James Franck Bright

The History of Constitutional Monarchy in England

(1689 to 1837)

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William and Mary to William IV

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WILLIAM AND MARY

(1689-1702)

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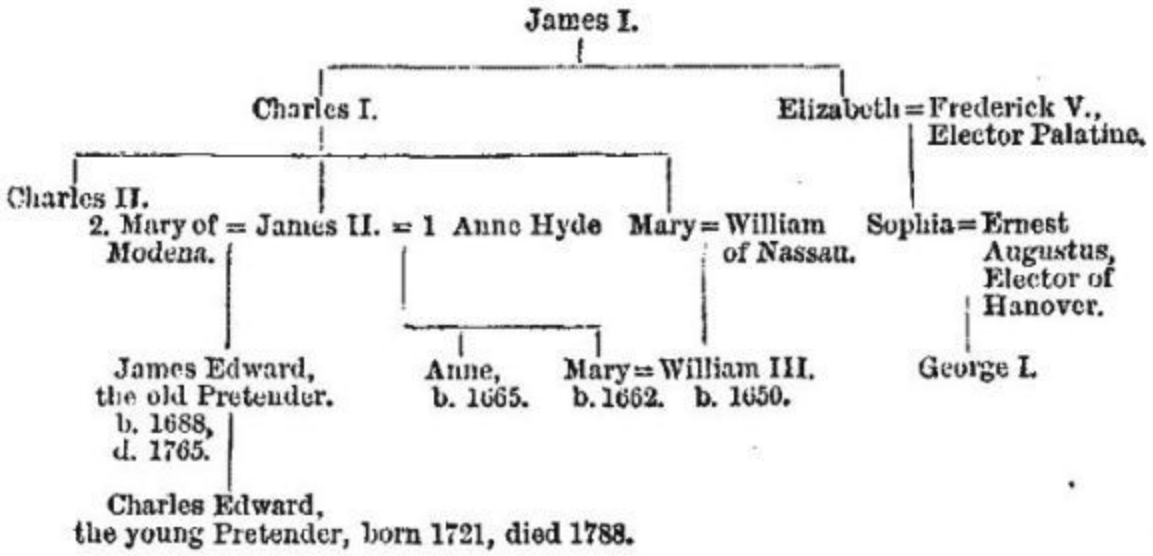

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

France.	*Austria.*	*Spain.*	*Prussia.*	*Russia.*
Louis XIV., 1643.	Leopold I., 1658.	Charles II., 1665. Philip V., 1700.	Frederick I., 1701.	Peter the Great, 1689.

Denmark and Norway.	*Sweden.*
Christian V., 1670.	Charles XI., 1660.
Frederick IV., 1699.	Charles XII., 1697.

POPES.	Alexander VIII.,	Innocent XII.,	Clement XI.,
—	1689.	1691.	1700.

Archbishops. *Chancellors.*

William Sancroft, 1678. (In Commission, 1689.)

John Tillotson, 1691. Sir John Somers, 1693.

Thomas Tenison, 1694. Sir Nathan Wright, 1700.

First Lord of the Treasury.	*Chancellor of the Exchequer.*
1689. Mordaunt.	1689. Delamere.
1690. Lowther.	1690. Hampden.
1690. Godolphin.	1694. Montague.
1697. Montague.	1699. Aaron Smith.
1699. Tankerville.	1701. Henry Boyle.
1700. Godolphin.	
1702. Carlisle.	

Secretaries of State.

1689 { Nottingham	1697 { Shrewsbury
{ Shrewsbury	{ Vernon
1690 { Nottingham	1699 { Jersey
{ Sidney	{ Vernon
1693 { Shrewsbury	1700 { Hedges
{ Trenchard	{ Vernon
1695 { Shrewsbury	1702 { Manchester
{ Trumbal	{ Vernon

BEFORE the Crown was absolutely offered to William, the Convention was eager to reform a number of the most

prominent abuses of the last reign. It was shown by the wiser leaders among them that such reforms would entail a mass of legislation which, to be done well, must occupy several years. It was therefore determined that, for the present, a solemn declaration of principles only should be drawn up. This is known as the Declaration of Right. In it, after enumerating the evils from which the country had suffered, the Lords and Commons declared that the dispensing power does not exist, that without grant or consent of Parliament no money can be exacted by the sovereign, and no army kept up in time of peace. They also affirmed the right of petition, the right of free choice of representatives, the right of Parliament to freedom of debate, the right of the nation to a pure administration of justice, and the necessity, in order to secure these things, of frequent Parliaments. This Declaration having been read to William and Mary, the Crown was solemnly offered them by Halifax, and by them accepted. They were immediately proclaimed amid general plaudits.

The Declaration of Right.

Crown accepted by William and Mary.

Thus was consummated, with scarcely any bloodshed, and by what appeared an almost unanimous action on the part of the nation, a complete revolution. It was not the less a revolution because it was held that the whole Constitution of England passed on in its minutest detail unchanged. By it was overthrown for ever the theory which came into existence under the Tudors, and

Character of the Revolution.

was brought to perfection under the Stuarts; henceforward it was impossible that the King should be regarded either as the proprietor of the country, or as a ruler by divine right, the representative of God upon earth. In the place of this theory was substituted that great Whig theory, which, arising among the Puritans, had enjoyed a brief triumph in the successes of the Great Rebellion, and, violently overthrown at the Restoration, had succeeded in making good its position during the reigns of the two last Stuarts,—the theory which regarded the King as reigning by the will of the people and in virtue of an implied contract with them. As a natural consequence of the position thus taken by the nation as the supreme power in the State, Parliament, its representative, became in its turn supreme, and although the change was not yet fully understood, the representatives of the people were gradually taking to themselves not only the duties of legislation, but also the executive. The ministry, therefore, however much they may have been still regarded as the King's ministers, became by degrees the national ministers, answerable for their conduct in Parliament, and before long became in fact little else than the executive Committee of the majority in Parliament.

Personal unpopularity of William.

The unanimity of parties which had secured the triumph of William was of short duration, nor was his personal popularity long-lived. The apparent coldness of his demeanour, his carelessness of the pomps of the Court, his wretched health, which obliged him to withdraw from London and establish his Court at Kensington, speedily rendered him personally

unpopular; while, as soon as the general danger which had caused their union was removed, the fundamental differences which divided political parties at once made themselves obvious. Moreover, the tendency to reaction, visible after all political excitements, began to show itself. Two classes were by no means ready to accept kindly the revolution which had been wrought. These were the clergy and the army. The greater part of the clergy had spent their lives in inculcating the duty of passive obedience. Although that theory had broken down in practice when the attacks of the Crown were directed against themselves, they could not bring themselves to submit without difficulty to a complete reversal of their political creed, nor could they help seeing that the success of William implied nothing short of the substitution of the Whig doctrine for that of monarchy by divine right. A very large portion of them were therefore disaffected. The army, though it had disliked the introduction of Catholics and of Irish among its ranks, and was not prejudiced in favour of any theory of monarchy, felt its professional honour injured by the sorry part it had played in the late events. So deep was the disaffection that one regiment quartered at Ipswich broke out into open mutiny, marched northward in arms, and was only brought to obedience after a skirmish with some Dutch troops under Ginkel, which had been rapidly sent in pursuit. The signs of general disaffection at the same time were so obvious that it was thought necessary to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act.

Discontent of the clergy

and the army.

Before this happened, William had had to form a ministry and to furnish himself with a Parliament. For this latter purpose, in spite of the opposition of many of the old Tories, who regarded a Parliament not summoned by the King's writ as no Parliament at all, the Convention was changed into a Parliament, and proceeded to act in that capacity. It was not indeed reasonable that a freely elected body, whose choice of a king both sides were willing to allow, should still be regarded upon technical grounds as incapable of settling matters of much less importance. The choice of ministers was a matter of more difficulty.

The Convention changed into a Parliament.

At the present time the choice of ministers is tolerably simple. The House of Commons having obtained the position of both legislature and executive, the administration is placed in the hands of a Committee of that party which is predominant in the Commons; the Crown, in fact, having but little choice in the matter. This theory of government, which is a necessary consequence of the Parliamentary triumph at the Revolution, was in the years immediately succeeding that event not understood. The notion of a king whose duties are rather ornamental than real had scarcely entered men's minds. The King was still expected to have the direction of the executive, to be, in fact, his own Prime Minister, and to nominate as heads of departments such statesmen as he thought best fitted for the employment,

William's difficulties in forming a ministry.

Ignorance of the constitutional change.

without exact regard to their political views. The effect of this was to make the King responsible for the Government; and though the right of impeachment, as exercised in the case of Danby, rested upon the supposition that ministers were responsible to Parliament, the fact was not yet fully recognized. It was this responsibility of the king which had produced the disasters of the Great Rebellion and the late Revolution. The gradual substitution of Parliamentary ministry, which should serve as an intermediate body between the Commons and the Crown, and save the Crown from direct responsibility, is the great constitutional change which was completed on the accession of the Hanoverian house. Such a change becomes absolutely necessary when Parliament has once secured a complete control of the executive; otherwise it is plain that the acts or proposals of the executive, constantly met by a hostile majority in Parliament, could never be brought to a completion. It also of necessity implies a mutual responsibility among the ministers, who upon essential points must all agree with the Parliamentary majority. These necessary consequences of the triumph of the Whig theory of the sovereignty of the people were little understood even by the best English politicians; and William, able as he was as a foreign statesman, had never a clear insight into the working of the English Constitution. Nor was his character such as to fit him to occupy the place of an ornamental king. Thus he both himself intended and was expected by the nation to exercise a supreme influence in the Government, at the same time that the newly won powers of the Parliament were liable constantly to thwart his schemes. Besides the

difficulty which this general ignorance of constitutional principles caused, peculiar difficulties, arising from the manner in which he had obtained the Crown, beset William. He had been brought to the throne by the Whigs. By the Whigs he was expected to become a party leader. They looked forward, under his guidance, to a triumphant revenge on the party at whose hands they had suffered so much. On the other hand, William's own wish was to hush the storm of faction, to become King of the whole English nation, not of one party, and to be able to use the resources of England for his great European measures; he therefore had no intention of becoming a mere party leader. Again, his view of the duties and responsibilities of a king was a high one, whereas the Whigs, on whom he might be expected to rely, were pledged to give greater prominence to the influence of Parliament. William's natural tendencies, therefore, when once safeguards for a just Government and personal liberty were secured, inclined him rather to the Tories, whose view of the prerogative was higher.

The Whigs' desire for vengeance.

It was in the midst of these difficulties that William had to select his ministry. He attempted to conciliate all parties, with the exception of the extreme Jacobites, and his ministry was a mixed one. Danby had been mainly instrumental in bringing William to England. He had indeed in the Convention thrown some obstacles in the way of the Parliamentary change of dynasty, but might fairly look for a high reward. He was displeased at being appointed President of the Council, a

William's ministry.

post of high honour, but not of great political activity. Halifax was appointed Privy Seal. His intellect, which always saw two sides of a question, was not such as to fit him for decided statesmanship. The places of real importance, the Secretaryships, were shared between the Tories and the Whigs; Nottingham, the leader of that class who expressed with perfect honesty their willingness to acknowledge any King *de facto*, and Shrewsbury, a young man of great ability and as yet a consistent Whig, were appointed to those places. Neither Treasury nor Admiralty were intrusted to any single individual, but were placed in Commission, both Whigs and Tories sitting at the Boards. At the Treasury, though only third on the Commission, Godolphin, by his superior skill and knowledge, soon became pre-eminent. The purity of the judgment-seat was secured by a careful selection of the ablest lawyers from a list supplied by the Privy Council, while the great places of the Household, where personal rather than political influence was wanted, were chiefly given to William's personal friends from Holland, the most prominent being Overkirk, Master of the Horse, and Bentinck, subsequently Earl of Portland.

By the appointment of his ministers, and by the conversion of the Convention into a Parliament, the apparatus of Government was complete. The Whigs were for a time triumphant. The revenue was settled on a peace footing at £1,200,000 a year; the hereditary taxes being given to William for the support of his Crown (a grant which forms the origin of the Civil List), while the Parliamentary taxes intended for the support of Government

Settlement of the revenue.

were granted only for limited periods. The hearth tax, the most obnoxious and unjust of taxes, as it is at once inquisitorial in its action and presses with undue severity upon the poor in comparison with the rich, was abolished. The settlement of the Church, and of the oaths to be taken by the holders of places, at once rendered obvious the strength of faction which still existed, and the difficulties which must beset all attempt at impartial government. Three Bills were produced, a Toleration Bill, a Comprehension Bill, for the purpose of so changing the construction of the Church and its Liturgy as to admit numerous Protestant Dissenters, and a Bill for the removal of the Test Act, for the purpose of enabling the King to employ, as he was most desirous of doing, all Protestants in his service. Of these three, one only, the Toleration Act, was carried. In fact the Comprehension Bill, which was introduced by Nottingham, was no doubt intended, after admitting a certain number of Dissenters, to render the exclusion of the rest more absolute. Fear of this rendered the Dissenters themselves hostile to it, and William's personal efforts to produce at once comprehension and relaxation of the Test Act were in vain; both Bills were thrown out.

Settlement of the Church.

There yet remained the question of the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. It was acknowledged on all hands that all lay place-holders and all newly-appointed holders of ecclesiastical preferments should be obliged to take these oaths,

Oaths of allegiance and supremacy.

slightly altered to suit existing circumstances. The case of the clergy already holding benefices was not so clear. Many were willing to accept the new Government peaceably, and it seemed hard that they should be required to take oaths which gave the lie to all their former political views. With regard to the Bishops too, the High Church Party advanced the doctrine that the Episcopal ordination was indelible, and that it was impossible for any Act either of King or Parliament to prevent a man who had once been a Bishop from being so always. Against the King's wish the party who were for the most stringent application of the oaths carried the day. All the clergy were required to take them by August 1689; if they had not been taken by February 1690, those clergy and Bishops who refused them were to be deprived. Between 300 and 400 refused the oath, and there thus sprang up that section of the clergy known as Nonjurors. The settlement of the country was completed by the Coronation Oath, which declared that the King would uphold the Protestant religion as settled by law. It was a foolish miscomprehension of these words, which obviously did not prevent a Parliamentary change in the arrangements of religion, which subsequently led George III. into his obstinate opposition to Catholic emancipation. When the oath had been arranged, the coronation took place (April 11), and some new titles were given; thus Danby became Lord Caermarthen, Churchill Earl of Marlborough, Bentinck Earl of Portland, and Mordaunt, First Lord of the Treasury, Earl of Monmouth.

When the Government of the country was fairly settled it was time for William to receive his reward. Parliament

gratified him by a strong declaration against the policy of Louis abroad, and assurance of hearty support should he find it necessary to have recourse to arms. On the 13th of May war with France was therefore declared. William stated that he had no choice in the matter as France had already begun war upon England. This was an allusion to the action of France in Ireland; for Louis, though unable to trust James and his English and Irish friends in that implicit manner which would have rendered his assistance irresistible, was yet so far convinced that the real key to success against the coalition was the neutralization of England, that he had allowed James some assistance in troops. The other great countries of the coalition had already declared war with France. Louis found himself with one ally only, who did him, if possible, more harm than good,—this was the Porte. He succeeded in inducing that power to continue its attacks upon Hungary, which was a constant source of weakness to Austria; but the unnatural alliance between the most Christian King and the great enemies of Christendom gave an opening for the invective of his enemies, which received still further point from his subsequent behaviour. Unable to sustain the forward position which his armies had assumed in Germany the preceding year, especially when some of his forces were required in Ireland, he ordered a retreat. What he could not keep he determined to destroy, and the Palatinate was laid waste with a reckless, unsparing fury, which enabled each country, as it declared

The European war breaks out.

Devastation of the Palatinate.

war with him, to point out that his conduct was more cruel than even that of his Turkish ally. It had such an effect on the Continent, that war was declared at intervals of about a month by Austria, the Empire, Spain, Brandenburg and Holland. William's primary object was attained; Europe was combined against France. The resources of England were placed in his hands to support that coalition, but there was yet much to be done before he was free to act.

State of Ireland.

It has been already related that, on his flight, James stated his intention of finding if possible a new centre of action in Ireland. The view was a natural one, for he had throughout his reign been preparing that island as a refuge in case of danger. He had there acted with more freedom than was possible in England, and gone far to carry out his plans for re-establishing Catholicism. Talbot, Lord Tyrconnel, a perfectly unscrupulous man, was at the head of the Government. Almost all the other important offices were in Romanist hands. Rice, chief Baron of the Exchequer, made the law courts subserve the same policy; he openly asserted his intention of assaulting the Act of Settlement; all who had or thought they had claims against the actual possessors of land, brought their claims into his court, and no proof was held too weak, no witness too untrustworthy, for the purpose of re-establishing the old Catholics in their possession of the soil. From private acts he proceeded to public. Charter after charter was forfeited; municipal corporations re-established, with reckless indifference to all forms of right, on a Roman Catholic basis. While aldermen in the boroughs thus became Roman Catholic, sheriffs of the

same religion were appointed, and in their hands lay the choice of juries, so that the whole legal apparatus was directed against Protestantism. The army meanwhile had been similarly reorganized; 6000 Protestant veterans had been disbanded and their places occupied by vehement and disorderly Catholics, who lived, we are told, constantly at free quarters on the Protestant inhabitants.

The arrival of William in England had brought matters to a crisis. The Papists thought their time was at length come. The whole country was full of panic and rumours of a coming massacre. Many of the English fled. The gentry and yeomen gathered themselves together to the towns and strong houses, to attempt if possible to make good for themselves that security which the Government would not give them. The two most important of these centres were Enniskillen and Londonderry. At the former, early in 1689, the Protestant population refused admittance to two companies of Popish infantry which had been ordered to be quartered on them. The gentry collected, drove the soldiers away, appointed Gustavus Hamilton governor, garrisoned the houses round Lough Erne, and held the district for King William. At Londonderry the same process took place. A regiment of 1200 Papists, under the Earl of Antrim, was sent to the city, and the mayor and sheriffs, who by the new charters were Papists, were proceeding to admit them, when thirteen young apprentices of Scotch birth took upon themselves to close the gates, and the Protestant gentry were

Panic among the Englishry.

Londonderry and Enniskillen garrisoned.

summoned from the neighbouring country to defend the city. In two days it was strongly garrisoned, and the troops withdrew. It was in vain that Lord Mountjoy, a Protestant, who still remained faithful to James, attempted a compromise. Some few troops under Lundy were indeed admitted, but the country was still held for the Protestants, and Lundy was obliged, in appearance at all events, to accept the new Government.

William's negotiation with Tyrconnel.

Meanwhile William had attempted to enter into negotiations with Tyrconnel. For this purpose he had employed as his agent Richard Hamilton, who had once held a commission in James's army, but who now professed to have changed his allegiance. Hamilton pledged his word that, if he failed in his commission, he would come back in three weeks; but, forfeiting his promise, he returned to his old allegiance, and became a chief leader on the side of James. But the character of the quarrel was already changing, the real object of Tyrconnel, in common with the greater part of the Irish Catholics, was to uphold neither James nor William, but to destroy for ever the English supremacy. For this purpose he was willing to use the name of James, trusting in fact to the assistance of Louis, to whom he opened his real design. He succeeded in ridding himself of Mountjoy, whose loyal influence was likely to thwart his plans, by sending him on a mission to St. Germains, where James now held his Court, and where he was at once apprehended. He then

Tyrconnel's object Irish independence.

summoned the Irish to arms. An army of 50,000 Papists was collected, and many thousands more took arms on their own behalf, and ravaged the Protestant settlements around them. To complete the Irish supremacy, Tyrconnel ordered the Protestants to be disarmed. The destruction wrought is inconceivable. Property which has been estimated at £5,000,000 was destroyed. Whole herds of cattle were killed and left to rot in the fields; 50,000 are said to have been thus killed in six weeks, while about 400,000 sheep were similarly slain. Unable to withstand this general movement, the Protestants in the south and west were overpowered, or retreated if possible to the strongholds of Londonderry and Enniskillen. In those two places the flower of the English settlers stood at bay, surrounded on all sides by hordes of liberated serfs now in mutiny against their former masters. An army was ordered to march northwards under the traitor Richard Hamilton. The Protestants fled before it; 30,000 of them collected as a last asylum behind the walls of Londonderry.

His temporary success.

The country was in this condition when James, in answer to the messages which Tyrconnel had sent him, determined, with the assent of Louis, and with considerable assistance in officers and arms, himself to visit Ireland. He landed at Cork, and soon appeared in the capital, while William, unable to act with energy on account of the difficulties which surrounded him, was assailed by unthinking men with violent abuse for not taking stronger measures to prevent

He gets James over.

those disasters which he was really watching with the greatest dismay.

On his arrival in Dublin it was gradually brought home to James that it was no feeling of passionate loyalty which was exciting the Irish population. Among those who attended his Court there were two distinct factions. Some Englishmen, with the loyal feelings which animated English Jacobites, were anxious to re-establish James and to retain the English influence in Ireland. Another party, which included Tyrconnel and almost all the Irish Papists, were fighting to destroy the English supremacy, they cared not how, and intriguing to secure the assistance of France. James would naturally have inclined to the former party, but soon learnt that the power of his partisans was entirely gone.

Character of Irish Jacobites.

He made a feeble struggle, and, contrary to the wish of the French and Irish, proceeded himself to the siege of Londonderry. On his march he found that the Protestants, as they retired, had destroyed all the crops and houses behind them. He journeyed through a desert, and when he found that the inhabitants of the city had got rid of their treacherous governor Lundy, had taken matters into their own hands, and appointed Walker, a clergyman, and Major Henry Baker, joint governors, he determined to return instantly to Dublin, there to hold a Parliament. The prosecution of the siege was intrusted to a French general, Maumont, and Richard Hamilton. The defence was so vigorous that the siege was soon turned into a blockade;

Siege of Londonderry.

and while the gallant city was holding out to the last extremity, the Parliament at Dublin met.

As a matter of course, considering the circumstances under which it was collected, it consisted entirely of Catholics. It proceeded to act with a recklessness which might be expected from an enslaved nation suddenly called to power, and from men who for years had been unused to public life. The great Act of Settlement, that compromise which in Charles II.'s reign had settled the share of land to be held by the Protestant emigrants who had followed Cromwell's victorious arms, was repealed. Many thousands of square miles were at a single blow transferred from English to Celtic landlords. The Act itself may have been unjust, but for years it had been the basis of society, and men had acted as though their titles were secure. Its repeal was therefore a violent act of unjust confiscation. Moreover, as far as James was concerned, nothing could be more disastrous, nothing could more surely destroy any influence he might yet keep in England, where it seemed to foreshadow the justice Protestants might expect from his hands were his reign re-established. Such slight opposition as James offered (for he had the wisdom to see some of the disastrous consequences of the measure) had no effect but to cause profound distrust of himself. Other legislation even more disastrous met with no opposition at his hands. In his want of money he issued false coinage of copper and brass, intrinsically worth perhaps a sixtieth of its nominal value. Thus of course all creditors and mortgagees, who were

Wild legislation of the Irish Parliament.

pretty certain to be Protestants, were ruined. The money was rendered current by threats of punishment against those who refused it. Prices were kept down by law; and to complete this wild legislation, the great Act of Attainder was passed, containing between 2000 or 3000 names. No inquiry was instituted as to the grounds of accusation against those who were attainted, and opportunities were thus afforded for any man who had a personal enemy to introduce his name in the Bill. A limit of time was set within which all those named were bound to surrender themselves to justice or be liable to execution without trial; while, to prevent the King's mercy from interfering with their vengeance, the Commons passed a law that after November the right of pardon should cease.

Its effect on English Jacobites.

Such legislation, sanctioned by James, while it failed to give him real popularity in Ireland, checked the reaction which was beginning in England. The feeling there grew constantly stronger against the inaction of the Government. The fate of Londonderry and Enniskillen were watched with absorbing interest. A fleet, with some troops under command of Kirke, was at length despatched, but Kirke refused to risk the passage of the river which led from Lough Foyle, and which was now guarded by forts and a boom, and the starving population of Londonderry had the misery of watching the ships as they lay idly in the Lough. But they still held out with astonishing constancy. Their friends in Enniskillen fared somewhat better. They did not confine themselves to defence; but, issuing from the little island in Lough Erne which surrounded their city, they

collected from their enemies a considerable quantity of cattle and ammunition, and lived in comparative comfort and security. At length, in July, the fate of Londonderry seemed sealed. Nearly everything eatable had been devoured,—horse-flesh, rats, salt hides, all that could possibly be converted even into the most objectionable food. It seemed impossible to feed the population in any way for two days longer. At last a peremptory order reached Kirke to relieve the city at all hazards. On the 30th of July, three vessels, two transports and a frigate, sailed up the river, and, after a few minutes of difficulty, broke the boom, and in the evening, at ten o'clock, were anchored at the quay. The city was saved after 105 days of siege and blockade.

Londonderry saved.

The Irish army immediately broke up from its camp and retreated. As it reached Strabane, on its backward course, it received the news of another disaster. A great effort had been determined on against Enniskillen, but Colonel Wolseley had been sent to take the command by Kirke, and was successful in defeating at Newton Butler the approaching Irish, of whom nearly 2000 were put to the sword or drowned in a neighbouring lough. The news of this defeat hastened the steps of the retreating army as it returned from Londonderry, and it fled in confusion to Charlemont.

Battle of Newton Butler.

The same week which saw the relief of Londonderry and

Violent character of the Revolution in Scotland.

the battle of Newton Butler was remarkable also for the great defeat of William's army at Killiecrankie. In accordance with the character of the Scotch people, and in some proportion to the cruelty which had been exercised upon them, the Revolution in Scotland took a more violent form than it had assumed in England, for in the North James had been able to carry out more completely those plans which had produced his fall in the southern kingdom. A Church repugnant to the majority of the people had been forced upon them by law; in defiance of the opposition of a subservient Parliament, all the high places had been filled with Papists; nonconformity had been punished with an arbitrary severity and a ferocious cruelty of which England showed no counterpart; the electoral laws also, by requiring from all electors abjuration of the Covenant and an assertion of the King's ecclesiastical supremacy, excluded all but Prelatists from the right of election. Before collecting a national Convention, to consider the state of the nation under the present circumstances, it was necessary to dispense with the Act which excluded Presbyterians from the franchise. The Convention consequently consisted almost exclusively of Whigs, and the change of Government was marked by grave disorders in many parts of the country; nor, though William disliked these excesses, was he able to repress them, and the Episcopal clergy were in many instances most roughly used. There was at first some talk of a union with England, for the national feeling of the Scotch was beginning to yield to the increasing belief that in most points, especially of a financial and commercial

Opposition to a union.

character, such a union was very desirable; while many even of the Whigs in England wished for a union of the Churches and the establishment of Episcopacy on some broad and general basis. But the religious feeling of the country was quite averse to such a course, and William was too tolerant a man to wish to apply any coercion to men's consciences. He therefore wrote a letter, in which he did little else than profess his attachment to Protestantism, and his wish if possible to establish the Union. The arrangements he left in their own hands.

Unable himself to be present in Scotland, he intrusted the business to the two Dalrymples, father and son, and to Lord Melville, a prudent man, who, though he had retired abroad during the storm which succeeded the Rye-House Plot, had never committed himself warmly to either party. James's agents were Graham of Claverhouse, now Earl of Dundee, and Lindsay, Earl of Balcarras. The Castle of Edinburgh, was in the hands of Gordon, a Jacobite; and James's agents hoped that, by their own vigour and by means of the dread inspired by the castle which commanded the town, they might yet obtain a predominant influence in the Convention. The first trial of strength was the election of a President, and before long it became evident that the Whigs would certainly have the upper hand. They elected the Duke of Hamilton, and about the middle of March the regular sittings of the Convention began. At the first meeting, letters from both King James and King William were produced; that of James, the production of Melfort, was

Letters from James and William.

fitted, like most of the productions of that statesman, to injure his master's cause as much as possible. There was no word of repentance, no word of conciliation; every line breathed an obstinate determination to continue in the old course, and threats of vengeance on his enemies. Dundee and Balcarras felt that all hope of maintaining a majority was lost, and having thus failed in their first object, determined to pursue, in accordance with a plan they had already arranged, a second line of policy, to secede with their adherents to Stirling, and there establish a rival Convention. The movement was thwarted by the premature retreat of Dundee. Edinburgh was full of fierce Western Cameronians, and feeling that his life was endangered, he hastily withdrew. The news that, with a party of his old troopers, he had set out for Stirling, holding on his way a conference with the Governor of Edinburgh Castle, excited the fears and hatred of the Presbyterians in the Convention. They at once proceeded to rouse the people of Edinburgh to arms, and to place the town in an attitude of defence, and thus thwart the idea of secession. They then went on to consider the state of the nation, and declaring that the late King had forfeited the throne by misconduct, offered the Crown to William and Mary. The offer was accompanied, as in the case of England, with a Declaration of Right,—here in Scotland called the Claim of Right,—in which, without discussing the question, they declared that Episcopacy was abolished. The Crown was then solemnly offered and accepted.

Dundee tries to secede.

Edinburgh arms.

Yet the difficulties of William were still most severe. The bigoted Covenanters held aloof from a tolerant King who had not taken the Covenant; and a number of extreme Whigs, who were attached to a monarchy so limited as to be really a republic, put themselves at the head of a factious opposition, forming among themselves an organization known by the name of the Club. While this powerful opposition was being formed in the Lowlands, war in behalf of the fugitive King actually broke out in the Highlands. Dundee, on his flight from Edinburgh, had remained for some time peaceably in his own house. But letters passing between him and Melfort, James's minister in Ireland, were intercepted. An order was issued to arrest him, with his colleague Balcarras. Balcarras was secured, but Dundee fled towards Inverness, where he found a state of affairs which he was able to turn to the advantage of James.

The Club.

Dundee escapes.

The politics of the Highland clans bore little relation to the general politics of the nation. The Highlanders were as yet a half savage race, devoted to their patriarchal form of society, and with political attachments which seldom went beyond the head of their tribe. It mattered but little to them whether James or William were upon the Scottish throne. They were equally ready to oppose by violence any Government which interfered with their wild freedom. But among themselves they had bitter tribal jealousies and feuds, and the partial introduction of the feudal system had complicated their relations one with the other. Great chiefs, combining the

Highland politics.

character of feudal lords and clan patriarchs, had contrived to extend their power, and render other clans besides their own dependent or tributary. The Earl or Marquis of Argyle, Mac Callum More, as the Highlanders called him, head of the great clan of Campbell in Argyleshire, had thus extended his pre-eminence at the expense of his neighbours. The power of this chief was great. He could bring 5000 men into the field, and his jurisdiction was so independent as to be hardly second to that of the Crown; consequently all his neighbours looked upon him with jealousy and hatred. That the politics of the head of the Campbell clan were consistently Whig was enough to make all his rivals and enemies Jacobites. But of late years the power of the Campbells had decayed; during the triumph of the Stuart Kings the Marquis of Argyle had been beheaded, and the Earl, his son, had been driven into exile. As the Campbells sunk, the Macdonalds, the chief rivals of their clan, on whose property they had encroached, had risen. But the Macdonalds had a constant feud with the Mackintoshes in the neighbourhood of Inverness, in pursuance of which Macdonald of Keppoch was at this moment engaged in the siege of Inverness, which had made common cause with the Mackintoshes.

Dundee in the Highlands.

When therefore Dundee came into that neighbourhood he found the clans already in arms on quarrels of their own. It occurred to him that, by taking advantage of the general enmity against the Campbells, he might form a union of the clans, nominally at all events in favour of King James. His plan met with a partial success. He could not indeed induce the Mackintoshes to join with the

Macdonalds, but he secured their neutrality. The eastern clans as a rule followed the same course; but those of the west, more immediate sufferers from the power and encroachments of the Campbells, eagerly leapt at the opportunity of attacking the party of which Argyle was one of the chiefs. Mackay was sent to take the command of the English troops. With his regular soldiers he could do nothing against the rapid Highlanders in the mountains, and urged the plan, subsequently followed, of building a line of forts across the country. The campaign produced no event of importance. A cessation of arms occurred in June, spent by Dundee in obtaining succour from James in Ireland, by Mackay in raising troops with some difficulty among the Western Cameronians.

A fresh dispute among the clans renewed the war. The Murrays, of whom Athol was the chief, had not as yet declared for either side. The Marquis of Athol himself withdrew for safety to England, but his eldest son declared for King William, while his steward, who was believed to be in his confidence, declared for James. The two sections of the clan disputed the possession of the castle of Blair Athol, the seat of the chief. It was felt by both parties that the adhesion of this large clan was of great importance, and Dundee on one side and Mackay on the other hurried to support their friends at Blair Athol. The castle lies a little beyond the northern end of the pass of Killiecrankie, a ravine through which the river Garry rushes, and which leads from the lowlands of Perthshire to the mountains. The armies were not ill-matched in numbers.

Battle of Killiecrankie. July 27.

Mackay's troops were suffered by the Highlanders to get clear of the difficult pass, and then found themselves in a little valley, with the Highlanders occupying the hills around. As long as it was an affair of musketry, the Lowland troops, many of whom were veterans, held their ground, but when the clans suddenly threw their firelocks from them and rushed with a wild yell on their lines, they broke and fled, with the exception of one regiment, and rushed in helpless flight down the narrow pass. It was the difference in the weapons which caused this strange victory of undisciplined over disciplined troops. When he had fired his volley, the Highlander threw away his firelock, and was ready in an instant to rush forward with his broadsword. The bayonet at that time in use was so constructed that, when fixed, it filled up the mouth of the barrel. It took some minutes to arrange the clumsy contrivance which turned the musket into a pike. While the regulars were still fumbling with their weapons, the Highlanders were upon them.[1] Mackay brought off such troops as were left with rare coolness, and the death of Dundee neutralized the effects of the defeat. The Highland army passed under the command of General Cannon, who had brought over the Irish auxiliaries, a man of no particular ability. Mackay succeeded in rapidly re-establishing his army. He destroyed the prestige of the Highlanders by defeating a detachment at St. Johnstone's, near Perth; and when a newly raised regiment of Cameronian recruits beat off the mountaineers at Dunkeld, no longer held together by a leader of ability, they broke up

Mackay concludes the war.