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Art. I.—*Sanctification.*

Sanctification is the maintenance and progression of a new life, imparted to the soul, by a direct agency of the Spirit of God, in regeneration or the new birth. Of the latter, Coleridge admirably says that "not the qualities of the soul merely, but the root of the qualities is transcreated. How else could it be a birth, a creation?"* By nature, or the first birth, we are not only destitute of every element of this Divine principle, every spiritual desire or aptitude, we also have within us a principle utterly, and to finite power invincibly antagonistic to it; a deadly, death-working energy, that reigns and rules with a sovereign sway throughout and over our entire nature. It is described by the apostle as a merciless tyrant that rouses himself and asserts his supremacy at the least symptom of resistance to his malignant sway. This is sin, original sin, knowing no infancy, adult in the new-born babe; as Augustine says, *Tantillus puer, tantus peccator;*† the spring-head and ever-flowing fountain of all wrong acts and words and thoughts and feelings; it is like the poison in the viper, which makes it the sinner may come boldly to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.

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* Works, vol. v. p. 370, Shedd's edition.

† See South's Sermons, vol. ii. p. 430, Bohn's edition.

Therefore, may we thus preach grace to the sinner, grace which for its other name has—Christ. We can strive to present to his mind and heart this vision of its nature. We may preach grace for all wants of human souls, to lead them from darkness to the light of God, to make their weakness strength, and to turn sinners unto the faithful following of Jesus Christ. Grace is given for this ministry, wherein we are ambassadors for Christ, praying of sinners in Christ's stead that they be reconciled to God. Preaching this gospel of reconciliation, we would bring forth the headstone thereof, with shoutings, crying, "Grace, grace unto it"; and before this power of the Lord Jesus Christ shall the great mountain become a plain, and souls that have groped in darkness shall behold a light shining "on the path which leads them to the Lamb."

ART. V.—*The British Churches under Cromwell.*

THE Reformation in England was not permitted to reach the maturity it sought. Royal authority interposed and stopped its course by absolute prohibition. What the brief reign of Edward VI. effected, and not quite all that, alone was tolerated by Elizabeth. Some things the intervening reign of Mary had undone which her sister was not disposed to restore. The leading reformers who survived the Maryan persecution submitted, though many of them unwillingly, to the policy of Elizabeth, thereby accepting a reformation, which, as compared with that of the Continent and of Scotland, was but halfway. Some declined the Queen's authority in that matter, and together with those who unwillingly submitted, constituted a party of great weight in the Anglican church. A few of them separated from the establishment, but were of small moment in comparison with the number of them who remained in it. After the Roman Catholics had been excluded by the papal excommunication of Elizabeth, the state church contained just those two parties whose aims were on the one hand to stop the reformation where it was, and on the other, to carry it forward to greater purity. Thus by the arbitrary interference of the great Queen there was constituted a strife in the bosom of the Anglican church which has raged there ever since. Throughout her own reign the spirit of difference increased in intensity. Prelatists, who in the beginning were so few that Parker, the primate, found some difficulty in obtaining proper persons to fill the episcopal places, became, in course of time, and under consistent royal patronage, more numerous and of stronger convictions; while the Puritans maintained their cause by diligent study of their Bibles, by intercourse with the reformers of the Continent and of Scotland, and by associations among themselves which the government did not always penetrate. Among them the Genevan translation of the Bible found special favour. In the time of James I. the Prelatic party retained the ascendency which it had secured under favour of Elizabeth. But his weak despotism both intensified and enfeebled it, by promoting its adoption of preposterous claims, while his harsh treatment of the Puritans prolonged for them the education of adversity. Then why did they not leave the established church? Because they loved it, and were not the less its members in that they desired its greater purity. They held that the advantage of the other party over them was due only to royal favour and acts of parliament. It was entirely consistent with their church-membership to agitate for a change in the laws, which according to their views had biased their church polity and fettered her spiritual progress. The few who had separated had thereby only withdrawn their support from the cause within the church, and brought greater hardships upon themselves; and what good they were to effect did not yet appear. The position of Puritanism within the English church was entirely and nobly consistent with its own aims.

Prelatists, again, as naturally supported the cause of absolute authority in the princes who sided with them, which tendency, the short-sighted policy of the Stuarts turned to the service of their own selfishness, and set aside every guarantee of English freedom. Were the Puritans who stood manfully by the constitutional rights of their countrymen to be regarded as less true to their national church than that party which sought to ally it with despotism? After more than two generations of wretched misgovernment in that matter, Puritanism had made such progress that a Parliament could not be called without giving organization to its power. The King, at the head of the prelatic party, latterly shunned the conflict with it, and attempted to govern by his own will. But English customs and prescriptive law were not so completely suppressed as to allow of adequate revenue being collected in that way. The evils inflicted by tyranny recoiled upon itself; and when the King stood in need of an army to enforce his unconstitutional measures, he found himself constrained to call a Parliament to provide him with the means. It was certainly not very unnatural that the representatives of an oppressed people should withhold from the tyrant the means of further oppression. True, his immediate object, when the Long Parliament met, was to crush, not England, but the Church of Scotland; but in that Church of Scotland the Puritans recognized their own cause, and knew that every blow which should take effect upon it would damage themselves. In the quarrel which ensued between Charles and the Parliament, the two parties of the English church came to an open separation for the first time. In both Houses, among the lords temporal as well as among the representatives of the people, the Puritan element prevailed; in the latter by an overwhelming majority. Prelacy was abolished, and Presbyterianism, according to the views of the greater number of Puritans, established as the government of the English church, and the bishops excluded from the House of Lords. But the Puritans themselves consisted of two parties, Presbyterian and Independent. Until the Prelatists were overthrown both in battle and in debate, these two were practically one. The completeness of their success opened the way to their division. The Independents were most numerous in the army; the Presbyterians in Parliament. To the former belonged the force of the nation; to the latter the majority of its people. It was the purpose of Parliament, when the war was closed, to disband the army. But that, as its leaders well knew, would have been the humiliation of the Independent party, which, as they believed, most consistently sustained the true cause of God.

The execution of the King was the work of the Independent party; and in order to put themselves in condition to effect it, they had to break with the Presbyterians in Parliament. After the death of the King the most important persons in the kingdom, by virtue of the places they occupied, were Lenthal, speaker of the House of Commons, and Fairfax, commander-in-chief of the army. But the former had his sphere only in the House. He was nothing out of it; and within it only what the rules of the House made him. And Fairfax, who all along had conceded so much to the superior gifts of his Lieutenant-General, was now disabled by the defeat of the Presbyterian party to which he belonged. The real leader, by the inevitable force of events, was Cromwell, who, although he had not been the first to dare the boldest steps, had consistently moved on at the head of his party, which now, and barely by support of his talents, was in the ascendant. Well for the world that such a man stood where he did at that juncture.

Much difficulty has been needlessly introduced into the character of Cromwell. After his death royalists obtained the public ear, and were sustained by imperious fashion in shaping the history for themselves. It did not suit their purpose to admit that he was truly a Christian, and without that admission his whole public life becomes an enigma. Everything having the colour of honesty about him was to be explained as hypocrisy. And in order to throw upon him the reproach of things which occurred in the natural order of human events, they impute to him a superhuman foreknowledge and laying of plans to promote his own ambition in them, with such skill in disguising, that nobody could ever detect them. Within more recent time research has turned back to the writers of the Commonwealth, and especially to the letters and speeches of Cromwell himself, and now set before us, divested of the false colouring and misrepresentations of royalists, he appears to have been a man of great simplicity and openness. In all his correspondence, not the first trace is to be found of the charlatan. On the contrary, the most indubitable marks of a man who lived near to God, shaken as he laments by the trials of his life, but ever recurring to the merits of the Saviour. Not a letter from his hand, be it a note of affection to his wife or children, or a report of one of his victories to Parliament, fails to bear this testimony directly or indirectly. If some of his acts were neither wisest nor best, it is not more than incident to human nature; but that all in him which seemed to be Christian was the mere fruit of hypocrisy is inconceivable. They who have asserted it, have either not examined the facts, or been singularly blinded by prejudice. In its essential integrity the spirit of his letters was also that of his public life. The basis of his character was its profound religiousness. If not always uppermost, religion seemed to be always undermost in his thoughts. All things occurred to him in the light of their relations to God. And although tinctured, after the fashion of his day, with Old Testament severity, his religion was of that spirit which none ever learned save of the Lord Jesus Christ. With a university education, but without any pretensions to superior scholarship, his strong native powers readily appropriated the knowledge demanded by his duties; and he said of himself that he always did what was given him to do, to the best of his ability. Deep penetration into the motives of men, quick apprehension of the demands of the present, and great promptness and despatch in business, supplied to him the place of forethought. So readily did he adapt himself to emergency, and so abundant were his resources, that people were sometimes tempted to believe that he had laid a train to create the emergency, for which he seemed so well prepared: and could impute to nothing but hypocrisy his solemn averment to the contrary. But it was always so. His decision never wavered when the crisis came. Without a particle of the histrionic about him, the rapidity and daring of his intuitions sometimes affected himself like inspiration. It was to this that the most questionable as well as the greatest acts of his life were due. In the habit of daily prayer, and of taking special counsel with God in view of great duties, he was prone on rising from his knees, to take the idea which had strong hold of his mind as a voice from heaven: when he warmed in debate and new thoughts flashed before his mind, or in the sudden exigencies of battle, the idea of some brilliant and successful movement darted before him, he knew not whence; he believed to be of God. But this belief, while it led him into some mistakes, gave a singular elevation and splendor to his genius. With the humility of a Christian, and more than ordinary simplicity of conversation and manner, he conceived of himself as a special instrument of God, under special Divine protection and destination to a certain end.

We are not aware of any verified fact of his public life inconsistent with these elements of his character. That masterly combination of practical judgment, energetic fidelity in duty, with quick and startling intuitions in times of difficulty, and that abiding feeling of supernatural guidance and communion with Deity, constituted such an aggregate of character as the world has seldom seen.

His insight in historical cause and effect was sagacious and far-reaching. No other man of his day has left any evidence to such breadth of statesmanship. He alone, among those concerned in it, seems to have apprehended the true historical importance of the revolution in which he was acting so important a part. It was greatly to the embarrassment of his plans and grief of his spirit, that he could not get men to coöperate with him on the level of his own views. How often did he urge—and often in vain—upon his council and Parliaments that their cause was not that of a party, but of the whole three kingdoms; and in and through them, of the whole Protestant world. "All the honest interests," said he before the Parliament of 1656, "yea, all the interests of the Protestants in Germany, Denmark, Helvetia, and the Cantons, and all the interests of Christendom, are the same as yours. If you succeed, if you succeed well and act well, and be convinced what is God's interest, and prosecute it, you will find that you act for a very great many who are God's own." Such was the spirit of his foreign policy, manifesting itself in protecting Protestants and putting a check upon the aggressions and cruelties of Rome in every direction. At home it was this liberality which procured him abuse from all sides, except from the few, who, like Milton, rightly understood him. He would not narrow himself down to be the champion of any party less comprehensive than the whole Protestant name. Prelacy he restricted only in as far as it adhered to the practices of Rome. Men of that day deemed it evidence of hypocrisy, that professing Christianity he did not exclusively defend the interests of one denomination; a charge which has been put into most definite form by one of his French biographers of our own time. "Cromwell's neutrality for forms of worship," writes Villemain, "compared with the fervour which he always affected, would of itself be enough to convict him of hypocrisy. In that fanatical age, faith was never distinct from intolerance, and if Cromwell had been sincere, he would have chosen the sect he preferred to follow."* Another such shallow and malignant remark it would be difficult to quote from any respectable historian touching any character which he must have studied. Cromwell viewed himself as raised up by God to be the defender of evangelical religion under every name, against heathenism in Rome and out of it; but especially in it. And when we consider the state of Europe at that epoch, the idea, far from being a craze of fanaticism, proves to have been one of the grandest conceptions of enlightened statesmanship.

On the Continent, the thirty years' war had just closed in the treaty of Westphalia, and Protestant nations for the first time had secured the recognition of their independence. But the Pope could sanction no treaty stipulations going to derogate from his ancient claims of authority, the vexation and wrath of the Catholics were extreme, and the violence of persecution intensified wherever they retained sway. It was then that the Jesuit order was most active and powerful, instinct with the purpose to exterminate Protestants, and recover by stratagem and oppression what had been lost in open war. Catholic princes supported them or submitted to become the executioners of their designs; and the whole was sustained by the wealth and political weight of Spain. Protestant states on the Continent were small as compared with the great Catholic powers. The alliance with France had carried them to success in the war. But France, though in policy arrayed against the house of Hapsburg, could not be relied upon to support the cause of Protestants. Within her own bounds they were subjected to many hardships. The alliance in which a terrible war had bound them being then dissolved, the Protestant states were exposed to the machinations of unscrupulous enemies. Some strong arm was needed in that emergency to secure respect for the conditions of the treaty.

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* Villemain's Cromwell, ii. 200.

The spirit and purpose of popery coincided with those of the great monarchies of which we have already made mention. Monarchical despotism had been defeated in England, but was not dead there. In France it had been checked in development by regencies and the necessity of alliance with the liberal cause in order to counteract the overbalancing weight of Spain, but was meanwhile slowly making progress to that degree of absolutism, which a few years after Cromwell's death it boldly assumed, when the King declared himself the state. Of this cause also the King of Spain was the principal champion, and his politics were those of his kinsman on the throne of the empire. What else was to be seen beyond those bounds? To the north, Russia, not yet a European power; to the east and south the Turks, then in all their pride of dominion. In the new world, the colonies of the great popish powers were strengthening themselves over the aboriginal inhabitants by measures the most diabolical. The Puritan settlements upon the northern coast were still but few and feeble.

Against such stupendous strongholds of wrong, what could a nation like Denmark or Sweden, or the disjointed states of northern Germany, or Cantons of Switzerland avail; or what could Holland, though then an arm of greater strength? And now, had the regal policy which ruled in the court of the Tudors and Stuarts, and reached its greatest audacity in that of Charles I. been suffered to continue, and add its influence, if not the strength of the British isles, to the side of despotism on the Continent, civil liberty, now distinctly assigned over to the Protestant states, must have gone down in the extinction designed for them.

The treaty of Westphalia would have been strangled in its infancy, but for certain wonderful providences, among which most conspicuous appeared the Commonwealth of England holding all the British isles, for the first time, bound together in one. And he who had so bound them in one and now stood at their head, their representative to the world, well understood the import of the place he occupied in all these relations. No man elevated to such office ever estimated more justly its demands and responsibilities than Cromwell. The enemy of despotism in all forms, he was equally opposed to the radicalism of the levellers; and earnestly sought to establish the government of his country upon a regular constitutional basis. Repeatedly did he take measures to return the powers which he held to the hands of representatives of the people. The incapacity of their majorities defeated every such plan; and to save all from ruin, he had to resume the whole weight of the trust. The example which he wished to present to the world was that of a regularly constituted freedom. Not permitted so to do by the disorders of the time, it seems that he did the best which remained for him to do. Power had been put into his hands, to return it was impracticable then; but royalty had become synonymous with despotism, and he steadily refused its rank and title, preferring to be called the Protector of the English Commonwealth, in hope that the day might still come when the Protectorate might be laid down, or regulated to an ordinary office, and the commonwealth go on by force of its own constitution. Notwithstanding his anomalous position, he was on one side; kings on the other. However strongly tempted by the actual possession of power, and the offer of regal honours, he would not betray the cause of freedom, which might still emerge in its true colours in his or some other hands.

War, although a sphere in which he was invariably successful, Cromwell never pursued for either the gains or the glory to be obtained by it, not even for civil liberty alone. If he had any model before his mind, it was neither Cæsar nor Brutus, but Joshua, the captain of the armies of the Lord. The same motives which actuated his conduct in church and state, constituted the key to all his military career; that part of it which pertains to Ireland as distinctly as any other. He appeared in Ireland to put an end to an already long continued war; but he also commanded an army which viewed itself as the avenger of unspeakable barbarities practised upon their fellow Protestants. By two terrific blows he almost extinguished opposition. The rest of the campaign was little more than a triumphant march through the country. Everywhere non-resistants were spared. The men who had commenced hostilities, and conducted them, as long as unopposed by an adequate force, with the most atrocious brutalities upon multitudes of the unoffending, had provoked a retaliation, which, had their enemy been like themselves, would have been tenfold what they suffered. Cromwell's spirit was not cruelty. It was stern, unrelenting, but wise; and in the end proved to be, as we learn from himself at the time, it was intended to be, the most humane.

No other great general ever took less interest in war for its own sake. His object was always to have done with fighting as quick as possible, and to spare the effusion of blood. But he knew what was needed to that end; not only to cow the hearts of cowards, but what it takes to show brave men the unreasonableness of resisting. In a few months he subdued Ireland more completely than any of his predecessors had ever done, and with less blood than had often been shed in a futile insurrection.

In the neighbourhood of a man's strength lies the region of his weakness. Deeply impressed with the conviction that he was specially called by God to the execution of that work which in the order of events he found put into his hands, Cromwell neither felt free to decline the trust, nor questioned his own capacity or success in complying. In his eyes, it was not his own cause, but the cause of God which he served. No doubt seems to have ever subtracted from the energy of his purpose on that point. But although his clear practical sense precluded the dreamy weakness of fanaticism, it did not prevent him from sometimes taking his own cherished plans and earnest desires for the will of God. Ambition, excluded from his mind at every other avenue, entered by this, but without obtaining recognition. To some men ambition is a source of strength, when they fully admit it, and make the attainment of its ends their aim. Alexander and Napoleon openly professed ambition, and yielded all their energies in its promptings without reserve; and it answered the purpose of concentrating their efforts. To Cromwell it was weakness. For when he gave way to it, in any instance, it was as a Christian gives way, half unawares, to a strong temptation. It divided for the time being his otherwise far loftier aim. The unprejudiced student of his public career will find facts which suggest the operation of ambition, but not one which can be imputed to that motive alone. Dealing fairly with the subject, he will discover that Cromwell's motive, as known to himself, was something very different. His assenting to the Parliamentary purge, his taking part in the execution of the King, and dissolution of the Long Parliament, have been considered as the most questionable of his public acts, and those into which ambition entered most largely. They were certainly to him the occasion of power, but the 'cause of weakness, throwing government into his hands, but alienating the body of the people from him, the latter a weakness which would have been fatal, but for the devotion of the army. And yet, even in those cases, he must be a superficial thinker, who does not perceive that there were motives at work with which ambition had little to do—overmastering necessities which make it difficult to conceive of how Cromwell could have taken any other course that would have turned out better. The charge of hypocrisy reiterated against him by royalist writers, but never established in a single instance, later and more critical investigation has finally exploded.

By advocates of the restoration he was persistently represented, or rather misrepresented, as Luther was by papists. Between the two men there is much resemblance in the main; the same was their gradual progress with the progress of events; the same their strong grasp of truth, often in defiance of the ordinary means of reaching it; the same their practical good sense and power in holding a check upon extreme radicalism, as well as in conducting vast and varied designs of reform, and the same self consecration to a special calling in the cause of God. But the piety of the Protector is more consistently reverential than that of the Reformer. Luther occasionally made unduly free with sacred language, Cromwell, never.

In that most valuable of all powers in a ruler, discrimination of character in selecting fit men for places of office and trust, Cromwell has never been surpassed. In this matter he suffered himself to be biased by no party, sect, or relationship. General

Ireton was his son-in-law. But Ireton rose side by side with himself, the nearest rival of his own power both in the army and in Parliament. General Fleetwood was also a son-in-law, but not until he had earned his rank and reputation, and the wars of the commonwealth on British soil were closed. A similar remark will apply to his brother-in-law, General Desborough, whose place in the army was independent of any relationship of affinity to the Protector. And when to these names we add those of Harrison, Lambert, Rainsborough, Monck, Goffe, Whalley, Ludlow, and others, we shall be ready to say that such a roll of officers in command of her forces England never saw before. At sea, the men whom he put or retained in office, did, with little exception, equal credit to his judgment. If Penn and Venables did not satisfy his own expectations of them, England has had no reason to complain. For they added to her dominion the valuable island of Jamaica. And the career of Blake surpasses in brilliant daring and success everything in naval history except that of Nelson. From these men he chose his confidential advisers, and added to them some of the wisest and most learned civilians of the age. The gifted Thurloe became his secretary of state, Milton his foreign, or Latin secretary, the learned Whitelocke commissioner of the exchequer, and Sir Matthew Hale, lord chief justice. And in the regulation of the universities and of the affairs of the church, his selection of leading men was no less judicious. Dr. John Owen he set over the university of Oxford, in which he also assigned the headship of colleges to Goodwin and Wilkins. In Cambridge, Cudworth, Arrowsmith, and Lightfoot owed their places to his patronage or appointment, as well as all others who distinguished those institutions in his time. For the benefit of the northern counties of England, he also erected and endowed a college in Durham, which, abandoned at the Restoration, has, like some other plans of his, been revived of later years. But it was for the purifying, regulating, and support of the church that his most anxious thoughts and most careful attentions were expended.

At the time of the King's death the state of the church in England was still unsettled. Episcopacy had been abolished by authority of Parliament. The Assembly at Westminster, called to assist in church matters, had drawn up and recommended a Presbyterian system of doctrine, discipline, worship, and government; and the whole had been enacted by Parliament as the law of the land. Accordingly England and Wales had been divided ecclesiastically into provinces, and these again into classes, each of which contained a number of parishes, subject respectively to the authority of parochial, classical, and provincial assemblies: the first to meet once a week, the second once a month, the third twice a year, and, crowning the system, national assemblies were to meet as often as summoned by Parliament. But many difficulties had occurred in carrying out that order. A large number of the people clung to the ancient practice, as far as it was allowed, and did not understand, or did not like the new. Many of the ministers resisted it or imperfectly complied. Some deeming it an unscriptural radicalism, preferred in their hearts the Episcopal forms; others holding it to be not radical enough, demanded that the ultimate authority should be reposed in each congregation, and could take little interest in attending either classical or provincial councils; and others whose hearts were not profoundly engaged in religion, reluctated against the strictness of its discipline. Only in London, which was one of the ecclesiastical provinces, and in Lancashire, was it observed fully and consistently.

Presbyterians themselves further aggravated the evil by their own dissensions, and by an unnecessary urgency on the point of Divine right. Not content with the establishment of their church government, they insisted that the public and Parliament, by authoritative action, should recognize it as alone possessed of the Divine sanction, or as alone expressly and completely revealed under the gospel. Gratuitous offence was thereby given to many who would otherwise gladly have complied with it as consistent with Scripture.

In this excited transition state in the abolishing of the old system, and imperfect enforcing of the new, many congregations were greatly neglected, and improper persons either allowed to remain in pastoral charge of them, or introduced without sufficient scrutiny; and that not from neglect or carelessness, but from the nature of the circumstances.

Political complications increased the difficulty. Scotland and Geneva had furnished the Presbyterian model; and the Solemn League and Covenant with the former was much relied on for support. In the first instance, and for two or three years, it was a tower of strength. But in 1648 the Scotch also divided on the question of restoring the King, and the high royalist party obtaining the majority in their Parliament, sent an army into England to compel the English Parliament into their measures. Defeated by Cromwell, that invasion failed of its object; but was not without effect, reviving in the English breast the ancient dislike of Scotchmen, and alienating largely the adherents of the League and Covenant.

In the meanwhile subordinate sects had grown up or increased. Of these the strongest in learning and intellect, if not numbers, were the Independents. Not yet constituting a separate body or ecclesiastical connection, they were only variants or dissentients within the Presbyterian establishment. It was not until after the death of Cromwell that they came out with a confession of their own, which, after all, differed so little, except in government, from that of Westminster, that it soon fell into neglect. Other variations were created by the Baptists and Erastians, and the founders of the Society of Friends were beginning to attract public notice, and other differences of opinion were laying the foundations for sects which had yet taken no shape. All these, together with a greater number of repressed Episcopalians, were contained within the bosom of the newly established Presbyterian church, but not recognized as having any right to toleration. The greatest excitement of feeling, over all three kingdoms, intensified the tenacity with which conflicting opinions were adhered to and defended. Religion, politics, and local and national prejudices and interests heated and aggravated one another. English, Irish, Scotch, Welsh passions were excited to the utmost by designing leaders, and friends of the King arrayed in deadly animosity against his enemies. Well for the two nations most intimately connected that a real interest in religion, a practically working religion, entered so deeply into the heart of all their purposes, and swayed so much the conduct of their lives. Who shall be found equal to allay the public ferment, and reduce the discordant elements to harmony? Arduous would have been the task for a government unshaken in itself, and with all its machinery in full operation; what must it be to that fragment of the House of Commons, which has now assumed the burden alone? Nay, even to sustain itself would have been impracticable to that body, but for the coöperation of the army. And the strength of the army was that remarkable man who, without being its commander-in-chief, was morally and virtually the head of it.

The problem to be solved was new. At a time when monarchy was in the full blossom of its power and pride, and passive obedience to kings, as the anointed of the Lord, was the doctrine of the high and the burden of the low, the representatives of the people of England had resisted their monarch, brought him to trial before a court of commoners, and on the fundamental principles of justice had condemned him as a guilty man. The deed was not done secretly, nor timidly, but open, held up, as a lesson to the world, inviting examination and challenging its criticism. Men who took that unprecedented step must have felt well assured of the ground on which they stood. The laws which they contemplated were not the superficial and conventional. All such they obviously designed to subject to a thorough revision. The principles of the English constitution, and beneath them still, the eternal laws of right and wrong, alone did those men regard with veneration; and by the latter were even the practices of the constitution to be tried. In their eyes, the problem was one of radical revolution. This being admitted, it is not to the point to question them for non-conformity to prescriptive rule or mere statute law. They were now in the condition of lawgivers, empowered to abolish the old, and create new. If it were asked, who empowered them, the answer would readily be, the people of England, who had elected them to the places which they held, sustained them in the course they had pursued, and backed them with an army of their very best and bravest: and the doctrines by which they were guided, they drew from Scripture, and were always ready to defend thereby. True, the body of the nation had enjoyed no opportunity of publicly approving or disapproving of their recent action, but they claimed to hold their commission from it.

On the abolition of the old government there was little difference of opinion among them; there was more as to what should be the form of the new. An executive was to be created. What shall it be? A committee? A presiding officer? Or shall Parliament itself be the executive of its own decrees? Shall the nobility be admitted to represent themselves as a separate interest? Then the judiciary, which, under the rule of the late King and his predecessor, had been deliberately and persistently corrupted, had to be revised theoretically and practically, and set up anew. The dissensions of political parties had to be kept in check; the recently established church had to be sustained and its organization carried forward, and the fiercely conflicting sects in its bosom, reconciled or kept in order. Preparations had to be made to encounter war from the side of Ireland and of Scotland, as well as the restless machinations of royalists within their own country, and backed by the navies of Holland. Never did greater dangers threaten the existence of a government than those which were now arrayed against that remnant of the English House of Commons. A sense of guilt would have succumbed. They, fully convinced that their cause was right, braced themselves to defend it. And their confidence was well-founded. For theirs was not a backward movement to take up an obsolete or decaying practice; but forward in the line of Christian development. They might mistake as to means, their own feet might not reach the goal, but their aim was true, and the direction that from which success must ultimately come.

The above questions were answered by declaring the government of England to be a free commonwealth. Its administration was to be committed to an executive council without a king; Parliament to consist of the representatives of the people, without a House of Lords; and three keepers of the new great seal were appointed from whom the judges were to receive their commissions. The executive was to consist of forty or thirty-eight persons, and to hold the reins of sovereignty for one year. And instead of the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, which were abolished, one was drawn up called the Engagement, which obligated to be true and faithful to the government, as thus constituted.

That new oath was conceived in a "spirit of liberality hitherto unknown to English statesmen, and presented no bar to the occupation of office by religionists of all complexions and parties. It provided simply for the civil obedience of the subject, offering no violence to conscience, imposing no religious test, presenting no temptation to hypocrisy."*

Presbytery was declared to be the national church government in the three kingdoms and the principality of Wales; while liberal toleration was extended to all orderly Protestant sects. Romanists suffered many hardships, being excluded from offices in the service or gift of the government, but were not prevented from conducting their worship.

To support the church thus established it was resolved that the tithes should be continued as before, until some other maintenance equally good could be provided. The sequestered Bishop's lands were committed to trustees to be applied to the increase of poor livings in the church, and a similar disposition was made of other ecclesiastical revenues formerly payable to the crown. Provision was thereby made for the payment also of schoolmasters and professors in the universities. Moderate Episcopalians submitted to the new establishment, and many of their ministers served in it, as Puritans had formerly submitted to Episcopacy. But those who refused the Engagement, were thereby excluded. And to that class belonged also a great many Presbyterians, who had the best reason to be friendly to the Commonwealth. But they regarded it as a usurpation, and thought that the Engagement was inconsistent with their natural allegiance to the royal family, and with the Solemn League and Covenant, and that to tolerate the sectaries was to open the door to schism and all iniquity. Independents took the Engagement readily, because under it they were not to be molested for their religion; "and so did the King's old cavaliers, very few of them," as Baxter says, "being sick of the disease of a scrupulous conscience."

War threatened the young republic from the side of Scotland; it was already raging in Ireland. To the latter country Cromwell was sent, and left England in July, 1649. He returned in May of the next year, to undertake the campaign against the Scotch, who had proclaimed Charles Stuart their king, invited him to their country and taken up arms in his cause. Cromwell entered Scotland in the latter part of July, 1650. Then followed the battle of Dunbar, the taking of Edinburgh, the coronation of Charles as King of Scotland, his march into England, and defeat at Worcester, September 3, 1651, and his escape to the Continent. This finished the civil wars of the Commonwealth. For the remnants of resistance were thenceforward hopeless, and endured only a short time. England, Scotland, and Ireland were now united by the strong bands of military force, and for the first time completely covered by the authority of one ruling power, and governed from London.

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* Choules's note to Neal, part iv. chap. i.

Parliament now began to contemplate its own dissolution, which was appointed to take place on the fourth of November, 1654. The interval was to be employed in confirming the new institutions, and settling the qualifications of its successor. But many other matters, and especially the maritime war with the Dutch, imperatively demanded a large share of attention, and dissatisfaction arising both among the people and in the army, Parliament, long before the arrival of the day by itself appointed, was brought to a premature end. Cromwell, who, since the resignation of Fairfax, had been commander-in-chief of the army, was all this time, by force of his character and office, the principal man of the nation; and upon him, by a sort of intuitive consent, had all parties concentrated the responsibilities of government.

The Commonwealth was in a prosperous condition, and rising in European importance; but its domestic opponents were many. Taxes were heavy, public dissatisfaction great, and many were the appeals to the military officers to interfere. Members of Parliament had not escaped corruption from their extraordinary success. They were accused of applying to their own use an undue proportion of the revenue. And while appropriating to themselves the fruits of victory they proposed to disband, or transfer to the fleet, the soldiers who had won them, without providing for the large arrears of pay which were then due. A petition was presented by the officers of the army for a reform of the law, for carrying forward the purification of the church, for removal of scandalous and incompetent persons from offices of state, and especially for a real representative Parliament. Month after month were these topics agitated without any conclusion being reached. A serious quarrel thereupon arose between the Parliament and the army, in the midst of which word was brought to Cromwell that the former were discussing a resolution to dissolve at an earlier date than had previously been determined, and so to prescribe the constitution of a new Parliament, as to retain themselves in it, and constitute themselves electors of it, thereby designing to perpetuate their existing policy. The Lord-General immediately took a file of infantry, and proceeding to the Parliament house, turned the members out of doors. That act, accomplished by a scene not less grotesque than it was momentous, although hardly to be defended even upon revolutionary principles, was highly popular in its time. The soldiers approved it. It was in defence of their cause. The royalists were glad of it. It was the overthrow of their old enemy. And Presbyterians did not regret the removal of rulers who had despised the Solemn League and Covenant.

Cromwell, with his council of officers, now took upon themselves to convoke a new Parliament. One hundred and forty persons were selected from the wisest and most consistent Christians of their respective districts, some of them men of historical eminence; but after a brief session, in which little was done, they resigned their powers to the hands of the Lord-General and dissolved. The country thus again left without a government, what was to be done? Four days afterwards, December 16, 1653, the officers of the army, the mayor and aldermen of London, and the commissioners of the Great Seal, caused to be read publicly an *instrument* which they had drawn up, creating Cromwell "Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland," with a council which should not exceed twenty-one, nor be less than thirteen, granting to them the rights of sovereignty, and the power to make laws during the intervals of Parliament, and stipulating that a

Parliament should be called every three years, the first to assemble on the third of the following September. On the same occasion, on which the "Instrument" was read, Cromwell was solemnly inducted into office. And this act of a few was, three years and a half later, confirmed and repeated in a manner still more impressive by the second Protectoral Parliament, as the representatives, and in the name of, the people of England.

In this new state of the revolution Presbyterianism continued to maintain its place as the established church, the laws in relation to it, as such, "were not to be suspended, altered, abrogated, or repealed," while the doctrine of toleration was more clearly defined and more fully stated. The following paragraphs are the 36th, 37th, and 38th articles of the "Instrument."

"That none shall be compelled to conform to the public religion by penalties or otherwise; but that endeavours be used to win them by sound doctrine, and the example of a good conversation.

"That such as profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, though differing in judgment from the doctrine, worship, or discipline publicly held forth, shall not be restrained from, but shall be protected in the profession of their faith and exercise of their religion, so as they abuse not this liberty to the civil injury of others, and to the actual disturbance of the public peace on their parts: provided this liberty be not extended to popery or prelacy, or to such as, under a profession of Christ, hold forth and practice licentiousness.

"That all laws, statutes, ordinances, and clauses in any law, statute, or ordinance, to the contrary of the aforesaid liberty, shall be esteemed null and void."

The exception made to the prejudice of Episcopalians was more in law than in practice, and more because they were royalists than for their religion. Although not enjoying legal toleration, their assemblies were connived at; and all their clergy who refrained from taking active part in royalist plots were indulged in the exercise of their ministry, and preached publicly in the churches, both in London and in the country. It is fully admitted by Bishop Kennet, (Neal, ii. 136,) "that the Protector was for liberty, and the utmost latitude to all parties, so far as consisted with the peace and safety of his person and government." (Neal, ii. 158.) Mr. Baxter, a strong Presbyterian adversary of Cromwell, also testifies "that all men were suffered to live quietly, and enjoy their properties under his government: that he removed the terrors and prejudices which hindered the success of the gospel, especially considering that godliness had countenance and reputation as well as liberty, whereas before, if it did not appear in all the fetters and formalities of the times, it was the way to common shame and ruin. It is well known that the Presbyterians did not approve of the usurpation, but when they saw that Cromwell's design was to do good in the main, and encourage religion, as far as his cause would admit, they acquiesced."

Various causes conspired to render it impossible, at that time, to grant free toleration to Romanists. For they were not only dissenters in religion, but enemies to the whole Protestant connection, the subjects of a foreign prince ready to accept every occasion of hostilities. Cromwell would suffer no man to be molested for his religious belief, as long as he contained himself within the proper sphere of religion. But he would not allow the clergy of any denomination to turn their meetings into means of organizing resistance to the national government: and wherever such a disposition showed itself it was immediately suppressed. Although an Independent, he sustained and defended the Presbyterian establishment.

Even before the dissolution of the little Parliament, he had been engaged in devising measures for giving more effect to the organization of the church; and for purifying it from incompetent or otherwise improper ministers. His first step towards that end was taken on the twentieth of March, 1654, in the appointment of a commission for the trial of public preachers. It consisted of nine laymen and twenty-nine clergymen, selected from the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, with special view to their prudence, sagacity, and sound Christian experience. By those Triers, as they were called, "any person pretending to hold a church living, or levy tithes, or clergy dues in England," was first to be tried and approved.

A second step in the process, taken in the following August, consisted in appointing local commissioners of both clergy and laymen, from fifteen to thirty in each county of England, whose duty it was "to inquire into 'scandalous, ignorant, insufficient,' and otherwise deleterious ministers of the gospel," and to be a tribunal for judging and ejecting them. Persons thus ejected, if married, were to be allowed a small pension. In the selection of the triers Cromwell did not seem to care whether they were his political supporters or opponents, provided only they had the proper intellectual and spiritual qualifications. It was a singular plan, but wrought well, and received the approval of some good men who were no friends to its author. "Because this assembly of Triers," says Baxter, "is most heavily accused and reproached by some men, I shall speak the truth of them, and suppose my word will be taken, because most of them took me for one of their boldest adversaries: the truth is, though some few over-rigid and over-busy Independents among them were too severe against all that were Arminians, and too particular in inquiring after evidences of sanctification in those whom they examined, and somewhat too lax in admitting of unlearned and erroneous men, that favoured antinomianism, and anabaptism; yet, to give them their due, they did abundance of good to the church. They saved many a congregation from ignorant, ungodly, drunken teachers, that sort of men who intend no more in the ministry than to read a sermon on Sunday, and all the rest of the week go with the people to the ale-house, and harden them in sin: and that sort of ministers who either preached against a holy life, or preached as men that were never acquainted with it; these they usually rejected, and in their stead admitted of any that were able, serious preachers, and lived a godly life, of what tolerable opinion soever they were; so that though many of them were a little partial for the Independents, separatists, fifth monarchy men, and anabaptists, and against the Prelatists and Arminians, yet so great was the benefit above the hurt which they brought to the church, that many thousands of souls blessed God for the faithful ministers whom they let in, and grieved when the Prelatists afterwards cast them out again."

The Triers were concerned only with the established church, and the ministers whom they rejected were not thereby deprived of religious liberty; they were only denied the privileges of the national ministry. The commission continued to sit at Whitehall until the year 1659, after which it was discontinued.

Still further to distribute the force of government over the country, and secure the regular working of minor appointments in both church and state, the Protector, in the year 1655, divided England into ten districts, placing in each, with the title of Major-General, a man most carefully chosen, of real wisdom, fearing God, and of unimpeachable integrity. These officers were invested with a universal superintendence, civil, military, and ecclesiastical. They were to take care that the taxes were collected, to inquire after the private assemblies of suspected persons, and such as frequented taverns and gaming houses, and after scandalous and unlearned ministers and schoolmasters, and to aid the commission in ejecting them. And they were ordered to enlist a body of reserves, at half pay, who might be called together upon any sudden emergency. There was no appeal from the Major-General, except to the Protector himself. This also was an extraordinary device, and might have proved oppressively despotic, but that it was honestly meant for good, and conducted by wise and good men; and, like that of the Triers, wrought well. Of the Major-Generals, Cromwell said, in his speech to the Parliament of 1656, "They have been effectual for the preservation of peace," and in reference to the plan, "it hath been more effectual towards the discountenancing of vice and settling religion, than anything done these fifty years: I will abide by it, notwithstanding the envy and slander of foolish men." But as the state of the country became more satisfactory, he reduced the power of the Major-Generals, and finally, when he thought them no longer needed, suppressed them.

In Scotland there was almost perfect harmony in sustaining the Presbyterian church, which by accepting the works of the Westminster Assembly in 1647, and adopting the Directory for the election of ministers, in 1649 completed its form and organization. The people were also well agreed on the subject of royalty, and upon the death of Charles I. proclaimed his son Charles their king. But what had one time had been their bond of union, now proved to be a cause of dissension. The national covenant was turned into a religious test; and subscription made indispensable to the holding of any place in the service of the country. Covenanters moreover divided among themselves. When their young king arrived among them, one party insisted upon his subscribing immediately, in order to secure the political effect; another, perceiving the laxity of his character, urged that he ought not to subscribe until, after carefully reflecting, he might be able to do so religiously. Charles preferred to subscribe at once; and thereby convinced the more earnest thinkers of his insincerity. During the war, which ensued with Cromwell, Parliament passed certain resolutions repealing those acts which had confined all public offices to the hands of Covenanters. Against these resolutions the stricter party protested. And the quarrel between Resolutioners and Protesters marred the peace of the church and involved it in civil broils. The General Assembly, which met in July 1652, was so agitated by these causes that it broke up, and its acts were never recorded. Cromwell deemed it best that the scene should not be repeated; and when in July of the next year the ministers came together again, an officer of the army appeared among them and inquired by whose authority they met, that of Charles or of the Protector? The question was pertinent. Because the General Assembly of the church of Scotland meets by authority of the crown. As those delegates could show no such authority, they were escorted by a body of soldiers a mile out of town, and directed to return to their respective homes. General Assembly was suspended during the rest of the Protectorate. It was the only violence used by Cromwell towards the Church of Scotland. In nothing else did it suffer interruption. Synods and Presbyteries continued to meet as formerly; and although Resolutioners persisted in praying for the King, no force was applied to prevent them.

As in England, so in Scotland, means were taken by Cromwell to protect the interests of true religion. Mr. Patrick Gillespie and some others of the stricter party received a commission empowering them to settle the affairs of the church and secure its purity. The spiritual profit soon became obvious. A degree of civil peace prevailed, "beyond what had almost ever before been experienced." A quiet, but pervasive revival of religion, filled up the rest of the Protectorate in Scotland. "I verily believe," says Kirkton, "there were more souls converted to Christ in that short period of time than in any season since the Reformation, though of triple its duration."

Soon after the death of the King, a commission was appointed to regulate the affairs of the church in South Wales, and another in North Wales. The spiritual destitution of the Principality was great. Constant and godly ministers were few and much persecuted. The greater number either did not live in their parishes, or were incompetent, scandalous, and negligent of their cures. Vigorous measures were taken by the commissioners to remove the evils. But so many persons were concerned in them, that they met with much resistance and misrepresentation. As it was difficult to find a sufficient number of pious and learned ministers able to preach in the Welsh language, itinerant preachers, six for each county, were appointed to supply the deficiency, until the number equal to the parishes could be filled up. In the poverty of many of the parishes, the commissioners encountered another embarrassment, which the brief duration of the Protectorate did not give them time to entirely overcome.

Ireland was geographically divided among the great religious parties, the Presbyterians being principally residents of Ulster, the Episcopalians of the eastern side of the island, and the Romanists of all the rest. Although the last were by far the most numerous, yet Episcopacy had from the Reformation been the established religion. It ceased to be such under the action of the Long Parliament in January, 1643. The Solemn League and Covenant extended also to Ireland, and was gladly accepted by the Presbyterians there. The terrors of the Popish rebellion had constrained Protestants of every name to make common cause. Wiser had it been for them had they done so more consistently. A fearful array of cruelties were accumulated in those years for the soldiers of Cromwell to avenge upon the Romanist Irish. Presbyterians and Episcopalians alike were almost entirely swept from the North, and greatly thinned in the East. Cromwell compelled the Catholics to submission, confined them to one part of the island, and filled the land taken from them with a more orderly and industrious population. In the new prosperity which succeeded, the church participated. Settlers from Scotland replanted Presbytery in the north, and from England recruited Episcopacy and Independency on the east and south. The rule of the Protector extended toleration to all. Presbyterians being few could reap little advantage from the position of their church as the establishment of the consolidated Commonwealth. But under the Lieutenancy of Major-General Fleetwood, and still more of Henry Cromwell, the long-harassed country enjoyed an interval of wise and benign government, "when the churches had rest throughout all the land, and increased in number daily." It was then that Presbyterianism first assumed its proper form in the province of Ulster, and had great prosperity until the reign of oppression opened again with the restoration of the monarchy.

In New England, the colonists were allowed to establish congregationalism, as the government of their choice. A scheme was also projected for carrying the gospel to the North American Indians, which the death of the Protector prevented from going into operation.

It was the purpose of Cromwell to constitute the British church the centre of a confederation of all the Protestant churches of Europe. His plan, according to Bishop Burnet, was matured, and contemplated common defence against Rome, propagation of the gospel, and the employment of secretaries to hold "correspondence everywhere, to acquaint themselves with the state of religion all over the world, that so all good designs for the welfare of the whole, and of the several parts, might by their means be protected and encouraged." Though this was also defeated by his death, his administration put England into such a relation to the Protestant churches of the Continent as she did not again assume until the reign of William III. In this, as in many other respects, the Revolution was the true successor of the Commonwealth, less earnest and daring, but more cautious and expedient.

In all previous English history religion and politics had been so intimately intermingled as to be practically inseparable. Cromwell was the first to set the example of discriminating truly between them. Attempts to compel all into one form of profession and worship had resulted in dividing the church and creating deadly animosities. Under the free toleration of the Commonwealth all sects lived together peacefully. The lesson, poorly learned by the party which came next into power, was not forgotten by sounder thinkers; and when, upon the downfall of the Stuart kings, the government was remodeled, Cromwell's doctrine of toleration was incorporated into the constitution; and although the church was still connected with the state, the separation between religion and politics, as far as then practicable, was also revived.

The Commonwealth passed away, and its work for a whole generation seemed to be utterly undone; but its leading doctrines are those which are appointed not to die, its efforts were in the line of Christian progress, and even its errors have proved of most salutary warning to succeeding reformers. It was the generative epoch of that religious freedom which revived at the revolution, and operating to the present day in the British churches, has found a more congenial and fuller development on this side of the Atlantic.

ART. VI.—*Bibliotheca Sacra and Biblical Repository for July* 1863*; Art. III. Doctrines of the New-School Presbyterian Church.* By Rev. GEORGE DUFFIELD, D. D., Detroit, Michigan.

THE Plan of Union proposed by the Joint-Committee requires that the Confession of Faith be adopted in "its fair historical sense, as it is accepted by the two bodies." We know what its "fair historical sense" is, both in itself, and as it is accepted in the Old-school body. But its "historical sense" as accepted by the New-school body is equally to be legalized; and clearly to this extent, that no minister or office-bearer who holds it, in that sense, can be molested in, or refused admission to, the united body, without breach of covenant. It is therefore a chief test in regard to the merits of this proposed Plan of Union, if we can ascertain what the "fair historical sense" of these standards, as accepted by the New-school body, has been,