

17. In theory a defense of the monarchy, the *Leviathan* outraged almost every royalist with its brutally secular approach to the nature of power, justice, law, and society. Hobbes elected to return to England in 1651, where he remained, despite the vicissitudes of politics, until his death at the age of ninety-one, protected by a handful of powerful patrons (including Charles II) who admired his intellect but found it morally reprehensible, or perhaps just impolitic, to advocate his political philosophy. Hobbes wrote his history of the events from 1640 to 1660, entitled *Behemoth, or, The Epitome of the Civil Wars of England*, in 1668, but no one cared to publish it until after his death. In this dialogue he systematically and ruthlessly analyzed how a six-hundred-year-old monarchy had been destroyed in a matter of decades.

The fourth writer on the Civil War, like Hobbes and Hyde, is difficult to place politically, for if Hobbes was a monarchist detested by most royalists and Edward Hyde was a parliamentarian turned royalist, James Harrington was a moderate republican who succeeded in combining a close friendship with Charles I with radical political ideas. As a consequence, he got into trouble with both sides in the conflict, despite his efforts to stay out of politics. In *The Commonwealth of Oceana*, which he wrote in 1656, he developed the concept of the perfect state based on a balance between economic interests (property) and political power. His ideal republic was in effect a self-interested oligarchy limited by history and practicality, modeled on Venice of the seventeenth century. His analysis of the long-term social and economic causes underlying the Great Rebellion has a very modern flavor, for he sought and found the sources of historical change and political stability, whether monarchical or republican, in the structure of society and the interrelationship of its parts.

The final document both interprets the Great Rebellion and marks the conclusion of the revolutionary era. Written in 1659 by an anonymous radical commentator, *A True State of the Case of the Commonwealth* makes rewarding reading, for in it the reader can discern the steady drift back to the more conservative and traditional position, which culminated in the Restoration of 1660.

The Grand Remonstrance (1641)

Debated in the Commons during November 1641, the Grand Remonstrance was presented to Charles I on December 1. The complete document runs to nearly thirty printed pages; the portions excerpted here give a sense of the revolutionary implications of the document and the extent of Parliament's dissatisfaction and anger with the king's political, economic, diplomatic, and religious policies since the beginning of his

SOURCE: Samuel R. Gardner, *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution 1625-1660* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1899), pp. 204-232.

from: *The Past Speaks: Sources and Problems in English History!*

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"Revolution Readings"

reign in 1625. The Remonstrance passed the House of Commons by only eleven votes. It is an interesting mixture of fact and fiction and a crucial document in explaining the distorted and exaggerated perceptions of the religious and political issues of the day held by many members of Parliament. The reader should ask not only why the Remonstrance passed by such a narrow margin but also what the balance between truth and fabrication was in the parliamentary view of the events of Charles's reign.

The Commons in this present Parliament assembled, having with much earnestness and faithfulness of affection and zeal to the public good of this kingdom, and His Majesty's honour and service for the space of twelve months, wrestled with great dangers and fears, the pressing miseries and calamities, the various distempers and disorders which had not only assaulted, but even overwhelmed and extinguished the liberty, peace and prosperity of this kingdom, the comfort and hopes of all His Majesty's good subjects, and exceedingly weakened and undermined the foundation and strength of his own royal throne, do yet find an abounding malignity and opposition in those parties and factions who have been the cause of those evils, and do still labour to cast aspersions upon that which hath been done, and to raise many difficulties for the hindrance of that which remains yet undone, and to foment jealousies between the king and Parliament, that so they may deprive him and his people of the fruit of his own gracious intentions, and their humble desires of procuring the public peace, safety and happiness of this realm.

For the preventing of those miserable effects which such malicious endeavours may produce, we have thought good to declare the root and the growth of these mischievous designs: the maturity and ripeness to which they have attained before the beginning of the Parliament: the effectual means which have been used for the extirpation of those dangerous evils, and the progress which hath therein been made by His Majesty's goodness and the wisdom of the Parliament: the ways of obstruction and opposition by which that

progress hath been interrupted: the courses to be taken for the removing those obstacles, and for the accomplishing of our most dutiful and faithful intentions and endeavours of restoring and establishing the ancient honour, greatness and security of this Crown and nation.

The root of all this mischief we find to be a malignant and pernicious design of subverting the fundamental laws and principles of government, upon which the religion and justice of this kingdom are firmly established. The actors and promoters hereof have been:

1. The Jesuited papists, who hate the laws, as the obstacles of that change and subversion of religion which they so much long for.

2. The bishops, and the corrupt part of the clergy, who cherish formality and superstition as the natural effects and more probable supports of their own ecclesiastical tyranny and usurpation.

3. Such councillors and courtiers as for private ends have engaged themselves to further the interests of some foreign princes or states to the prejudice of His Majesty and the state at home. . . .

In the beginning of His Majesty's reign the [Catholic] party began to revive and flourish again. . . .

Evidence of the revival can be seen in the following historical events.

18. Tonnage and poundage¹ hath been received without colour or pretence of law; many other heavy impositions continued against law, and some so unreasonable that the sum of the charge exceeds the value of the goods.

¹Tonnage and poundage: import and export taxes

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19. The Book of Rates² lately enhanced to a high proportion, and such merchants that would not submit to their illegal and unreasonable payments, were vexed and oppressed above measure; and the ordinary course of justice, the common birthright of the subject of England, wholly obstructed unto them.

20. And although all this was taken upon pretence of guarding the seas, yet a new unheard-of tax of ship-money was devised, and upon the same pretence, by both which there was charged upon the subject near £700,000 some years, and yet the merchants have been left so naked to the violence of the Turkish pirates, that many great ships of value and thousands of His Majesty's subjects have been taken by them, and do still remain in miserable slavery. . . .

27. The monopolies of soap, salt, wine, leather, sea-coal,³ and in a manner of all things of most common and necessary use.

28. The restraint of the liberties of the subjects in their habitation, trades and other interests.

29. Their vexation and oppression by purveyors, clerks of the market and saltpetre men.⁴ . . .

33. And not only private interest, but also public faith, have been broken in seizing of the money and bullion in the mint, and the whole kingdom like to be robbed at once in that abominable project of brass money. . . .

37. The Court of Star Chamber hath abounded in extravagant censures, not only for the maintenance and improvement of monopolies and other unlawful taxes, but for divers other causes where there hath been no offence, or very small; whereby His Majesty's subjects have been oppressed by grievous fines, imprisonments, stigmatisings, mutilations, whippings, pillories, gags, confinements, banishments; after so rigid a manner as hath

not only deprived men of the society of their friends, exercise of their professions, comfort of books, use of paper or ink, but even violated that near union which God hath established between men and their wives, by forced and constrained separation. . . .

44. The estate of many families weakened, and some ruined by excessive fines, exacted from them for compositions of wardships. . . .

48. Titles of honour, judicial places, sergeantships at law, and other offices have been sold for great sums of money, whereby the common justice of the kingdom hath been much endangered, not only by opening a way of employment in places of great trust, and advantage to men of weak parts, but also by giving occasion to bribery, extortion, partiality, it seldom happening that places ill-gotten are well used. . . .

51. The bishops and the rest of the clergy did triumph in the suspensions, excommunications, deprivations, and degradations of divers painful, learned and pious ministers, in the vexation and grievous oppression of great numbers of His Majesty's good subjects.

52. The [ecclesiastical court of] High Commission grew to such excess of sharpness and severity as was not much less than the Romish Inquisition, and yet in many cases by the archbishop's power was made much more heavy, being assisted and strengthened by authority of the Council Table.

53. The bishops and their courts were as eager in the country; although their jurisdiction could not reach so high in rigour and extremity of punishment, yet were they no less grievous in respect of the generality and multiplicity of vexations, which lighting upon the meaner sort of tradesmen and artificers did impoverish many thousands.

²*Book of Rates*: issued by the king from time to time, a listing of the value of goods according to the current prices of the day ³*sea-coal*: regular coal ⁴*saltpetre men*: those who collected saltpetre (potassium nitrate) for gunpowder

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54. And so afflict and trouble others, that great numbers to avoid their miseries departed out of the kingdom, some into New England and other parts of America, others into Holland. . . .

57. The most public and solemn sermons before His Majesty were either to advance prerogative above law, and decry the property of the subject, or full of such kind of invectives.

58. Whereby they might make those odious who sought to maintain the religion, laws and liberties of the kingdom, and such men were sure to be weeded out of the commission of the peace, and out of all other employments of power in the government of the country.

59. Many noble personages were councillors in name, but the power and authority remained in a few of such as were most addicted to this [Catholic] party, whose resolutions and determinations were brought to the table for countenance and execution, and not for debate and deliberation, and no man could offer to oppose them without disgrace and hazard to himself. . . .

61. This faction was grown to that height and entireness of power, that now they began to think of finishing their work, which consisted of these three parts.

62. I. The government must be set free from all restraint of laws concerning our persons and estates.

63. II. There must be a conjunction between Papists and Protestants in doctrine, discipline and ceremonies; only it must not yet be called popery.

64. III. The Puritans, under which name they include all those that desire to preserve the laws and liberties of the kingdom, and to maintain religion in the power of it, must be either rooted out of the kingdom with force, or driven out with fear.

65. For the effecting of this it was thought necessary to reduce Scotland to such popish superstitions and innovations as might make them apt to join with England in that great change which was intended. . . .

76. The Parliament met upon the 13th of April, 1640. The earl of Strafford and archbishop of Canterbury, with their party, so prevailed with His Majesty, that the House of Commons was pressed to yield a supply for maintenance of the war with Scotland, before they had provided any relief for the great and pressing grievances of the people, which being against the fundamental privilege and proceeding of Parliament, was yet in humble respect to His Majesty, so far admitted as that they agreed to take the matter of supply into consideration, and two several days it was debated. . . .

78. Thereupon they wickedly advised the king to break off the Parliament and to return to the ways of confusion, in which their own evil intentions were most likely to prosper and succeed.

79. After the Parliament ended the 5th of May, 1640, this party grew so bold as to counsel the king to supply himself out of his subjects' estates by his own power, at his own will, without their consent. . . .

88. The popish party enjoyed such exemptions from penal laws as amounted to a toleration, besides many other encouragements and Court favours. . . .

90. A pope's nuncio residing here, to act and govern them according to such influences as he received from Rome, and to intercede for them with the most powerful concurrence of the foreign princes of that religion. . . .

94. And such power had they at court, that secretly a commission was issued out, or intended to be issued to some great men of that profession, for the levying of soldiers, and to command and employ them according to private instructions, which we doubt were framed for the advantage of those who were the contrivers of them. . . .

100. Whilst the kingdom was in this agitation and distemper, the Scots, restrained in their trades, impoverished by the loss of many of their ships, bereaved of all possibility of satisfying His Majesty by any naked supplication, entered with a powerful army into the kingdom, and without any

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hostile act or spoil in the country they passed, more than forcing a passage over the Tyne at Newburn, near Newcastle, possessed themselves of Newcastle, and had a fair opportunity to press on further upon the king's army.

101. But duty and reverence to His Majesty, and brotherly love to the English nation, made them stay there, whereby the king had leisure to entertain better counsels.

102. Wherein God so blessed and directed him that he summoned the Great Council of Peers to meet at York upon the 24th of September, and there declared a Parliament to begin the 3rd of November then following. . . .

105. At our first meeting, all oppositions seemed to vanish, the mischiefs were so evident which those evil counsellors produced, that no man durst stand up to defend them: yet the work itself afforded difficulty enough.

106. The multiplied evils and corruption of fifteen years, strengthened by custom and authority, and the concurrent interest of many powerful delinquents, were now to be brought to judgment and reformation.

107. The king's household was to be provided for—they had brought him to that want, that he could not supply his ordinary and necessary expenses without the assistance of his people. . . .

115. The monopolies are all suppressed, whereof some few did prejudice the subject, above £1,000,000 yearly. . . .

120. That which is more beneficial than all this is, that the root of these evils is taken away, which was the arbitrary power pretended to be in His Majesty of taxing the subject, or charging their estates without consent in Parliament, which is now declared to be against law by the judgment of both houses, and likewise by an act of Parliament.

121. Another step of great advantage is this, the living grievances, the evil counsellors and actors of these mischiefs have been so quelled.

122. By the justice done upon the earl of Strafford, the flight of the Lord Finch and Secretary Windebank.

123. The accusation and imprisonment of the archbishop of Canterbury. . . .

125. The discontinuance of parliaments is prevented by the bill for a triennial Parliament, and the abrupt dissolution of this Parliament by another bill, by which it is provided it shall not be dissolved or adjourned without the consent of both houses. . . .

130. The immoderate power of the Council Table, and the excessive abuse of that power is so ordered and restrained, that we may well hope that no such things as were frequently done by them, to the prejudice of the public liberty, will appear in future times but only in stories, to give us and our posterity more occasion to praise God for His Majesty's goodness, and the faithful endeavours of this Parliament. . . .

132. The exorbitant power of bishops and their courts are much abated, by some provisions in the bill against the High Commission court, the authors of the many innovations in doctrine and ceremonies.

Despite these reforms, the Catholic party has systematically sought to undermine the liberties of Parliament.

170. They have had such a party of bishops and popish lords in the House of Peers, as hath caused much opposition and delay in the prosecution of delinquents, hindered the proceedings of divers good bills passed in the Commons' House, concerning the reformation of sundry great abuses and corruptions both in Church and state.

171. They have laboured to seduce and corrupt some of the Commons' House to draw them into conspiracies and combinations against the liberty of the Parliament. . . .

176. Only in Ireland, which was farther off, they have had time and opportunity to mould and prepare their work, and had brought it to that perfection that they had

possessed themselves of that whole kingdom, totally subverted the government of it, routed out religion, and destroyed all the Protestants whom the conscience of their duty to God, their king and country, would not have permitted to join with them, if by God's wonderful providence their main enterprise upon the city and castle of Dublin had not been detected and prevented upon the very eve before it should have been executed.

177. Notwithstanding they have in other parts of that kingdom broken out into open rebellion, surprising towns and castles, committed murders, rapes and other villainies, and shaken off all bonds of obedience to His Majesty and the laws of the realm. . . .

181. But what can we the Commons, without the conjunction of the House of Lords, and what conjunction can we expect there, when the bishops and recusant⁵ lords are so numerous and prevalent that they are able to cross and interrupt our best endeavours for reformation, and by that means give advantage to this malignant party to traduce⁶ our proceedings?

182. They infuse into the people that we mean to abolish all Church government, and leave every man to his own fancy for the service and worship of God, absolving him of that obedience which he owes under God unto His Majesty, whom we know to be entrusted with the ecclesiastical law as well as with the temporal, to regulate all the members of the Church of England, by such rules of order and discipline as are established by Parliament, which is his great council, in all affairs both in Church and state.

183. We confess our intention is, and our endeavours have been, to reduce within bounds that exorbitant power which the prelates have assumed unto themselves, so contrary both to the Word of God and to the laws of the land, to which end we passed the bill for the removing them from their temporal power

and employments, that so the better they might with meekness apply themselves to the discharge of their functions, which bill themselves opposed, and were the principal instruments of crossing it.

184. And we do here declare that it is far from our purpose or desire to let loose the golden reins of discipline and government in the Church, to leave private persons or particular congregations to take up what form of divine service they please, for we hold it requisite that there should be throughout the whole realm a conformity to that order which the laws enjoin according to the Word of God. And we desire to unburden the consciences of men of needless and superstitious ceremonies, suppress innovations, and take away the monuments of idolatry. . . .

191. For the perfecting of the work begun, and removing all future impediments, we conceive these courses will be very effectual, seeing the religion of the Papists hath such principles as do certainly tend to the destruction and extirpation of all Protestants, when they shall have opportunity to effect it.

192. It is necessary in the first place to keep them in such condition as that they may not be able to do us any hurt, and for avoiding of such connivance and favour as hath heretofore been shown unto them.

193. That His Majesty be pleased to grant a standing commission to some choice men named in Parliament, who may take notice of their increase, their counsels and proceedings, and use all due means by execution of the laws to prevent all mischievous designs against the peace and safety of this kingdom. . . .

197. That His Majesty be humbly petitioned by both houses to employ such counsellors, ambassadors and other ministers, in managing his business at home and abroad as the Parliament may have cause to confide in, without which we cannot give His Majesty such supplies for support of his own estate, nor such assis-

⁵recusant: Catholic ⁶traduce: defame

tance to the Protestant party beyond the sea, as is desired. . . .

204. That His Majesty may have cause to be in love with good counsel and good men, by showing him in an humble and dutiful manner how full of advantage it would be to himself, to see his own estate

settled in a plentiful condition to support his honour; to see his people united in ways of duty to him, and endeavours of the public good; to see happiness, wealth, peace and safety derived to his own kingdom, and procured to his allies by the influence of his own power and government.

The Nineteen Propositions (1642)

The Nineteen Propositions were composed in June 1642, two months before the Civil War broke out. Although the propositions asserted the absolute supremacy of Parliament in practice, like so many other important English constitutional documents, they did not claim that supremacy in theory. The language of the propositions must have been particularly galling to Charles I.

Here follows the petition and propositions sent to the king, as they are agreed on by both houses of parliament: *videlicet*,⁷

Your Majesty's most humble and faithful subjects, the Lords and Commons in Parliament, having nothing in their thoughts and desires more precious, and of higher esteem, next to the honor and immediate service of God, than the just and faithful performance of their duty to your Majesty and this kingdom, . . . do, in all humility and sincerity, present to your Majesty their most dutiful petition and advice, that, out of your princely wisdom, for the establishing of your own honor and safety, and gracious tenderness of the welfare and security of your subjects and dominions, you will be pleased to grant and accept these their humble desires and propositions, as the most necessary and effectual means, through God's blessing, of removing those jealousies and differences, which have unhappily fallen betwixt you and your people, and procuring both your Majesty and them a constant course of honor, peace, and happiness.

1. First, that the lords and others of your Majesty's privy council, and such great officers and ministers of state either at home or beyond the seas, may be put

from your privy council, and from those offices and employments, excepting such as shall be approved of by both houses of Parliament; and that the persons put into the places and employments of those that are removed, may be approved of by both houses of parliament; and that all privy councillors shall take an oath for the due execution of their places, in such form as shall be agreed upon by both houses of Parliament.

2. That the great affairs of the kingdom may not be concluded or transacted by the advice of private men, or by any unknown or unsworn councillors; but that such matters as concern the public, and are proper for the high court of Parliament, which is your Majesty's great and supreme council, may be debated, resolved, and transacted, only in Parliament, and not elsewhere; and such as shall presume to do anything to the contrary shall be reserved to the censure and judgment of Parliament; . . . and that no public act, concerning the affairs of the kingdom, which are proper for your privy council, may be esteemed of any validity, as proceeding from the royal authority, unless it be done by the advice and consent of the major part of your council, attested under their

SOURCE: *Journals of the House of Lords*, Vol. V, pp. 97-99.

⁷*videlicet*: namely

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hands; and that your council may be limited to a certain number, not exceeding twenty-five, nor under fifteen; and if any councillor's place happen to be void in the intervals of Parliament, it shall not be supplied without the assent of the major part of the council, which choice shall be confirmed at the next sitting of the Parliament, or else to be void.

3. That the lord high steward of England, lord high constable, lord chancellor, or lord keeper of the great seal, lord treasurer, lord privy seal, earl marshal, lord admiral, warden of the cinque ports,⁸ chief governor of Ireland, chancellor of the exchequer, master of the wards, secretaries of state, two chief justices, and chief baron, may always be chosen with the approbation of both houses of Parliament; and, in the intervals of parliaments, by assent of the major part of the council. . . .

4. That he or they, unto whom the government and education of the king's children shall be committed, shall be approved of by both houses of Parliament; . . . and that all such servants as are now about them, against whom both houses shall have any just exception, shall be removed.

5. That no marriage shall be concluded or treated, for any of the king's children, with any foreign prince, or other person whatsoever, abroad or at home, without the consent of Parliament. . . .

6. That the laws in force against Jesuits, priests, and popish recusants, be strictly put in execution without any toleration or dispensation to the contrary. . . .

7. That the votes of popish lords in the house of peers may be taken away, so long as they continue papists; and that his majesty would consent to such a bill as shall be drawn, for the education of the children of papists by protestants, in the protestant religion.

8. That your majesty would be pleased to consent, that such a reformation be made of the church government and lit-

urgy, as both houses of Parliament shall advise; . . . and that your majesty will be pleased to give your consent to laws for the taking away of innovations and superstitions, and of pluralities, and against scandalous ministers.

9. That your majesty will be pleased to rest satisfied with that course that the lords and commons have appointed, for ordering the militia, until the same shall be further settled by a bill. . . .

10. That such members of either house of Parliament as have, during this present Parliament, been put out of any place and office, may either be restored to that place and office or otherwise have satisfaction for the same. . . .

11. That all privy councillors and judges may take an oath, the form whereof to be agreed on and settled by act of Parliament, for the maintaining of the Petition of Right. . . .

12. That all the judges, and all officers placed by approbation of both houses of Parliament, may hold their places *quamdiu bene se gesserint*.⁹

13. That the justice of Parliament may pass upon all delinquents, whether they be within the kingdom, or fled out of it; and that all persons cited by either house of Parliament may appear, and abide the censure of Parliament.

14. That the general pardon offered by your majesty may be granted, with such exceptions as shall be advised by both houses of Parliament.

15. That the forts and castles of this kingdom may be put under the command and custody of such persons as your majesty shall appoint, with the approbation of your Parliament; and, in the intervals of Parliament, with approbation of the major part of the council. . . .

16. That the extraordinary guards and military forces now attending your majesty may be removed and discharged; and that, for the future, you will raise no such

⁸*cinque ports*: five Channel ports which in early modern times furnished the navy, in return for which they had many legal privileges ⁹*quamdiu . . . gesserint*: during good behavior

guards or extraordinary forces, but, according to the law, in case of actual rebellion or invasion.

17. That your majesty will be pleased to enter into a more strict alliance with the states of the United Provinces, and other neighbor princes and states of the protestant religion. . . .

19. That your majesty will be graciously pleased to pass a bill, for restraining peers made hereafter from sitting or voting in Parliament, unless they be admitted thereunto with the consent of both houses of Parliament.

And these our humble desires being granted by your majesty, we shall forth-

with apply ourselves to regulate your present revenue, in such sort as may be for your best advantage; and likewise to settle such an ordinary and constant increase of it, as shall be sufficient to support your royal dignity in honor and plenty, beyond the proportion of any former grants of the subjects of this kingdom to your majesty's royal predecessors; . . . and cheerfully employ to the uttermost our power and endeavor, in the real expression and performance of our most dutiful and loyal affections, to the preserving and maintaining the royal honor, greatness, and safety of your majesty and your posterity.

Charles I's Answer to the Nineteen Propositions (1642)

Charles's response to the Nineteen Propositions, describing the nature of the "true" and historic constitution as the king perceived it, was much more theoretical than Parliament's challenge to royal authority.

There being three kinds of government among men, absolute monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, and all these having their particular conveniences and inconveniences. The experience and wisdom of your ancestors hath so moulded this [present government] out of a mixture of these, as to give to this kingdom (as far as human prudence can provide) the conveniences of all three, without the inconveniences of any one, as long as the balance hangs even between the three estates, and they run jointly on in their proper channel. . . .

In this kingdom the laws are jointly made by a king, by a house of peers, and by a house of commons chosen by the people, all having free votes and particular privileges. The government according to these laws is entrusted to the king: power of treaties of war and peace, of making peers, of choosing officers and counsellors for state, judges for law, commanders for forts and castles; giving commissions for

raising men; to make war abroad, or to prevent or provide against invasions or insurrections at home; benefit of confiscations, power of pardoning, and some more of the like kind are placed in the king. And this kind of regulated monarchy, having this power to preserve that authority, without which it would be disabled to preserve the laws in their force and the subjects in their liberties and properties, is intended to draw to him such a respect and relation from the great ones as may hinder the ills of division and faction; and such a fear and reverence from the people as may hinder tumults, violence and licentiousness.

Again, that the prince may not make use of this high and perpetual power to the hurt of those for whose good he hath it, and make use of the name of public necessity for the gain of his private fortunes and followers, to the detriment of his people, the House of Commons (an excellent con-

server of liberty, but never intended for any share in government or the choosing of them that should govern) is solely entrusted with the first propositions concerning the levies of moneys . . . and the impeaching of those, who for their own ends . . . have violated that law, which he¹⁰ is bound (when he knows it) to protect. . . . And the Lords being trusted with a judicatory power are an excellent screen and blank between the prince and people, to assist each against any encroachments of the other, and by just judgments to preserve that law which ought to be the rule of every one of the three. . . .

Since, therefore, the power legally placed in both houses is more than suffi-

cient to prevent and restrain the power of tyranny; and [since] without the power which is now asked from us we shall not be able to discharge that trust which is the end of monarchy, since this would be a total subversion of the fundamental laws and that excellent constitution of this kingdom . . . ; since to the power of punishing (which is already in your hands according to law) if the power of preferring be added, we shall have nothing left to us but to look on; since the encroaching of one of these estates upon the power of the other is unhappy in the effects . . . : for all these reasons to all these demands our answer is *nolumus leges Angliae mutari*.¹¹ . . .

Charles I's Defiance of the Parliamentary Court (1649)

By the beginning of 1649 the constitutional crisis was approaching its climax. Commons had declared itself to "have the supreme power in this nation"; whatever it enacted had "the force of law . . . although the consent of the king or the House of Peers be not had thereunto." On the basis of that authority, 135 commissioners met on January 20 as a court to try a monarch whose royal office had already been outlawed as "unnecessary, burdensome and dangerous" to the commonwealth of England. Consequently, when the trial began, the court insisted it was trying not a king but a private gentleman by the name of Charles Stuart, Esquire. In denying the authority of the court, Charles went to the root of the situation: he had law and history on his side; the court had power. In the end Charles was found guilty of high treason against the "people of England" and was executed on Sunday, January 30, 1649.

Having already made my protestations, not only against the illegality of this pretended court, but also, that no earthly power can justly call me (who am your king) in question as a delinquent, I would not any more open my mouth upon this occasion, more than to refer myself to what I have spoken, were I in this case alone concerned: but the duty I owe to God in the preservation of the true liberty of my people will not suffer me at this time to be silent: for, how can any free-born subject of England call life or any-

thing he possesseth his own, if power without right daily make new, and abrogate the old fundamental laws of the land which I now take to be the present case? Wherefore when I came hither, I expected that you would have endeavored to have satisfied me concerning these grounds which hinder me to answer to your pretended impeachment. But since I see that nothing I can say will move you to it (though negatives are not so naturally proved as affirmatives) yet I will show you the reason why I am confident you cannot

SOURCE: John Rushworth, *Historical Collections*, 8 vols. (London, 1680-1722), Vol. VII, pp. 1403-1404.

¹⁰he: the prince ¹¹*nolumus . . . mutari*: we do not wish the laws of England to be changed

judge me, nor indeed the meanest man in England: for I will not (like you) without showing a reason, seek to impose a belief upon my subjects.

There is no proceeding just against any man, but what is warranted, either by God's laws or the municipal laws of the country where he lives. Now I am most confident this day's proceeding cannot be warranted by God's laws; for, on the contrary, the authority of obedience unto kings is clearly warranted, and strictly commanded in both the Old and New Testament, which, if denied, I am ready instantly to prove.

And for the question now in hand, there it is said, that "where the word of a king is, there is power; and who may say unto him, what dost thou?" Eccles. viii. 4. Then for the law of this land, I am no less confident, that no learned lawyer will affirm that an impeachment can lie against the king, they all going in his name: and one of their maxims is, that the king can do no wrong. Besides, the law upon which you ground your proceedings, must either be old or new: if old, show it; if new, tell what authority, warranted by the fundamental laws of the land, hath made it, and when. But how the House of Commons can erect a court of judicature, which was never one itself (as is well known to all lawyers) I leave to God and the world to judge. And it were full as strange, that they should pretend to make laws without king or Lords' House, to any that have heard speak of the laws of England.

And admitting, but not granting, that the people of England's commission could grant your pretended power, I see nothing you can show for that; for certainly you never asked the question of the tenth man in the kingdom, and in this way you manifestly wrong even the poorest ploughman, if you demand not his free consent; nor can you pretend any color for this your

pretended commission, without the consent at least of the major part of every man in England of whatsoever quality or condition, which I am sure you never went about to seek, so far are you from having it. Thus you see that I speak not for my own right alone, as I am your king, but also for the true liberty of all my subjects, which consists not in the power of government, but in living under such laws, such a government, as may give themselves the best assurance of their lives, and property of their goods. . . . Then for anything I can see, the higher house is totally excluded; and for the House of Commons, it is too well known that the major part of them are detained or deterred from sitting; so as if I had no other, this were sufficient for me to protest against the lawfulness of your pretended court. Besides all this, the peace of the kingdom is not the least in my thoughts; and what hope of settlement is there, so long as power reigns without rule or law, changing the whole frame of that government under which this kingdom hath flourished for many hundred years? (nor will I say what will fall out in case this lawless, unjust proceeding against me do go on) and believe it, the commons of England will not thank you for this change; . . . and by this time it will be too sensibly evident, that the arms I took up were only to defend the fundamental laws of this kingdom against those who have supposed my power hath totally changed the ancient government.

Thus, having showed you briefly the reasons why I cannot submit to your pretended authority, without violating the trust which I have from God for the welfare and liberty of my people, I expect from you either clear reasons to convince my judgment, showing me that I am in an error (and then truly I will answer) or that you will withdraw your proceedings. . . .

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A Glimpse of Sion's Glory (1641)

A Glimpse of Sion's Glory, variously attributed to Hanserd Knollys or Thomas Goodwin, reveals the millenarian quality of Puritan thought before the Civil War and its link with the programs of radical political sects—the Levellers, Diggers, and Fifth Monarchy men—after the conflict. Millenarianism was once regarded as characteristic of only the outer fringes of the Puritan movement, but growing evidence suggests that Protestants of every variety and from every social level were touched by the belief that a preordained cataclysm was at hand and that a new Jerusalem would soon emerge from the ashes of Babylon.

Rev. 19:6: *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying: Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.*

At the pouring forth of the first vial, there was a voice saying: *Babylon is fallen, it is fallen.* At the pouring forth of the sixth, John hears a voice as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of thunderings, saying: *Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth*, immediately following the other. Babylon's falling is Sion's raising. Babylon's destruction is Jerusalem's salvation. The fourth vial was poured upon the sun, which is yet doing, namely upon the emperor and that house of Austria, and will be till that house be destroyed. . . . This is the work that is in hand. As soon as ever this is done, that Antichrist is down, Babylon fallen, then comes in Jesus Christ reigning gloriously; then comes in this *Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth*. . . . It is the work of the day to cry down Babylon, that it may fall more and more; and it is the work of the day to give God no rest till he sets up Jerusalem as the praise of the whole world. Blessed is he that dasheth the brats of Babylon against the stones. Blessed is he that hath any hand in pulling down Babylon. And beautiful likewise are the feet of them that bring glad tidings unto Jerusalem, unto Zion, saying, *The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth*. This is the work of this exercise: to show unto

you how, upon the destruction of Babylon, Christ shall reign gloriously, and how we are to further it. . . .

From whence came this hallelujah? *I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters.* By waters we are to understand people: the voice of many waters, of many people. . . .

The voice, of Jesus Christ reigning in his Church, comes first from the multitude, the common people. The voice is heard from them first, before it is heard from any others. God uses the common people and the multitude to proclaim that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. As when Christ came at first the poor receive[d] the Gospel—not many wise, not many noble, not many rich, but the poor—so in the reformation of religion, after Antichrist began to be discovered, it was the common people that first came to look after Christ. . . . The business, brethren, concerning the Scots, it is a business in the issue whereof we hope there will be great things. Where began it? At the very feet, at the very soles of the feet. You that are of the meaner rank, common people, be not discouraged; for God intends to make use of the common people in the great work of proclaiming the kingdom of his Son. . . .

Though the voice of Christ's reign came first from the multitude, yet it comes but in a confused manner, as the noise of many waters. Though the multitude may begin a thing, and their intention may be

good in it, yet it is not for them to bring it to perfection: that which they do commonly is mixed with much confusion and a great deal of disorder. . . . After the beginning of this confused noise among the multitude, God moves the hearts of great ones, of noble, of learned ones; and they come in to the work, and their voice is as the voice of mighty thundering, a voice that strikes terror, and hath a majesty in it to prevail. . . . This is the work of the day, for us to lift up our voice to heaven, that it might be mighty to bring forth more and more the voice of our Parliament as a voice of thunder, a terrible voice to the Antichristian party, that they may say, *The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth*. And let us not be discouraged, for our prayers, though they be poor and mean, and scattered, they may further the voice of thunderings. . . .

Though Christ's kingdom be for a while darkened, Christ shall reign gloriously. That is implied. It is revealed to John as a great wonder, as a glorious thing. Why, did not Christ reign before? Yes, but not in that manner that now he is to reign: the kingdom of Christ hath been exceedingly darkened in the world: though it now begins to appear a little more brightly, it hath been exceedingly darkened. . . .

It may be, it is to be a stumbling block to wicked and ungodly men in his just judgment, that they should see and not understand. And it was upon this ground that God suffered his kingdom to be darkened hitherto, that Antichrist might prevail: because of much glory that he is intending to bring out of the prevailing of Antichrist in the world, therefore in his providence he hath so permitted it as that the kingdom of his Son for many years should be darkened. And [my brethren] if the kingdom of Christ had been kept in congregations in that way that we and some other churches are in, it had been impossible that Antichrist should have got head. But God in his providence, because he would permit Antichrist to rise and to rule for a long time—and he had many things to bring out of the kingdom of An-

tichrist, to work for his glory—therefore God hath left this truth to be so dark: the setting up of Christ in his kingly office. Thirdly, because God would exercise the faith and other graces of his Spirit in his children, that they might believe in, and love Jesus Christ for his spiritual beauty, though there appears nothing but spiritual beauty, though no outward beauty, no outward kingdom doth appear, but he be as a spiritual king only. . . . And the less Christ doth reign outwardly in the world, the less glorious his kingdom doth appear outwardly, the more let us labour to bring our hearts under his spiritual reign. . . . For yet the voice is not heard much, that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, abroad in the world, though lately some noise we have heard. But blessed be God, in our congregations amongst us we may hear that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. It is through our wretched wickedness if his kingly power be not fully set up amongst us in all his ordinances. And that we should have an opportunity to set up his kingly power amongst us here, while it is so much opposed and so little known in the world, it is a great mercy. . . .

But though it be dark for a while, certainly he shall reign, and the voice will be glorious and distinct one day, saying, *Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth*. He shall reign first personally; secondly, in his Saints. . . .

The people of God have been, and are, a despised people. But their reproach shall be for ever taken away, and they shall not be ashamed of religion, for it shall be glorified before the sons of men. . . . There are notable texts of scripture to show the great honour that shall be in the ways of religion. . . . We know that now in many places the governors of Judah [England], the great ones of the country, their spirits have been set against the Saints of God. We know what reproachful names they have put upon them, and how they have discountenanced them. Though the governors of Judah have counted them factious, and schismatics, and Puritans, there is a time coming when the governors of Judah

shall be convinced of the excellency of God's people, so convinced as to say in their hearts that the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that is, the Saints of God gathered together in a church, are the best commonwealth's men: not seditious men, not factious, not disturbers of the state. . . .

You see that the Saints have little now in the world; now they are the poorest and the meanest of all; but then when the adoption of the sons of God shall come in the fulness of it, the world shall be theirs; for the world is purchased for them by Jesus Christ. *Not only heaven shall be your kingdom, but this world bodily. . . .*

But you will say, Are these things true? To that we answer: For the truth of them I will go no further than this chapter, verse 9, *These are the true sayings of God. . . .*

It is God Omnipotent that shall do these things, by that power, *whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself*. Mountains shall be made plain, and he shall come skipping over mountains and over difficulties. Nothing shall hinder him. . . .

But when shall these things be? Truly brethren, we hope it is not long before they shall be; and the nearer the time comes, the more clearly these things shall be revealed. . . .

EDWARD HYDE *Memoir of Charles I (ca. 1669)*

Edward Hyde, first earl of Clarendon (1609–1674), although partial to Charles (reigned 1625–1649) and to the divine-right theory of kingship, gives a provocative analysis of the king's character in this excerpt from his History of the Great Rebellion and Civil War in England.

But it will be unnecessary to add a short character of his person, that posterity may know the inestimable loss which the nation then underwent, in being deprived of a prince, whose example would have had a greater influence upon the manners and piety of the nation, than the most strict laws can have. To speak first of his private qualifications as a man, before the mention of his princely and royal virtues; he was, if ever any, the most worthy of the title of an honest man; so great a lover of justice, that no temptation could dispose him to a wrongful action, except it was so disguised to him that he believed it to be just. He had a tenderness and compassion of nature, which restrained him from ever doing a hard-hearted thing: and therefore he was so apt to grant pardon to malefactors, that the judges of the land represented to him the damage and insecurity to the public, that flowed from such his indulgence. And

then he restrained himself from pardoning either murders or highway robberies, and quickly discerned the fruits of his severity by a wonderful reformation of those enormities. He was very punctual and regular in his devotions; he was never known to enter upon his recreations or sports, though never so early in the morning, before he had been at public prayers; so that on hunting days his chaplains were bound to a very early attendance. He was likewise very strict in observing the hours of his private cabinet devotions; and was so severe an exactor of gravity and reverence in all mention of religion, that he could never endure any light or profane word, with what sharpness of wit soever it was covered: and though he was well pleased and delighted with reading verses made upon any occasion, no man durst bring before him any thing that was profane or unclean. That kind of wit had never any countenance then. He was so

SOURCE: Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon, *History of the Great Rebellion and Civil War in England*, 8 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1826), Vol. VI, pp. 236–241.

great an example of conjugal affection, that they who did not imitate him in that particular durst not brag of their liberty: and he did not only permit, but direct his bishops to prosecute those scandalous vices, in the ecclesiastical courts, against persons of eminence, and near relation to his service.

His kingly virtues had some mixture and alloy, that hindered them from shining in full lustre, and from producing those fruits they should have been attended with. He was not in his nature very bountiful, though he gave very much. This appeared more after the duke of Buckingham's death, after which those showers fell very rarely; and he paused too long in giving, which made those, to whom he gave, less sensible of the benefit. He kept state to the full, which made his court very orderly; no man presuming to be seen in a place where he had no pretence to be. He saw and observed men long, before he received them about his person; and did not love strangers; nor very confident men. He was a patient hearer of causes; which he frequently accustomed himself to at the council board; and judged very well, and was dexterous in the mediating part: so that he often put an end to causes by persuasion, which the stubbornness of men's humours made dilatory in courts of justice.

He was very fearless in his person; but, in his riper years, not very enterprising. He had an excellent understanding, but was not confident enough of it; which made him oftentimes change his own opinion for a worse, and follow the advice of men that did not judge so well as himself. This made him more irresolute than the conjuncture of his affairs would admit: if he had been of a rougher and more imperious nature, he would have found more respect and duty. And his not applying some severe cures to approaching evils proceeded from the lenity of his nature, and the tenderness of his conscience, which, in all cases of blood, made him choose the softer way, and not hearken to severe counsels, how reasonably soever

urged. This only restrained him from pursuing his advantage in the first Scottish expedition, when, humanly speaking, he might have reduced that nation to the most entire obedience that could have been wished. But no man can say he had then many who advised him to it, but the contrary, by a wonderful indisposition all his council had to the war, or any other fatigue. He was always a great lover of the Scottish nation, having not only been born there, but educated by that people, and besieged by them always, having few English about him till he was king; and the major number of his servants being still of that nation, and who he thought could never fail him. . . .

So many miraculous circumstances contributed to his ruin, that men might well think that heaven and earth conspired it. Though he was, from the first declension of his power, so much betrayed by his own servants, that there were very few who remained faithful to him, yet that treachery proceeded not always from any treasonable purpose to do him any harm, but from particular and personal animosities against other men. And, afterwards, the terror all men were under of the parliament, and the guilt they were conscious of themselves, made them watch all opportunities to make themselves gracious to those who could do them good; and so they became spies upon their master, and from one piece of knavery were hardened and confirmed to undertake another; till at last they had no hope of preservation but by the destruction of their master. And after all this, when a man might reasonably believe that less than a universal defection of three nations could not have reduced a great king to so ugly a fate, it is most certain, that, in that very hour when he was thus wickedly murdered in the sight of the sun, he had as great a share in the hearts and affections of his subjects in general, was as much beloved, esteemed, and longed for by the people in general of the three nations, as any of his predecessors had ever been. To conclude, he was the worthiest gentleman, the best master, the

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best friend, the best husband, the best father, and the best Christian, that the age in which he lived produced. And if he were not the greatest king, if he were without some parts and qualities which

have made some kings great and happy, no other prince was ever unhappy who was possessed of half his virtues and endowments, and so much without any kind of vice.

LUCY HUTCHINSON *The Background of the Civil War (ca. 1664)*

Starting with the Reformation under Henry VII, Lucy Hutchinson (b.1620) traces the historical background of the Civil War through the religious and international crises of Elizabeth's reign, the growing corruption of government under James I, and the final persecution of the godly under Charles I.

When the dawn of the gospel began to break upon this isle, after the dark midnight of papacy, the morning was more cloudy here than in other places by reason of the state-interest, which was mixing and working itself into the interest of religion, and which in the end quite wrought it out. King Henry the Eighth, who, by his royal authority cast out the pope, did not intend the people of the land should have any ease of oppression; but only changed their foreign yoke for home-bred fetters, dividing the pope's spoils between himself and his bishops, who cared not for their father at Rome, so long as they enjoyed their patrimony and their honours here under another head: so that I cannot subscribe to those who entitle that king to the honour of the reformation. But even then there wanted not many who discerned the corruptions that were retained in the church and eagerly applied their own endeavours to obtain a purer reformation; against whom, those—who saw no need of further reformation, either through excess of joy for that which was already brought forth, or else through a secret love of superstition rooted in their hearts, thought this too much,—were bitterly incensed, and, hating that light which reproved their darkness, everywhere stirred up spirits of envy and persecution against them. Upon

the great revolution which took place at the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the crown, the nation became divided into three great factions, the papists, the state protestants, and the more religious zealots, who afterwards were branded with the name of Puritans. In vain it was for these to address the queen and the parliament; for the bishops, under the specious pretences of uniformity and obedience, procured severe punishments to be inflicted on such as durst gainsay their determinations in all things concerning worship, whereupon some even in those godly days lost their lives.

England was not an idle spectator of the great contest between the papist and protestant, in which all Christendom seemed to be engaged. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the protestant interest, being her peculiar interest, that princess became not only glorious in the defence of her own realm, but in the protection she gave to the whole protestant cause in all the neighbouring kingdoms; wherefore, as if it had been devolved upon her person, the pope shot all his arrows at her head, and set on many desperate assassinations against her, which, by the good providence of God, were all frustrated, and she, not only miraculously delivered from those wretches, but renowned at home and

SOURCE: Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson* (London: Bell & Sons, 1908), pp. 69–70, 75–81, 83–86, 88–90.

abroad for successes against her rebellious subjects in England and Ireland, and for the assistance of her distressed neighbours; but, above all, for the mercy which it pleased God to afford her and this realm in the year 1588, when the invading Spaniard had devoured us in his proud hopes, and by the mighty hand of God was scattered as a mist before the morning beams. That which kept alive the hopes of the papists, most part of her reign, was the expectation of the queen of Scots, who, entering into confederacy with them, lost her head for the forfeit, wherein the duke of Norfolk suffered also for the loss of his. The queen of England was very loath to execute this necessary justice; but the true-hearted protestants of her council, foreseeing the sad effects that might be expected if ever she [Mary] arrived to the crown, urged it on; and after the death of Queen Elizabeth, the wiser of them much opposed the admission of her son. But he, dissembling the resentment of his mother's death, by bribes and greater promises, managed a faction in the court of the declining queen, which prevailed on her dotage to destroy the earl of Essex, the only person who would have had the courage to keep out him they thought it dangerous to let in. So subtly brought they their purpose about, that wise counsel was in vain to a blinded and betrayed people. The anti-prelatical¹² party hoping that, with a king bred up among the Calvinists, they should now be freed from the episcopal yoke, were greedy of entertaining him, but soon cured of their mistake; when, immediately after his entry into the kingdom, himself being moderator at a dispute between both parties, the nonconformists were cast out of doors, and the offensive ceremonies, instead of being removed, were more strictly imposed; the penalties against papists were relaxed, and many of them taken into favour; whilst those families who suffered for his mother were

graced and restored as far as the times would bear, and those who consented any way to the justice done upon her, disfavoured. A progress was made suitable to this beginning, the protestant interest abroad was deserted and betrayed, the prelates at home daily exalted in pride and pomp, and declining in virtue and godliness. . . .

The court of this king was a nursery of lust and intemperance; he had brought in with him a company of poor Scots, who coming into this plentiful kingdom, were surfeited with riot and debaucheries, and got all the riches of the land only to cast away. The honour, wealth, and glory of the nation, wherein Queen Elizabeth left it, were soon prodigally wasted by this thriftless heir; and the nobility of the land was utterly debased by setting honours to public sale, and conferring them on persons that had neither blood nor merit fit to wear, nor estates to bear up their titles, but were fain to invent projects to pill¹³ the people, and pick their purses for the maintenance of vice and lewdness. The generality of the gentry of the land soon learned the court fashion, and every great house in the country became a sty of uncleanness. To keep the people in their deplorable security, till vengeance overtook them, they were entertained with masks,¹⁴ stage plays, and various sorts of ruder sports. . . . The ministers warned the people of the approaching judgments of God, which could not be expected but to follow such high provocations; God in his mercy sent his prophets into all corners of the land, to preach repentance, and cry out against the ingratitude of England, who thus requited so many rich mercies that no nation could ever boast of more; and by these a few were every where converted and established in faith and holiness; but at court they were hated, disgraced, and reviled, and in scorn had the name of Puritan fixed upon them. . . .

¹²*anti-prelatical*: opposed to an episcopally organized church ¹³*pill*: plunder ¹⁴*masks*: an entertainment involving masked characters

The king had upon his heart the dealings both of England and Scotland with his mother, and harboured a secret desire of revenge upon the godly in both nations, yet had no courage enough to assert his resentment like a prince, but employed a wicked cunning he was master of, and called king-craft, to undermine what he durst not openly oppose—the true religion. . . . If any durst dispute his impositions in the worship of God, he was presently reckoned among the seditious and disturbers of the public peace, and accordingly persecuted; if any were grieved at the dishonour of the kingdom, or the griping of the poor, or the unjust oppressions of the subject, by a thousand ways, invented to maintain the riots of the courtiers, and the swarms of needy Scots the king had brought in to devour like locusts the plenty of this land, he was a puritan. . . . In short, all that crossed the views of the needy courtiers, the proud encroaching priests, the thievish projectors, the lewd nobility and gentry—whoever was zealous for God's glory or worship, could not endure blasphemous oaths, ribald conversation, profane scoffs, sabbath breaking, derision of the word of God, and the like—whoever could endure a sermon, modest habit or conversation, or anything good,—all these were puritans. . . . The king, grudging that his people should dare to gainsay his pleasure, and correct his misgovernment in his favourites, broke up parliaments, violated their privileges, imprisoned their members for things spoken in the house, and grew disaffected to them, and entertained projects of supply by other grievances of the people. The prelates, in the mean time, finding they lost ground, meditated reunion with the popish faction, who began to be at a pretty agreement with them; and now there was no more endeavour in their public sermons to confute the errors of that church, but to reduce our doctrines and theirs to an accommodation. . . .

The face of the court was much changed in the change of the king, for King Charles was temperate, chaste, and serious; so that the fools and bawds, mimics and catamites,¹⁵ of the former court, grew out of fashion; and the nobility and courtiers, who did not quite abandon their debaucheries, yet so revered the king as to retire into corners to practice them. Men of learning and ingenuity in all arts were in esteem, and received encouragement from the king, who was a most excellent judge and a great lover of paintings, carvings, gravings, and many other ingenuities, less offensive than the bawdry and profane abusive wit which was the only exercise of the other court. But, as in the primitive times, it is observed that the best emperors were some of them stirred up by Satan to be the bitterest persecutors of the church, so this king was a worse encroacher upon the civil and spiritual liberties of his people by far than his father. He married a papist, a French lady, of a haughty spirit, and a great wit and beauty, to whom he became a most uxorious¹⁶ husband. By this means the court was replenished with papists, and many who hoped to advance themselves by the change, turned to that religion. All the papists in the kingdom were favoured, and, by the king's example, matched into the best families; the puritans were more than ever discountenanced and persecuted. . . . The example of the French king was propounded to him, and he thought himself no monarch so long as his will was confined to the bounds of any law; but knowing that the people of England were not pliable to an arbitrary rule, he plotted to subdue them to his yoke by a foreign force, and till he could effect it, made no conscience of granting anything to the people, which he resolved should not oblige him longer than it served his turn; for he was a prince that had nothing of faith or truth, justice or generosity, in him. He was the most obstinate person in

¹⁵catamites: boys kept for unnatural purposes

¹⁶uxorious: submissive

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his self-will that ever was, and so bent upon being an absolute, uncontrollable sovereign, that he was resolved either to be such a king or none. His firm adherence to prelacy was not for conscience of one religion more than another, for it was his principle that an honest man might be saved in any profession; but he had a mistaken principle that kingly government in the state could not stand without episcopal government in the church; and, therefore, as the bishops flattered him with preaching up his sovereign prerogative, and inveighing against the puritans as factious and disloyal, so he protected them in their pomp and pride, and insolent practices against all the godly and sober people of the land. . . .

There were two above all the rest, who led the van of the king's evil counsellors, and these were Laud, archbishop of Canterbury, a fellow of mean extraction and arrogant pride, and the earl of Strafford, who as much outstripped all the rest in favour as he did in abilities, being a man of deep policy, stern resolution, and ambitious zeal to keep up the glory of his own greatness. . . . But above all these the king had another instigator of his own violent purpose, more powerful than all the rest, and that was the queen, who, grown out of her childhood, began to turn her mind from those vain extravagancies she lived in at first, to that which did less become her, and was more fatal to the kingdom, which is never in any place happy where the hands which were made only for distaffs affect the management of sceptres.—If any one object the fresh example of Queen Elizabeth, let them remember that the felicity of her reign was the effect of her submission to her masculine and wise counsellors; but wherever male princes are so effeminate as to suffer women of foreign birth and different religions to intermeddle with the affairs of state, it is al-

ways found to produce sad desolations; and it hath been observed that a French queen never brought any happiness to England. . . . This lady being by her priests affected with the meritoriousness of advancing her own religion, whose principle it is to subvert all other, applied that way her great wit and parts and the power her naughty spirit kept over her husband, who was enslaved in his affection only to her, though she had no more passion for him than what served to promote her designs. Those brought her into a very good correspondence with the archbishop and his prelatial crew, both joining in the cruel design of rooting the godly out of the land. The foolish protestants were meditating reconciliations with the church of Rome, who embraced them as far as they would go, carrying them in hand, as if there had been a possibility of bringing such a thing to pass; meanwhile they carried on their design by them, and had so ripened it, that nothing but the mercy of God prevented the utter subversion of protestantism in the three kingdoms.—But how much soever their designs were framed in the dark, God revealed them to his servants, and most miraculously ordered providences for their preservation. About the year 1639, the Scots, having the English service-book¹⁷ obruded upon them violently, refused it, and took a national covenant against it, and entered England with a great army, to bring their complaints to the king, which his unfaithful ministers did, as they supposed, much misreport. The king himself levied an army against them, wherein he was assisted by the nobility and gentry, but most of all by prelates, insomuch that the war got the name of *bellum episcopale*, or "bishops' war"; but the commonality of the nation, being themselves under grievous bondage, were loath to oppose a people that came only to claim their just liberties. . . .

¹⁷English service-book: The Book of Common Prayer

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