

An Hour with the Editor

ENGLISH SOVEREIGNS

The story of the war between Charles and Parliament forms no part of this series, for in the study of the evolution of the British Constitution we are concerned only with such details as have had a direct political effect. The strife lasted four years and was conspicuous for the valor shown on both sides. It began with the battle of Edge Hill on October 23rd, 1642, which though indecisive resulted in some advantage to the King, whose fortunes were shattered at Marston Moor on July 22, 1644, and completely overwhelmed at Naseby in June, 1645. Charles surrendered to the Scots on May 5, 1646, and was handed over to the Parliamentary commanders in June, 1647. It was the war that brought Cromwell to the front. He had not been very prominent during the struggles in Parliament. He entered that body when a young man, but subsequently retired to his estate, and was re-elected in 1640. At the time of the passage of the Solemn Remonstrance he is quoted as having said: "If this had not passed, I would have sold all I possess tomorrow and have quitted England forever." In July, 1642, when it was evident that the issue before the country could only be settled by arms, he offered to place all he possessed at the service of Parliament, and moved a resolution, which was adopted authorizing himself to raise two companies of soldiers at his own expense. His wonderful genius for organization and leadership were conspicuous during the struggles in Parliament. He entered that body when a young man, but subsequently retired to his estate, and was re-elected in 1640. At the time of the passage of the Solemn Remonstrance he is quoted as having said: "If this had not passed, I would have sold all I possess tomorrow and have quitted England forever." In July, 1642, when it was evident that the issue before the country could only be settled by arms, he offered to place all he possessed at the service of Parliament, and moved a resolution, which was adopted authorizing himself to raise two companies of soldiers at his own expense. His wonderful genius for organization and leadership were conspicuous during the struggles in Parliament.

Cromwell was a man of good family, descended, it is said, on his mother's side from the royal house of Stuart. He was of considerable means. He married the daughter of Sir Henry Bouchier, a gentleman of property. Oliver's own grandfather was Sir Henry Cromwell. He was therefore far from being a base upstart that royalist writers have represented. His personal appearance was not attractive. Here is a description of him by Sir Philip Warwick as he appeared in Parliament in 1640: "He was dressed in a plain cloth suit, which seemed to have been 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 much larger than his collar. His hat was without a band; his stature was of good size; his sword stuck close to his side; his countenance was swollen and reddish; his voice sharp and untunable; and his eloquence full of fervor. It lessened much my reverence unto that great council for this gentleman was very much heartened by it." To this we must add that he was a man of strong religious convictions, not unkindly in disposition, full of a contagious enthusiasm and a devoted champion of independence of thought. The custom was at one time to represent him as thoroughly insincere, and as simply grasping for power. It has been said that he did not himself feel the religious spirit with which he inspired his followers, assuming it only for the purpose of working upon their feelings; but while he undoubtedly turned the fervor of his men to good account, there is no longer room for doubt that he himself felt it even more than they. He was by no means a religious bigot. Indeed it may be said of him that he typified in an extraordinary degree of that stalwart spirit of English independence, which had asserted itself in the time of the Plantagenets, had lain dormant during the reigns of the Tudors only to assert itself in support of Elizabeth, the last of that line, when the freedom of the nation was threatened and when, as we have seen, Roman Catholics vied with the Protestants in their resolve to keep the land free from a foreign yoke.

After the battle of Marston Moor it was recognized by all the Parliamentary party that Cromwell was the guiding spirit of the hour and in the confusion that ensued he showed himself equal to the occasion. The King escaped from his confinement, was taken and sent to the Isle of Wight; but this escape fired his adherents with the belief that his cause was not wholly lost. Cromwell backed up by the Independents was gradually driving the Presbyterians out of power, and when in 1648 they were found to be intriguing with the King, he sent Colonel Pride to drive them from the House of Commons. By this act 100 of the members were deprived of their seats. Thus the Long Parliament was gradually being weakened numerically. The first break in its ranks was when some sixty of its members left London to take up arms for the King; now it was further reduced, but by the law of the land it yet continued to be a parliament. So reduced were its numbers that it afterwards became known as "The Rump." In the following year the King was put on trial, condemned and executed. The next step was the abolition of the House of Lords. A Council of State was appointed by the Commons and of this Cromwell was the most conspicuous member. Rebellion followed in Ireland. The Scots sent an army southward to avenge the slight put upon the Presbyterians and in the hope of restoring the Monarchy. The Welsh rose in rebellion. Later the Scots opened negotiations with Prince Charles, son of the late King, who landed in Scotland in June, 1650, and was proclaimed King. Cromwell was not for a moment dismayed. He put down the rebellion in Ireland and Wales with an iron hand, and marched against the Scots, whom he defeated at Dunbar, and by that victory became virtually dictator of Great Britain. He permitted Parliament to continue in existence for three

years, but it spent its time in useless discussions about formalities. Absolutely supreme in the kingdom, it did not know how to exercise its tremendous power, and when on April 20th Cromwell went to the House and bade the members to be gone, for they were "no longer a parliament," the whole nation experienced a feeling of relief. Cromwell at once summoned a new parliament, which consisted of 140 members. This body declared him Lord Protector of the kingdom, and invested him with absolute power. As soon as this had been done, he dissolved it and remained sole master of Great Britain, a position which he held for five years. These were glorious years for England for the able rule of the Protector made the nation honored and feared throughout Europe.

It would be a mistake to suppose, as some do, that the Commonwealth, as England under Cromwell was called, was a republic. It was in point of fact only a monarchy under another name and a sovereign who was called Protector instead of King. Cromwell ruled for a part of the time without a parliament; ordinances took place of statutes to some extent and the Protector was as absolute as any of the Tudors had been. But these things were the inevitable result of the confusion into which the country had been plunged by civil war. That Cromwell was a champion of freedom cannot be disputed, but with an army that clamored for a republic, a great mass of the nobility and gentry demanding a king, with all the lawyers of the opinion that the forms of British law would not lend themselves to any but a monarchical form of government, with a country distracted by religious controversy, it was impossible even for a man with his courage and force of character to do more than preserve orderly administration without paying much attention to the form in which things were done. It was with England at this time a case of "what is best administered is best." Cromwell gave the nation a strong government; he reformed the courts; when he saw that it was necessary he called in the nobility to share in the administration of the kingdom and later consented to the restoration of the House of Lords. It is thought that at one time he contemplated proclaiming himself king, and there is very little doubt that if he had done so, the whole royalist party would have stood by him; but the army was opposed to such a step, and possibly he himself was not satisfied that it would have been a wise one. He did, however, secure from Parliament the right to nominate his successor, and he named his son for the post. It can be said with truth that he died before his work was half done. He was only 59 when he passed away in 1658, and he was at that time easily the most conspicuous figure and most powerful personality in Europe. Had he lived for another decade, the history of the world might have been very different. His son Richard was weak and vacillating and unable to handle the contending elements within the nation, and after seven months of office passed into respectable retirement.

It is difficult to estimate Cromwell's place in English history; but perhaps if we say he was typical of the English people we shall do him and them full justice. He was energetic, courageous, imbued with a sense of freedom, autocratic, something of an opportunist, a staunch believer in popular sovereignty, devotedly patriotic, at times arrogant, a man who took no thought of the odds against him if he thought he was in the right, religious yet tolerant, a man of domestic tastes, yet at home on the battlefield or in the councils of state, by choice a country farmer, but equal in statesmanship to the greatest diplomats of his day, without arrogance yet holding himself equal to the contemporary sovereigns of most ancient lineage. There is no doubt that he was the chief instrument in preserving their liberty for the people of England.

NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

What is known as the Slav race has had much to do with the determination of the character of a very large part of the population of Europe. The Slav peoples now number about 120,000,000, of whom the greater part live in Russia, but they are divided into many branches, between whom there is little unity. It is only necessary to say that the Poles and the majority of the Russians are of Slav origin to show how widely apart the branches of a race may grow in the progress of time. The Slavs also occupy parts of Austria and the Balkan peninsula. Their origin is absolutely unknown, although their language and general physical characteristics indicate that they belong to what is termed the Indo-European family. The name has no relation to the English word "slave," although it has been thought that the people were called Slavs or Serbs, from the Latin word *Servus*, a slave, because they lived at one time to a very large extent in a condition of serfdom. As a matter of fact, the term is a corruption of the Slav word "Swaba," which means speech, and was applied by the people to themselves as a distinction from other races whose language was unintelligible to them. They first appear in history about the First Century of our era, when they lived north of the Carpathian Mountains, across what is now central Russia to the headwaters of the Volga. They were kept from spreading northward by the races represented by the Fins and Magyars of today, and the great procession of peoples, known as the Teutonic invasion of Europe, kept them from finding their way southward.

When the last of these hordes had swept westward and the empire of the Huns had been broken, the Slavs began to move southward, probably under pressure from their northern neighbors. They seem to have been a peaceful race, living exclusively by farming and without any commerce with other nations. As far as is known, they were the aboriginal inhabitants of the country. While, as has been said, the various branches of the race differ widely in their characteristics, they have one feature in common, namely, an intense devotion to the land in which they live. Centuries of occupation have wedded them to the soil as no other people are.

The custom is to speak of the Teutonic race as though it were something that could easily be differentiated from all other peoples; but this view is not tenable. The Teutones are mentioned by Roman historians about 350 years before Christ, and are described as living in what is now Holland and southern Denmark, whence they moved southward during the next two centuries, and at one time threatened the safety of the Roman nation. In 102 B.C. they were defeated in a terrible battle by Caius Marius, and it is said that 200,000 of them were slain and an enormous number taken prisoners and carried to Rome. They therefore doubtless had considerable influence in determining the character of the people of Italy. They must have been a different race from the Goths, the Vandals, or the Franks. The Goths are supposed to have been of northern origin, but about the Third Century of our era they were living on the northern shore of the Black Sea, whence they migrated westward, one branch of them going, as we have already seen, as far as Spain. The Vandals seem to have been distinct from the Goths. They spread over western Europe during the Fifth Century. It is not certain that the Franks were a distinct race, the weight of evidence being rather to the contrary. The name was applied to a confederation of tribes that inhabited the country along the Rhine about the middle of the Christian Era. They may have been identical with the Teutones, but every thing relating to the history of western Europe at that time is so uncertain that the best opinions on this point are little more than guesses. The qualities which differentiate the inhabitants of Germany from those of England are sufficiently marked to justify the opinion that there is a large element in the blood of the former that is lacking in the latter, and vice versa. Menzel, the German historian, confesses his inability to reduce the traditions of the Germans into anything like a connected or even probable story. He thinks he sees evidence suggesting the possibility of the German race having come originally from India, and endeavors to identify the worship of Odin with that of Buddha. But he says: "Who first trod the sacred soil? Who for the first time rested beneath the shade of the German oak? The earliest account of the Germans is very obscure. Civilized nations, distinguished by mighty deeds, had already dwelt on the shores of the Mediterranean, while our northern land was still unknown. History, though still in its infancy, already recorded the forests legendary lore still held its superstitious reign. Already the sages of the East taught wisdom beneath the palm, the merchants of Phoenicia and Carthage weighed anchor and spread their purple sails on the distant ocean, the Greek beautified the earth with magic art, and the Roman founded his colossal and iron despotism, while the German, ignorant and naked, was still reigning undisturbed over the denizens of the wild." This writer clearly inclines to the view that the German stock was aboriginal, that is, from whatever quarter it may have come, it was the first to occupy the great primitive forests which extended over Europe from the Alps to the Baltic. These aboriginal people were chiefly hunters, if we may accept the reports of their condition which the Roman historians have handed down. It may be that the Saxons and some other races found their way from Eastern homes after these aboriginal peoples were already in occupation of the country. Of this there seems to be pretty good evidence. There can be no doubt that the Gothic and Vandalic invasions added new elements to the population. It may be suggested tentatively that the original Germanic race was in possession of the country from the earliest times; that other tribes invaded the country from the east and the more aggressive of them crossed the sea and occupied England; that the Goths and Vandals settled to a very considerable extent in the western part of what is now Germany, although they, like the Saxons, pressed forward and remained in greater numbers in France and Spain. But, however this may be, it is impossible, speaking in general, to reach any very definite conclusion upon the subject. There is nothing in history more obscure than the origin and movements of the several races that occupied Central and Western Europe previous to and during the first five centuries after the beginning of the Christian Era.

GIANTS

Almost every race has its legends of a race of demi-gods. Of these the best known is Hercules, who is said to have been a son of Zeus, his mother being Alcmena, daughter of Alcaeus, who was son of Theseus. The Hebrews had their legends of this kind, and the story of Genesis has perpetuated the fact. This is found in the sixth chapter of that book, the first four verses of which are not in any way dissimilar to the myths preserved in Greece, Rome, and even among the aboriginal races of the Western Continent. The Hebrew legend gives no details as to individuals, but it concludes that the giants "became mighty

men, which were of old, men of renown." This reference is one of the portions of the Bible, which is sometimes cited as casting discredit upon the remainder, whereas in point of fact it really adds to the value of the Book of Genesis, because it gives us a glimpse into the long past history of the human race. When we read that the sons of God fell in love with the daughters of men, we are only reading something similar to the tales of Grecian and other mythologies. We are not called upon to accept such statements as literally true, but we make a great mistake if we regard them as mere inventions; for nothing is more certain than that there were days long preceding history when there were "mighty men, men of renown," and there is good ground for believing that they were men of a stature much greater than the people of the present day. The story as told in Genesis is that this age of giants was terminated by a great catastrophe, therein described as a flood. There is good reason to believe that this is veritable history.

In the British Museum are two statues brought there from Easter Island. This island lies in an unfrequented part of the South Pacific Ocean. It is used by Chili as a penal settlement. The area is small, and the shape triangular. It is notable for the remarkable statues found there in great numbers, and in various stages of preservation and completion. These statues are of the upper part of the human body, and the features are almost identical. The countenances depicted in stone have powerful chins and mouths, the noses are somewhat longer proportionately than what we would regard as normal; the foreheads are not high, but that may be due to the fact that the heads are in all cases flat upon the top, as though the sculptors had not intended to make them complete. The brows are very intellectual. In short, the men represented by these statues have been of no ordinary kind. The profiles are unlike those of any race with which we are familiar today, and seem to represent a vanished type. An observer, who reported upon them for the United States National Museum, says, "The aspect is lightly upwards and the expression is firm and profoundly solemn." Of these statues there are 555. The largest is 70 feet high, the smallest about 3 feet. They are as nearly alike, except in point of size, as they can well be. Evidently the sculptors had some definite countenance in mind that they were trained to reproduce. They are carved out of trachyte, a very hard stone, and some of them are so ancient that the work of time has defaced them so as to render them nearly unrecognizable. As there is no tradition among any of the tribes of the Pacific Ocean of a race that made these statues, the best preserved among them must be very ancient. Hence it seems as if we must assign exceedingly great antiquity to those that have become defaced by weathering. These statues rest upon great platforms. Some of these are 500 feet high and 10 feet wide and high. They are built of great stones, but without cement, smaller stones being used to bind the larger ones together. In every case the statues face the sea. Many of the stones weigh 5 tons, and one of the statues is estimated to weigh 250 tons. The platforms, and indeed the whole island, form a great burial place. "Look where you may, dig where you like, human remains are sure to be found," says Capt. Barclay, R.N. The quarry from which these stones and statues were taken is open to inspection today just as the ancient artists and workers left it uncounted years ago. Here are found partly completed figures and partly quarried stones. The appearance of the place suggests that the workmen left their work in haste, as though driven away or destroyed by some terrible catastrophe. There is nothing on the island to cast any light upon its history further than that it was a sepulchre. We have no light upon the source whence the human remains were brought. There is, however, upon the back of some of the statues a hieroglyphic very common in prehistoric remains, namely, a circle with a smaller circle within it. This is supposed to be the primeval representation of the Deity, being a representation in a simple way of that which has neither beginning nor end.

We may follow this subject a little further in another article.

Some Famous Dramatists and Their Master-Pieces

(By H. de Burmann-Lapin)

EURIPIDES

Euripides has been termed the lesser of the three great tragic poets of the fifth century B. C. In one particular, however, he ranks first and that is in his beautiful delineation of the characters of noble women. The quality of sympathy was one of the most highly developed in his sympathetic nature, and this fact led him the better to understand the tender unreasoning subtleties of the sex that must always remain more or less of a mystery to man. Therefore in giving Euripides a place peculiar to himself and distinctive from that of his great contemporaries, Aeschylus and Sophocles, we shall consider this capacity which he possessed and some of the examples of it which have led writers to say of him, "that in romantic lyric, in connected picturesque description, in pathos, in sympathy with elemental human feeling, Euripides has not a rival whatever."

He was born in 480 B.C., as an old story tells us on the Island of Salamis, where his

mother was in exile while the war was going on between the Athenians and the hosts of Xerxes. His parents were people of rank and Euripides was given the best of teachers, proving himself in every way worthy of his masters.

Like Sophocles and Aeschylus, he too competed with other poets in the public trials of artistic ability for the favor of the Athenian, and though at first he didn't meet with widely spread popular approval, the people were not slow to recognize his genius, and later he was accorded many honors. It is a significant fact, moreover, that while only seven dramas of Sophocles and seven of Aeschylus have been preserved to us, we have no less than nineteen of the plays of Euripides.

This poet lived to see the downfall of his country, preceded by the death of the idolized Pericles, and the terrible visitation of the plague. Whether or not the terrible condition of affairs thus brought about is what made him appear to doubt the justice of Divine wisdom or not, the fact remains that we can readily read between the lines of his poems of the constant strife which he felt, and "which his art could not reconcile between man and Providence." Indeed some critics go so far as to say that Euripides made it the primal object of his work to undermine the established belief in the recognized Athenian divinities.

One of his most beautiful characters is that of "Alcestis," that noble and virtuous woman of old tradition who offered herself as a sacrifice to save her husband's life, and dying in his stead, was eventually restored to the land of the living through the power of Hercules.

The following lovely translation is from Robert Browning's "Balaustran":

"What kind of creature should the woman prove
That has surpassed Alcestis?—surelier shown
Preference for her husband to herself
Than by determining to die for him?
Hear what she did indoors and wonder then.
She washed with river waters her white skin,
And taking from the cedar closets forth
Vesture and ornament bedecked herself
Nobly and stood before the hearth and prayed:
'Mistress, because I now depart this world,
Falling before thee the last time I ask—
Be mother to my orphans. Wed the one
To a kind wife, and make the other's mate
Some princely person; nor, as I who bore
My children perish, suffer that they too
Die all untimely, but live happy pair,
Their full glad life out in the Fatherland.
And every altar throwed Admetos's house
She visited, and crowned and prayed before,
Stripping the myrtle foliage from the boughs
Without a tear, without a groan—no change
At all to that skin's nature fair to see,
Caused by the imminent evil.

But when of many tears she had her fill,
She flings from off the couch, goes headlong
forth,
Yet—forth the chamber—still keeps turning
back
And casts her on the couch again once more.
Her children clinging to their mother's robe
Wept meanwhile; but she took them in her
arms,
And as a dying woman might, embraced
Now one and now the other. . . .

Helen and Hecuba are magnificent creations, especially the latter, the noble, dethroned haughty Trojan queen, wife of the murdered Priam and mother of his nineteen sons. It is her daughter, "Polyxene" who perishes that Troy may be saved, though her sacrifice is all in vain. Iphigenia is another lovely example of the poet's power of delineation of female character. Hecuba hears the story of her daughter's death:

"The whole vast concourse of the Achaean
host
Stood round the tomb to see your daughter
die.
Achilleus's son, taking her by the hand,
Placed her upon the mound and I stayed near;
And youths, the flower of Greece, a chosen
few,
With hands to check the heifer should she
bound
Attended". . . . But she—
Knowing her hour was come spake thus and
said:

"O men of Argos, who have sacked my town,
Lo, of free will I die. Let no man touch
My body: boldly will I stretch my throat.
Nay but I pray you set me free, they slay;
That free I thus may perish, among the dead,
Being a queen, I blush to be called slave."
The people shouted and King Agamemnon
Bade the youths loose the maid and set her
free."

Here is a little fragment that shows the poet's tenderest side:

Children's Blessing
Lady, the sun's light to our eyes is dear,
And fair and tranquil reaches of the sea,
And flowery earth in May, and bounding
waters;
And so right many fair things I might praise;
Yet nothing is so radiant and so fair
As for souls childless with desire sore smitten,
To see the light of babes about the house.