

***SAMUEL RAWSON
GARDINER***



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CROMWELL***

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Oliver Cromwell

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PREFACE.

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The following work gives within a short compass a history of Oliver Cromwell from a biographical point of view. The text has been revised by the author, but otherwise is the same in a cheaper form as that which was published by Messrs. Goupil with illustrations in their Illustrated Series of Historical Volumes.

OLIVER CROMWELL.

CHAPTER I. KING AND PARLIAMENT.

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Oliver Cromwell, the future Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, was born at Huntingdon on April 25, 1599, receiving his baptismal name from his uncle, Sir Oliver Cromwell of Hinchbrooke, a mansion hard by the little town. It was at Huntingdon that the father of the infant, Robert Cromwell, had established himself, farming lands and perhaps also adding to his income by the profits of a brewhouse managed by his wife, Elizabeth—a descendant of a middle-class Norfolk family of Steward—originally Styward—which, whatever writers of authority may say, was not in any way connected with the Royal House of Scotland.

"I was," said Cromwell in one of his later speeches, "by birth a gentleman, living neither in any considerable height nor yet in obscurity. I have been called to several employments in the nation, and—not to be overtedious—I did endeavour to discharge the duty of an honest man in those services to God and His people's interest, and to the Commonwealth." The open secret of Cromwell's public life is set forth in these words:—his aim being: first, to be himself an honest man; secondly, to serve God and the people of God; and thirdly, to fulfil his duty to the Commonwealth. In this order, and in no other, did his obligations to his fellow-creatures present themselves to his eyes. For the work before him it could not be otherwise than helpful that his position in life brought him into contact with all classes of society.

What powers and capacities this infant—or indeed any other infant—may have derived from this or the other ancestor, is a mystery too deep for human knowledge; but at least it may be noted that the descent of the Cromwells from Sir Richard Williams, the nephew of Thomas Cromwell, the despotic Minister of Henry VIII., brought into the family a Welsh strain which may have shown itself in the fervid idealism lighting up the stern practical sense of the warrior and statesman.

Of Oliver's father little is known; but his portrait testifies that he was a man of sober Puritanism, not much given to any form of spiritual enthusiasm—very unlike his elder brother, Sir Oliver, who had inherited not only the estate, but the splendid ways of his father, Sir Henry Cromwell—the Golden Knight—and who, after running through his property, was compelled to sell his land and to retire into a more obscure position. As the little Oliver grew up, he had before his eyes the types of the future Cavalier and Roundhead in his own family. So far as parental influence could decide the question, there could be no doubt on which side the young Oliver would take his stand. His education was carried on in the free school of the town, under Dr. Beard, the author of *The Theatre of God's Judgments Displayed*, in which a belief in the constant intervention of Providence in the punishment of offenders was set forth by numerous examples of the calamities of the wicked. Though Oliver afterwards learned to modify the crudeness of this teaching, the doctrine that success or failure was an indication of Divine favour or disfavour never left him, and he was able, in the days of his greatness, to point unhesitatingly to the results of Naseby

and Worcester as evidence that God Himself approved of the victorious cause.

In 1616 Cromwell matriculated at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, where his portrait now adorns the walls of the College hall. After a sojourn of no more than a year, he left the University, probably—as his father died in that year—to care for his widowed mother and his five sisters, he himself being now the only surviving son. It is said that not long afterwards he settled in London to study law, and though there is no adequate authority for this statement, it derives support from the fact that he found a wife in London, marrying in 1620, at the early age of twenty-one, Elizabeth Bourchier, the daughter of a City merchant. The silence of contemporaries shows that, in an age when many women took an active part in politics, she confined herself to the sphere of domestic influence. The one letter of hers that is preserved displays not merely her affectionate disposition, but also her helpfulness in reminding her great husband of the necessity of performing those little acts of courtesy which men engaged in large affairs are sometimes prone to neglect. She was undoubtedly a model of female perfection after the Periclean standard.

Of Cromwell's early life for some years after his marriage we have little positive information. His public career was opened by his election in 1628 to sit for Huntingdon in the Parliament which insisted on the Petition of Right. Though his uncle had by this time left Hinchingbrooke, and could therefore have had no direct influence on the electors, it is quite likely that the choice of his fellow-townsmen was, to a great extent, influenced by their desire to show their

attachment to a family with which they had long been in friendly relation.

Even so, however, it is in the highest degree improbable that Cromwell would have been selected by his neighbours, to whom every action of his life had been laid open, unless they had had reason to confide in his moral worth as well as in his aptitude for public business. Yet it is in this period of his life that, if Royalist pamphleteers are to be credited, Cromwell was wallowing in revolting profligacy, and the charge may seem to find some support from his own language in a subsequent letter to his cousin, Mrs. St. John: "You know," he wrote, "what my manner of life hath been. Oh! I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light. I was a chief—the chief of sinners. This is true, I hated godliness, yet God had mercy upon me." It has however never been wise to take the expressions of a converted penitent literally, and it is enough to suppose that Cromwell had been, at least whilst an undergraduate at Cambridge, a buoyant, unthinking youth, fond of outdoor exercise; though, on the other hand, whilst he never attained to proficiency as a scholar, he by no means neglected the authorised studies of the place. Much as opinion has differed on every other point in his character, there was never any doubt as to his love of horses and to his desire to encourage men of learning. It may fairly be argued that his tastes in either direction must have been acquired in youth.

One piece of evidence has indeed been put forward against Cromwell. On the register of St. John's parish at Huntingdon are two entries—one dated 1621, and the other 1628—stating that Cromwell submitted in those years to

some form of Church censure. The formation of the letters, however, the absence of any date of month or day, and also the state of the parchment on which the entries occur, leave no reasonable doubt that they were the work of a forger. It does not follow that the forger had not a recollection that something of the kind had happened within local memory, and if we take it as possible that Cromwell was censured for 'his deeds,' whatever they may have been, in 1621, and that in 1628 he voluntarily acknowledged some offence—the wording of the forged entry gives some countenance to this deduction—may we not note a coincidence of date between the second entry and one in the diary of Sir Theodore Mayerne—the fashionable physician of the day—who notes that Oliver Cromwell, who visited him in September of that year, was *valde melancholicus*. Even if no heed whatever is to be paid to the St. John's register, Mayerne's statement enables us approximately to date that time of mental struggle which he passed through at some time in these years, and which was at last brought to an end when the contemplation of his own unworthiness yielded to the assurance of his Saviour's love. "Whoever yet," he wrote long afterwards to his daughter Bridget, "tasted that the Lord is gracious, without some sense of self, vanity and badness?" It was a crisis in his life which, if he had been born in the Roman communion, would probably have sent him—as it sent Luther—into a monastery. Being what he was, a Puritan Englishman, it left him with strong resolution to do his work in this world strenuously, and to help others in things temporal, as he himself had been helped in things spiritual.

English Puritanism, like other widely spread influences, was complex in its nature, leading to different results in different men. Intellectually it was based on the Calvinistic theology, and many were led on by it to the fiercest intolerance of all systems of thought and practice which were unconformable thereto. Cromwell's nature was too large, and his character too strong, to allow him long to associate himself with the bigots of his age. His Puritanism—if not as universally sympathetic as a modern philosopher might wish—was moral rather than intellectual. No doubt it rendered him impatient of the outward forms in which the religious devotion of such contemporaries as George Herbert and Crashaw found appropriate sustenance, but at the same time it held him back from bowing down to the idol of the men of his own party—the requirement of accurate conformity to the Calvinistic standard of belief. It was sufficient for him, if he and his associates found inspiration in a sense of personal dependence on God, issuing forth in good and beneficent deeds.

When, in 1628, Cromwell took his seat in the House of Commons he would be sure of a good reception as a cousin of Hampden. There is, however, nothing to surprise us in his silence during the eventful debates on the Petition of Right. He was no orator by nature, though he could express himself forcibly when he felt deeply, and at this time, and indeed during the whole of his life, he felt more deeply on religious than on political questions. The House, in its second session held in 1629, was occupied during the greater portion of its time with religious questions, and it was then that Cromwell made his first speech, if so short an

utterance can be dignified by that name. "Dr. Beard," he informed the House, "told him that one Dr. Alablaster did at the Spital preach in a sermon tenets of Popery, and Beard being to repeat the same, the now Bishop of Winton, then Bishop of Lincoln, did send for Dr. Beard, and charged him as his diocesan, not to preach any doctrine contrary to that which Alablaster had delivered, and when Beard did, by the advice of Bishop Felton, preach against Dr. Alablaster's sermon and person, Dr. Neile, now Bishop of Winton, did reprehend him, the said Beard, for it."

The circumstances of the time give special biographical importance to the opening of this window into Cromwell's mind. The strife between the Puritan clergy and the Court prelates was waxing high. The latter, whilst anxious to enforce discipline, and the external usages which, though enjoined in the Prayer Book, had been neglected in many parts of the country, were at the same time contending for a broader religious teaching than that presented by Calvin's logic; but knowing that they were in a comparatively small minority they, perhaps not unnaturally, fell back on the protection of the King, who was in ecclesiastical matters completely under the influence of Laud. The result of Charles's consultations with such Bishops as were at hand had been the issue of a Declaration which was prefixed to a new edition of the articles, and is to be found in Prayer Books at the present day. The King's remedy for disputes in the Church on predestination and such matters was to impose silence on both parties, and it was in view of this policy that Cromwell raked up an old story to show how at least twelve years before, his old schoolmaster, Dr. Beard,

had been forbidden to preach any doctrine but that which the member for Huntingdon stigmatised as Popish, and this too by a prelate who was now seeking, in a less direct way, to impose silence on Puritan ministers. Other members of Parliament had striven to oppose the ecclesiasticism of the Court by the intolerant assertion that Calvinism alone was to be preached. Cromwell did nothing of the kind. He did not even say that those who upheld what he calls 'tenets of Popery' were to be silenced. He merely asked that those who objected to them might be free to deliver their testimony in public. There is the germ here of his future liberal policy as Lord Protector—the germ too of a wide difference of opinion from those with whom he was at this time acting in concert.^A

^A My argument would obviously not stand if the remainder of the speech printed in Rushworth were held to be genuine. There is, however, good reason to know that it is not (*Hist. of Eng.*, 1603-1642, vii., 56, note).

Little as we know of Cromwell's proceedings during the eleven years in which no Parliament sat, that little is significant. His interference in temporal affairs was invariably on the side of the poor. In 1630 a new charter was granted to Huntingdon, conferring the government of the town on a mayor and twelve aldermen appointed for life. To this Cromwell raised no objection, taking no special delight in representative institutions, but he protested against so much of the charter as, by allowing the new corporation to deal at its pleasure with the common property of the borough, left the holders of rights of pasture at their mercy; and, heated by a sense of injustice to his poorer neighbours, he spoke angrily on the matter to Barnard, the new mayor. Cromwell was summoned before the council, with the result

that the Earl of Manchester, appointed to arbitrate, sustained his objections, whilst Cromwell, having gained his point, apologised for the roughness of his speech. It is not unlikely that it was in consequence of this difference with the new governors of the town that he shortly afterwards sold his property there, and removed to St. Ives, where he established himself as a grazing farmer. Nor was he less solicitous for the spiritual than for the temporal welfare of his neighbours. Many Puritans were at this time attempting to lessen the influence of the beneficed clergy, who were, in many places, opposed to them, by raising sums for the payment of lecturers, who would preach Puritan sermons without being bound to read prayers before them. The earliest extant letter of Cromwell's was written in 1636 to a City merchant, asking him to continue his subscription to the maintenance of a certain Dr. Wells, 'a man of goodness and industry and ability to do good every way'. "You know, Mr. Story," he adds, "to withdraw the pay is to let fall the lecture, and who goeth to warfare at his own cost?"

In 1636 Cromwell removed to Ely, where he farmed the Cathedral tithes in succession to his maternal uncle, Sir Thomas Steward. Soon after he was settled in his new home, there were disturbances in the fen country which the Earl of Bedford and his associates were endeavouring to drain. On the plea that the work was already accomplished, the new proprietors ordered the expulsion of cattle from the pastures scattered amongst the waters. The owners, egged on by one at least of the neighbouring gentry, tumultuously resisted the attempt to exclude them from their rights of commonage. We are told, too, that 'it is commonly reported

by the commoners in the said fens and the fens adjoining, that Mr. Cromwell, of Ely, hath undertaken—they paying him a groat for every cow they have upon the common—to hold the drainers in writ of law for five years, and that in the mean time they should enjoy every foot of their commons'. That Cromwell should have taken up the cause of the weak, and at the same time should have attempted to serve them by legal proceedings, whilst keeping aloof from their riotous action, is a fair indication of the character of the man. No wonder he grew in popularity, or that in 1640 he was elected by the borough of Cambridge to both the Parliaments which met in that year.

In the Short Parliament Cromwell sat, so far as we know, as a silent member. Of his appearance in the Long Parliament we have the often-quoted description of his personal appearance from a young courtier. "I came into the House," wrote Sir Philip Warwick, "one morning well clad, and perceived a gentleman speaking whom I knew not, very ordinarily apparelled, for it was a plain cloth suit which seemed to be made by an ill country tailor; his linen was plain, and not very clean; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not larger than his collar. His hat was without a hat-band. His stature was of a good size; his sword stuck close to his side; his countenance swollen and reddish, his voice sharp and untuneable, and his eloquence full of fervour, for the subject matter would not bear much of reason, it being on behalf of a servant of Mr Prynne's who had dispersed libels against the Queen for her dancing and such like innocent and courtly sports; and he aggravated the imprisonment of this man by the council-

table unto that height that one would have believed the very Government itself had been in great danger by it. I sincerely profess it lessened much my reverence unto that great council, for he was very much hearkened unto; and yet I lived to see this very gentleman whom, by multiplied good escapes, and by real but usurped power, having had a better tailor, and more converse among good company, appear of great and majestic deportment and comely presence." Curiously enough the so-called servant of Prynne—he was never actually in Prynne's service at all—was no other than John Lilburne, who was such a thorn in the flesh to Cromwell in later years. In undertaking the defence of the man who had been sentenced to scourge and imprisonment for disseminating books held to be libels by Charles and his ministers, Cromwell announced to his fellow-members his own political position. In life—and above all in political life—it is not possible to satisfy those who expect the actions of any man to be absolutely consistent. Later generations may be convinced not only that Charles was sincere in following a course which he believed to be the right one, but that this course commended itself to certain elements of human nature, and was, therefore, no mere emanation of his own personal character. It nevertheless remains that he was far from being strong enough for the place which he had inherited from his predecessors, and that in wearing the garments of the Elizabethan monarchy, he was all too unconscious of the work which the new generation required of him—all too ready to claim the rights of Elizabeth, without a particle of the skill in the art of government which she

derived from her intimate familiarity with the people over which she had been called to rule.

Charles's unskilfulness was the more disastrous, as he came to the throne during a crisis when few men would have been able to maintain the prestige of the monarchy. On the one hand the special powers entrusted to the Tudor sovereigns were no longer needed after the domestic and foreign dangers which occupied their reigns had been successfully met. On the other hand, a strife between religious parties had arisen which called for action on lines very different from those which had commended themselves to Elizabeth. In throwing off the authority of the Roman See, Elizabeth had the national spirit of England at her back, whilst in resisting the claims of the Presbyterian clergy, she had the support of the great majority of the laity. By the end of her reign she had succeeded in establishing that special form of ecclesiastical government which she favoured. Yet though the clergy had ceased to cry out for the supersession of episcopacy by the Presbyterian discipline, the bulk of the clergy and of the religious laity were Puritan to the core. So much had been effected by the long struggle against Rome and Spain and the resulting detestation of any form of belief which savoured of Rome and Spain. During the twenty-two years of the peace-loving James, religious thought ceased to be influenced by a sense of national danger. First one, and then another—a Bancroft, an Andrewes, or a Laud, men of the college or the cathedral—began to think their own thoughts, to welcome a wider interpretation of religious truths than that of Calvin's Institute, and, above all, to distrust the inward conviction as

likely to be warped by passion or self-interest, and to dwell upon the value of the external influences of ritual and organisation. To do justice to both these schools of thought and practice at the time of Charles's accession would have taxed the strength of any man, seeing how unprepared was the England of that day to admit the possibility of toleration. The pity of it was that Charles, with all his fine feelings and conscientious rectitude, was unfitted for the task. Abandoning himself heart and soul to the newly risen tide of religious thought, his imagination was too weak to enable him to realise the strength of Puritanism, so that he bent his energies, not to securing for his friends free scope for the exercise of what persuasion was in them, but for the repression of those whom he looked upon as the enemies of the Church and the Crown. With the assistance of Laud he did everything in his power to crush Puritanism, with the result of making Puritanism stronger than it had been before. Every man of independent mind who revolted against the petty interference exercised by Laud placed himself by sympathy, if not by perfect conviction, in the Puritan ranks.

Neither in Elizabeth's nor in Charles's reign was it possible to dissociate politics from religion. Parliament, dissatisfied with Charles's ineffectual guidance of the State, was still more dissatisfied with his attempt to use his authority over the Church to the profit of an unpopular party. The House of Commons representing mainly that section of the population in which Puritanism was the strongest—the country gentlemen in touch with the middle-class in the towns—was eager to pull down Laud's system in

the Church, and to hinder the extension of Royal authority in the State. To do this it was necessary not only to diminish the power of the Crown, but to transfer much of it to Parliament, which, at least in the eyes of its members, was far more capable of governing England wisely.

That Cromwell heartily accepted this view of the situation is evident from his being selected to move the second reading of the Bill for the revival of annual Parliaments, which, by a subsequent compromise, was ultimately converted into a Triennial Act ordaining that there should never again be an intermission of Parliament for more than three years. The fact that he was placed on no less than eighteen committees in the early part of the sittings of the Parliaments shows that he had acquired a position which he could never have reached merely through his cousinship with Hampden and St. John. That he concurred in the destruction of the special courts which had fortified the Crown in the Tudor period, and in the prosecution of Strafford, needs no evidence to prove. These were the acts of the House as a whole. It was the part he took on those ecclesiastical questions which divided the House into two antagonistic parties which is most significant of his position at this time.

However much members of the House of Commons might differ on the future government of the Church, they were still of one mind as to the necessity of changing the system under which it had been of late controlled. There may have been much to be said on behalf of an episcopacy exercising a moderating influence over the clergy, and guarding the rights of minorities against the oppressive

instincts of a clerical majority. As a matter of fact this had not been the attitude of Charles's Bishops. Appointed by the Crown, and chosen out of one party only—and that the party of the minority amongst the clergy and the religious laity—they had seized the opportunity of giving free scope to their own practices and of hampering in every possible way the practices of those opposed to them. It was no Puritan, but Jeremy Taylor, the staunch defender of monarchy and episcopacy, who hit the nail on the head. "The interest of the bishops," he wrote, "is conjunct with the prosperity of the King, besides the interest of their own security, by the obligation of secular advantages. For they who have their livelihood from the King, and are in expectance of their fortune from him, are more likely to pay a tribute of exacted duty than others whose fortunes are not in such immediate dependency on His Majesty. It is but the common expectation of gratitude that a patron paramount shall be more assisted by his beneficiaries in cases of necessity than by those who receive nothing from him but the common influences of government."

As usual, it was easier to mark the evil than to provide an adequate remedy. The party which numbered Hyde and Falkland in its ranks, and which afterwards developed into that of the Parliamentary Royalists, was alarmed lest a tyrannical episcopacy should be followed by a still more tyrannical Presbyterian discipline, and therefore strove to substitute for the existing system some scheme of modified episcopacy by which bishops should be in some way responsible to clerical councils. Cromwell was working hand in hand with men who strove to meet the difficulty in

another way. The so-called Root-and-Branch Bill, said to have been drawn up by St. John, was brought to the House of Commons by himself and Vane. By them it was passed on to Hazlerigg, who in his turn passed it on to Sir Edward Dering, by whom it was actually moved in the House. As it was finally shaped in Committee, this bill, whilst absolutely abolishing archbishops, bishops, deans and chapters, transferred their ecclesiastical jurisdiction to bodies of Commissioners to be named by Parliament itself. Cromwell evidently had no more desire than Falkland to establish the Church Courts of the Scottish Presbyterian system in England.

This bill never passed beyond the Committee stage. It was soon overshadowed by the question whether Charles could be trusted or not. The discovery of the plots by which he had attempted to save Strafford's life, and the knowledge that he was now visiting Scotland with the intention of bringing up a Scottish army to his support against the Parliament at Westminster strengthened the hands of the party of Parliamentary supremacy, and left its leaders disinclined to pursue their ecclesiastical policy till they had settled the political question in their own favour. Important as Charles's own character—with its love of shifts and evasions—was in deciding the issue, it must not be forgotten that the crisis arose from a circumstance common to all revolutions. When a considerable change is made in the government of a nation, it is absolutely necessary, if orderly progress is to result from it, that the persons in authority shall be changed. The man or men by whom the condemned practices have been maintained cannot be

trusted to carry out the new scheme, because they must of necessity regard it as disastrous to the nation. The success of the Revolution of 1688–89 was mainly owing to the fact that James was replaced by William; in 1641 neither was Charles inclined to fly to the Continent, nor were the sentiments of either party in the House such as to suggest his replacement by another prince, even if such a prince were to be found. All that his most pronounced adversaries—amongst whom Cromwell was to be counted—could suggest was to leave him the show and pomp of royalty, whilst placing him under Parliamentary control and doing in his name everything that he least desired to do himself. It was a hopeless position to be driven into, and yet, the feeling of the time being what it was, it is hard to see that any remedy could be found.

Before Charles returned from Scotland, which he had visited in the vain expectation of bringing back with him an army which might give him the control over the English Parliament, an event occurred which brought to light the disastrous impolicy of his opponents in leaving upon the throne the man who was most hostile to their ideas. The Irish Roman Catholic gentry and nobility, having been driven into Royalism by fear of Puritan domination, had agreed with Charles to seize Dublin and to use it as a basis from which to send him military aid in his struggle against the Parliament of England. In October 1641, before they could make up their minds to act, an agrarian outbreak occurred in Ulster, where the native population rose against the English and Scottish colonists who had usurped their lands. The rising took the form of outrage and massacre,

calculated to arouse a spirit of vengeance in England, even if report had not outrun the truth—much more when the horrible tale was grossly exaggerated in its passage across the sea. Before long both classes of Roman Catholic Irishmen, the Celtic peasants of the North and the Anglo-Irish gentry of the South, were united in armed resistance to the English Government.

It was a foregone conclusion that an attempt to reconquer Ireland would be made from England. Incidentally the purpose of doing this brought to a point the struggle for the mastery at Westminster. If an army were despatched to Ireland it would, as soon as its immediate task had been accomplished, be available to strike a decisive blow on one side or the other. It therefore became all-important for each side to secure the appointment of officers who might be relied on—in one case to strike for the Crown, in the other case to strike for the Commons. Pym, who was leading his party in the House with consummate dexterity, seized the opportunity of asking, not merely that military appointments should be subject to Parliamentary control, but that the King should be asked to take only such councillors as Parliament could approve of. Cromwell was even more decided than Pym. The King having named five new bishops, in defiance of the majority of the Commons, it was Cromwell who moved for a conference with the Lords on the subject, and who, a few days later, asked for another conference, in which the Lords should be asked to join in a vote giving to the Earl of Essex power to command the trained bands south of the Trent for the defence of the kingdom, a power

which was not to determine at the King's pleasure, but to continue till Parliament should take further order.

Cromwell was evidently for strong measures. Yet there are signs that now, as at other times in his life, he underestimated the forces opposed to him. His allies in the Commons, Pym and Hampden at their head, were now bent on obtaining the assent of the House to the Grand Remonstrance, less as an appeal to the King than as a manifesto to the nation. The long and detailed catalogue of the King's misdeeds in the past raised no opposition. Hyde was as ready to accept it as Pym and Hampden. The main demands made in it were two: first, that the King would employ such councillors and ministers as the Parliament might have cause to confide in; and secondly, that care should be taken 'to reduce within bounds that exorbitant power which the prelates have assumed to themselves,' whilst maintaining 'the golden reins of discipline,' and demanding 'a general synod of the most grave, pious, learned and judicious divines to consider all things necessary for the peace and good government of the Church'. So convinced was Cromwell that the Remonstrance would be generally acceptable to the House, that he expressed surprise when Falkland gave his opinion that it would give rise to some debate. It was perhaps because the Remonstrance had abandoned the position of the Root-and-Branch Bill and talked of limiting episcopacy, instead of abolishing it, that Cromwell fancied that it would gain adherents from both sides. He forgot how far controversy had extended since the summer months in which the Root-and-Branch Bill had been discussed, and how men who

believed that, if only Charles could be induced to make more prudent appointments, intellectual liberty was safer under bishops than under any system likely to approve itself to a synod of devout ministers, had now rallied to the King.

It was, by this time, more than ever, a question whether Charles could be trusted, and Cromwell and his allies had far stronger grounds in denying than their opponents had in affirming that he could. After all, the ecclesiastical quarrel could never be finally settled without mutual toleration, and neither party was ready even partially to accept such a solution as that. As for Cromwell himself, he regarded those decent forms which were significant of deeper realities even to many who had rebelled against the pedagogic harshness of Laud, as mere rags of popery and superstition to be swept away without compunction. With this conviction pressing on his mind, it is no wonder that, when the great debate was over late in the night, after the division had been taken which gave a majority of eleven to the supporters of the Remonstrance, he replied to Falkland's question whether there had been a debate with: "I will take your word for it another time. If the Remonstrance had been rejected, I would have sold all I had the next morning, and never have seen England any more; and I know there are many other honest men of the same resolution."

There was in Cromwell's mind a capacity for recognising the strength of adverse facts which had led him—there is some reason to believe—to think of emigrating to America in 1636 when Charles's triumph appeared most assured, and which now led him to think of the same mode of escape to a purer atmosphere if Charles, supported by Parliament,

should be once more in the ascendant. On neither of the two occasions did his half-formed resolution develop into a settled purpose, the first time because, for some unknown reason, he hardened his heart to hold out till better times arrived; the second time because the danger anticipated never actually occurred.

B See the argument for the probability of the traditional story, though the details usually given cannot be true, in Mr. Firth's *Oliver Cromwell*, 37.

In the constitutional by-play which followed—the question of the Bishops' protest and the resistance to the attempt on the five members—Cromwell took no prominent part, though his motion for an address to the King, asking him to remove the Earl of Bristol from his counsels on the ground that he had formerly recommended Charles to bring up the Northern army to his support, shows in what direction his thoughts were moving. The dispute between Parliament and King had so deepened that each side deprecated the employment of force by the other, whilst each side felt itself justified in arming itself ostensibly for its own defence. It was no longer a question of conformity to the constitution in the shape in which the Tudors had handed it down to the Stuarts. That constitution, resting as it did on an implied harmony between King and people, had hopelessly broken down when Charles had for eleven years ruled without a Parliament. The only question was how it was to be reconstructed. Cromwell was not the man to indulge in constitutional speculations, but he saw distinctly that if religion—such as he conceived it—was to be protected, it must be by armed force. A King to whom religion in that form was detestable, and who was eager to

stifle it by calling in troops from any foreign country which could be induced to come to his aid, was no longer to be trusted with power.

So far as we know, Cromwell did not intervene in the debates on the control of the militia. He was mainly concerned with seeing that the militia was in a state of efficiency for the defence of Parliament. As early as January 14, 1642, soon after the attempt on the five members had openly revealed Charles's hostility, it was on Cromwell's motion that a committee was named to put the kingdom in a posture of defence, and this motion he followed up by others, with the practical object of forwarding repression in Ireland or protection to the Houses at Westminster. Though he was far from being a wealthy man, he contributed £600 to the projected campaign in Ireland, and another £500 to the raising of forces in England. Mainly through his efforts, Cambridge was placed in a state to defend itself against attack. Without waiting for a Parliamentary vote, he sent down arms valued at £100. On July 15 he moved for an order 'to allow the townsmen of Cambridge to raise two companies of volunteers, and to appoint captains over them'. A month later the House was informed that 'Mr. Cromwell, in Cambridgeshire, hath seized the magazine in the castle at Cambridge,' that is to say, the store of arms—the property of the County—ready to be served out to the militia when called upon for service or training, 'and hath hindered the carrying of the plate from that University; which, as was reported, was to the value of £20,000 or thereabouts'. Evidently there was one member of Parliament prompt of decision and determined in will, who had what so