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1688

How **Glorious** was
the **Revolution?**

by A L Morton

with a preface by Christopher Hill

and a section on Scotland by Willie Thompson

July 1988



James, Duke of York

*From a miniature
by Samuel Cooper, 1661*



Charles II

*From a chalk drawing
by Samuel Cooper, 1662*

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Preface

Leslie was in the last stage of finalising this pamphlet when he died. At one or two points he had left gaps to be filled in, and where his intention was clear this has been done. There were however two important sections still to be written. The first was his summary of the achievements of the revolution which he had left until the rest of the pamphlet had been written. We felt this could not be omitted, so in order to use Leslie's own words we decided to take the summary he made in the course of Chapter IX of his *People's History of England*. This summary has been collated by Vivien Morton, who has also supplied the bibliography. The second important section was an account of events in Scotland, which Leslie intended to follow his eloquent account of the revolution in Ireland. We thank Willie Thompson for supplying this essential part of the history.

It is sad that this essay lacks the final polish that Leslie would no doubt have given it; but it is virtually complete, and — like everything he wrote — it presents his Marxist viewpoint clearly, freshly and vigorously.

Christopher Hill

Charles II and the Restoration of 1660

The restoration of the monarchy in 1660 was a compromise which satisfied nobody. The history of the next decades is of a series of struggles in which both parties tried to revise it in accordance with their own interests, and the so-called Revolution of 1688 is important because it marked a decisive stage in this struggle. It ended both the attempt of the plebeian left to carry forward the uncompleted revolution of the 1640's and 1650's and the attempt, led by the monarchy, to bring about a Catholic-feudal counter-revolution which, if successful, could have established an absolutism similar to that existing in France. It is this double nature of the Revolution which determined its character and the frequently contradictory features which we can find in it.

In 1660 the monarchy was indeed restored, together with the House of Lords and the established church. More important was the restoration of the gentry, the natural rulers (a term which I shall have to use again) who during the Commonwealth and Protectorate had been forced to share much of their power with men from the lower ranks of society. Indeed the Restoration had been largely the result of their fears that pressure from below would further erode their position. They were happy to give the Crown power to suppress the militant dissenters — hence the Clarendon Code — but not, once their fears had subsided, to allow it increased power at their own expense. The restored monarchy was to be a limited, parliamentary monarchy whose powers were constrained within set limits. As the French ambassador wrote disapprovingly in 1664: “**This** government . . . has a monarchical appearance and there is a king, **but it** is very far from being a monarchy.”

Charles II would have liked to change this, but he possessed a keen sense of what was possible and was prepared to move slowly and cautiously. The cavalier Parliament voted him a basic revenue for life, giving him a certain independence, and in the first decade of his reign the Opposition was too crushed to assert itself.

The Treaty of Dover (1670) expressed his desire for a pro-French foreign policy, but he never pursued this beyond the point where it aroused serious hostility. Similarly in 1672 a Declaration of Indulgence, aimed at improving the position of catholic as well as protestant dissenters, was withdrawn in the face of opposition.

During the 1670's the position began to change. A new opposition led

by the Earl of Shaftesbury developed, aimed at curtailing royal powers and reversing Charles's policy. Central to the struggle was the question of the succession ; Charles had no legitimate children and the next in line was his brother James, an open and bigoted catholic. Shaftesbury and the New Country Party — soon to be known as Whigs — attempted to change the rules so as to exclude James. A succession of Whig Parliaments between 1679 and 1681 narrowly failed to achieve this, largely because of a division within the ranks of the exclusants. One group representing the upper strata of nobility and gentry and rich bourgeoisie wanted the crown to pass to Mary, daughter of James but a Protestant and married to William of Orange, Stadtholder of Holland. The more radical Whigs, including Shaftesbury, supported the candidature of the Duke of Monmouth, son of Charles by an early mistress. Monmouth claimed that Charles had actually married his mother, but the claim was never substantiated, though widely believed. Around him a wide mass movement developed, including many old Commonwealth men who had had to lie low under the regimen following 1660. The strength of this popular movement was equally disturbing to the aristocratic Whigs and to the Royalists, now beginning to adopt the name of Tories : both saw the menace of a new civil war and revival of a plebeian and possibly Leveller republicanism. The Exclusion Bill, though passed by a large majority in the Commons was rejected by the Lords in November, 1680.

Charles was quick to take advantage of this division. Parliament was dissolved and a new Parliament summoned to meet in royalist Oxford instead of in London where Shaftesbury had immense support. It is worth noting that throughout English history the meeting of a Parliament outside London was frequently a sign that something sinister was being planned. The Whigs put forward a new Exclusion Bill, Parliament was immediately dissolved and the Whigs, isolated in a hostile city, panicked and dispersed hurriedly. Charles, strengthened by a new secret agreement with Louis XIV which promised him an annual subsidy, was master of the situation and proceeded to destroy the opposition. Many of the leaders were arrested, Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney were executed, as were a number of less prominent figures. Essex died in prison. Shaftesbury and Monmouth escaped to Holland where Shaftesbury soon died. The Whig party virtually ceased to exist ; its local organisations which still remained strong, as was to be seen in 1685, were isolated and leaderless. Its great strength had been in the middle and lower-middle classes in the towns and especially among the dissenters there. In many of these towns they had fought for their independence against the dominating gentry (often Tory) in the

surrounding countryside.

This was the next point of attack. The laws against dissenters which had largely fallen into abeyance were revived, press censorship was strengthened and backed by heavy sentences on seditious writing and speeches. And since the strength of the Whigs lay in the towns the government began a systematic attack on these, starting with London. A Tory Lord Mayor and Tory Sheriffs were obtained and in 1683 the city was forced to surrender its Charter. There were to be no more Whig juries like the one that had freed Shaftesbury.

London disposed of, the smaller towns followed easily : by a mixture of threats, bribes and legal trickery, one after another was forced to surrender its Charter and to be remodelled and placed securely in Tory hands. Since these were the boroughs which returned the majority of M.P.s this ensured that any future Parliament would be overwhelmingly Tory in composition.

Charles however, between the sums voted for life in the Cavalier Parliament and the subsidy of Louis, had no need for Parliament and none was called during the remainder of his life. There is good historical ground for the Whig claim that the attack on English law and religion which led to the downfall of James did not begin in his reign but should be dated from the Oxford Parliament and the repression which followed it. But Charles, unlike James, was content to keep his counter-revolution within the bounds which were approved of by his Tory supporters. He seems to have done his best to leave a tidy inheritance to his brother, of whose sense and judgement he had well-founded doubts. Towards the end of 1684 there were even signs that he was trying to come to terms with Monmouth, but in January 1685 he died.

II. The International Background

In the mythology of Whig historians William III is the Great Liberator, the Protestant Hero who, as the Orange song puts it, "gave us our freedom, religion and laws." In a roundabout sort of way this may be true, though we may still wish to ask : what laws ? and freedom for whom ? These were the last things he had in mind when he landed at Torbay on November 5th, 1688. To discover what his objectives were we have to look less at internal English politics than at the European situation.

In the late seventeenth century there was effectively only one great power : France. Spain, in spite of its vast colonial empire, was in political and economic decline and barely able to defend its scattered possessions. Austria was preoccupied with the threat from the Turks who occupied the greater part of Hungary and in 1683 were actually besieging Vienna. France had a population of some 18 to 19 million (England had 5 to 6 million), immense resources, a large highly professional army, good natural frontiers except to the east where there were possibilities of expansion towards the Rhine, and, in Louis XIV, a ruler who was determined to make use of this favourable situation to dominate Europe. (Compare Napoleon and Hitler.)

From the time of the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) a series of diplomatic coups added to French territory without provoking major wars : the smaller states who were absorbed or threatened were too divided and too terrified to make any effective resistance, and attempted defensive alliances were broken up by a combination of threats and bribery. The one country which seemed to offer real resistance was the Dutch Republic under its young Stadtholder William. The Orange dynasty, under whose leadership Holland had won independence in what amounted to a bourgeois revolution with powerful elements of a national liberation struggle in the sixteenth century, had secured the post of hereditary Stadtholder, but its position was by no means unchallenged. It stood, with considerable support, for Dutch national unity as against the oligarchical republicans who favoured the local autonomies and represented the interests of the rich financiers and traders concentrated in the great city of Amsterdam. William himself, born in 1650 after the death of his father, had been brought up under the control of the dominant Republicans who preferred to limit his political influence. It took a combined attack on Holland by France and England (the outcome of the Treaty of Dover) to bring about his appointment as captain-general of the Dutch forces. In this war much of the country was overrun and the rest only saved by the traditional strategy

of flooding large areas which practically turned the province of Holland into an island. In this crisis the republicans were overthrown by a popular rising in the course of which the leaders were murdered and William as Stadtholder was able to bring the war to a conclusion which left Dutch independence unimpaired.

From this point he became the recognised leader not of Holland alone but of the European resistance to French domination. His policy was centred on this alone and it ruled his actions. Holland alone could never hope to succeed against French superiority in men and resources, and William had therefore to build alliances, primarily among the Protestant states of Europe but also with any state which felt itself threatened by French power. Many of these alliances were unstable, and for William it was crucial to win the support, or at least secure the neutrality, of England. Both Charles and James were attracted to an alliance with catholic and absolutist France, but there was always a strong anti-France party with which William could negotiate. His marriage with Mary, James's daughter and the next heir to the throne, as well as his own position as the grandson of Charles I, placed him in a peculiar position in which he could reasonably hope to secure England in the course of time. But with the accession of James the danger of an Anglo-French alliance aimed at Holland was obviously increased.

It is in this international setting too that the question of Catholicism must be understood. Hatred and fear of catholics was part of England's revolutionary tradition. It was connected in many minds with absolute rule, religious persecution and exploitation. "Popery and wooden shoes" embodies the popular view. Yet in England catholics were a small minority, occupying a marginal place in the national life. The typical catholic community was grouped around a gentry family in a backward part of the country, and most English catholics neither had nor desired political influence. Many were alarmed when James began his campaign to catholicise England, fearing with some justice that it might lead to increased persecution and an ending to the good relations most of them had with their protestant neighbours.

Looking at England alone, hostility to catholicism might seem irrational, but the policies of Charles and James looked very different in a European setting. Everywhere protestant states were being eroded, and advancing catholicism went hand in hand with the drive towards absolutism led by France. England's 'natural rulers', the protestant landed proprietors who now ran their estates on thoroughly capitalist lines, had every reason to fear dispossession from a French-dominated catholic Europe which might

even reverse the work of the Reformation on which much of their prosperity had been founded. There was therefore every reason for them to look to William for support against what seemed to them the anti-national policy of the Stuart monarchy. And they were quite ready to appeal, as Shaftesbury did, to the deep-seated protestant prejudices of the English masses.

William for his part cared nothing for English internal policies and not much for religious prejudices. He did not like the English and was contemptuous of the squabbles of Whigs and Tories : if at any point he appeared to favour the Whigs it was because they tended to form an Orangist faction in England. On the other hand he was distrustful of their inclination to place limitations on the royal authority which he hoped one day to exercise in England. He wanted the authority to secure the wealth, the resources and the manpower of England for his struggle to ensure the independence of Holland and for what he saw, on the whole justly, as the best future for Europe.

III. James and Monmouth

James came to the throne in January 1685 in what appeared to be a very strong position. The remodelling of local government, begun by Charles and now continued, placed loyal Tories in complete control of the counties and boroughs and guaranteed another Cavalier Parliament. Tory doctrines of the absolute submission to a divinely-appointed authority seemed to James to promise acceptance of anything the Sovereign might decide to do. He yet had to learn that the natural rulers' obedience was in fact conditional upon government being exercised in accordance with their wishes and interests.

At first it appeared as if these were to be retained. Immediately after his brother's death James made a statement to the Privy Council :

"I shall make it my endeavour to preserve the government in Church and State as it is now by law established. I know the principles of the Church of England are for monarchy and the members of it have showed themselves good and loyal subjects, therefore I shall always take care to defend and support it."

The King's brothers-in-law, Rochester and Clarendon, were at this stage among his principal ministers, but more to his liking were two sinister figures, Judge Jeffreys and the Earl of Sunderland. Sunderland's first job was to arrange the election of a docile Parliament. In this he was so successful that only forty Whigs were returned in the Parliament which met in May. Like the Cavalier Parliament they voted the new King supplies for life, and when he showed disapproval of a proposal to enforce the Penal Laws against all dissenters, which would have included catholics, it was at once dropped.

The landings of the Earl of Argyle in Scotland and of Monmouth in the South West aroused a new outburst of Tory loyalty. Monmouth and Argyle with their groups of followers — almost all from the 'middle sort of people' — had been in exile for some years waiting for a favourable opportunity. Did the death of Charles offer it? Monmouth seems to have been doubtful : the new reign had hardly started and James had not yet begun to operate the policies which they anticipated. William advised him to turn to Austria and fight in the war against the Turks, but William might well be anxious to be rid of a dangerous rival. However Monmouth appears to have been over-persuaded by his fellow exiles. Argyle also was against delay. Probably, like all exiles throughout history, they overestimated the support they could expect. They remembered the enthusiasm of the period

of the Exclusion struggles and could hardly have realised the extent to which the Whig faction had been undermined. Above all they did not realise that the aristocratic Whigs did not want a revolution from below, and were increasingly looking to William as the practical alternative to James.

The decision was made for two separate invasions, money and arms were collected and a statement of policy was agreed. This included equal rights and liberties for all protestants, annual Parliaments, judges and the army under parliamentary control, and the restoration of the Charters which had been forcibly revoked under Charles. Monmouth himself, while claiming to be the legitimate heir, did not make any claim to the Crown. The future was to be left to the decision of a free Parliament.

Argyle sailed first. His rising was a complete failure and he had been defeated and captured before Monmouth landed at Lyme Regis on June 11th. The support which Monmouth received suggests that in the west at least the local organisation of Shaftesbury's old party was still intact. Within a few days several thousand men had gathered — peasants, weavers, miners, townspeople of the middle classes. Only the gentry were absent, including many once enthusiastic Whigs on whom Monmouth had confidently relied. Nor were there any of the hoped-for risings in other parts of England.

The government, which had been warned by William of the proposed landing, was able to concentrate its forces quickly. At its request William had at once sent the six English and Scottish regiments stationed in Holland and these were sufficient to prevent any movement in London. Monmouth planned, after the time needed to recruit and organise his forces, to march on Bristol where he would certainly have found support. But he was unable to cross the Avon in the face of the royal army, which followed him as he retreated to Bridgewater. A night attack on its camp at Sedgemoor failed and Monmouth's people's army was totally routed. Many of his men were slaughtered, he himself escaped only to be captured and beheaded. The sequel was the notorious Bloody Assizes conducted by Jeffreys, in the course of which some 330 men were hanged, 850 transported and many others flogged or imprisoned. Even Tories were horrified by these brutalities and later Jeffreys' name became a by-word for cruelty. Yet in a sense he was the scapegoat for a system and a policy which felt itself threatened by the revolt from below. At the end of his life, dying in the Tower after James's flight, he was to say with some justice: "Whatever I did then, I did by express orders, and I have this further to say for myself, that I was not half bloody enough for him that sent me thither." James however was

sufficiently satisfied with his work to make him Lord Chancellor, and he was to take a leading part in James's subsequent policies.

Sedgemoor, marking the final defeat of the plebeian left in the English Revolution, was to have important, perhaps decisive, effects on the character and course of the events which history has dignified by the name of the 'Glorious Revolution'. The natural rulers, first Whig but later Tory also, who had been alarmed by Shaftesbury's appeal to the lower orders, could now feel that opposition to the Crown could be kept within safe limits with no danger to the rights of property. And James, initially terrified by this mass insurrection, felt that its defeat left him in so strong a position that he could push along more boldly with the counter-revolution which he had always had in mind, a French-type absolutism based on military force and catholic support. Monmouth's invasion had given him a reason for raising the number of regiments, and in these he had commissioned many catholic officers. This was a breach of the Test Acts of 1673 and 1678 by which catholics were forbidden to hold public office, but during the crisis of the rebellion this had passed unchallenged. James was determined to keep these officers and add to their number.

In October Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes which had given the French protestants, the Huguenots, considerable freedom to worship and conduct their own affairs, and began a policy of forcible conversion. Thousands of Huguenots escaped to England and Holland with tales of persecution and torture. All the popular convictions of Catholicism as a religion based on cruelty and intolerance were reinforced. The plight of the Huguenot became a protestant cause and James could hardly avoid a share in the unpopularity of his patron and ally Louis. He knew that this event made his claim to be an advocate of toleration incredible, but dared not condemn it even if he wished to. It was in this atmosphere that Parliament reassembled in November, an atmosphere very different from that of its first session. Every element for conflict existed.

James told Parliament that the rebellion had proved the militia useless. This was true : not only had they refused to fight but many had deserted *en masse* with their arms to form a substantial part of Monmouth's army. But if the militia was of small military value, it was precious to the natural rulers who controlled it. The idea of a standing army was odious not only to the Whigs but to the Tories, who had bitter memories of the way Cromwell's army had been used to limit their power in the localities. James's demand that he should keep the regiments raised against Monmouth (amounting to some 20,000 men) aroused immediate hostility, all the more

when he declared he would keep the catholic officers. Making protestations of loyalty and respect, the Commons cut his demand for a vote of £1,200,000 by almost half. Opposition in the House of Lords was even more open. Lying behind the matters actually under debate was the correct belief that James was about to demand the repeal of the Test Acts and of *Habeas Corpus*. After only eleven days Parliament was prorogued and was never to meet again. James realised that he had much to do before even this most Tory of Parliaments would be prepared to accept his policies. To him this Tory opposition to his wishes was merely wrong-headed, and the greater part of 1686 was spent in attempts to bring them to a better state of mind.

This took the form of what was known as 'closetings', in which peers and MPs were summoned to meet James and attempts were made by a mixture of bribes, threats and arguments to win agreement to support the repeal of the Test Acts and penal laws. It was hoped in this way to secure a parliamentary majority for the royal policy. Attempts were also made to secure conversion to Catholicism. All these were very unsuccessful : closeting produced widespread resentment, and converts were few in number and of poor quality. The most prominent was the Earl of Sunderland who now became increasingly influential with James. As 1686 proceeded and these methods failed to produce results, James adopted new tactics. In June a collusive case produced a decision that the Crown had the right to dispense with the Test Act under special circumstances. This was something for which good precedents existed. James hoped to enlarge this into the right to suspend laws entirely — something which would have given him almost unlimited powers. In July he set up a new Court of High Commission, with Jeffreys as President, to discipline the Church. This was a prerogative court of the kind that had been established by the Long Parliament, and had since then been regarded as entirely illegal.

One of the first cases it heard was that of the Bishop of London, Henry Crompton. Crompton was a Tory but strongly anti-catholic, He had led the opposition to the Crown in the House of Lords. Now he was suspended from office for his refusal to suspend a clergyman who had preached against Catholicism. It was about this time that a Jesuit, Father Petre, became the King's intimate adviser, and James began to surround himself with the more aggressive catholics to the alarm of the old catholic Jamesites who could see the dangers of his policy. It was clear however that the catholic community in England was too small and too remote from the political life of the nation to be an adequate base for the intended counter-revolution.

IV. James and the Natural Rulers

By the end of 1686 James had come to realise that there was no possibility that the Tories, the traditional supporters of the monarchy, could be brought to support his policies. A completely new strategy seemed inevitable. In January 1687 his brothers-in-law Rochester and Clarendon, who had been prepared to grovel to a considerable extent, were dismissed. Clarendon was replaced as Lord Deputy in Ireland by the catholic Earl of Tyrconnel, known to his friends as Lying Dick Talbot, who proceeded to create a catholic army which was to play an important part in James's plans. In England he consulted only Sunderland, Jeffreys and Father Petre. In July Parliament, which had been prorogued several times, was dissolved : by this time he had finally abandoned hope of using his first Parliament, and began systematic attempts to prepare for a packed Parliament which would be more subservient.

With this aim he made a complete, startling and in the end fatal reversal of policy. Abandoning the Tories he began to court the Whigs and particularly the dissenters whom he had always treated as his enemies. Reversing the policies of the previous year he started to remodel the Charters and Constitution of the counties and boroughs so as to place Whigs and dissenters in power. Claiming to be a friend of toleration and religious freedom he relaxed the laws against dissenters and allowed them both freedom of worship and a greater share in political life. In this he had a double objective. First, this new freedom could apply to catholics as well as protestant dissenters. Second, in alliance with the dissenters and the Whigs he might build an urban base of support to counter-balance the domination of the rural areas by the Church of England Tories. As always in this age, class and political divisions tended to take religious forms.

Political realities were far too strong for this strategy to have much hope of success. The dissenters were happy to take advantage of the freedoms which it offered, but few were convinced by James's new posture as a friend of toleration. They had always been the strongest opponents of Catholicism and recognised this as a manoeuvre to favour it by the back stairs. And the atmosphere after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was calculated to confirm the popular belief that Catholicism was a religion which made persecution an article of faith. On the other hand this new policy which involved a shift of power away from the natural rulers, the landed gentry, towards the urban middle class, was calculated to alienate not only the Tories who were everywhere being replaced but many of the

aristocratic Whigs who, after all, had deserted Shaftesbury and Monmouth just because of their appeal to the masses. The natural rulers might be divided as between Whigs and Tories, but as natural rulers they were united in a deeper sense, and ready to combine against such a threat to their authority.

In April James issued what is known as the Declaration of Indulgence, which suspended all the penal laws and absolved office holders from the restrictions imposed by the Test Acts. It declared that the King had 'no doubt of the concurrence of our two Houses of Parliament when we shall think it convenient for them to meet.' But everyone knew that to obtain this concurrence would be extremely difficult. The remainder of James's reign was to be occupied with attempts to secure a Parliament so packed as to make this possible, attempts which all failed. Meanwhile the attack proceeded on several fronts.

One was a challenge to the monopoly of the Church of England in education. Catholic schools were set up and the dispensing power was used to allow catholics to hold fellowships in Oxford and Cambridge. Oxford, which had always been the heart of Tory loyalties, was chosen for special attack. Christ Church and University College were converted into what amounted to catholic seminaries, but the climax came with the attempt to appoint a catholic as President of Magdalen, one of the richest and most powerful Oxford colleges. The Fellows refused and after a long struggle were dismissed and replaced by men of the King's religion. Cambridge was similarly if less spectacularly disciplined. At a time when virtually all the clergy came from one or the other University the whole established Church felt itself under attack, and the most fervent preacher of divine right felt unable to defend these actions. One unintended result was to bring many Anglicans and dissenters closer together in a common protestant front.

While James was alienating the Church, his political activities were equally unwelcome to the gentry. All over the country Justices of the Peace were being replaced, where possible by catholics but in some places by dissenters, many of these of lower social standing. At a higher level many Lords Lieutenant who were both the royal representatives in the counties and usually also influential landowning magnates, were purged. By the beginning of 1688 thirteen catholics held fifteen Lord Lieutenancies : many of them were people of little experience or authority.

One of the first jobs was to prepare for the calling of a new Parliament which would be sufficiently obedient. The Lords Lieutenant were instructed

to put to Justices, officials and all manner of prominent people three questions : whether, if chosen to serve in Parliament, they would support the taking away of the Test Acts and Penal Laws ? whether they would vote for one who was in favour of them ? whether they would support the King's declaration of liberty of conscience and live peaceably with Christians of all persuasions ? Very few gave answers acceptable to James, many replying in terms similar to those of Sir John Bramston, hitherto a Stuart loyalist :

“Unto the first two I said I could not pre-engage ; to the third I said I would always pay all duty and obedience to the King and endeavour what in me lieth to live peaceably with my neighbours of all persuasions.”

To James such evasions looked like rebellion. The prospect of a suitably packed Parliament still seemed very distant.

In November the whole picture changed with the announcement that the Queen was pregnant after having been married to James for thirteen years with no sign of a male heir. It had long been taken for granted that his daughter Mary would succeed, which meant that in effect William would be the next King. This had placed a limit on what changes James could make, and his opponents were inclined to await events. If the Queen's child were a boy — and everyone seems to have been led either by hope or fear to assume that it would be ; James certainly was confident that heaven was about to work a miracle in his favour — his actions might prove irreversible. The combination of a catholic heir, a packed Parliament and a standing army were terrifying equally to dissenting Whigs and the natural rulers. From this point it began to be probable that William might be forced to intervene, and all parties prepared themselves for this probability.

Even before this William had been taking soundings. In February 1687 his confidential adviser Dijkvelt had been in England, officially as ambassador, but also to make contacts with all sections of the opposition. James hoped to win an expression of William's approval for his policy : this was not forthcoming. Dijkvelt told the dissenters that William was opposed to the removal of the Test Acts, but favoured increased tolerance for all protestants. When he returned to Holland he carried with him a sheaf of letters, written of course in very cautious language, expressing good will towards William. Among the signatories was the Bishop of London, the Earl of Danby, Nottingham, Halifax, Devonshire, Clarendon, Rochester, as well as Churchill and Princess Anne — altogether a very wide slice of the political spectrum. Unlike the English opponents of James, William could not afford to wait indefinitely : he felt that the crisis of his struggle

to build an effective coalition against French aggression was approaching, and England was an essential part of any such coalition. At the worst he must prevent it becoming an ally of France, and the growing domestic opposition was likely to push James into the arms of Louis. A further danger, and one that he appears to have taken seriously, was that the discontent aroused by James's policy might lead to a republic. William, like the natural rulers, was anxious to avoid a revolution from below.

We do not know by what stages or just at which point he decided that an invasion was necessary. Such a venture could not be undertaken without long preparation — military, political and diplomatic. He had to prepare a fleet and an army and, more difficult, to persuade the Dutch to let him use these in England. He had to build his European alliance so that Holland would not be open to a French invasion while he was thus occupied. He had to secure the greatest possible active support from his English friends. It is hard to think that throughout 1687 he was not at least making contingency plans. By the end of the year we can be pretty sure these were hardening into definite preparations.

V. *The Years of Crisis*

On the basis of the canvassing already described, the remodelling of the corporations was pushed forward, especially after November 1687. By the following March more than twelve thousand people, reported by agents of the Crown to be uncooperative, had been removed and replaced. New Charters were issued to a number of towns to replace those revoked. Under the overall control of Sunderland an elaborate machine was built up, all aimed at the time when it would be 'safe' to order a general election.

The first Declaration of Indulgence had failed to have any of the desired effects. It had alienated the Tories without securing any significant Whig support. It is not easy to see why James thought that a repetition would have any better results. But in April of 1688 he reissued it with the important difference that this time it was to be read in church by every clergyman throughout the kingdom. Presumably this was intended to involve the Church in the illegality of his actions. It proved to be a command which even those most dedicated to the theory of divine right and passive obedience could not bring themselves to obey. The Declaration was to be read in London on May 20th and on June 3rd in the rest of the country. On May 18th Sancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, drafted a petition in the most respectful terms which pointed out that the Declaration was 'founded upon a dispensing power as hath often been declared illegal in Parliament' and therefore 'humbly and earnestly beseech your Majesty . . . not to insist upon their distributing and reading your Majesty's said Declaration.' This was signed by seven bishops and presented to the King. James was surprised and furious, all the more because the petition was at once printed and circulated throughout London. Very few London clergy read the Declaration on the appointed day.

On May 25th the Council met and summoned the seven bishops to appear before it on June 8th. On June 3rd the great majority of clergy in the provinces refused to read the Declaration. Encouraged by this and by the support they received even from the dissenters whom James was trying to abstract, the bishops refused to withdraw and at the Council meeting also refused to answer any questions. They were then committed to the Tower to await trial. Two days later the Queen produced a son. Sunderland, who was now beginning to take fright, suggested that as a way out a general celebration pardon should be given which would of course include the seven bishops. James saw the birth of a catholic heir as a reason for pressing on more sternly. By this time the case was an immense sensation and when

the trial of the bishops took place in Westminster Hall it was packed with peers, gentry and clergy, while the streets around were filled with crowds awaiting the result. When a 'not guilty' verdict was announced there were enthusiastic scenes : significantly even the army which James had assembled at Hounslow Heath greeted the news with cheers.

William in Holland had been following these events attentively, and if he had not already made up his mind to intervene this must have been the latest date on which he did so. His kinsman and close friend Zuylestein was sent to London ostensibly to congratulate James on the birth of his son which had destroyed the expectations of a peaceful succession. His real purpose was to meet William's closest English contacts and concert plans for joint action. On the same day that the seven bishops were acquitted Admiral Herbert went to Holland with a letter signed by seven separate leading figures, Whigs and Tories : the Earls of Devonshire, Shrewsbury and Danby, Lord Lumley, Bishop Crompton, Edward Russell and Henry Sidney. The latter, brother of the Whig leader Algernon Sidney, executed in the previous reign, had for some time been William's most reliable English agent, with whom he maintained continual contact. This letter stressed the need for haste, since 'we have great reason to believe we shall be every day in a worse condition than we are, and less able to defend ourselves', and promised that the signatories 'will not fail to attend upon your Highness upon your landing and do all that lies in our power to prepare others to be in as much readiness.' They feared that delay might mean their arrest on charges of treason, as indeed it would have done if James's security services had been more efficient.

William had equal though different reasons for haste. He was alarmed at James's military and naval preparations which seemed to foreshadow an early Anglo-French alliance directed against himself. These included putting the navy on a war footing, strengthening the army, infiltrating many catholic officers. The army however was so disaffected that James felt it wiser to break up the camp at Hounslow and disperse it. This did nothing to improve the army's morale. He now made one of those blunders which marked his whole campaign. Realising the unreliability of his English army, he sent to Tyrconnel for regiments of catholic Irish soldiers, creating even more panic and disaffection among both English soldiers and civilians who had been accustomed to regard all Irishmen as barbarians. The number of Irish soldiers sent was not enough to redress the military situation, but enough to weaken his position in Ireland which might otherwise have fallen completely into his hands after William's invasion. Finally, in August writs were issued for the election of a new Parliament. This, if James's

plans were at all successful, would be a packed Parliament which would repeal the Test Acts, legalise all James's actions and provide a new base for his absolutist and catholicising plans.

In Holland also plans were going rapidly forward. William received from the State the money he needed for his invasion. Thousands of Dutch sailors were recruited into the navy. Mercenaries were hired from all parts of Germany and even further afield to reinforce the Dutch army. James's demand for the return of the six Scottish and English regiments stationed in Holland was refused, and these regiments were to form an important part of the invading force. Without them and a number of English volunteers it would have been an army entirely foreign.

Diplomatic preparations were not less necessary than military. William was a gambler, prepared to take risks if the stakes were high enough, but they were always calculated risks. Every possible step was taken to ensure success, and only after that was the decisive move made. First he had to win over his Dutch public : his old republican opponents had always been cautious of any action that might offend the French or lead to war or anything that could leave Holland denuded of armed forces even for a time. This attitude was now changing. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes had had an even greater effect here than in England because of the close ties between the Dutch and the Huguenot community. And Louis had made recent attacks on Dutch commercial interests, like the arbitrary seizure of cargoes, or restriction on Dutch imports. Most of all they were alarmed at the danger of an Anglo-French alliance directed against themselves, fears which William shared. In the autumn of 1688 France was clearly prepared for war : no one as yet knew who was the target.

By September it was clear in England that preparations for an invasion were nearing completion, were seriously intended, and that the invasion would be welcomed by a very large part of the population. James suddenly took fright. On September 21st he announced that catholics would be ineligible to sit in Parliament. On September 28th the writs of election were withdrawn. The restitution of London's Charter, the reinstatement of the Fellows of Magdalen, the sacking of the new Lords Lieutenant and the reinstatement of purged J.P.s followed within days. James was abandoning his whole policy and turning once again to his traditional Tory supporters with an appeal to their loyalty in the face of a foreign invasion. It was of course far too late. No one could believe that his motive came from anything but fear, or that his repentance could be sincere. It was a sign of weakness which gave his opponents confidence that they had only

to press on to secure victory.

William meanwhile was anxious over a move from France, where an offensive campaign was being prepared. If it was aimed at Holland the invasion of England was out of the question. But in mid-September the French army moved into Westphalia and besieged Philipsburg on the middle Rhine. With hindsight this appears a blunder, opening the way for William to attack England. But Louis probably calculated that invasion would involve William in a war which, on the analogy of English and French civil wars, would be long and expensive and would prevent Dutch involvement in Europe, so giving him a free hand. He could hardly have known how isolated James had become or how quickly resistance would crumble. At best William's invasion was a desperate gamble. It committed the Dutch navy to convoying a large fleet of transports against the prevailing wind and in the face of an English navy of approximately equal strength at a season when naval operations were seldom undertaken. Once landed, William's army would be faced with one twice its size with little hope of escape if defeated. He had to rely on the promises received from English politicians whom he knew to be corrupt and untrustworthy. The fact that he was prepared to embark under such conditions shows the importance which he attached to winning England.

As soon as he heard of the French invasion of Westphalia, William decided on immediate action. He at once issued a Declaration outlining the illegal and oppressive nature of James's government and that he would come 'with a force sufficient' to maintain the protestant religion and the laws and liberties of those kingdoms. In some respects the Declaration was guarded : James was nowhere attacked and his illegalities attributed to 'evil counsellors'. Of his own intentions William says only that his expedition 'is intended for no other design but to have a free and lawful Parliament assembled as soon as possible.'

William was keeping his options open : at this stage it was impossible to forecast the way things might go. He was determined to secure English resources for his cause, but he seems not to have decided what form his control might take. Indeed it was not till much later, when James's flight made the way clear for him, that he decided to claim the Crown. To have done so earlier would certainly have alienated the support of the Tories who clung to the principles of legitimacy. The essential thing was that his invasion should be made with the support of both parties.

The invasion was originally planned for late September, then postponed to mid-October. It was hoped to make for the Yorkshire coast where his

supporters were mustering their forces, but this depended on the wind. An attempted sailing on October 29th was driven back by a westerly gale which damaged some ships. But on November 1st this gave way to a southeaster, the famous 'Protestant Wind' which carried him, not towards Yorkshire but down the Channel to his landing at Torbay on November 5th. The same wind kept the English fleet penned up in the mouth of the Thames, and when it changed, political differences prevented the navy from acting in any decisive way. The great gamble, which could so easily have ended in disaster, had succeeded.

VI. *The Invasion*

The army which landed at Torbay numbered some 15,000 men. It was weak in cavalry and artillery, but consisted mainly of well-trained soldiers with battle experience, certainly superior in quality to James's army. William reached Exeter on November 9th and stayed some time, recruiting and mustering his forces. He was in no hurry. Recruits were coming in in fair numbers, but nothing compared to those who had flocked to Monmouth. The west had been terrorised by the barbarities that followed Monmouth's defeat, but it would also seem that the common people felt that this was not their affair: let the King and the gentry fight it out between themselves. William had no intention of fighting if he could possibly help it — he wanted to rule by consent rather than conquest, and he knew this consent was forthcoming at least so far as the natural rulers were concerned. He was hardly interested in any other consent and it was clear that there would be no loyal rush to support the King.

James's army was much larger, about 40,000, but less concentrated. Garrisons had to be kept in the strategic areas and near London since it was expected that William's supporters would make diversionary risings. He was still able to assemble a force much larger than William's and ordered a rendezvous at Salisbury. His only chance was a battle before the inevitable desertions began, but he delayed so long in London that he did not reach Salisbury until November 19th. By this time his army was already beginning to disintegrate. At first there was a certain caution, but by the middle of November William's supporters were in control of Yorkshire and the Midlands, and he began to advance slowly towards Salisbury. Soon the desertions became a flood. One of the first to go was Lord Cornbury, a nephew of James. He was followed by many nobles and army officers, and some whole units went over to William. One of the earliest to leave the sinking ship was Lieutenant-General Churchill, later Duke of Marlborough. In this situation James lost his nerve and seems to have abandoned hope. Only five days after arriving in Salisbury he returned to London leaving his demoralised army without direction.

Back in London he announced his intention to call a Parliament, something he had refused to do a few days earlier. In many parts of the country, especially in the larger towns and cities, there were violent No Popery riots, and early in December a nation-wide panic which spread like an epidemic. This played into William's hands by alarming the propertied classes and convincing them that he was the only person who could prevent a

breakdown of law and order and either anarchy or revolution from below. His advance had reached Hungerford when he was met by three notable fence-sitters sent by James to discuss terms. James proposed to call Parliament and meanwhile remove his army (or what was left of it) from the neighbourhood of London. William's reply agreed that both armies should remain thirty miles from London, but insisted that all Catholics should be dismissed from their offices.

These negotiations however were a move on James's part to gain time while the Queen and their little son were got away to France. The night after his envoys returned to London he left in secret after throwing the Great Seal into the Thames so that it would be impossible to call a Parliament in his name. As soon as his departure was known there were riots in London with much damage to property but none to life. James reached Sheerness where crowds were on the streets looking for 'Papists'. James was recognised, captured and eventually returned to London. William was not pleased. James was encouraged on December 22nd to repeat his flight, and this time there were to be no interruptions.

His departure solved many problems and avoided an immediate break among William's supporters. Both Whigs and Tories had found James impossible to live with and needed William's help to deal with him. For the Whigs there was no further problem: they could happily face the possibility of James's deposition; and the idea of a new king whose right sprang from an Act of Parliament was entirely in accord with their ideas. For the Tories it was different. They were too fixed in their belief in legitimacy and divine right, and the memory of 1649 was too close for them to contemplate the idea that a King could be deposed. So long as James remained in England he was their King and would remain so, and some device — a regency perhaps — would have to be agreed. In such a case an open break would have been almost certain, with William forced to take sides — the last thing he wished. He was neither a Whig nor a Tory. True, the Whigs had most actively promoted his cause and at this time were his most enthusiastic champions. But they also closely resembled the Dutch Republicans with whom he had constantly struggled at home. In Holland he was not a King; he was merely the Stadholder, an appointed official. In England he intended to be something much more, and the Tories were more likely than the Whigs to accept this. He did not intend to be either a Whig or a Tory King, but the King of the whole political nation, that is, of the property-owning classes.

On December 24th such peers as could be got together met and asked

William to take over the administration and arranged for the calling of a Convention Parliament (it could not be a normal Parliament because there was no King to issue the writs to summon it) which met on January 22nd, 1689.

In the Commons the Whigs had a substantial majority but in the Lords the Tories were slightly stronger. The first question was the succession which the flight of James had made much easier. A few were for inviting James to return, on conditions. This was a non-starter as James had no intention of returning except with the help of a French army. There was more support for a Regency, which might be a preliminary for further negotiations for James's return and for the ultimate succession of his son. After this was defeated the majority of Tories switched to a plan for Mary to be Queen (there was a widespread but unfounded belief that the baby born in June was not James's son). This proposal was immediately rejected both by William, who declared he would return to Holland rather than remain as his wife's 'gentleman usher', and by Mary, who disliked the idea of having to exercise any authority, though later she proved, in William's absence, capable of reaching clear and sensible decisions. This left only the position that the Whigs had always wanted, that the throne was vacant and was to be offered to William and Mary jointly. The Commons added a formula, accepted by the Lords after a little arm-twisting, saying: 'that King James II, having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of his Kingdom, and . . . having violated the fundamental laws, and having withdrawn himself out of the Kingdom, has abdicated the Government, and that the throne is thereby vacant.'

An unopposed vote of both Houses declared 'that it was inconsistent with this Protestant Kingdom to be governed by a Popish Prince.'

The Convention agreed to a Declaration of Rights (later converted into a Bill of Rights) which outlined the actions put forward by James 'by the assistance of divers evil counsellors, judges and ministers' and declared them illegal in the future. These included the 'pretended power' of suspending law, the setting up of the Ecclesiastical Commission, the raising of a standing army without the consent of Parliament, interfering with free elections and levying money by pretence of prerogative. Later a 'Mutiny Act' was passed which laid down that Parliament vote money each year for the armed forces. This ensured not only control by Parliament, but also that it would be necessary for Parliament to meet every year. Later still a Triennial Act declared that no Parliament should sit for more than three years. The Convention then voted to transform itself into a normal

Parliament — itself an action of very doubtful legality.

Once King, William was able to choose ministers and officials. There was an immediate scramble for places and jobs and no one wanted to be left out. A ministry did not then depend on a parliamentary majority and William, in keeping with his principle of avoiding commitment to any party, chose men from both and from middle-of-the-roaders like Halifax. This meant that his Council was composed of men who hated and distrusted each other and was a field of constant intrigue. It also meant that he trusted very few Englishmen, and his real confidence was reserved for his Dutch intimates like Bentinck and Dijkvelt. The strength of his position was that neither Whigs nor Tories could do without him : they might think they were making use of him ; he knew he was making use of them.

William himself was prepared to accept any conditions providing he could secure the wealth and manpower of England for use against France. But before these resources were available he had to secure his hold not only upon England but upon Ireland and Scotland, and here the course of events proved to be very different from the one in England, at least in one important respect. One of the reasons why this Revolution has been called 'Glorious' in our conventional history books is that it was bloodless : hardly a shot was fired, hardly a man killed. This may be true as far as England is concerned, though it was the prelude to twenty years of war on a scale without precedent. It was very different in Ireland and Scotland. In Scotland our Revolution was bloody enough ; in Ireland it was bloody indeed.

VII. Ireland

The Cromwellian conquest of Ireland was one of the matters left almost unchanged in 1660. The land which had passed to protestants remained in their possession and they held over two-thirds of the country and considerably more of the best land. Under Charles there was some amelioration of the anti-catholic penal laws, as had been the case in England except in the years of the Popish Plot crisis. Under James the situation changed considerably, and when Tyrconnel became Deputy was entirely reversed. Protestants were now persecuted and catholics favoured. The Corporations were remodelled, protestant judges replaced by catholics. The army became preponderantly catholic. One of James's worst blunders was to bring the best regiments of the army to England where they only aroused hostility without being effective, instead of sending them to Ulster.

News of the Revolution in England reached Ireland in December and Tyrconnel at once declared for James. There was a panic among the protestants, many of whom escaped to England. Others concentrated in the northern towns of Derry and Enniskillen where they prepared to resist a siege. In March 1689 James arrived in Ireland with a number of French and English advisers and officers, a supply of arms and some French troops. In May he summoned a Parliament in Dublin which consisted entirely of catholics except for a handful of token Jacobite protestants. Derry was besieged, but the siege was carried on most inefficiently. James and his Dublin government were far more concerned with their internal feudings.

Broadly, three parties developed with entirely different objectives. James and his French supporters regarded Ireland merely as a springboard from which to regain England, which they believed was only waiting to welcome their return. They fully shared the English contempt for the native Irish and only wanted them as cannon fodder. The Irish Jacobites had no interest in James's return to England, preferring an independent Ireland. They had no particular affection for James, and if they must have him as King it was better that he should be King in Dublin where he would be under some control, rather than in London where he would be an English King from whom they could expect only neglect and exploitation. The French interest was different again. They did not believe that James's immediate return to England was at all probable nor did they desire it. But an Ireland under French control would be an immense asset in their war against the Williamite alliance and in the longer run would leave England permanently weakened. At the worst Ireland in revolt would help to divert English

resources from Europe at a minimum cost.

At the end of May an expedition under Kirke arrived in Ulster but was not strong enough to raise the siege of Derry, which went on till the end of July when the town was relieved from the sea. Kirke perhaps deserves notice as a typical figure of this peculiar Revolution. A professional soldier, he had distinguished himself by his brutalities after Sedgemoor : he now emerges as a zealous Williamite. He was unable to do more than maintain a foothold in Ulster. A large force was now prepared under Schomberg, William's most experienced general. His army was untrained, badly equipped and worse fed, and he could not venture to risk a battle with the Irish. Soon it was so wasted with disease that nothing more could be done that year. In the spring of 1690 reinforcements and supplies of good quality arrived, and in June William joined them. On July 1st William won a decisive victory at the river Boyne. James's army was completely routed and he himself ran away so fast that he hardly stopped running till he reached a ship to take him back to France.

All Ireland east of the Shannon was overrun, but Patrick Sarsfield's plan of defence in depth, brilliantly carried out, prevented a complete conquest, and William had to return to England leaving the war to be completed by others. With the flight of James it took on the new character of a war of liberation : Irish soldiers who had fought poorly on the Boyne began to show a different quality in a cause which seemed their own and under a leader in whom they had confidence. If Sarsfield's strategy had been followed resistance might have been prolonged, but the French general who still had superior command insisted on a set battle, and the Irish Army was destroyed at the terrible battle of Aughrim in July 1691. The fall of the last stronghold at Limerick followed inevitably. Under the terms of capitulation it was agreed that all French soldiers who wished might leave for France : Sarsfield and some 10,000 did so, to be followed by many thousand others in the succeeding years. The other main clause in the terms was that Irish catholics should enjoy 'such privileges in the exercise of their religion' as they had enjoyed in the reign of Charles II.

This agreement was shamelessly repudiated by the (protestant) Parliament which met in Dublin the next year. Instead a whole series of parliamentary laws were passed which stripped catholics of every sort of civil right and made the native Irish foreigners in their own land.

To do him justice, William wished to prevent this breach of faith but was overruled, just as in England his desire to allow more freedom for dissenters was thwarted at Westminster.

The English Parliament completed the picture by destroying the Irish woollen industry in the interest of English clothiers, and forbidding the export of Irish cattle in the interest of English landowners and farmers. Many more thousands of acres passed into protestant, mainly English hands. The century which followed the capitulation of Limerick marks the lowest point of misery and degradation in Irish history.

While the Revolution can be said to have had some progressive aspects for England and Scotland, for Ireland it had none. While our heads may be, marginally, with William on the Boyne, our hearts go to the defeated at Aughrim and to Sarsfield and the 'Wild Geese' sailing to exile from Limerick. Yet the essence of the tragedy is that for Ireland there was no possible outcome which could have brought good to the Irish people : as either English colony or French province their future would have been one of exploitation and poverty. The departure of the 'Wild Geese', which has become part of Ireland's romantic mythology, is itself part of the tragedy since it robbed her of thousands of her bravest and most energetic people, the ones who in other circumstances could have been the leaders of the nation. They could satisfy their feelings by continuing the war against England on the battlefields of Europe, but Ireland was in no way benefitted by these actions, as is dramatically illustrated by Sarsfield's dying words at the battle of Loudon :

“Would to God this wound had been for Ireland !”

VIII. *Scotland*

Nowadays Marxists are very sensitive to the dangers of applying economically reductionist explanations to historically complex events. Even so, it is hardly possible on the evidence to escape the conclusion that the actions of Scotland's rulers during the upheavals of 1688 — 9 were directed to ensuring at all costs the security of a social framework favourable to the then existing forms of capital accumulation, and that their attention stayed resolutely fixed upon the main chance.

As far back as a century earlier, taking advantage of the conditions of relative social stability enforced under James VI, Scottish landowners had manifested growing commercial inclinations and innovative enterprise in the production and marketing of agricultural surpluses as well as in the exploitation of minerals upon their domains. With the end of the disruptions occasioned between 1640 and 1660 by the civil wars and Cromwellian occupation, such trends were greatly strengthened, producing something like boom conditions for a time in the 1670s. The more traditional merchant capital, centred in the royal burghs, shared in the development, but more haltingly and tentatively: the economically advanced landowners constituted the really dynamic element.

The backbone of the economy was formed by the Scottish lowland peasantry, small tenants restricted to employing family or at the most occasional casual labour. The potential for accumulation by the landowners was conditioned in the last resort by the degree to which they were able to appropriate the surplus that their tenants produced, and that in turn by the relative bargaining strength of landlord and tenant. Population shrinkage in the course of the century had given the peasants a market advantage in this respect, holdings tended to expand and rents to remain stable. Particular importance therefore attached to supplementary forms of influence and control, above all of the all-pervasive social and cultural institution, the Scottish kirk.

Its enormous ideological presence, the social power it exercised, its poor-relief and educational functions as well as its own economic resources, made the question of who ran it the central source of conflict in 17th century Scotland. Moreover it was an issue which had escaped the confines of elite politics and became a popular rallying point.

According to the late Christina Lerner the educated classes back in the 16th century, aiming to strengthen their social and ideological power, 'attempted

to impose a literate urban advanced form of religion upon the peasantry and made a political issue of it in so doing.' The endeavour proved to be all too successful and backfired very badly upon the ruling classes, for the lower orders learned to use the Bible to legitimise their self-assertion against the masters. The outcome was the cultivation of an intense religiosity among the rural masses combined with passionate commitment to the concept of presbyterian government in a kirk absolutely free of any form of state influence, as expressed in the two Covenants of 1639 and 1643. Socially it implied for the kirk not democratic government but certainly quasi-representative structures in which the ordinary members at least possessed a voice, although probably not a determining one. It represented a vision totally at odds with the purposes of the kirk as seen by most of the landlords after 1660, who, filled with the bitter aftertaste of Covenanter dominance in the revolutionary decades, found an episcopal system to be much more compatible with their notions of social and spiritual hierarchy.

Nurtured on presbyterian traditions and a diet of biblical heroes, popular rebellion exploded in the 1660s. The religious zeal of the intransigent Covenanters — universally drawn from the lower orders and mostly peasants — their self-righteous exclusiveness, their eagerness to inflict or undergo martyrdom, evoke echoes of the most implacable Shi'ite militants of the 1980s, but over the following two decades military and civil pressure detached most presbyterians, especially the better-off, from the insurrection and coerced them into accepting episcopalianism for the sake of their peace and their property. By 1688, while the remnants of the armed popular movement were still conducting guerrilla operations in the south-west of the country, its force had been militarily contained and marginalised while the mainstream presbyterian leadership had entered into an uneasy accommodation with the catholic King James.

Indeed, the developments which occurred in Scotland illustrate marvellously the extent to which social order and subordination were the points at issue and the religious foibles of the monarch very much a secondary consideration. In 1681 James, then Duke of York, was made his brother Charles's viceroy in Scotland and so given the opportunity there to rehearse his future kingly role. While relentlessly harrying the irreconcilable Covenanters, he got through the Scots Parliament an Act enforcing a Calvinist theology on an episcopalian Scottish kirk . . . and making himself (once he was king) head of it. Having reached the throne he went further, with an Indulgence to tolerate even presbyterianism in Scotland alongside the official episcopalian church, so long only as the presbyterians accepted his sovereign *civil* authority — together with

merciless persecution of those who did not. Although the concession was generally recognised as a quid pro quo to obtain toleration for catholics, it was willingly accepted by those elements of presbyterianism, especially the smaller landowners, who had hitherto engaged in passive opposition or conformed with reluctance. In 1688 Scotland was effectively quiescent.

It was the threat to the Established Church and the local privileges of the ruling class in England that provoked there the overthrow of James at the end of the year. His fall and the appearance of William of Orange presented itself as a *fait accompli* to all components of the Scottish elite. The dominant faction hastened to negotiate with the new monarch a settlement still more in conformity with their interests than the fragile and shaky balance they had arrived at with James. Although episcopalianism was strongly represented in the Convention Parliament (and in parts of the country possessed a measure of popular support) presbyterianism now became the established form, partly as a concession to popular feeling, partly because it too could be made, if less readily, amenable to landlord control. For the rest, the principal role of the Convention, as with its English counterpart, was to proscribe the arbitrary exercise of the royal authority in the future, to consolidate the legal rights and possessions of the propertied classes.

The resolution was made the easier by the secession from the Convention of the hardline Jacobites who now attempted to secure the country for James with military forces supplied by certain of the Highland clan chiefs. Some of these were motivated by their catholic adherence, but as many (including the unfortunate branch of the Macdonald clan massacred at Glencoe as a pacificatory measure in 1692) were episcopalians. Highland society had endured increasing strain as its patriarchal clan structure clashed with the property-based feudal relations which Scottish monarchs had striven to promote. The standard-bearers of that 'modernising' approach were the mighty clan Campbell and their chiefs, the presbyterian Earls of Argyle, two of whom had been executed since 1660 by the restored Stuarts. It was less romantic attachment to the Stuart bloodline than the threat of Campbell hegemony which pushed these clan chiefs into their military adventure. Their defeat in 1689 by the Cameronian regiment, raised from among the former Covenanter guerrillas, ensured the Revolution's triumph in mainland Britain.

In Scotland the triumph was that of a bourgeoisie still principally agrarian in its sources of accumulation, but commercially ambitious and intellectually self-confident. It possessed by then standards of the age an excellent educational network, its civil law was newly codified, its clergy

were practised in sharpening their intellects upon theological abstractions. In the following century it was to produce an intelligensia of European reputation. The firm social entrenchment of the lowland bourgeoisie is made clear in the relative ease with which it survived the economic and political disasters of the following decade : a devastating famine and the massive commercial losses sustained in the abortive Darien colonisation scheme and the bankruptcy of the Bank of Scotland. Finally it negotiated an advantageous parliamentary and commercial Union with England in 1707 and progressed to the attainment in due course of a fully-fledged Scottish capitalist economy and social order.

The Union was unpopular with the Scottish masses in town and countryside who, along with the Jacobites, were to be the inevitable losers in the new regime. Massacre, expropriation, cultural genocide and pauperism, following from the settlement of 1688 - 1707, supplied the foundations for the brilliant commercial and cultural achievements of the succeeding generations.

IX. *The Compromise of 1688*

The events of 1681 had appeared at first sight as a complete and successful counter-revolution, undoing at one stroke the work of the Long Parliament, the Civil War and the Commonwealth, and their sequel seemed to confirm this view. Yet the counter-revolution was neither so complete nor so secure as it appeared. The social basis of the Whigs in the class of prosperous merchants was in fact stronger than ever before. The period between 1660 and 1688 was one of rapid commercial expansion. The alliance with Portugal and the establishment of closer trade relations with Spain and her colonies had opened new markets for English goods. The plantations in the American colonies and the West Indies grew steadily and provided both markets and raw materials, while the East India Company became not only an important trading concern but a force in English internal politics. The exploitation of the colonial areas was already placing a great accumulation of capital in the hands of the Whig merchants.

Considerable as were the social forces Charles had been able to rally behind him in his bid for absolutism, they were not the disposers of decisive masses of capital. The Crown was temporarily and accidentally independent owing to the subsidies that Louis was prepared to grant Charles for political reasons of his own; but these subsidies could not be counted on indefinitely and the most Tory of Parliaments would not have been prepared to grant the Crown a revenue adequate to maintain the large standing army which a despotism demanded. In practice, the country gentry almost always proved especially tight-fisted because their conservatism and limited outlook made it impossible for them to appreciate the increasing needs of the complicated State organisation that was developing in this era. Sooner or later the government would have been forced to come cap in hand to the financial interests in the City for help that would only have been given on terms.

At the same time, in the political field, the defeat of Monmouth's rebellion which James thought he had turned to his advantage since it provided an excuse to increase the standing army, in the end profited the Whigs rather than the government. This defeat, by crushing the left wing, made it possible to stage in safety a Revolution that could afterwards be hailed as 'Glorious' precisely because the masses had no part in it. It was safe to overthrow James without the remotest chance that his departure would open the way for a Republic under which the poor might make inconvenient demands upon the rich.

Once James had gone, the Bill of Rights laid down the conditions upon which the Whig magnates and bourgeoisie were pleased to allow the monarchy to continue to exist. The King was no longer, in effect, allowed to control either the army or the judges. He was specifically forbidden either to dispense with the laws or to suspend them. The control passed once and for all to Parliament, which must be called at least once in every three years (extended in 1716 to seven years and in 1911 reduced to five). On these terms the Whigs became loyal and enthusiastic monarchists, since the monarchy was now *their* monarchy and depended on them for its existence. In this they differed from the Tories who had felt that their existence depended on that of the monarchy and were consequently far less exacting in the terms upon which their support was given.

“The ‘Glorious Revolution’ (as Marx said) brought into power along with William of Orange the landlord and capitalist appropriators of surplus value. They inaugurated the new era by practising on a colossal scale thefts of State lands, thefts that had hitherto been managed more modestly. These estates were given away, sold at a ridiculous figure or even annexed to private estates by direct seizure. All this happened without the slightest observation of legal etiquette. The Crown Lands, thus fraudulently appropriated, together with the Church estates, so far as these had not been lost again during the republican revolution, form the basis of the today princely domains of the English oligarchy. The bourgeois capitalists favoured the operation with the view, among others, to promoting free trade in land, to extending the domain of modern agriculture on the large farm system, and to increasing their supply of agricultural proletarians ready to hand. Besides, the new landed aristocracy was the natural ally of the new bankocracy, of the new-hatched *haute finance* and of the large manufacturer, then depending on protective duties.”

The Revolution of 1688 placed in the hands of the Whigs for the next century, apart from short intervals, the control of the central State apparatus. For the exercise of this control they quickly evolved the necessary financial machinery and the appropriate political methods. Yet their victory was not complete. They were forced to leave in the possession of the Tory squirearchy the control of local government in the country districts, thus creating a kind of dualism around which much of the political conflict of the Eighteenth Century turned.

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