

to treat with the King were denounced, and he himself was declared to be guilty of the highest treason, incapable of penitence or common honesty.¹ On Dec. 1 the army seized Charles as their own prisoner; and on the following day Fairfax led his troops into London, where they closed in upon Parliament, to overawe it into submission with their wishes. Pride's Purge took place on Dec. 6, by which all opposers of the army, some 148 members of the Commons, were excluded from their places, leaving 78 members to carry out the orders of their masters. Of this number, some 28 withdrew from the house of their own accord, leaving what Prynne called the 'unparliamentary Junto' to bring the king to the scaffold.

The second political group, closely allied with the army, was composed of Independents—Puritans who had gradually come to believe in the separation of church and state, and were now willing to grant toleration to all religious freethinkers, except prelatists, papists, and atheists. At the close of the year 1648 this party in parliament and in the nation was divided into two classes—first, the ultra-radicals, who were determined to compass the king's death, and set up a republic; and, secondly, the great majority, who were willing to visit the king with deposition, but who shrank from the army's proposed cure for the ills of the nation. Of the large number of Independent divines, only two, so far as is known, expressed approbation of the trial of the king.

A third party, strongest in London, Lancashire, and Scotland, was made up of Presbyterians who were doing their utmost to save the royal prisoner from

¹ Rushworth, *Hist. Coll.* 7. 1297.