Gladstone, whose Radical proclivities were now notorious, meant to carry a real Reform Bill based on the principles of democracy, *i. e.* a purely horizontal extension of the franchise. The Tory attitude towards further Reform had always been somewhat undecided and never a special article of party faith since the disaster of 1832. In general, however, it agreed with Whiggism in considering that the franchise ought to be based on a balance of interests and not on the counting of noses. Consequently it had no difficulty in joining with the Adullamite Whigs and throwing out Gladstone's Reform Bill of 1866 and the Whig-Radical Government with it. Derby again became Premier and Disraeli leader of the House of Commons. At first it did not appear that the collapse of the Gladstone Reform Bill had caused anything but a Parliamentary sensation. But it became suddenly apparent that the country had at last been aroused from its somnolence on the Reform issue and that the unenfranchised masses were clamouring at the gates.

The Tory leaders were not in the least prepared to imitate Peel and Wellington's colossal blunder of the late 1820's. The historic tradition of Toryism from the seventeenth century onwards had in the main been in favour of a moderate measure of electoral reform. Lord Derby and his Cabinet had no particular love for an existing franchise which seemed destined to keep them permanently out of real power. It seemed best to them to get the matter out of the way by passing a moderate Reform Bill rather than hold out until the Radicals were strong enough to compel the Whigs to pass some sweeping democratic measure which would have conferred on the Tories a lasting unpopularity for another few generations. And Lord Derby, who took the lead in this matter, was undoubtedly right. Disraeli's general views on working-class enfranchisement have already been put on record.

At the same time there was a general sentiment in the Party against a mere lowering of the property qualification of which Lord Robert Cecil[1] (Secretary of State for India) was the most vigorous exponent. The original Government Resolutions were extremely vague in their terms, and Ministers were prepared to allow their measure to be shaped largely by the House. This, however, Gladstone and the Radicals would not allow. Ministers therefore hurriedly produced a Reform Bill based partly on the theory of the representation of special classes and interests known as "fancy franchises." The moment the matter was put to the test of debate it was seen that the Whigs in 1832 had so arranged matters that there was no going back on the "democratic" principle of that measure. In effect the House as a whole shaped the Bill for a Government which had no clear majority and simply lowered the franchise qualification, thus admitting very considerable numbers of the working classes. Derby and Disraeli and the great bulk of the Party accepted this solution gladly, but Lord Robert Cecil[1] and two other Ministers resigned. In the event Disraeli obtained an immense Parliamentary triumph and secured the working-class vote he had dreamed of in his youth. For the moment it did him no good, since the Government was heavily defeated in the General Election of 1868. But the foundation of popular Toryism had been laid once more.

We have seen that Disraeli's original conceptions of Tory policy had been in the direction of a union between the aristocracy and the working classes against the big industrialists and the middle-class men. This view was in itself not really defensible against his own more profound doctrine of the essential unity of all classes in the State. By 1866 he was exchanging what might be described as the dualism of his politics for a trialism which included all the three sections of the community, aristocracy, middle classes and workers. He had been driven this way largely by the necessity of bidding for middle-class support. But, unlike Peel, he had never done so at the expense of the vital interests of the men who formed the backbone of his Party. Finally, he was to solve and more than solve the problems which had defeated both Canning and Peel, and while reconciling rural Toryism with the industrial middle classes, was to add the third factor of a working-class Conservative vote. When he had done this the essential part of his work for Toryism was finished. His best friend in this task was his great enemy. When Mr. Gladstone succeeded Lord Palmerston as the real director of the Whig-Liberal-Radical Coalition, he was minded to turn that instrument in precisely the opposite direction to that favoured by Lord Palmerston. Mr. Gladstone had moved surely if by almost imperceptible gradations from the Right to the Left of politics since his great undergraduate anti-Reform speech of 1831. He had been unmuzzled by his rejection as the member of Oxford University in 1865, and he was determined to make up the leeway that Palmerston's obstinate Jingoism and Conservatism had imposed on the Radical elements of his Party. In doing this he immediately gave Disraeli, now Premier by Derby's retirement, the opportunity of a straight fight which heretofore had been hopelessly lacking to him. The lists were open. Lord John Russell vanished in the background of retirement. Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister, and his great Ministry of 1868–1874 set the tone of the politics of the next twenty or even thirty years. If the Radical wing had long been chafing at the inaction imposed on them by Palmerston, the Whigs and many of the middle-class men had long been viewing Mr. Gladstone with a growing suspicion and fretting against their official connection with the more Radical elements. To all these men Mr. Gladstone's reforming Ministry gave the opportunity. The Premier treated churches and armies with scant veneration; he seemed, to the excited view of the period, ready to tear up society by the roots. Disraeli by many years of careful and guarded Opposition had prepared the mould into which all this molten mass could be poured. He had robbed his Opposition of all taint of unrefined reaction. If a Conservative of any school of thought or any class wished to join it there was nothing to prevent him doing so. All the strength that had been Palmerston's rapidly began to pass over to his side. They came not in battalions, not in an organised split, but in spies, and the defection of the units was more formidable than any open revolt. It was a thing unperceived, and therefore irresistible, by the Ministerial machine. When Mr. Gladstone shook and despoiled any ancestral institution which he called an Upas tree, and its possessors thought an apple tree, the fruit dropped off into Disraeli's basket. The glow of the Radical democracy for its chief was hardly an adequate compensation for this complete shift in central public opinion. It had the cheering appearance and the warmth of a stage fire. By 1872 the doom was set. Disraeli's self-control on holding back from office on this occasion made his complete triumph in 1874 inevitable.

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[1] The late Lord Salisbury.

This steady drift of the Whigs and Palmerstonians to the Conservative side would in the long run have proved as dangerous to the popular character of Toryism as the adhesion of the royal borough holders in 1874 or of the Portland Whigs in 1794 had it not been for the Reform Bill of 1867. But for this the new Tory-Whig Party would have become purely Conservative and reactionary, and in spite of some temporary triumph would have been swept to ruin by Gladstonian Radicalism. As it was, Disraeli could and did call on the third element in the electorate. The workers sensed his inborn sympathy with their economic needs just as they understood, better than Gladstone did in his own heart, how indifferent the Liberal leader was to all the issues about which they really cared. "Enfranchise them and let them look after themselves," was the Liberal motto. "Enfranchise them and make them a living and human part of the body politic," was the doctrine of the Tory chief. The working men voted Conservative in 1874, and thus not only ensured the immediate victory of

Disraeli at the polls, but prevented the Party he led becoming merely a repository of Tory longings for the past and Whig jealousies and fears of democracy.

So Mr. Gladstone went to disaster and partial retirement and Disraeli reigned in his stead. All the personal visions of his youth had been realised. Against impossible odds, as Lord Melbourne had told him long ago, he had become a Tory Prime Minister leading an unadulterated Tory majority in the Commons—a thing which had not been seen since 1841 and was not to be seen again till 1922. He had united the three classes in the State under the Tory banner. He had forged the instrument for his successors to use for many years to come in the future. But the effort had left him too weak to wield it as effectually as he would have done if fate had allowed him early power. It is painful to read, as his Ministry progresses, the continual records of illness which made his public and social efforts a continual contest between the will and the body.

Lord Beaconsfield's Administration can be summarised easily enough. To the Tory Democracy he paid his debts of past memories and recent pledges in full. In the early years of his *régime* a long list of useful social enactments for the benefit of the labouring classes showed that he had neither forgotten his youth nor the appeals that he had made in Opposition for the support of all good citizens for a policy of social reform. That he had failed to carry out the great conceptions which would have avoided the evils he was now asked to cure is hardly to be imputed to him as a fault. Let the scribes of Liberalism and the Pharisees of Whiggery and Toryism look to it—the leaders who flouted the Social Reformers and contemned their doctrines while there was yet time to put them into effective practice. It is Peel and Bentham and Russell who are in the dock when we consider the social and economic conditions which had to be dealt with in 1874—not Disraeli.

To the average Conservative, to the seceding Whig, to the revolting Palmerstonian of the middle classes he gave security for the institutions that they cherished and for the commerce by which they lived.

To the more adventurous spirits, to the new feeling of Empire now once more stirring in the veins of a conquering race sixty years after the time when England had last stood at bay, he offered a "spirited" foreign policy. This was the joint in the harness. It is true that England had chafed under the pacifism of Gladstone, which had made her a negligible power in the councils of Europe, and had cast a backward eye of longing to the times when Palmerston would use a fleet against a helpless Power to make it pay alleged debts to a Levantine Jew who happened to be a British subject, or when Russell would bombard an unfortified port of mediæval Japan. But England, as Palmerston had always been shrewd enough to see in the ultimate resort, was not ready in his time for a great European war on some vague interest in the Baltic or on the Danube. Neither was it so ready in Disraeli's time. In the main the same feeling of caution and reluctance existed about the extension of Imperial responsibilities in South Africa and Afghanistan whenever the toll of life and treasure seemed likely to be too heavy. The later stages of Disraeli's European and Imperial adventures, therefore, outpaced the absorbent qualities of the nation. Despite the music-halls and the Carlton Club, it required another six years of Mr. Gladstone's rule before the Imperialism or Jingoism typified by Mr. Kipling could be brought to birth. A dissolution in 1878 would no doubt have produced a majority in the magnesium blaze of the diplomatic victory at Berlin, but the result, like that of most khaki elections, would not have endured. Disraeli held on to the end of his term and faced his defeat without a word of petulance or reproach. He had in effect done his work. After forty years of unwearied labour he had set Toryism on its legs again as a force with the people, given it a vital creed and doctrine suitable to the new age, and now left it to his successors to make the best of his heritage.

Lord Beaconsfield is often regarded as the founder of Imperialism viewed as a political creed. This is not strictly accurate. He was the representative of the first movement of revolt against the pure commercialism, the narrow parochialism and violent anti-militarism of the age of Cobden and Bright. In him the spirit of race, nationality, patriotism, call it what you will, which was to dominate the succeeding period found its earliest mouthpiece. But Disraeli had no conception of the Empire in the light we chiefly think of it to-day as a Commonwealth of white self-governing Dominions under the Crown. To Beaconsfield the interest and enthusiasm attaching to the Empire were that of Britain as a great world Power governing the vast masses of subject races and speaking with the enemy in the gates of Near Eastern and Middle Asia. It was the *Raj* which fascinated him, not the self-governing colony. That other aspect of the Imperial spirit only flowered after his death.

To many men of the last generation the decisive political events of their experience began with the Midlothian campaign and ended with the decisive defeat of Mr. Gladstone over Home Rule in 1886. In those eight or nine years two pitched battles were fought between some of the most eminent politicians that England has ever produced, in which each side in turn scored a victory. The figures loomed large, the issues were great, the contest was fierce and the turn of affairs dramatic. This combination so struck the popular mind that they overshadowed both past events and developments which were to come, and distorted the national view of the essential nature of the historic parties. The age of Palmerston seemed remote; men completely forgot what Toryism had been before the Eastern problem or the Home Rule issue arose. The two parties remained immobilised from this point of view for ever, as though struck in one single attitude by lightning and turned to stone eternally in the illumination of the flash.

This accounts not only for many erroneous views about the nature of both parties, for no party's whole essence will ever express itself over one or two issues or in the period of a single decade, but also for the often expressed opinion that there is no continuity in party history, that Whigs and Tories have changed sides on most issues in the course of history, and that the study of the political past may be interesting, but is unprofitable.

For in the 'eighties the Tories appeared to the public gaze as a war party, as expansionists, as men continually talking about the honour of the Flag abroad, as the privileged classes, as defenders of property and of the institutions of Church and State, and as nothing more. Anyone who has persevered so far with this history will see how very unlike this picture is to the reality of Toryism at most periods in its history. For at no time before 1878 had it been "Jingo," never more than mildly expansionist, only once in its career had it been anti-popular, and then in collocation with half the Whigs, so that the continuity of its views on the preservation of Church and State would remain as the only mark by which it could be recognised. Whereas public opinion regarded the Whig-Liberals headed by Gladstone as the friends of every country but their own, the opponents of armed intervention on the Continent, the Little Englanders, the foes of the Church and the Lords and the upholders of the extreme claims of the Democracy. Again, anyone who has studied these pages will see how amazingly difficult it is to fit this general description to the Whig, or the Whig-Liberal, or even the Whig-Liberal-Radical Party at any stage in its career.

What is the explanation of this curious paradox? It is to be found chiefly in the influence of personality. If the destiny of the Tory Party during the middle nineteenth century had been left by fate in the hands of Peel instead of in the hands of Disraeli it would have been to-day a very different Party from what it now is. But if the fate of the Liberal Party from 1865 to 1893 had been in the hands of a man of the Palmerstonian type, or that of the late Duke of

Devonshire, as it well might have been, the Tory Party would have been more different still. It is an immense tribute to the personal effect of Mr. Gladstone's genius that he not only acted directly on his own Party, but he reacted on the other. He not merely un-Whigged Liberalism, but he half-Whigged Toryism. The effect could not be everlasting, but it was certainly momentous.

By 1880 Mr. Gladstone had become a violent Radical, Little Englander and peace-at-any-price advocate. Since his temperament and intellect were of such a character that you must be either for or against him, those who clung to Whig-Liberal tradition of patriotism abroad and property at home passed definitely to the other side—the process beginning in 1868 and ending in 1886. And by the method described in the chapter on Tory Philosophy [1] the very violence of the counter-accusations intensified this recruitment and increased the deflection of historic Tory policy. The depletion of the Whig manufacturing and professional ranks was made good to Liberalism by increased recruitment first from the Radical working men and later from the agricultural labourers.

The modern Tories may go down on their knees and thank Heaven that Mr. Gladstone was no social reformer in the restricted economic sense of the term. If he had been it is quite probable that Toryism would long since have ceased to be a great national party. For in the sheer passion of its disagreement with the G.O.M. it would probably have disavowed its social reform tradition and abandoned all allegiance to and from the Tory Democracy. As it was, Lord Randolph Churchill snatched the torch from Disraeli's dying hand, and Mr. Chamberlain, coming up from another direction, stepped into Lord Randolph's place when the latter fell. The Tory ranks were thus locked against pure Whiggery and defence of property as the be-all and end-all of the Party, but none the less the incursion from the other side had been serious, the effect of Mr. Gladstone's influence on his opponents sinister, and some cause given for the false legend to grow that Toryism stood for a kind of Jingo capitalism.

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[1] Chap. xix, p. 354.

Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote, who succeeded "Dizzy" as leaders of the Opposition in 1881, were not the kind of men best adapted to dissipate such a notion. Lord Salisbury, though in the last days outwardly reconciled to his Chief, had never really agreed with him on any main issue of domestic policy and had a strong dash of Whig reaction in his temperament. He thought the aristocracy either of birth or talent, and he had both, should rule, but he had lost the mediæval aristocratic tradition preached by Disraeli, that leadership implies service and sacrifices—even sometimes of prejudices or ideas. An aristocracy which always finds a principle of integrity preventing it ever giving away a point of dignity or interest in the game of life becomes as suspect as a manufacturer who finds that the economic law always makes it immoral and impossible for him to raise wages. And such suspicions are generally justifiable. Sir Stafford Northcote, on the other hand, was a kind of amalgam of Peelite, Whig and Conservative—a type gaining increasing influence in the Tory Party. He had all the nervousness of the commercial middle classes in their first essays in high politics. So that while Lord Salisbury was always wanting to fight on bad ground, Sir Stafford was always anxious to run away from a strong position. The alternation of these two ideas of tactics in Parliament proved inauspicious.

The situation was saved by Lord Randolph Churchill, and Mr. Churchill is quite justified in claiming that but for his father Conservatism might have slipped down a crack in 1881 as it did after 1832. The Party leaders in no way understood the strength of the situation Disraeli had prepared for them by the trialism of the alliance of the classes. They were depressed men, and, like depressed men, they foozled. To this general judgment Sir Michael Hicks-Beach (Lord St. Aldwyn) was a conspicuous exception, However, the main work lay with Lord Randolph both in reanimating the courage of the Opposition in the Commons and in rallying and recruiting the dead chief's Tory working man to the standard of his Party. There followed the exciting years of Majuba, Khartoum, the Phœnix Park murders, the Reform and Redistribution Bill and the Land War in Ireland. In the General Election of 1885 Mr. Gladstone would have been overthrown by the Tory Democratic vote in the industrial towns had not Mr. Chamberlain rushed up suddenly to the rescue with the vote of the newly enfranchised agricultural labourer in his pocket. The battle, however, still swayed doubtfully, and on the whole it looked as if Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain would triumph.

The ultimate decision came from Ireland. The attitude of the Tory Party towards that country had not been much more clearly defined in the nineteenth century than its original view of the American question in the eighteenth. Pitt was the author of the Act of Union in 1800. This had been in essence a war measure forced on the Imperial Government by the scandal of Grattan's Parliament and the dangerous rising of 1798. It represented only one-third of Pitt's Irish policy. His plan of commercial union had been killed long before by Fox and his policy of Catholic Emancipation was hurled down by the Crown. Neither Pitt nor the Tory Party had any particular reason for regarding the Act of Union as sacrosanct for ever.

During the greater part of the nineteenth century the Whigs had been the chief instruments and advocates of Irish repression, partly from a traditional alliance with Ulster Protestantism and partly because they happened to be in power. Besides, coercion on land controversies appealed to the Whig magnates. The three parties in Ireland were Whigs, Tories and O'Connellites, the latter generally working in the House of Commons with the Radicals. Then came the Home Rulers under Butt, with an increased number of purely Nationalist seats. Finally, in 1881 Parnell and his followers captured sixty-five seats for the Nationalists, leaving thirteen Whigs and twenty-five Tories. In the election of 1885 the entire north, frightened by the trend of Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy, went Tory, and the Nationalists captured all the remaining constituencies. The Whigs in Ireland were thus extinguished.

Mr. Gladstone's second Administration had been one long story of conflict with the Parnellites in the Commons and of coercion in Ireland. He had been turned out in 1885 by a combination between the Tories and the Irish. He had appealed to the constituencies for a clear majority independent of the Nationalists, so that he might be free to deal with the Irish problem without dictation. Parnell had replied by throwing the Irish vote on the Tory side in the election. When the last polls were declared it was seen that Gladstone's appeal had failed. The Irish were in a position to overthrow him any day by voting with the Tories. In many quarters it was believed that Lord Salisbury and some of his colleagues were not averse to a scheme of local government in Ireland which would satisfy Parnell, although the supposition was wrong.

Mr. Gladstone's motives at the time were fiercely impugned. It was said that he simply sold the Union in order to buy the Irish vote and remain in power. This was certainly not his main impelling motive. He seems to have been driven towards some kind of Home Rule Government in sheer despair and disgust of governing Ireland indefinitely by pure coercion. But he was too veteran a politician not to see how odious to Englishmen it might be to pass a Home Rule measure under the dictation of the Irish members. It was exactly this danger he had desperately sought to avoid. Therefore in the recess which followed the election, while the Conservative Ministry of Caretakers was still in office, he sent through Lord Balfour a private message to Lord Salisbury suggesting that he should remain in power and settle the Irish question in his own way—the Liberal chief would afford him a benevolent neutrality. This was really the old game of a combination of the British parties against the Irish. But Gladstone little understood the aversion and distrust by which he was regarded by his political opponents. His offer was turned down. By the last week of January 1886 an alliance with the Irish had been made and Mr. Gladstone was Prime Minister, pledged to take the Home Rule plunge.

The interest of the episode is the light it throws on the Tory attitude towards the Irish problem. Some people, reading events backwards, have talked as though Toryism throughout the nineteenth century was, as a Party, specially pledged against the repeal of the Union, or to the defence of the Protestant "garrison."[1] The Whigs were equally hostile to repeal, more pledged to Ulster, and in fact until about 1879 the issue was never one of practical British politics.

What decided Toryism to fight the Home Rule movement to the death was an instinctive recourse to its first principle of unity and loyalty. It was for exactly the same reason that, though they had not raised the American issues of the eighteenth century, the Tories went unanimously against the American Secessionists. The Irish Nationalists had proclaimed themselves, they thought, by a thousand acts and speeches, rebels and traitors, and if they did not openly declare for independence, it was because they sought it by a more cunning method. And, in addition, a Tory instinct for centralisation in Imperial affairs which the American fiasco had never quite killed doubtless asserted itself.

When it was definitely known that Mr. Gladstone had declared in favour of Home Rule, there arose such an uproar as had not taken place since Peel declared for Free Trade or Fox announced his alliance with North. The passage of centuries is supposed to have ameloriated the manners and soothed the passions of politicians, yet the feeling aroused over this was probably more bitter than on any issue in the previous two hundred years in which the Crown was not involved. The remnant of Gladstonian Whigs had long been chafing at their enforced association with the Chamberlainite Radicals. Nothing but Mr. Gladstone's immense personal prestige had kept them in the ranks. Now, with a just reason for revolt and an assured record of consistency in political belief, they marched over to join in the Tory ranks many old friends who had gone before.

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[1] It may be pointed out that Peel's overthrow in 1846 was accomplished by the joint vote of Irish, Radicals and Tory Protectionists against a Coercion Bill.

This was expected by the Party managers, and Parnellite members and votes would make good the deficiency. But the secession of Mr. Chamberlain and a Radical group was a bombshell. That there was an element of personal pique in his rebellion may perhaps be admitted. The Premier had never appreciated either the personality or the influence of his most formidable subordinate, nor allowed him as active a share as he wanted in the handling of the Irish problem. On the other hand, self-interest of a far more overwhelming kind bade Mr. Chamberlain cling to Liberalism at all costs, for with the Whig defection he had the reversion of the Premiership.[1] The fact of the matter is that Mr. Chamberlain was actuated by one of those overwhelming impulses which in great moments of public crisis show a man what he really is. That he was a Radical he had always known—it was at this moment that he discovered that he was a patriot above everything else. Men viewed the phenomenon with astonishment. Yet in the British Colonies it was and is the commonest combination in the world.

With the adhesion of Mr. Chamberlain's working-class following to Lord Randolph's the issue was decided. A treaty between the Liberal Unionists and the Tories was promptly arranged; the Government was thrown out and decisively, indeed terribly, beaten at the polls. The great towns went dead against the Government, and in Birmingham, the traditional centre of Radicalism, none but a Unionist ever sat for well over a generation. Even Scotland was seriously shaken in its allegiance to the prophet of Midlothian, and in England itself Liberalism ceased to be anything but a minority force for twenty years. But decisive as Mr. Chamberlain's change of sides proved on the immediate result of the battle, its implications went deeper yet. It prevented Toryism from being strangled in the embrace of the seceding Whigs, and was destined to turn Tory footsteps in the direction of modern Imperialism.

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[1] For an analysis of Mr. Chamberlain's attitude cf. *Life of Randolph Churchill*, by Winston Churchill, Vol. II, pp. 53–55.

The Liberal Unionist leaders refused office in the Conservative Government, and in the following year (1887) Lord Randolph Churchill resigned the Chancellorship of the Exchequer and the leadership of the Commons on the question of naval and military expenditure, and fell from power for ever. Partly by the accident of ill-fortune and ill-health, partly by a lack of sustained intellectual power, he remains a secondary star in the galaxy of Tory statesmen. And this in spite of the charm of his personality, his swift and romantic rise to power and the tragic catastrophe of his fall and death. Yet in the brief seven years in which his figure flits across the lighted stage, his achievements were indeed remarkable for the slenderness of his resources, the brevity of his time and the deficiencies of his early training.

Lord Randolph was not deeply learned, though he had read history under Bishop Creighton at Oxford, his favourite reading, apart from Blue Books, which he assimilated with astonishing rapidity, being novels, Gibbon and Jorrocks, so that he was probably unaware that in the stand he made for economy in armaments he was casting back to the historic tradition of his Party, rather than, as his contemporaries thought, borrowing the opinions of his opponents. In this, as in his Tory Democracy, his subconscious instincts were predominant. And indeed his Tory Democracy was not the product of an intellectual concept as Disraeli's was, nor yet an ordered programme of Social Reform like that of Mr. Chamberlain, but a brilliant rhetorical exposition of a sentiment deeply implanted in his Party and his class. When he came to fatal and final grips with Lord Salisbury and the old gang he was, however, fighting against the stars in their courses. The new Whig element was against his democratic tendencies; the Imperialism of adventure abroad and the military strength such a policy connoted, which Disraeli in his last years had not altogether succeeded in popularising with his Party, had been given a tremendous impetus within the Tory ranks by Mr. Gladstone's extravagant attacks on it. If, as Lord Salisbury justly said, "Mr. Gladstone in struggling with Ireland aroused the slumbering genius of Imperialism," Lord Randolph as an insular Tory after the pattern of Bolingbroke, and a peaceable Tory after the fashion of Pitt, was the first victim of the new movement. The deep gratitude which his Party owed him and continues to owe him did not save him from destruction.

Mr. Chamberlain immediately stepped into his place in the firing line, and indeed his influence both on the external and internal development of Tory policy and ideas is the outstanding feature of the remainder of the century. But he had many advantages over his fallen predecessor. He was the master of many legions. He held the Conservative Ministry in his hand in the division lobby, and in the country he possessed a magnificently equipped machine. Lord Randolph Churchill, as soon as he showed signs of capturing the National Union, had been bought in by the front bench and subsequently sold out with no organisation behind him. Henceforward his influence on Toryism could only be personal. Furthermore, Lord Salisbury proved himself more than once quite capable of assimilating and profiting by the lessons of experience. He had learnt much, his biographer tells us, from the failure of his doctrinaire policy on Reform in 1867. He must have known that he had only defeated Randolph by the skin of his teeth because the latter had given battle at the wrong time and on unfavourable ground. Indeed, finally he justified his choice as Tory Prime Minister by accepting, however unwillingly, the heritage of trialism Disraeli had left him, and in that trialism Mr. Chamberlain represented the third or democratic element. He would not, he dared not, refuse to come to reasonable terms with Highbury. A procession of measures of sound social reform continued, therefore, to proceed from the new Unionist combination.

But Mr. Chamberlain's democratic tendencies might not have preserved him in power if his energies had been confined to home questions. Like others, his attention was perforce turned by Mr. Gladstone to questions of Empire. Never was there a more apt pupil. He took to the new problems like a duck to water, and from the moment that he was sent to deal with the question of the Newfoundland Fisheries, because it was convenient to have him out of England for a time, he showed his innate aptitude for the fresh element. When the full flood came he rode in triumphantly upon the tide.

The white Colonies or Dominions had long been neglected, probably fortunately, by the central executive of the Empire. The Tories had been frightened by their experience of undue interference with America. The Whigs were indifferent. The Liberals and Radicals gloated over the idea that these appanages of the Crown would, if left to themselves, shortly cut the painter. Throughout this period the Colonies had scrambled along as best they could and developed their resources independently without losing any of their theoretic loyalty to the Home Country and the Crown.

Now all this was to be altered. The centre was to recognise the circumference and the circumference be drawn to the centre. The first sign of the new movement came naturally through a recognition of the joint symbol of the Crown. It was the Jubilee of 1887 which first brought the Tory Party, still flushed from its victory over the anarch Little-Englander, into contact with Colonial sentiment. The temporary and unreal Ministries of Gladstone and Rosebery from 1892 to 1895 did nothing to check the movement, and indeed the last-named statesman was well known to be an exemplar of the new creed. The inevitable return of another Salisbury Government in 1895 found Mr. Chamberlain at the Colonial Office. Henceforward matters proceeded apace. The new Secretary was of all men the best adapted to forward the progress of the movement. He was a business man, a democrat and a patriot dealing with Colonial statesmen and Premiers who usually combined all these three qualities, and had found the old type of Colonial Secretary, whether Whig or Tory, deficient in one, two or possibly all three of these qualifications. Furthermore, Mr. Chamberlain's vast popular abilities made him pre-eminently qualified to interpret the Empire to the great mass of the people. All through his career, whatever issue he took up lived and became the absorbing interest of the period, and the Imperial movement was no exception. He did not make it, but he crystallised it. If the force came from without, the concentration came from within. What was instinctive he made clear, what was silent he made audible and rendered obscurity vivid. An immense amount of practical and useful work was accomplished. The dependencies found the purse-strings of the Home Country, with its vast resources, loosed in their favour. A firm diplomacy at once upheld their interests against foreign neighbours and at the same time arrived at broad settlements throughout the world which relaxed tension everywhere. By the time of the Diamond Jubilee of 1897 a wave of Imperial sentiment swept to the foot of the throne, and the full potentialities of our widespread Dominions seemed to be recognised by the entire home population. It was like waking in some early summer dawn bearing with it the sure presage of a long, brilliant, cloudless day. Trade was good; times were prosperous; a wise, mild and progressive Tory Government seemed to accord with the desires and necessities of the people. There appeared to be no limit set to the Imperial potentialities of the British race. A nation old in war and peace, in the politics, the commerce, the industry and the arts of the world, seemed to renew its youth by contact with the vigorous progeny which had sprung from its loins. Henceforward the creed of Imperial development takes a permanent and lasting place among the gods of the Tory shrine.

It would bring the historian too near to current political controversies to pursue the story of this development beyond the bounds of the nineteenth century. How Imperialism was cemented by blood on the battle-fields of South Africa, how that very war contained the seeds of the decay of the new Tory-Imperialist Party; how Mr. Chamberlain launched his Tariff Reform policy to stay the rot at home and consolidate the Empire abroad, and how he failed, are questions which cannot be treated either impartially or in the light of history and evidence so near to the events. Much less is it possible to pursue the story of Toryism through the great reverse of 1906, when the tide of Social Reform met the river of Imperialism and threw it back into the renewed Irish and Constitutional struggle which raged from 1909 onwards till the declaration of war on Germany closed with the clang of iron gates on all these absorbing domestic topics.

The Tory Party emerged from the war and the Coalition with its ranks practically intact and with the first independent majority it has held since 1874. Never were its perpetual powers of recuperation better illustrated. It retains its original concept of the State, the Crown and the Church as born in 1660. It has brought within that concept every new element in social life at home and in racial possessions beyond the seas. It has expanded both in breadth and depth to meet each fresh demand and necessity. It has taken the new weapons without putting off the old armour. So that this history may end without any fear of self-contradiction with the question it asked in the first chapter, What is Toryism? What part does it play in the life of the race or the nation?

In the moral sphere it is the claim of duty, the recognition that even liberty is not an abstract and unconditional right, but something only to be gained and retained at the cost of self-sacrifice and at the price of service, a gift exercised under a rigid and continuous self-control.

In the historical sphere Toryism is something more than a clinging to the old ways modified by a realisation how inevitable is change, or a deep reverence for the past joined to a high hope for the future. It is the living consciousness in the individual of his unity with the State and his loyalty to his fellows, so that to the real Tory all the sons of England will be in strict reality his brothers.

And as life expresses itself both in time and in space, this personal sense of the organic unity of the race will be reinforced by the knowledge that past, present and future are in a single line of continuity. The Tory will thus feel at once a microcosm of the whole body politic and a link in an endless chain of development. His creed will be Duty, Unity, Loyalty seen in an enduring light. Looking down the ages he will say, almost in the Positivist spirit of the great poet—

> "And no man's heart shall beat,
> But somewhat in it of our blood once shed
> Shall quiver and quicken; as now in us the dead
> Blood of slain men and the old world's desire
> Plants in their tremulous footsteps our fresh feet."

APPENDIX

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