

first statesman to attempt to put it in practice; but it was not till a later period in the history of the nation that responsible government became an understood and settled thing.

Charles had engaged England in a war with the Dutch, but the English fleet had been beaten shamefully. A plague came upon London, carrying away in six months one hundred thousand human beings, and scarcely any ministers remained to administer consolation to the dying but the nonconformists, and those who had been educated by them. Then came a great fire on the city of London, laying it almost in ashes. Everything seems to have gone wrong with the nation. Macaulay says that if there had been an election the Roundheads would have been restored to power. Persecution went forward with great energy, and some of the brightest ornaments of the church languished in prison or found their way to the settlements in the new world, in spite of a cruel law that forbade nonconformists to sail for colonies where they would have sympathisers. England's sun set in dishonor, and Macaulay tells us that on the very day that the Dutch fleet burnt the British war vessels in the Thames, the King amused himself romping with some of the abandoned women about the court. Then it was that Englishmen recalled the days of Cromwell and Blake, to whose memory and remains they had done such great dishonor.

While the agitation went forward in favor of the Exclusion Bill, every effort was made by the court party to crush the Whig leaders, and at length the opportunity offered itself. The Duke of Monmouth (the worthless son of Charles the Second and Lucy Walters), called by the lower classes "the Protestant Duke," planned a rebellion, and on its discovery warrants were issued for the arrest of Monmouth, Shaftesbury, Russell and Sydney, although the three latter were innocent of all connection with it. The king pardoned Monmouth, and sent him into exile; the grand jury of London threw out the bill against Shaftesbury, who then fled to Holland, and plotted with the Prince of Orange, whom he had formerly wronged; but Russell and Sydney were sent to the scaffold, where, says Macaulay, "Russell died with the fortitude of a Christian, Algernon Sydney with the fortitude of a stoic." From that time forward the Whigs were in disgrace at court, and to be a Whig was to suffer every sort of indignity. Thousands of innocent persons suffered on supposition of favoring the Duke of Monmouth, and some of England's best men made their way to America, where they swelled the ranks of the settlers. In their triumph the court party made an onset upon the city of London, and other towns that were represented by Whig members, taking from these towns their charters, and granting them new ones that gave the ascendancy to the party of the court. And as if not satisfied they turned their eyes to America, and threatened the colonies with similar treatment.

While the Whigs struggled in Parliament for the Exclusion Bill, Charles had sent James to Scotland. The Scots had considered the brutality of the savage Lauderdale inhuman, but James surpassed him in cruelty. Macaulay says that James "not only came to council when the torture was to be inflicted, but watched the agonies of the sufferers with a sort of interest and complacency." The sufferings of English nonconformists after the Restoration were terrible to think of; but the sufferings of the Scots Presbyterians, who had always befriended the Stuarts, was beyond description. Thousands fled the country to Ireland, Holland, and America, where their descendants are still numerous. On the disgrace of the Whig statesmen, it was con-