# Colonel Thomas Blood

## Crown-Stealer — 1618-1680

**by Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 1869-1947**

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The story which follows is, without doubt, one of the most curious and extraordinary in English history. It is, in fact, so remarkable that it seems necessary to begin by assuring the cautious reader that it is true. Much as it may resemble at times that species of literature known in England as the shilling shocker and in America as the dime novel, its material is drawn, not from the perfervid imagination of the author, but from sources whose very nature would seem to repudiate romance. The dullest and most sedate of official publications, Parliamentary reports, memoranda of ministers, warrants to and from officers and gaolers, newsletters full of gossip which for two hundred years and more has ceased to be news, these would seem to offer little promise of human interest.

Yet even these cannot well disguise the fascination of a life like that of Thomas Blood. The tale of adventure has always divided honours with the love story. And such a career as his, full of mystery, of personal daring, and the successful defiance of law by one on whom its provisions seem to have borne too hardly, cannot be obscured even by the digest of official documents. Moreover it has historical significance. This most famous and successful of English lawbreakers was no common criminal. In a sense he was the representative of an important class during a critical period of history. Not merely to the Old Englander, but to those interested in the rise of the New England beyond seas, the fate of the irreconcilable Puritans, no less than that of their more submissive brethren, must seem of importance. This is the more true in that no small number of the men whose names appear in this narrative played parts on both sides of the Atlantic. The younger Vane, who had been the governor of Massachusetts, in 1636, and whose execution marked the early years of Restoration vengeance, is the most striking of these figures. Next to him come the fugitive regicides, Gorfe, Whalley and Dixwell, who lived out their days in New Haven, Hartford and Hadley. It is not so well known, however, that Venner, whose insurrection in the early days of the Restoration was one of the most dramatic and important events of that time, was at one time a resident of Salem. Still less is it likely to be known that Paul Hobson, one of the contrivers and the involuntary betrayer of the great plot of 1663, was later allowed to remove to Carolina. The relationship of Lawrence Washington, whose activities in the early years of Charles II‘s reign gave the government such anxiety, to the Washingtons who settled in Virginia has been vigorously denied. But certainly no small element among these irreconcilables found sympathy, support or refuge among their brethren in the New World. And it was perhaps no more than chance that the subject of this sketch did not become governor of an English colony in America.

This essay began as a serious historical study, whose larger results are chronicled in another place. But it grew insensibly into the only form of composition which seemed to do it any sort of justice, a species of story. It is, in short, a romance, which differs from its kind chiefly in that it has a larger proportion of truth. On the other hand it lacks in equal measure what is generally superabundant in such works, a plot. It has a plot, indeed many plots, but it is not always easy to determine just what the plot is or what relation the hero or villain as you like, bears to it. It has, above all, a mystery which may atone for its shortcomings in other directions. And it has, finally, for its central figure a character whose strange, surprising adventures were the marvel of his day and are not greatly dimmed by the dust of two centuries. On these grounds it seems not unprofitable nor uninteresting to contemplate again and in a new light the life and works of the man who has been generally conceded the bad eminence of being the most daring and successful of English rascals, Thomas Blood, courtesy-colonel of conspiracy and crown-stealer. The scene of his activity was that brilliant and obscure period we know as the Restoration, those years during which his most gracious Majesty, King Charles the Second, of far from blessed memory, presided over the destinies of the English race. And you are, if you wish, to transport yourself at once into the very midst of the reign of him who for his wit and wickedness has been forever miscalled the Merry Monarch.

The great event of the winter of 1670-1 in English politics and society was a circumstance unprecedented in European affairs, the visit of the head of the House of Orange to the English Court. The young Prince William, soon to become the ruler of Holland, and later King of England, made this, his first visit to the nation which one day he was to rule, ostensibly to pay his respects to his uncle Charles who was then King, and his uncle James, who was Duke of York. Beside this his journey was officially declared to have no other purpose than pleasure and the transaction of some private business. What affairs of state were then secretly discussed by this precocious statesman of nineteen and His British Majesty‘s ministers of the Cabal, we have no need to inquire here, nor would our inquiries produce much result were they made. The web of political intrigue then first set on the roaring loom of time which was to plunge all England into agitation and revolution and unrest, and all western Europe into war, has, for the moment, little to do with this story. There was enough in the external aspects of his visit to fill public attention then and to serve our purpose now. The five months of his stay were one long round of gayety. Balls, receptions, and dinners, horse-races, cocking mains, gaming and drinking bouts followed each other in royal profusion. And a marriage already projected between the Prince and his cousin, the Princess Mary, gave a touch of romance to the affair, only qualified by the fact that she still played at dolls in the nursery.

The court was not alone in its efforts to entertain the young prince. The ministers, the leaders of the opposition, and many private individuals beside, lent their energies to this laudable end. The work was taken up by certain public or semi-public bodies. And, in particular, the corporation of the great city of London felt that among these festivities it must not be outdone in paying some attention to the most distinguished citizen of the neighbouring republic, who, as it happened, was also the most promising Protestant candidate for the English throne. Accordingly on the afternoon of Tuesday, December 6, 1670, as the custom then was, they tendered him a banquet at Guildhall where were assembled the wealth and beauty of the city to do him honour. The great function, apart from a subtle political significance which might have been noted by a careful and well-informed observer, was not unlike others of that long series of splendid hospitalities by which the greatest city in the world has been accustomed for centuries to welcome its distinguished guests. There was the same splendour of civic display, the same wealth of courses, the same excellent old wine, doubtless the same excellent old speeches. And in spite of the greatness of the event and the position and importance of the guest of honour, the glories of this noble feast, like those of so many of its fellows, might well have passed into that oblivion which enfolds dead dinner parties had it not been that before the evening was over it had become the occasion of one of the most daring and sensational adventures in the annals of crime, the famous attempt on the Duke of Ormond.

This extraordinary exploit, remarkable in itself for its audacity and the mystery which surrounded it, was made doubly so by the eminence and character of its victim. James Butler, famous then and since as „the great Duke of Ormond,“ bearer of a score of titles, member of the Council, sometime Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and still Lord High Steward of England, was by birth and ability one of the greatest, wealthiest and most powerful men in the three Kingdoms. He was, moreover, scarcely less distinguished for his noble

character than for his high rank. Neither these nor the circumstances of his career in public life gave any apparent ground for belief that he was in danger of personal violence. During the Civil Wars he had followed the fortunes of King Charles the father with courage and fidelity, though with no great success. When the royal cause was lost he followed Charles the son into exile. When monarchy was restored he regained his ancient estates and dignities, he was made the virtual ruler of Ireland and with his two friends, the Chancellor, Clarendon, and the Treasurer, Southampton, completed a triumvirate which dominated English affairs during the first half dozen years of the Restoration. When our story opens, Southampton was dead, Clarendon in exile. But Ormond, last of the staunch Protestants and stately Cavaliers of the old regime, remained conspicuous in a corrupt and worthless court for his ability and his virtues. By reason of these, as well as his office, he had been chosen on this occasion to accompany the Prince of Orange to the city feast. And by reason of his years he had, before the concluding revels of the younger men, left the banquet to return home and so found his way into a most surprising adventure and this story.

At the time of which we write he lived in a mansion opposite St. James's palace, built by his friend the Chancellor and still known as Clarendon House. His establishment, like that of most men of rank in those days, was on a scale almost feudal. It included some scores of servants, companions and dependents of the family. A porter sat at the gate, day and night, and when the Duke went abroad in his chariot he was attended by six footmen, a coachman and a runner. It would have seemed that in the three kingdoms there was scarce a man who, by virtue of his position, character and surroundings, was less likely to be exposed to violence than he. What enemies he might have made in his administration of Ireland, if such there were, could at best be men of little importance, living besides in a land then as distant from London as the United States is to-day. They would, presumably, not be well informed of his movements, least of all of his social engagements, and they would be helpless in the midst of London, against the power at his command. What rivals he had in England, it might be premised from their station, would be far above the practice of personal assault as a means of political triumph. Certainly nothing could have been farther from his thoughts or those of his family than that any danger beyond a possible attack of indigestion could threaten him in connection with a Guildhall dinner. As the early winter evening came on, therefore, the porter dozed at the gate, the family and servants retired early, according to the better customs of a ruder age, and the quiet of a house at peace with itself and the world settled down on the little community within its walls.

It was of short duration. When the lumbering seventeenth century chariot was heard making its way up the street on its return about eight o'clock, the porter roused from his nap and came out to unbar the gates for the home-coming Duke. But to his dismay there was no Duke, and neither footmen nor runner, only an empty coach and a frightened coachman, crying that they had been set upon by seven or eight men in St. James Street almost in sight of the house, that the footman, lagging behind on the hill, had been overpowered or put to flight, that the Duke had been dragged out of the chariot and carried off down Piccadilly way, and that he was, perhaps, already killed. The porter was a man of courage and decision. He gave the alarm and, with a certain James

Clark, one of the Duke‘s household, who happened to be passing through the courtyard when the coach came in, hastened off in the direction indicated. They found no one at the place where the attack had been made, but hurrying on past Devonshire House they came upon two men struggling in the mud of the Knightsbridge road. As they approached, one of the combatants, a man of huge stature, struggled to his feet. He was immediately joined by another who appeared from the shadows, and both fired their pistols at the prostrate figure. Then, without waiting to see the result, the ruffians mounted their horses which had meanwhile been held by a third man, and rode off. The rescuers, joined by many persons whom their alarm had brought together, hurried to the man in the road. He was too far spent for words and in the darkness was unrecognizable from dirt and wounds. It was only by feeling the great star of the order of the Garter on his breast that they identified him as the Duke. He was carried home and though much shaken by his adventure was found otherwise uninjured and after some days he fully recovered. His account of the night‘s happenings added a curious detail to the history of the attack and explained why he had been found so far from where the coach was stopped. The plan of his assailants, it appeared, was not merely to capture or kill him, nor, as might have been supposed, to hold him for ransom. They proposed, instead, to carry him to the place of public execution, Tyburn, and hang him from the gallows there like a common criminal. In pursuance of this design they had mounted him behind the large man, to whom he was securely bound, while the leader rode on to adjust tlie rope that there might be no delay at the gallows. When, however, the others failed to appear, this man rode back and found that the Duke, despite his age, had managed to throw himself and his companion from their horse and so gain time till help came.[1]

Such was the extraordinary attempt on the Duke of Ormond, than which no event of the time showed more daring and ingenuity, nor created as great a sensation. The assailants were not recognized by the Duke nor his men, no assignable motive for their actions could be given, nor any further trace of them discovered. And this was not from lack of effort. The court, the city, and the administration were deeply stirred by the outrage, and the whole machinery of state was set in motion to discover and apprehend the criminals. Unprecedented rewards were offered, the ports were watched, the local authorities warned to be on the lookout for the desperadoes, and spies were sent in every direction to gain information. The House of Lords appointed a committee of no less than sixty-nine peers to examine into „the late barbarous assaulting, wounding and robbing the Lord High Steward of His Majesty‘s Household.“

For more than a month this august body, aided by the secret service officers, pursued its investigations. The result was small. The most important testimony was that of a „drawer“ at the Bull Tavern, Charing Cross. He deposed that on the day of the assault, between six and seven in the evening, five men on horseback, with cloaks, who said they were graziers, rode up to the inn. They dismounted, ordered wine, some six pints in all, and sat there, drinking, talking and finally, having ordered pipes and tobacco, smoking for nearly an hour. About seven o‘clock a man came by on foot crying, „Make way for the Duke of Ormond,“ and shortly after the Duke‘s coach passed by. Fifteen minutes later the five men paid their reckoning and rode off, still smoking, toward the Hay Market or Pall Mall, leaving behind some wine, which the boy duly drank.

Beside this, a certain Michael Beresford, clerk or parson of Hopton, Suffolk, testified that on the same evening, somewhat earlier it would appear than the incident at the Bull, he had met in the „Piattza," Covent Garden, a man formerly known to him as a footman in the service of the regicide, Sir Michael Livesey. This man, Allen by name, appeared much disturbed, and after some conversation in which he hinted at „great designs" on foot, called away by a page, who told him the horses were ready. The principal piece of evidence, however, was a sword, belt and pistol, marked „T. H." found at the scene of the struggle and identified as the property of one Hunt, who had been arrested in the preceding August under suspicion of highway robbery, but released for lack of evidence against him. Three horses were also found, one of which corresponded to the description of the animal ridden by the leader of the five men at the Bull. In addition to this there was the usual mass of more or less irrelevant informations, rumours, arrests, witnesses and worthless testimony which such a case always produces. After much deliberation the committee finally drew up a bill against three men, Thomas Hunt, Richard Halliwell, and one Thomas Allen, also called Allett, Aleck and Ayloffe. These were summoned to render themselves „by a short day" or stand convicted of the assault. The bill was duly passed by both houses and fully vindicated the dignity of the Lords. But it had no further result. The men did not render themselves by any day, short or long, the government agents failed to find them and there the matter rested. The result and indeed the whole procedure was thoroughly unsatisfactory to many in authority. At the outset of the investigation Justice Morton of London, the far-famed terror of highwaymen, was asked by Ormond to look into the matter and was furnished with the names of certain suspects. He reported on Hunt and his career, and went on to say that Moore and Blood, concerning whom his Grace had enquired, were in or about London. A month later, Lord Arlington, the Secretary of State, who had charge of the secret service, reported to the Lords' committee that of the men suspected, „Jones, who wrote »Mene Tekel«,[2] Blood, called Allen, Allec, etc., young Blood, his son, called Hunt, under which name he was indicted last year, Halliwell, Moore and Simons, were desperate characters sheltering themselves under the name of Fifth Monarchy men." „Would not this exposing of their names by act of Parliament," he asked, „make them hide themselves in the country, whereas the Nonconformists with whom they met, and who abhorred their crime would otherwise be glad to bring them to justice?" Apparently not, in the opinion of the Lords, and the result was what we have seen. Neither Arlington's advice nor the men were taken. And though in the minds of Ormond, Morton and Arlington, apparently little doubt existed as to the authors of the outrage, no way was found to put their opinions into effect. It needed another and even more daring exploit to demonstrate the truth of their conjecture and bring the criminal into custody. And it was not long until just such a circumstance confirmed their surmise that the man guilty of the assault was the most famous outlaw of his day, long known and much wanted, many times proclaimed, and on whose head a price had often been set. He was, in short, Thomas Blood, courtesy-colonel of conspiracy, plotter, desperado, and now, at last, highwayman, a man not much known to the world at large, but a source of long standing anxiety to the government.

Who was he and what was the motive of this apparently foolhardy and purposeless piece of bravado? The answer to that question lies deep in the

history of the time, for Blood was no common rascal. Unlike the ordinary criminal he was not merely an individual lawbreaker. He was at once a leader and a type of an element in the state, and the part that he and his fellows played in affairs was not merely important in itself and in its generation, but even at this distance it has an interest little dimmed by two centuries of neglect. The story of his life, in so far as it can be pieced out from the materials at our command, is as follows:

In the reign of James I, that is to say, in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, there lived at an obscure place called Sarney. County Meath, Ireland, a man named Blood. He was by trade a blacksmith and ironworker and seems to have been possessed of some little property, including an iron works. He was not a native Irishman but one of those north English or Scotch Presbyterians, colonized in that unhappy island according to the policy which had been pursued by the English government. Of him we know little more save this. About 1618 there was born to him a son, christened Thomas, who grew to young manhood unmarked by any noteworthy achievements or qualities of which any record remains. But if the circumstances of his own life were of no great importance, the times in which he lived were stirring enough, and remote as he was from the center of English political life, he could hardly have failed to know something of the great issues then agitating public affairs, and be moved by events far outside his own little circle. When he was ten years old, the long Struggle between the English king and Parliament biased up in the Petition of Right, by which the Commons strove to check the power of the Crown. Thereafter for eleven years no Parliament sat in England. There, supported by royal prerogative, the Archbishop Laud sought to force conformity to the Anglican ritual on multitudes of unwilling men and women, while the Attorney-General, Noy, and the Treasurer, Weston, revived long-lapsed statutes and privileges and stretched the technicalities of the law to extort unparliamentary revenue. Then it was that the Great Emigration poured thousands of settlers into the New World and established finally and beyond question the success of the struggling Puritan colonies oversea. Such matters touched the boy in the Irish village little. But when the greatest of the Royalists, Thomas Wentworth, Earl Strafford to be, was transferred from the presidency of the English Council of the North to rule Ireland, Blood, like all others in that troubled province, was brought face to face with the issues of the time. He, like others, saw in that administration the theory and practice of the enlightened despotism which English Parliamentarians said it was the aim of this man and his master to force upon England when English liberties should have been crushed with the Irish army then forming.

Whether young Blood enlisted in that army we do not know, but it is not improbable. In any event, when the Civil War finally broke out, the Blood family seem to have been in the thick of it. Years afterward Prince Rupert said that he remembered the young man as a bold and dashing soldier in his command. And, later still, Blood himself wrote King Charles II, in behalf of his uncle Neptune, for thirty years dean of Kilfernora, noting among his virtues that he had been with Charles I at Oxford. Thus it would appear that the Bloods first sided with the royal cause. Beside this we know that, in the year before the execution of the King, Blood married a Miss Holcroft of Holcroft in Lancashire. And we know further that then or thereafter, like many another stout soldier,

like the stoutest of them all, General Monk[3] himself, the young Royalist changed sides, for the next time he appears in history it is with the rank of lieutenant in the Cromwellian army.

Before that, however, many great events had taken place, in war and politics. The Royalist resistance in England had been beaten down, and the king was dead, the title and office of king had been abolished, the House of Lords had been done away with, and England was a commonwealth with a Huntingdonshire gentleman, Oliver Cromwell, at its head. The war had shifted to Scotland and Ireland. Charles II had been proclaimed in Edinburgh, and Catholic and Royalist had risen in Ireland. Thither Cromwell had hastened with his invincible Ironsides, to crush the Irish before they could gather head and, with the aid of the Scotch, overthrow his hard-won power. His stroke was swift and merciless. The chief strongholds of his enemies, Drogheda and Wexford, were stormed and their inhabitants put to the sword after the manner of the old Testament. The Irish army was overpowered and Cromwell hurried back to crush the Scots at Dunbar and Worcester, leaving his son-in-law, the lawyer-general Ireton, to stamp out the embers of rebellion. Thereafter, he sent the ablest of his sons, Henry, to hold the island for the Commonwealth.

With him Blood came into touch with the house of Cromwell. The young Irishman had probably been among the troops which were brought over to conquer the „rebels“ serving under the Lord General and Ireton after him. For when the new government, following the example of its predecessors, confiscated the land of its enemies and the fair domains of Royalist and Catholic passed into the hands of the hard-hitting and loud-praying colonels and captains and even common soldiers of the Commonwealth, Blood not only acquired estates, but was further distinguished by being made Justice of the Peace under Henry Cromwell. Thus with his fellows, and in greater proportion than most of them, he prospered and after an adventurous career seemed about to achieve the ambition of most Englishmen then and since, and become a real country gentleman. For a space of seven years, under Commonwealth and Protectorate, he lived, like many others of his kind, satisfied and secure in the enjoyment of the fruits of his share in saving England from the tyrant, little moved by the great events oversea. And, had it not been for circumstances as far outside his little sphere as those which had raised 111111[4] to this position, he might well have finished an obscure and peaceful existence, with little further interest for the historian or moralist. But at the end of those seven fat years Fate, who had been so kind to Blood and his fellows, changed sides, and he, like many others, missing the signs of the times, or moved by conviction, could not, or would not, at all events did not change with her. On September 3, 1658, Oliver Cromwell died and the fabric of government which for some years had rested on little more than his will and his sword, began at once to crumble. For a few months his son Richard endured the empty honour of the Protector‘s title. Then he resigned and the administration was left in a weltering chaos of Rump Parliament politicians and Cromwellian army generals. To end this anarchy came the governor of Scotland, General Monk, with his army, to London in the first months of 1660. Under his shrewd, stern management the old Parliament was forced to dissolve itself and a new House of Commons was chosen. The first act of this so-called Convention was to recall the House of Stuart to the throne, and on May 29, 1660, Charles II rode into London and his inheritance, welcomed by the same shouting thousands who

had so recently assembled to pay the last honours to the Protectorate. As rapidly as might be thereafter the new regime was established. The old officers and officials were replaced by Royalists, the forces by land and sea were disbanded, save for five thousand trusty troops to guard the new monarchy, the leaders of the fallen party were arrested and executed, or driven into exile, or put under security. Some, like Monk and Montague and Browne, were now the strongest pillars in the new political edifice. Many, like Harrison and his fellow-regicides, were marked for speedy execution, while others, like Vane, were kept for future sacrifice. Many more, like Marten and Waller and Cobbet, dragged out a wretched existence as political prisoners, exchanging one prison for another till death released them. Some, like Hutchinson, were put under bonds and granted a half liberty that in too many cases led only to later imprisonment. Only a few, like Lambert, lived long in the more pleasant confinement of the Channel Islands and the Scillies. Yet many escaped. Ludlow and Lisle and their companions found protection if not safety in Switzerland. Many more sought refuge in Holland. Some like Algernon Sidney flitted over Europe like uneasy spirits. No small number joined the Emperor to fight the Turk, or took service in Holland or Sweden or the petty states of Germany. And still others, like Goffe and Whalley and Dixwell, sought and found security in the New World. The leaders of the fallen party out of the way, for the ensuing six years the government left no stone unturned to undo the work of revolution and to restore in so far as possible the old order.

It was no easy task. For twenty years England had been engaged in a civil strife where political animosities were embittered by religious dissensions, emphasized by lines of social cleavage. Not merely had the ancient fabric of church and state been shattered, but society itself had been convulsed by the intrusion of ideas and classes hitherto little regarded as vital elements of public affairs. One by one institutions long held sacred fell before these new vandals who seemed about to set up a new heaven and a new earth. King, Lords, Church, local government, finally the House of Commons itself disappeared. An open way for the talents was created. A carter became a colonel and member of Parliament, a butcher became a major-general. The son of a country merchant developed into the greatest English naval commander of his time. Meeting house and conventicle took their place beside parish church and cathedral. Bishops, vestments, liturgy, at last the whole Establishment disappeared, and there came to be thousands of men who, like Pepys, saw a church service with its „singing men“ for the first time after the Restoration. One section of the people in short had triumphed over another. Many of them, like Blood, actually entered into their enemies‘ inheritance and seemed likely to found a new dominant caste. Nor was the effect confined to England. That land where Puritanism had taken refuge across the sea, New England, felt the impulse no less strongly. The current of emigration which some years before had flowed so strongly toward the new world was checked and even turned back. With the clash of arms not a few New World Puritans hastened to the mother country to strike a blow for their cause. Thus the young George Downing, but just graduated from Harvard, entered the Parliamentary army as chaplain, turning thence to diplomacy, and with the overthrow of the Puritans, to Royalism. But many were more scrupulous or less fortunate than he. When 1660 came and this was all reversed, when the old party was in the ascendant, the king on the throne, what would become of them? They had been free to worship in their

own way and had been largely exempt even from many forms of taxation. But all this was now suddenly reversed. The Royalists were again in the ascendant, the king was on his throne, Puritanism was discredited, its leaders gone, its organization destroyed. What were men like Blood to do? Matters moved rapidly in those early months of 1660 as they had need to do if the restoration of the old order was to be accomplished without bloodshed. From the first of January when Monk with his Scotch army entered England on its way to London to the end of May when Charles II rode into Whitehall and his inheritance, great events pressed close on each other's heels. The old Long Parliament was restored to decree its own dissolution and the summoning of its successor. A general election when Royalism was stimulated by the Declaration from Breda promising amnesty and toleration produced the Convention Parliament which under stress of Royal promise and fear of the sectaries recalled the King. A Royal Council was hurriedly brought together, the House of Lords filled up, the Commonwealth officials and officers replaced as rapidly as might be by Royalists and before the end of June administration had been secured for the new monarchy. Thus under the protection of Monk and his trusty regiments, King, Lords, Commons resumed their ancient place, administration came into new hands, the bishops were taking their place in the Lords, the clergy in their parishes as they could and all England seemed well on the way to accept a settlement. Yet great issues remained.

For the moment the restoration had affected only the leaders of the fallen party and the army. The divisions in society and politics remained, and the three classes which had fought the civil war persisted. But their positions were greatly changed. The Anglicans were in power. The Presbyterians for the time shared that power with their rivals, and it was only by their aid the king had been recalled. But the Third Party, or sectaries—Independents, Baptists, Unitarians, Quakers, and the rest, were now hopelessly at sea. Cromwell, under whom they had risen to numbers and influence, was dead, their army was being disbanded, they had little voice in Parliament, and the shadow of persecution was already upon them. Yet though cast down they were not destroyed. They had not time to fully establish themselves as a factor in religion and politics. Their development was checked half way and they had been given no opportunity to work out their salvation unhindered. But they were there and they were to be reckoned with.

For several months, though the Anglicans strove to prevent it, the Presbyterians at least, seemed likely to receive the recognition they had earned by their services to the restoration. In the Parliament they were the most powerful group. In the new Council twelve men of the thirty had borne arms against the late king. Among the royal chaplains ten Presbyterian divines found place. And beside issuing the Declaration from Breda promising liberty of conscience, the king presently called a conference of Anglicans and Presbyterians at the Savoy palace to consider some plan of toleration or comprehension. So far all promised well for an amicable adjustment of relations between the two great parties in church and state. But their very agreement boded ill for the third party. In the days of their prosperity they had suppressed Anglican and Presbyterian alike. Now that these had joined hands the sectaries had little to hope. They had early stirred to meet the danger. While the Convention debated the terms on which the king should return, their deliberations were cut short not less by the declaration of the king, than by the

fear of a rising of the republicans and sects. But, as the event proved, it was not in the alliance of the two greater parties their danger lay, for that alliance was of a few days and full of trouble. The Convention was dissolved without the embodiment into legislation of those guarantees which might have made the Presbyterians secure. And before the new House was chosen, or the Savoy Conference held, their cause was hopelessly compromised by the third party with whom, against their will, the Anglicans successfully endeavored to identify them. For in January, 1661, fanaticism broke out in London. A cooper named Venner, a soldier of the old army, sometime conspirator against Cromwell, sometime resident of Salem, in New England, with some three score followers, all of that peculiar millenial sect known as Fifth Monarchy men, rose against the government, and for three days kept the city, the court and the administration in a state of feverish alarm. But the odds against them were too great. They found neither aid nor comfort from outside, and the children of this world triumphed over those who would have restored the rule of the saints under King Jesus.

That rising helped destroy whatever chance the Presbyterians had of holding their strength in the new Parliament, and the House of Commons showed a clear majority of Royalist Anglicans. Hardly had this body begun its deliberations when the Savoy Conference met, and, after some wrangling, dissolved without reaching any agreement. Thence ensued a period of reaction whose results are writ large in religious history to this day, for this was the time when established church and denominations definitely parted company. The dominant party lost no time in destroying the strength of their rivals. The Corporation Act drove the dissenters from those bodies which governed the cities and towns and chose a majority of the Commons. The Act of Uniformity excluded all dissenting ministers from the Church of England. And the restoration of the bishops to the House of Lords, and of its confiscated property to the Church completed the discomfiture of the Presbyterians. These, indeed, suffered most for they had most to lose, but the new policy bore no less hardly on the sectaries. And these, joined by the more extreme Presbyterians, were less inclined to submit to the revived authority in church and state. Many moderate men, indeed, found it in their consciences to conform enough to evade the law. But many more were not able nor inclined to take this course. Deprived of their army, of their political position, of their religious liberty, even at,length of their right to petition, in many cases of what they considered their rightful property, with no outlet for their opinions in Parliament, the case seemed hopeless enough. Some recanted, the most began a long and honorable course of silent endurance of their persecution. And some, of bolder spirit, turned to darker ways.

These events in England had their counterpart in Scotland and Ireland. In the former a Royalist Parliament, intoxicated with power, a source, however, from which its name of the Drunken Parliament was not derived, repealed at one stroke all the acts of the preceding twenty-eight years, and abolished that document so dear to Presbyterian hearts, the Solemn League and Covenant. In the latter a Court of Claims was established to unravel the intricacies of the interminable land question and restore the estates, as far as possible, to their former owners. In all three kingdoms the dispossessed party was thrown into a ferment of discontent over this sudden reversal of their fortunes. The soldiers of the old army were especially enraged. They felt that they had lost by political

trickery what had been won in fair fight. By a sudden turn of fortune's wheel, a bit of legal chicanery, their old enemy, the Parliament, had caught them off their guard and overthrown them. Their place had been taken by the ungodly, the Arminian and the idol-worshipper. And these brethren of the Covenant and the sword were not men to rest quietly under such wrongs. Many, indeed, turned aside from politics and war, taking no further part in public affairs. But not a few declared they would not be led into an Egyptian bondage under a new Pharaoh. They would not be turned adrift by the empty vote of a packed Parliament, whence they had been excluded. Those whom they had fairly fought and fairly conquered, those who had followed Mammon, and bowed the knee to Baal, the worshippers of Rimmon, the doers of abominations, the servants of the Scarlet Woman who sits on the Seven Hills, were these to enter upon that fair inheritance, so lately in the hands of the Saints, without a blow? Surely the Lord was on the side of His servants, as he had shown them by so many signal instances of His favour, at Naseby, at Marston Moor, at Dunbar and Worcester, and a hundred fights beside, in the great days gone by. Was He to look on unmoved? Had He abandoned them to their enemies? Was this not rather a device of His to try their constancy and courage? Was it not their part as brave and righteous men to strike another blow for the faith that was in them and the heritage He had put in their hands? A bold stroke had once prevailed against their oppressors. Might not another restore the Covenant and give back to the afflicted saints their inheritance and the spoil of the Philistines? A new king was on the throne who knew not Joseph. But his rule was recent, his hold precarious. His father had been overthrown though all the wealth and power of the mighty had been on his side. Now the land was honeycombed with sedition, there were thousands of bold spirits accustomed to discipline and the use of arms, and thousands more of the faithful with money and sympathy to aid in the great work of destroying the rule of grasping bishops and a Catholic king.

Thus while the regicides fled from the wrath of the new government, or suffered the penalty of their deeds in London, while Parliament was driving Nonconformity from church and state and the greater part of the dispossessed party girded itself to endure the impending persecution, while new-fledged royalty flaunted its licentiousness in Whitehall, earnest and vindictive men plotted against the new order in England, in Ireland and Scotland and Wales, in London itself. Emissaries made their way by night along unfrequented roads, or stole from village to village in tiny fishing boats, or crept through narrow lanes of the old City and its environs, to cheer the secret and unlawful conventicles of Baptist and Quaker, Presbyterian and Congregationalist, Unitarian and Fifth Monarchist, with hopes and plans for the resurrection of the Kingdom of the Righteous. The old Republicans were approached, the holders of land taken in the recent troubles, the members of the old Rump Parliament, the exiles abroad, the officers and soldiers of the old army at home. Proclamations were printed promising all things to all men, but chiefly toleration and lighter taxes. Tracts were smuggled from London or Holland full of the language of prophecy. The new monarchy had been measured and found wanting, the old Covenant was about to rise, Phoenix-like, from its ashes, the heavens were full of signs and portents, and prodigies everywhere indicated the fall of king and bishop. A new Armageddon was at hand, the rule of King Jesus was to be restored, „even by Blood." Everywhere arms were gathered and men enlisted against that great day. A council of conspirators directed the activities of its agents from London

and communicated with other groups throughout the three kingdoms and with the refugees on the Continent. In such wise were woven the threads of conspiracy against restored royalty and the pride of the Anglicans, widely but loosely.

And everywhere, meanwhile, the government followed close on the trail of the conspirators and kept in close touch with the elements of discontent. Everywhere spies and informers were enlisted, even from the ranks of conspiracy itself, to discover and also, it was whispered, to foment conspiracy where none existed, that dangerous men might be drawn in and seized. From every county justices and deputy lieutenants poured a steady stream of prisoners and information into the hands of the administration. Under the careful direction of the Lord General the militia was reorganized, former strongholds weakened or destroyed, troops moved here and there, suspicious persons seized and incipient disturbance vigorously repressed. So for three years this underground warfare went on. Late in 1661 the government found or professed to find, a clue to conspiracy and exploited its discovery in Parliament to secure the act against corporations. Again in 1662 another, and perhaps more real clanger was brought to light, and again this was used to pass the Act of Uniformity, a measure against dissenting ministers which drove some eighteen hundred from the Church and rendered comprehension finally impossible. Some of the alleged conspirators were hanged, some were used to get more information, but for the most part the leaders remained unknown, or escaped. Thus far the disaffected had played into the hands of their bitterest enemies, and had accomplished little more than furnish a much desired excuse for legislation to destroy Nonconformity root and branch. If insurrection had been planned at all it had been thwarted, and turned against its authors and their party. So useful had it been to the Anglicans, indeed, that it was more than hinted that the so-called conspiracies were in fact engineered by them for use in Parliament. This was not quite true. Conspiracy there had been, and was, as events were to prove. The increasing persecution of Dissent, the increasing weight of taxation, the increasing luxury of the court and the exactions of the church, provided an increasing basis of discontent, deep and far-reaching. And the administration learned presently that the plot they had so diligently pursued and exploited had a very real existence. By 1663 it was a wide spread and apparently well-organized conspiracy. It included the discontented Nonconformists of the west and north of England, the Scotch Covenanters, the dispossessed Cromwellians in Ireland, the London conventiclers and the Continental refugees. A central Committee of Six, chiefly old army officers, sat in London, whence they directed the movement from their hiding places in those little known regions of the metropolis where even the King‘s writ ran with difficulty or not at all. The scheme contemplated the surprise and seizure of Whitehall and the Tower, the capture of the King and his brother, of the Chancellor, and the Lord General. Simultaneous risings were to take place throughout the country whereby the local authorities were to be overpowered, the Guards, if possible, decoyed away from the capital, and the central administration paralyzed and destroyed. The forces of the conspirators, under their former leaders, especially General Ludlow, were to unite, march on London, and there either exact terms from the captive King or set up another Republic, but in any event relieve the people from the burdens of religious and financial oppression. Such was the dream of the discontented, which,

transformed into action might well have plunged England again into the throes of civil war.

Meanwhile what of our friend Blood amid all these great affairs? Had he, like many others, preferred the safer course, withdrawn into private life and abandoned his property and ambitions together? That, indeed, seems to have been his first course. The Court of Claims apparently deprived him, among many others, of part or all of his new-found fortune in land, and he seems to have taken up his residence in Dublin, with or near his brother-in-law, Lackie, or Lecky, a Presbyterian clergyman, and, like his modern namesake, the historian, a fellow of Trinity College. Even so he maintained his reputation as an active man, for on June 30, 1663, a Dublin butcher, Dolman by name, is found petitioning the Duke of Ormond for the return of an „outlandish bull and cow“ of which he had been unlawfully deprived by Thomas Blood, lieutenant in the late army. The petition was duly granted and the animals doubtless duly recovered. But before that the gallant lieutenant was in far deeper designs than the benevolent assimilation of other people‘s outlandish bulls, and before the worthy butcher petitioned against him he had come under the direct attention of the Lord-lieutenant in a much more serious connection.

It was not to be supposed that such a man was overlooked in the assignment of parts for the great conspiracy. A committee had been formed in Dublin to organize and enlist the old Cromwellians in the design and of this committee Blood and his brother-in-law were prominent members. They were, in fact, the chief means by which correspondence was maintained with the north Irish Presbyterians in Ulster, and the so-called Cameronians in Scotland, as well as the Nonconformist group in Lancashire and north England, with whom Blood‘s marriage had given him some connection. The local design, as evolved by this committee, was most ingenious. A day, the 9th or 10th of May, was set for its execution, men and arms were collected, and the details carefully arranged for the seizure of Dublin Castle and the person of Ormond. According to an old usage the Lord-lieutenant was accustomed from day to day to receive petitions in person from all who cared to carry their troubles to him in this way. Taking advantage of this custom, it was proposed by the conspirators to send certain men enlisted in the enterprise into the Castle in the guise of petitioners. Some eighty others, meanwhile, disguised as workingmen and loiterers, were to hang about the great gate of the Castle. Another, disguised as a baker, and carrying a basket of bread on his head, was to enter the gate, as if on his way to the kitchen. As he went in he was to stumble and let fall his pile of loaves. It was calculated that the careless guard would probably rush out to snatch the bread thus scattered. The baker would resist, the pretended workmen and loiterers would gather to see the fun, and, under cover of the disturbance, rush the gate, seize the guard-house and its arms, overpower the guard, and, with the aid of the petitioners within, occupy the Castle. Upon the news of this, risings were to take place throughout the country, and the English troops and officials overpowered and brought over or killed.

It was an admirable plan. The volunteers were chosen, the disguises prepared, a proclamation to the people was printed, and the whole matter laid in train. The plot, in fact, wanted but one thing to succeed—secrecy. This it was not destined to have. At the proper time the inevitable informer appeared in the person of Mr. Philip Alden or Arden, a member of the committee. By him and by a certain Sir Theophilus Jones, to whom some knowledge of the plot had come,

Ormond was warned of his danger. He took immediate steps to secure himself and arrest the conspirators. But they were warned of their danger in time to escape, and under the rules of the game they should have made off at once. Instead they boldly went on with their plans, but set the time four days ahead, for May 5th. Even this daring step failed to save them. The Castle guard was increased, troops and militia called out, the other districts warned, and the conspirators sought out and arrested. Among the first victims was Blood's brother-in-law, Lackie. He was thrown into prison, where the severity of his treatment is said to have driven him insane. His wife petitioned for his release, and there is a story that his colleagues, the fellows of Trinity College, joined her in begging that his life be spared. They were told that he might have his liberty if he would conform, which, however, even at that price, he refused to do. This much is quite certain, his wife was promised, not her husband's liberty but his body. And this, after his execution in December, was accordingly handed over to her. The other conspirators suffered likewise in life, or liberty, or property, and every effort was made to include Blood in the list of victims. A proclamation he had issued was burned by the hangman. He was declared an outlaw, his remaining estates were confiscated, and a price was set on his head. But the government was compelled to satisfy itself with this, the man himself disappeared. Among the brethren of his faith he was able to find plenty of hiding places. But, according to his own story, told many years later, he scorned to skulk in corners. Disguised as a Quaker, as a Dissenting minister, even as a Catholic priest, he made his way from place to place, living and preaching openly, and by his very effrontery keeping the officers off his scent for some years. And so great, it is said, was the terror of his name and his daring that a plot to rescue Lackie from the scaffold not only frightened away the crowd from the execution, but nearly succeeded in its object, while for months afterward Ormond was hindered from venturing out of Dublin by the fear of his friends that he would be kidnapped or killed by Blood and his companions.

Meanwhile the great design in England, like that in Ireland, found its shipwreck in treachery. Two of the men entrusted with the secrets of the design revealed it to the government. One of the leaders, Paul Hobson, was early seized, and his correspondence intercepted. The first leader chosen went mad, and the miracles which were prophesied, did not come to pass. The plans for a rising in Durham, Westmoreland and Lancashire were betrayed, troops and militia were hurried to the points of danger, and the few who rose in arms during that fatal month of October, 1663, discouraged by the fewness of their numbers and the strength brought against them, dispersed without a blow. The rest was but the story of arrests, examinations, trials, and executions. More than a score of those who took part in the design were executed, more than a hundred punished by fine or imprisonment or exile, or all three. Hobson was kept prisoner in the Tower for more than a year. His health failed, and in consideration of information he had given, he and his family were permitted to go under heavy bonds, to the Carolinas, where, as elsewhere in the colonies, he doubtless found many kindred spirits. By the middle of 1664 the tale of victims was complete, and the conspiracy was crushed. The alarm again reacted on Parliament, and a bill against meetings of Dissenters, which had been long pending, was passed under pressure of the plot. By its provisions it became unlawful to hold a religious meeting of more than five persons beside the family

in whose house the worshippers assembled under severe and cumulative penalties. This was the Conventicle Act.

Blood, meanwhile, like several of his coconspirators, flitted from place to place, in Ireland and England, the authorities always on his trail. Finally, like many before and after him, he seems to have found refuge In the seventeenth century sanctuary of political refugees, Holland. There no small number of the leaders and soldiers of the old army had preceded him, and many had taken service in the Dutch army and navy. It may be that he had some thought of following their example, perhaps his designs were deeper still. He had nothing to hope from England, for his confiscated estates had been leased to a certain Captain Toby Barnes, reserving the rights of the government, based on his forfeiture by treason. He therefore made his way and extended his acquaintance not only among the English, but among the Dutch as well, and, if his story is true, was introduced to no less a person than the great Dutch admiral, De Ruyter, the most formidable of all England's enemies. And this was of much importance, for while he sojourned abroad, England and Holland had drifted into war. From February, 1665, to July, 1667, the two strongest maritime powers strove for control of the sea. In the summer of 1665 the English won some advantage in the fierce battle of Lowestoft, but the noise of rejoicing was stilled by a terrible catastrophe. In that same summer the Plague fell upon London. The death list in the city alone swelled from 600 in April to 20,000 in August. Business was suspended, the court and most of the administration and the clergy fled, and the war languished. A few brave spirits like Sheldon, the bishop of London, a certain secretary in the Admiralty, Samuel Pepys, of much fame thereafter, and the old Cromwellian general, Monk, now Duke of Albemarle, stuck grimly to their posts. But they and their fellows were few among many. Amid the terror and confusion the Nonconformist clergy came out of their hiding places, ascended the pulpits which had been deserted by their brethren of the Anglican church, few of whom followed the example of their brave, intolerant old bishop, and ministered to the spiritual needs of the stricken people. Conventicles sprung up everywhere, and conspiracy again raised its head. This time new plans were devised. Hundreds of old soldiers were reported coming to London and taking quarters near the Tower. Arms were collected and a plan formed to surprise the great stronghold by an attack from the water side. In addition there was a design for risings elsewhere, aided by the Dutch. The government bestirred itself under the direction of the inevitable Monk. The London conspirators were seized, information was sent to the local authorities, who made arrests and called out the militia, and the danger was averted. Parliament met at Oxford in October and, as a sequel to the plot, passed the most ferocious of the persecuting measures, the Five Mile Act, by which no Nonconformist preacher or teacher was permitted to come within that distance of a city or borough, save on a duly certified journey.

The next year repeated the history of its predecessor. The English fleet under the only man who seemed to rise to emergencies in this dark time, Monk, met the Dutch off the North Foreland and fought there a terrible battle which lasted three days, and was claimed as a victory by both sides. Again this was followed by a calamity. In September a fire broke out in London which raged almost unchecked for a week, and laid the greater part of the city in ashes. France, meanwhile, entered the war on the side of Holland, and the English government, corrupt and exhausted, seemed almost ready to fall. It was little

wonder that the sectaries, though their arms had been lost in the fire, plucked up courage and laid more plans. Six weeks after the fire the Covenanters in west Scotland, maddened by persecution, were in arms, and maintained themselves for some weeks against the forces sent against them. During the following winter the English, short of money, and negotiating for peace, resolved not to set out a fleet in the spring. In June the Dutch, apprised of the defenceless condition of the English coasts, brought together a fleet under De Ruyter, sailed up the Medway and the Thames, took Sheerness and Chatham, broke through the defenses there and captured or destroyed the English ships they found at anchor. There was little to oppose them. The Guards were drawn out, the young gentlemen about the court enlisted, the militia was brought together, and volunteers collected. Some entrenchments were dug, and guns were mounted to oppose a landing. And the Lord General Monk, who had done all that was done, marched up and down the bank, before the Dutch ships whose big black hulks lay well within the sound of his voice, chewing tobacco, swearing like a pirate, shaking his heavy cane at the enemy, and daring them to land. They did not kill him as they might easily have done. From their ships came a brisk cannonade, volleys of jeers and profanity, and the insulting cries of English seamen aboard, deriding their fellow-countrymen ashore. And with these insults the fleet presently weighed anchor and sailed away to patrol the coasts, interrupt commerce, and attack other ports. In particular an attempt was made on Landguard fort, covering Harwich. There the Dutch fleet was taken into the harbour by English pilots, some twelve hundred men landed under command of an English exile, Colonel Doleman. But despite the heroic efforts of the „tall English lieutenant-colonel“ who led them, efforts which extorted the admiration of his fellow-countrymen who held the fort against him, the Dutch were driven off. At Portsmouth and elsewhere similar attempts were made but with no greater success and, the negotiations then in progress at Breda having been expedited by this exploit, the Dutch fleet withdrew, leaving England seething with impotent rage and mortification. Peace was signed at Breda a month later, on terms influenced in no small degree by this notable raid, the first in centuries which had brought an enemy into the Thames.

And what had become of our friend Blood in these stirring times? It is not to be supposed that the organizer of Irish rebellion, the correspondent of English revolutionary committee and Scotch Covenanters, and the friend of De Ruyter, sat quietly apart from this turmoil of war and conspiracy. Yet, working underground as he did, like a mole, it is possible to trace his movements only by an occasional upheaval on the surface. It seems quite certain that he did not, like so many of his countrymen, enlist in the Dutch service and that he was not among the four or five thousand troops, mostly English, which manned their fleet, nor did he, like them, take part in the attempt to storm the forts covering Harwich. On February 13, 1666, there is a secret service note, that Captain Blood may be found at Colonel Gilby Carr‘s in the north of Ireland, or at his wife‘s near Dublin, and that the fanatics had secretly held a meeting at Liverpool and put off their rising till after the engagement of the fleets. On May 3, there is a similar note concerning a man named Padshall, then prisoner in the Gatehouse in London, that if he is kept close he may discover where Allen, alias Blood, lodges, or „Joannes“ alias Mene Tekel, and the note indicates their presence in the city. Then came the battle of the North Foreland and the failure of the Dutch to crush the English fleet. On August 24th we learn that these two

men, Blood and Jones, have gone to Ireland to do mischief. There another plot was reported forming, which contemplated the seizure of Limerick. But this, like that of the preceding year on the Tower, both of which bear a strong family resemblance to the old design on Dublin Castle, were discovered and defeated. One insurrection alone, as we have seen, resulted from this unrest, the rising of the Scotch Covenanters in October. And among them, according to advices which came to the administration, was Blood. He had evidently found the Irish plot betrayed and with some of his companions, described in the accounts of the Pentland rising as „some Presbyterian ministers and old officers from Ireland," hurried to the only chance of real fighting. That was not great. The Covenanters, cooped up in the Pentland Hills, were beaten, dispersed and butchered, before concentrated aid could be given them. Blood, as usual, escaped. He seems first to have sought refuge in Lancashire among his relatives. Thence he went to Ireland, but, landing near Carrickfergus, was so closely pursued there by Lord Dungannon that he turned again to England, and by the first of the following April was reported to the government as being at the house of a rigid Anabaptist in Westmoreland. From there he watched the government unravel the web of conspiracy he had been so busy weaving. Yet even here lies another mystery. In 1665, at the time when he might be supposed to have been most active against the government, his wife petitioned, through him apparently, for the return of certain property seized from her father by one Richard Clively, then in prison for killing a bailiff, and in December of that year it appears that certain men convicted of attending conventicles are to be discharged, and the order is endorsed by Blood. More than that, there is a petition of September, 1666, the month of the Fire, noted as „Blood's memorial," requesting a permit from Secretary Arlington that the „hidden persons, especially the spies, be not seized till they are disposed of." From such data it has been conjectured that Blood was playing a double part, that he was, after all, no dangerous conspirator but a mere informer.

And this brings us to a most curious phase of this whole movement, the relation of the conspirators to the government. It is a remarkable fact that no small number of those who to all appearances were most deeply implicated in conspiracy, corresponded at one time or another with the administration, in many instances furnishing information of each other to the secretaries. And this might lead, indeed, it has led, many to imagine that the whole of these vaunted conspiracies were, after all, nothing but what we should call in the language of modern crime, „plants," devised and executed by the government itself for purposes of its own. There is, in some instances, evidence of this. But in many others it is apparent that this is not a full explanation of cases like that of Blood. In that doubtful borderland between secret service and conspiracy it was often possible for a man to serve both sides. Having engineered a plot and acquired money and arms and companions to carry it out a man not infrequently found himself in the clutches of the law. The officers, because they did not have evidence to hang him, or because they hoped to gain more from him alive than dead, were often disposed to offer him his life, even his liberty, in return for information. He, on his part, was nearly always ready to furnish information in any quantity and of any sort, in return for this favour. And, if he were shrewd enough, he might amuse his captors for years with specious stories, with just enough truth to make them plausible, and just enough vagueness to make them unusable, and ultimately escape, meanwhile

carrying on the very plans which he purported to betray. He might even get money from both sides and make a not to be despised livelihood from his trade. This is very different from the regular informer, who, like Alden, received a lump sum or an annuity from the government, and it was a very fair profession for a man with enough shrewdness and not too much conscience in those troubled times. If, indeed, Blood were such a man, as seems probable, he represented a considerable element in the underground politics of the early Restoration. And it is to be observed that no small proportion of the men who were executed for actual and undeniable complicity in the plots were of just this type and had at various times been in government service, only to be caught red-handed at the end. And that such was the case of Blood seems to be proved by the fact that the next time he appears above the horizon his actions seem to dissipate any idea of permanent accommodation with the government.

The arrests and examinations which succeeded the abortive conspiracy of 1663 had led the secretaries of state into many dark ways of subterranean politics, and they had steadily pushed their investigations through the years of the war, the plague and the fire. They had broken up one group after another, pursuing a steady policy of enlisting the weaker men as informers, and executing or imprisoning the irreconcilables. Among those they had thus discovered had been a little group, the „desperadoes," the names of some of whom we have come across before, Blood, his brother-in-law, Colonel Lockyer, Jones, the author of Mene Tekel, and a Captain John Mason. The last had been taken, had escaped, and some time during the Dutch war, was recaptured. On the 20th of July, 1667, while the Dutch fleets still patrolled the English coast and the peace of Breda was just about to be signed, warrants were issued from the Secretary of State to the Keeper of the Tower and the Keeper of Newgate to deliver Captain John Mason and Mr. Leving to the bearer to be conveyed to York gaol. This duty was assigned to a certain Corporal Darcy, otherwise unknown to fame, who with some seven or eight troopers proceeded to carry out his instructions. The little party thus made up rode north by easy stages for four days without incident. On the fourth day they were joined by one Scott, a citizen of York, apparently by profession a barber, who, not much fancying solitary travel in that somewhat insecure district, sought safety with the soldiers. About seven o'clock on the evening of the 25th of August the little party entered a narrow lane near the village of Darrington, Yorkshire, and there met a most extraordinary adventure. As they rode along, doubtless with no great caution, they heard behind them a sudden rattle of horses' hoofs. They turned to meet a pistol-volley from a small body of well armed and mounted men, and a demand for their prisoners. Several of the guard were wounded at the first fire, and the surprise was complete. But Corporal Darcy was not a man to be thus handled. He faced his little force about, delivered a volley in return, charged his assailants briskly and in a moment was the center of a sharp hand-to-hand fight. He was twice wounded and had his horse shot under him. Three of his companions were badly hurt. Of the attacking party at least one was severely wounded.[5] But when they drew off they carried Mason with them. Leving, feeling discretion the better part of valour, took refuge in a house near by and after the fight surrendered himself again to the stout corporal. Scott, the innocent by-stander who had sought protection with the soldiers, was killed outright, the only immediate fatality in either party, though some of the troopers died later of their wounds. The corporal, despite his disabled

condition, managed to get one of his opponents‘ horses in place of the one he lost, and rode hurriedly into the nearby village for help. But the fearful villagers had barricaded themselves in their houses, and were moved neither by his promises nor his threats to join in the pursuit of the desperadoes. He had, therefore, to be content with giving information to the nearest justice, sending after them the hue and cry, and making his way to York with his remaining prisoner.

This, it will be remembered, was one Leving. And with him we come upon a character, and a plot beneath a plot, which well illustrates the times. William Leving, or Levings, or Levering, or Leonard Williams, as he was variously called, was very far from being the man his guards thought him. It must have been a surprise to them after the fight to see one of their prisoners instead of making off with the rescuers, render himself again into their hands. But the explanation, though the good corporal and his men did not know it, nor yet the governor of York gaol to whom Leving was delivered, was only too well known to Captain Mason‘s friends, and explains the strange conduct of the Captain‘s fellow prisoner on other grounds than mere cowardice. Leving had been deeply implicated in the plots of 1661 and 1662, perhaps in that of 1663 as well. He had been caught, and, to save his life, he had „come in,“ to use an expressive phrase of the time. He was, in short, one of the most useful of the government‘s spies. It was he who had given news of Blood and his companions in Ireland. It was he who had furnished some of the information on which the government was then acting, and who proposed to furnish more, acquired, possibly, by this very ruse of sending him North with Mason. And it was he who now gave to the justice and the officers the names of the principal rescuers, Captain Lockyer, Major Blood, and Timothy Butler, and wrote to Secretary Arlington suggesting that the ways into London be watched as they would probably seek refuge there. It was little wonder that Mason‘s rescuers had sought to kill Leving, or that he had sought refuge in flight and surrender.

These indeed availed him little. He was kept a prisoner at York even after it appeared from his examination who and what he was. This was doubtless done more for his own safety than for any other reason, but even this was not effectual. Not many weeks later he was found dead in his cell. Some time after another informer, similarly confined there, wrote Arlington a terrified letter begging protection or release, „that he might not, like Leving, be poisoned in his cell.“ Thus, it appears, his enemies found him out even there. And that you may not think too hardly of the poor spy, it may be added that on his dead body was found a letter, apparently one he was engaged on when he died, completely exonerating certain men then in hiding for the great conspiracy. It would, perhaps, be uncharitable to hint that this was part of an even more subtle plot beneath the other two, and that his murderers sought to shield their friends outside by this device. York gaol, in any event, was no place to keep men disaffected toward the government. From the Lord-lieutenant down the place was thick with discontent and conspiracy. Indeed no great while before the Council had arrested the Lord-lieutenant himself, no less a person than one of their own number, the great Duke of Buckingham, on the charge of corresponding with the sectaries, and had confined him for some time in the Tower.

But what, meanwhile, had happened to Mason and his friends? On August 8th they were proclaimed outlaws by name and a hundred pounds reward was

offered for Lockyer, Butler, Mason and Blood. But they had disappeared, as usual. Blood, it was said, had been mortally wounded, and was finally reported dead. That part of the story, at least, was greatly exaggerated, and was, no doubt, spread by Blood himself. He seems, in fact, to have retired to one of his hiding places and there recovered from his injuries, which were severe. The rest dispersed, and Mason, we know, found his way to London where three years later he appears in the guise of an innkeeper, still plotting for the inevitable rising. To us this seems strange. Our minds conjure up a well-ordered city, properly policed and thoroughly known. But apart from the fallacy of such a view even now, the London of Charles II was a far different place from the city of to-day in more ways than its size and the advances wrought by civilization. The City itself was then distant from the Court. The long thoroughfare connecting them, now the busy Strand, was then what its name implies still, the way along the river, and was the seat of only a few great palaces, like the Savoy, and the rising pile of Buckingham. Beside what is now Trafalgar Square stood then, as now, St. Martin‘s in the Fields. But the fields have long since fled from Piccadilly and Whitehall. Beyond and around in every direction outside the purlieus of the Court and the liberties of the City, stretched great collections of houses and hovels, affording rich hiding places for men outside the law. The inns abounding everywhere offered like facilities. Beneath the very walls of St. Stephen‘s where Parliament devised measures to suppress conventicles, those conventicles flourished. Among their numbers, among the small and secluded country houses round about, among the rough watermen and sailors along the river, in wide stretching districts where the King‘s writ ran with difficulty or not at all, and a man‘s life was safe only as his strength or skill made it so, or, it was whispered, even among some of the great houses like that of the Duke of Buckingham, men flying from justice might find safety enough.

Later Mason seems to have been joined in London by Blood and the old practices were renewed. But the Major, for Blood had now by some subterranean means arrived at that title, was apparently not wholly content with this. He retired, it would appear, to the little village of Romford, in Surrey, and there, under the name of Allen or Ayloffe, set up—amazing choice among all the things he might have chosen—as a physician. His son-in-law was apprenticed to an apothecary, and thus, with every appearance of quiet and sobriety, the outlaw began life again. But it was not for long, at any rate. Most likely, indeed, this whole business, if it ever existed at all, was a sham. For on May 28th, 1670, we find Secretary Trevor, who had succeeded Arlington in office, ordering the Provost Marshal to search out and take in custody Henry Danvers and William Allen, alias Blood. In December of that same year came the assault on Ormond, with which our story began, and Blood, under his alias, was for the third time proclaimed an outlaw, and for the third time had a price set on his head. Surely, you will say, this is enough of that impudent scoundrel who so long disturbed the slumber of His Majesty‘s secretaries, and flouted the activities of their agents. And, in spite of the stir raised by the attempt on Ormond, if Blood had disappeared after that for the last time, he would not have lived again in the pages of history. For that he is indebted to the great exploit which at once ended his career of crime and raised him above the ordinary herd of outlaws and criminals.

At the time of which we write the Tower of London served even more numerous and important purposes than it does to-day. It was then, as now, a

depository of arms and ammunition, and the quarters of a considerable body of troops, which served to overawe possible disturbance in the city. But in 1670 it was also the principal prison for political offenders, and it was the place where the state regalia, the crown, the orb, and the scepter, were kept. Then, as now, the various functions of the great fortress were quite distinct. The visitor of to-day passes through a wide courtyard to the main edifice, the White Tower of William the Conqueror, whose chambers are filled with curious weapons and armour. He may climb the stone stairs to see the grim apartments once reserved for men reckoned dangerous to the state, and gaze with what awe he can muster upon the imitation crown jewels set out for the delectation of the tourists. Everywhere he finds in evidence the guardians of these treasures, the unobtrusive attendant, the picturesque beefeater, the omnipresent policeman, and if he looks down, from the high windows he may see far below him the red tunics or white undercoats of the soldiers on parade or at work. In some measure this was true in 1670, and it is to this spot we must now turn our attention. We have already seen some of the characters in this story taken to or from the custody of the lieutenant of the Tower, and our steps in trace of our hero or villain, as you choose to call him, have often led perilously near its grim portals. At last they are to go inside.

Among the various functionaries in and about the Tower in the year 1670 was one Edwards, the Keeper of the Regalia, an old soldier who lived with his wife and daughter within the walls, his son being away at the wars on the Continent. Some time after the attack on the Duke of Ormond there appeared one day, among the visitors who flocked to see the sights of the stronghold, a little party of strangers from the country, a clergyman, his wife and his nephew. They visited the usual places of interest, and presently under Edwards‘ guidance, were taken to see the regalia. They were pleasant folk and much interested in what they saw. But unfortunately while looking at the royal paraphernalia the lady fell ill with some sort of a chill or convulsion. Her husband and nephew and Edwards were greatly alarmed. They carried her to Edwards‘ apartments where his wife and daughter took her in charge, and administered cordials and restoratives until she recovered. The clergyman was deeply grateful. He rewarded Edwards generously for his attention and they were all profuse in acknowledging the kindness of the Keeper‘s family. Nor did the matter end here. From this little incident there sprang up an acquaintance which rapidly ripened into friendship between the two families. The clergyman and his nephew came in from time to time on visits. The nephew was young and dashing, the daughter was pretty and pleasing.[6] They were obviously attracted to each other, and their elders looked on the dawning romance with favor. So rapidly did the matter progress that the clergyman presently proposed a marriage between the young couple. Edwards was not unwilling and on the 9th of May, 1671, the clergyman, his nephew, and a friend, with two companions rode up about seven in the morning to make the final arrangements. Mrs. Edwards, however, was not prepared to meet guests at so early an hour and some delay occurred. To fill in the time the clergyman suggested that Edwards might show the regalia to his friend who had never seen it. So the four mounted the steps to the room where the treasures were kept. Edwards went on before to take the regalia out for exhibition. But as he stooped over the chest to get them he was seized suddenly from behind, a cloak was thrown over his head, he was bound and gagged, knocked on the head with

a mallet, and all these measures having failed to prevent his giving an alarm, he was finally stabbed. One of the men with him seized the crown and bent it so that it went under his cloak. The other put the orb in the pocket of his baggy breeches, and began to file the scepter in two that it might be more easily carried. But as they were thus busied, by a coincidence, surely the strangest out of a play, at this precise instant Edwards‘ son, Talbot, returned from the wars, bringing a companion with him. They accosted the third man who had remained as a sentinel at the foot of the stairs. He gave the alarm, the two men ran down the stairs and all three hurried off toward the Tower Gate. But there fortune deserted them. Edwards roused from his stupor, tore out the gag and shouted „Treason and Murder!“ The daughter hurried to his side and thence to Tower Hill crying, „Treason! the crown is stolen!“ Young Edward and his companion. Captain Beckman, took up the alarm and hurried to the Keeper‘s side. Gaining from him some idea of the situation they rushed down and saw the thieves just going out the gate. Edwards drew his pistols and shouted to the sentinels. But the warders were apparently terrified and young Edwards, Beckman, and others who joined the pursuit closed in on the outlaws. They in turn aided the confusion by also crying „Stop Thief“ so that some were deceived into believing the parson a party to the pursuit. Beckman seems to have caught him and wrestled with him for the crown, while a servant seized one of the other men. Beckman and Blood had a most „robustious struggle.“ Blood had fired one pistol at Beckman, and when they grappled drew a second and fired again, but missed both times. The accomplices waiting outside, mounted and rode off in different directions. But the pursuit was too close. Two of the three principals having been taken almost at the gate, the third might have got away but was thrown from his horse by running into a projecting cart pole, and captured at no great distance. The other accomplices, two apparently, seem to have escaped. The prisoners were brought back to the Tower at once and identified. To the astonishment of their captors the clergyman was found to be our old friend Blood, the so-called nephew was his son,[7] the third man an Anabaptist silk dyer, named Parret. Warrants were immediately made out to the governor of the Tower, Sir John Robinson, for their imprisonment; Blood‘s on the ground of outlawry for treason and other great and heinous crimes in England; young Blood‘s and Parret‘s for dangerous crimes and practices. Thus fell the mighty Blood in this unique attempt at crime. The sensation caused by his extraordinary undertaking was naturally tremendous. Newsletters and correspondence of the time are all filled with the details of the exploit, for the moment the gravest affairs of state sunk into insignificance before the interest in this most audacious venture. An infinite number of guesses were hazarded at the motive for the theft, for it was felt that mere robbery would not account for it. It was even suspected that it was a prelude to the assassination of the king and the proclamation of a usurper who hoped to strengthen himself by the possession of the regalia. This view was reenforced by the fact that the Chancellor‘s house was entered at about the same time and nothing taken but the Great Seal. The darkest suspicions were afloat, and the relief at the capture of the noted outlaw and the failure of his attempt on the crown was intensified by the sense of having escaped from some vague and terrible danger which would have menaced the state had he succeeded. Broadsides and squibs of all sorts were inspired by the exploit. Among others the irrepressible Presbyterian

satirist, Andrew Marvell, characteristically improved the occasion to make it the subject of a satire on the Church, as follows:

ON BLOOD'S STEALING THE CROWN.
When daring Blood his rent to have regained
Upon the English diadem restrained
He chose the cassock, surcingle and gown,
The fittest mask for one that robs the crown:
But his lay pity underneath prevailed.
And whilst he saved the keeper's life he failed;
With the priest's vestment had he but put on
The prelate's cruelty, the crown had gone.

The proceedings in Blood's case, therefore, excited extraordinary interest, which was not lessened by the unusual circumstances surrounding it. The prisoners were first brought before Sir Gilbert Talbot, the provost-marshal.[8] But Blood refused absolutely to answer any leading questions put him by that official as to his motives, accomplices, and the ultimate purpose of his exploit. This naturally deepened the interest in the matter, and increased the suspicion that there was more in it than appeared on the surface, the more so as the outlaw declared he would speak only with the king himself. To the further astonishment of the world this bold request was granted. Three days after his arrest, on May 12, he was taken by the king's express order to Whitehall and there examined by Charles, the Duke of York, and a select few of the royal family and household. The proceeding was not quite as unusual as it seemed, for in the earlier years of the Restoration it had been fairly common and the king had proved a master in the art of examination. But it had been given up of late and its revival seemed to indicate a matter of unusual gravity. „The man need not despair," said Ormond to Southwell when he heard that the king was to give Blood a hearing, „for surely no king would wish to see a malefactor but with intention to pardon him." But this opinion was not general and his conviction was never doubted by the world at large. A few days after his examination Secretary Williamson's Dublin correspondent wrote him that there was little news in Ireland save the talk of Blood's attempt on the crown, and he voiced the prevailing sentiment when he „hoped that Blood would receive the reward of his many wicked attempts." The coffee houses talked of nothing else and all London prepared to gratify itself with the spectacle of the execution of the most daring criminal of the time.[9]

But in this, at any rate for the present, they were to be disappointed. Blood was remanded to the Tower, and there held for some time while certain other steps were taken to probe the case deeper. Two months later Sir John Robinson wrote to Secretary Williamson that Lord Arlington had dined with him the Saturday before, and had given into his hands certain warrants, not as every one supposed for Blood's execution, but for his release and that of his son. Two weeks later a grant of pardon was issued to him for „all the treasons, murders, felonies, etc., committed by him alone or with others from the day of His Majesty's accession, May 29, 1660, to the present," and this was followed by a similar grant to his son. Later, to complete this incredible story, his estates were restored to him, he was given a place at Court, and a pension of five hundred pounds a year in Irish lands. Not long afterward the indefatigable

diner-out, John Evelyn, notes in his diary that, dining with the Lord Treasurer, Arlington, a few days before, he had met there, among the guests, Colonel Thomas Blood. It is no wonder that a Londoner wrote in early August of that same year: „On Thursday last in the courtyard at Whitehall, I saw walking, in a new suit and periwig, Mr. Blood exceeding pleasant and jocose—a tall rough-boned man, with small legs, a pock-frecken face with little hollow blue eyes.“ And in September Blood had acquired enough credit, apparently, not only to get a new grant of pardon confirmed for himself and his son, but others for certain of his former companions as well.

What is the explanation of this extraordinary circumstance? It is a question no one has yet answered satisfactorily, and it has remained one of the many unsolved mysteries of the period, along with the murder of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey and the Popish Plot. If we knew fully we could clear up many dark ways of Restoration politics. We have certain second-hand accounts of what took place in that memorable interview between the vagabond king and the Irish outlaw, from which we may get some light on the matter. The latter, „as gallant and hardy a villain as ever herded with the sneaking sect of Anabaptists,“ in the words of a contemporary, we are told, „answered so frankly and undauntedly that every one stood amazed.“ Snatches of Blood‘s comments on his most recent exploit have floated down to us. „It was, at all events, a stroke for a crown,“ had been his remark to Beckman when he was captured, a cool witticism which must have pleased the wittiest of monarchs when it was repeated to him. „Who are your associates?“ he is said to have been asked, to which he replied that he „would never betray a friend‘s life nor deny guilt in defense of his own.“ Blood explained to the king, it is said, that he thought the crown was worth a hundred thousand pounds, when, in fact the whole regalia, had he known it, only cost six thousand. He told the story of his life and adventures with much freedom, and it must have been a good story to hear. He confessed to the attempt on Dublin Castle, to the rescue of Mason and the kidnapping of Ormond. There was found on his person a „little book in which he had set down sixty signal deliverances from eminent dangers.“ And one may remark, in passing, that it is a pity that it, instead of the dagger with which Edwards was stabbed, is not preserved in a London museum. Perhaps it may turn up some day, and allow us the whole story as he told it to Charles. Several about the monarch contributed their information of Blood. Prince Rupert, in particular, recalled him as „a very stout, bold fellow in the royal service,“ twenty years before. But the thing to which rumor credited his escape and which was reported to have made his fortune, was a story in connection with the king himself. A plot had been laid by Blood and his accomplices, according to his account, to kill the king while he was bathing in the river at Battersea. But as they hid in the reeds, said the outlaw turned courtier, with their victim before them, the majesty of royalty was too great—he could not fire the shot. But, he continued, there was a band to which he belonged, three hundred strong, pledged to avenge his death on the king, in case of his conviction.

Doubtless truth lurks amid all this. It may all be true. Even so there is hardly material here for pardon, much less for reward. Other reasons not known at that time, must be assigned for such royal clemency. One, perhaps, lies in this letter written six days after the examination:

„May 19, 1671. Tower. Col. Blood to the King.

„May it please your Majesty these may tell and inform you that it was Sir Thomas Osborne and Sir Thomas Littleton, both your treasurers for your Navy, that set me to steal your crown, but he that feed me with money was James Littleton, Esq. 'Tis he that pays under your treasurer at the Pay Orifice. He is a very bold villainous fellow, a very rogue, for I and my companions have had many a hundred pounds of him of your Majesty's money to encourage us upon this attempt. I pray no words of this confession, but know your friends. Not else but am your Majesty's prisoner and if life spared your dutiful subject whose name is Blood, which I hope is not that your Majesty seeks after."

Surely of the two qualities then so necessary in the court, wit and effrontery, a plentiful supply was not lacking to a man who could write such a letter in such a situation. And his daring, his effrontery and his adventures undoubtedly made a great impression on the king.

Another reason for the treatment Blood received was, strangely enough, his powerful influence at court. It will be remembered, in connection with the rescue of Mason, that the great Duke of Buckingham, Lord-lieutenant of Yorkshire, and one of the men highest in favour at court and in the country at large, had been arrested on a charge of conspiring with the fanatics against the throne. He had been released, and was now not only again in the royal favour, but was one of the leading men in the ministry of the day, the so-called Cabal. It was he who secured the interview with the king for Blood, and he doubtless lent his influence for mercy. And there was, perhaps, a deeper reason for this. Buckingham was the bitter enemy of Ormond. The king, whatever his inclination, could not, in decency, pardon Blood, after his confessing to the attack on Ormond, without at least some pretense of consulting the man who had been so maltreated. He sent, therefore, to Ormond to ask him to forgive Blood. Lord Arlington carried the message with those private reasons for the request, which still puzzles us. Blood, meanwhile, under direction, wrote a letter to Ormond, expressing his regret in unmeasured terms. The old Duke's reply was at once a lesson in dignity and loyalty. „If the king could forgive an attempt on his crown," he said proudly to Arlington, „I myself may easily forgive an attempt on my life, and since it is his Majesty's pleasure, that is reason sufficient for me, and your lordship may well spare the rest of the explanations." But Ormond's son, and his biographer, took refuge in no such dignity. The latter declares roundly that Buckingham instigated the attempt on his master. And not long after the affair, the former, the gallant young Earl of Ossory, coming into the royal presence and seeing the Duke of Buckingham standing by the king, his colour rose, and he spoke to this effect:

„My lord, I know well that you are at the bottom of this late attempt of Blood's upon my father; and therefore I give you fair warning if my father comes to a violent end by sword or pistol, or if he dies by the hand of a ruffian, or by the more secret way of poison, I shall not be at a loss to know the first author of it; I shall consider you as the assassin; I shall treat you as such; and wherever I meet you I shall pistol you, though you stood behind the king's chair; and I tell it you in his Majesty's presence that you may be sure I shall keep my word."

These were brave words, and had they come from other lips than those of the Restoration Bayard, might have been regarded as mere bravado. But he had proved his courage on too many occasions to count this lightly. Scarce five

years before, while visiting Sir Thomas Clifford, in the country, he had heard the guns of the fleet off Harwich, in the fierce battle of Lowestoft. With no commission and with no connection with either the navy or the government, he had mounted a horse, and, accompanied by his host, had ridden to the shore and put off in an open boat to the English fleet to take his part in one of the hardest day‘s fighting the English fleet ever saw. The word of such a man, conspicuous for his honesty as for his courage, was not to be lightly set aside. And whether this threat was the cause or not, or whether Buckingham was really not responsible for an assault which might have been attributed to Blood‘s desire for revenge on the man who had confiscated his estates and hanged his brother-in-law, the old Duke was not further molested.

But, apart from these matters, there is another, and one may be permitted to think, a more serious reason for Blood‘s escape. It lies in the political situation of the time. This was, in many ways, peculiar. Some four years before the events we have narrated in connection with the theft of the crown the administration of Clarendon had fallen and had been succeeded by that of a group called the Cabal, whose chief bond of union lay in the fact that they were none of them Anglicans and they were all opposed to Clarendon. They, with the aid of the king, who, largely through tenderness to the Catholics, had never favoured the persecuting policy, had relaxed the execution of the Clarendonian measures, and had thus far succeeded in preventing the re-enactment of the Conventicle Act which had expired some years before. The Anglicans in Parliament had been no less insistent that the old policy be maintained and that the Act be renewed. The king, now supported by his ministers, was no less eager to renew the attempt which had failed under Clarendon, and revive the dispensing power, whereby the toleration of Catholic and Protestant Nonconformist alike would rest in his own hands. This situation was complicated by the fact that king and ministers alike were bent on another war with Holland. It seemed highly desirable to them to pacify the still discontented Nonconformists before entering on such a struggle, particularly since the government had little money and must rely on the city, which was strongly Nonconformist in its sentiments. It seemed no less necessary to destroy, if possible, that group of extremists whose conspiracies were doubly dangerous in the face of a war. To gain information of the feelings of the dissenting bodies, and discover what terms would be most acceptable to them, to track down and bring in the fierce and desperate men from whom trouble might be anticipated, to discover if possible the connection that existed between the sects and those in high places, these were objects of the highest importance. They needed such a man as Blood. And it seemed worth while to Charles to tame this fierce bird of prey to his service to achieve such ends as he contemplated. Some such thought evidently occurred to the king during the examination. „What,“ he is said to have asked bluntly at its close, „What if I should give you your life?“ Blood's reply is almost epic, „I would endeavor to deserve it.“

This, at any rate, became his immediate business. Almost at once he was taken in hand by the government, and it was soon reported that he was making discoveries. The arrest of three of Cromwell‘s captains is noted among the first fruits of his information. And close upon the heels of his pardon came the arrest and conviction of some twenty-four or twenty-five irreconcilables.[10] This may or may not show the hand of the new government agent, but the circumstantial evidence is strong. It is certain, however, that throughout the

winter of 1671-2 Secretary Williamson was in close consultation with Blood over the situation and the demands of Dissenters, and he filled many pages of good paper with cryptic abbreviations of these long and important interviews, in which are to be found many curious secrets of conventicles and conspiracies, of back-stairs politics and the underground connections of men high in the councils of the nation. From Blood, from the Presbyterian ministers, through one or two of their number, and from sources to which these communications led, the court and ministry gradually obtained the information from which a great and far-reaching policy was framed. This took form in the beginning of the following year in the famous Declaration of Indulgence. This, taking the control of the Nonconformist situation from Parliament, placed it in the hands of the king. Licenses were to be issued to ministers to preach, to meeting-houses, and to other places for worship which was not according to the forms or under the direction of the Anglican church. The policy, owing to the bitter opposition of Parliament, lasted but a few months, but it marked an era in English history. The rioting which had accompanied the revival of the Conventicle Act, and which had encouraged the government to try the licensing system, disappeared. For a few months entire religious toleration prevailed, and. though Parliament forced the king to withdraw his Declaration, the old persecution was never revived. In this work Blood‘s share was not small. He not merely furnished information, he became one of the recognized channels through whom licenses were obtained, and in the few months while they were being issued he drove a thriving trade. And with one other activity which preceded the Dutch war he was doubtless closely connected. This was the issuing of pardons to many of those old Cromwellians who had sought refuge in Holland a dozen years before. No small number of these, taking advantage of the government‘s new lenience, came back from exile with their families and goods, and took up their residence again in England. Thus Colonels Burton and Kelsey, Berry and Desborough, Blood‘s brother-in-law Captain Lockyer, Nicholas, Sweetman and many others found pardons and were received again into England. „Through his means,“ wrote Mrs. Goffe to her husband, „as is reputed, Desborough and Maggarborn [Major Bourne?] and Lewson of Yarmouth is come out of Holland and Kelsi and have their pardon and liberty to live quietly, no oath being imposed on them.“ „The people of God have much liberty and meetings are very free and they sing psalms in many places and the King is very favourable to many of the fanatics and to some of them he was highly displeased with.“ It might have been that the regicides in New England could have returned but the cautious Mrs. Goffe warned her husband not to rely on the favourable appearance of affairs.

„It is reported,“ she wrote, „that Whally and Goffe and Ludlow is sent for but I think they have more wit than to trust them.“

In the third great measure of the period, the Stop of the Exchequer, Blood naturally had no part, but when the war actually broke out, he found a new field of usefulness in obtaining information from Holland, in ferreting out the tracts which the Dutch smuggled into England, in watching for the signs of conspiracy at home. Thus he lived and flourished. His residence was in Bowling Alley, now Bowling Street, leading from Dean‘s Yard to Tufton Street, Westminster, convenient to Whitehall. His favorite resort is said to have been White‘s Coffee House, near the Royal Exchange.[11] His sinister face and ungraceful form became only too familiar about the court. His bearing was resented by many as insolent. He was both hated and feared as he moved

through the atmosphere of intrigue by which the court was surrounded, getting and revealing to the king information of the conspirators, of the Dutch, and the other enemies of royalty. His was not a pleasant trade and there were undoubtedly many who, for good reasons of their own, wished him out of the way. There were many who contrasted his reward with the neglect of the unfortunate Edwards, and who railed at Blood and the king alike. Rochester allowed himself the usual liberty of rhymed epigram:

> Blood that wears treason in his face
> Villain complete in parson‘s gown
> How much is he at court in grace
> For stealing Ormond and the crown?
> Since loyalty does no man good
> Let‘s steal the King and out do Blood.

There were doubtless many more who regretted that the king had not bestowed on him a reward that was at one time contemplated, the governorship of a colony, the hotter the better. In that event America would have had some direct share in the career of England‘s most distinguished criminal. And even so it is by no means certain she would have suffered greatly in comparison with the situation of some colonies under the governors they actually had. But Blood was far too useful at home to be wasted on a distant dependency. And, on the whole, the outlaw seems to have fully justified his existence and even his pardon, as an outer sentinel along the line of guards between King Charles and his enemies. That he was so hated is perhaps, in some sort a measure of his usefulness. For the times when men in the ministry or just out of the ministry conspired or connived at conspiracy against the government and held communication with an enemy in arms to compel their sovereign to their will are not those in which a ruler will be too squeamish about his means, least of all such a ruler as Charles.

In such wise Blood lived until 1679. Then he seems to have fallen foul of the Duke of Buckingham, who had played such a great part in his career. He, with three others, was accused by the Duke of swearing falsely to a monstrous charge against his Grace and sued for the crushing sum of ten thousand pounds. A most curious circumstance brought out by this trial connects our story with the literature of to-day. In Scott‘s novel, »Peveril of the Peak«, it will be remembered that the villain is one Christian, brother of the deemster of the Isle of Man, who was executed by the Countess of Derby. This man, a most accom-plished Scoundrel, is there portrayed as the familiar Duke of Buckingham, who plays a part in the romance very like that which he played in this story of real life. With the appearance of the later editions of the novel the author, in response to many inquiries concerning the authenticity of the various characters there portrayed, added some notes in which he gave some account of the originals of many of his characters. Concerning Christian, however, he declared that he was a wholly original creation, that, so far as he knew, no such man had ever existed, and that he was purely a fictitious character. Though, strange as it may seem, one of the men indicted with Blood in this action at law, was, in fact, named Christian, and Scott knew of him. And while he may not have played the part assigned to him in the story, he had for

some time been in the service of the Duke, and to have had a reputation, if not a character, which might well have served as a model for the villain of the novel.

The motive of Buckingham in beginning this suit is obscure, but it was suspected that he thought by this means to hush up certain accusations which might have been brought against his own machinations, then scarcely to be defended in the light of day. The curious and unusual procedure and the absurdity of the charge which one might suppose it beneath the dignity of so great a nobleman to press in such fashion against such men, lends a certain colour to this suspicion. In any event the suit was tried and Blood was duly found guilty. But he was never punished. He fell sick in the summer of 1680 and, after two weeks of suffering, died August 24, in his house on the southwest corner of Bowling Alley. He was firm and undaunted to the last and looked death in the face at the end with the same courage he had exhibited many times before. All England was then in the throes of the excitement of the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Bill, and civil war seemed almost in sight. Whig and Tory stood arrayed against each other, with the crown as the prize between. It would not be supposed that the death of the old adventurer could have caused more than a passing ripple of interest. Quite the contrary was the case. Strange end of a strange story, the mystery which surrounded him during his life did not altogether end with his death and burial. Even that, said many, was but one of the old fox‘s tricks. And to prove that it was not his body which had been interred in the adjoining churchyard of New Chapel, Tothill Fields, the grave was opened after some days, the corpse carried before a coroner and identified by the curious fact that one of the thumbs was twice the natural size, a peculiarity which it seems would have betrayed Blood many times during his life.

Thus ended the troubled life of a mysterious man. If his end was not peare it certainly was not worse than his beginning. Not a few persons must have breathed easier at the final burial of the secrets which died with him. He was not without some literary remains, chief of which was a Life, which though not written by his own hand, gives evidence of having been written, either under his direction, or from material furnished by him. It contains, as perhaps its chief matter of interest outside the facts here included, not many of which adorn its pages, a story of which Blood seems to have been very proud. It is that on one occasion some of the men in his following of desperadoes proved unfaithful. He caused them to be seized and brought before him for trial in a public house. There, after the case had been set forth and the arguments made, he sentenced them to death, but later reprieved them. This, of all the good stories he might have told, is left to us as almost his sole contribution to the account of his adventures. For the rest, his memory was promptly embalmed in prose and verse, mostly libellous and wholly worthless, from any standpoint, of which the following sample may suffice whether of history or literature:

„At last our famous hero, Colonel Blood,
Seeing his projects all will do no good,
And that success was still to him denied
Fell sick with grief, broke his great heart and died.“

But there is still one curious circumstance about his family which it would be too bad not to insert here, and with which this story may fittingly conclude.

It concerns one of his sons whom we have not met, Holcroft Blood. This youth, evidently inheriting the paternal love of adventure, ran away from home at the age of twelve. He found his way, through an experience as a sailor, into the French army. After the Revolution of 1688 he became an engineer in the English service, owing chiefly to his escape from a suit brought against him by his enemies, which was intended to ruin him but by accident attracted to him instead the notice of the man with whose visit to England our story began, now William the Third of England and Holland. This became the foundation of his fortunes. In the English Service young Blood rose rapidly through the long period of wars which followed. He gained the praise of the great Marlborough, and ultimately became the principal artillery commander of the allied forces in the War of the Spanish Succession, dying, full of honors, in 1707. Meanwhile Ormond‘s grandson and heir, the second Duke, distinguished himself likewise in that same war in other quarters, and bade fair to take high rank as a commander. But on the death of Queen Anne he took the Jacobite side, was driven into exile, and died many years later, a fugitive supported by a Spanish and Papal pension. Thus did Fate equalize the two families within a generation.

I said at the beginning that this was to be the story of the greatest rascal in English history, but I am not so sure that it is, after all. It may be only the story of a brave man on the wrong side of politics and society. For his courage and ability, thrown on the other side of the scale, would, without doubt, have given him a far different place in history than the one he now occupies. What is the moral of it all? I do not know, and I am inclined to fall back on the dictum of a great man in a far different connection: „I do not think it desirable that we should always be drawing morals or seeking for edification. Of great men it may truly be said, ‹It does good only to look at them.›“

**Bibliographical Note:**

The story here told has been related elsewhere though not in such detail nor, so far as I am aware, from precisely this point of view. Apart from the accounts in encyclopedias and biographical dictionaries, of which by far the best for its day is the Biographia Brittanica, the most accessible source of information is the article on Blood in the Dictionary of National Biography and the fullest details are to be found in W. Hepworth Dixon‘s Her Majesty‘s Tower, VOL. IV, pp. 119, and in a note (No. 35) to Scott‘s Peveril of the Peak, in which novel the Colonel plays enough part to have a pen-portrait drawn of him by Scott in a speech by Buckingham.

These, of course, touch but lightly on the broader aspects of the matter. The sources for nearly all the statements made in the foregoing narrative are to be found in the Calendars of State Papers, Domestic and Ireland, 1660-1675, in the Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, especially in the Ormond Papers and in Carte‘s Life of Ormond. In 1680 was published a pamphlet entitled Remarks on the Life and Death of the Famed Mr. Blood, etc., signed R. H., which includes, besides a general running account of several of the outlaw‘s chief adventures, a curious and obscure story of the Buckingham incident from which it is practically impossible to get any satisfaction. To this is added a Postscript written some time after the body of the work and describing Blood‘s illness, death and burial. This tract appears to have been written by

some one who knew Blood, and in places seems to represent his own story. It would perhaps be too much to assume from the similarity of the initials that it was composed by that Richard Halliwell, Hallowell or Halloway, the tobacco cutter of Frying-Pan Alley, Petticoat Lane, whose name, or alias, appears among those often connected with Blood in his enterprises. Sir Gilbert Talbot's narrative of Blood's adventures, especially valuable for its full account of the attempt on the crown, is to be found in Strype's Continuation of Stowes Survey of London. Some details as to Blood's London haunts may be found in Wheatley and Cunningham's London, Past and Present. There are several portraits of Blood extant of which the one in the National Portrait Gallery, painted by Gerard Soest, is the best. This is reproduced in Cust's National Portrait Gallery, VOL. I, p. 163. Another which appeared in the Literary Magazine, for the year 1791, is evidently a copy of the one prefixed to this study. This is reproduced from a contemporary mezzotint, which is described in Smith's British Mezzotinto Portraits, (Henry Sotheran & Co., Lond., 1884), as follows:

Thomas Blood.

H. L. in oval frame directed to left facing towards and looking to front, long hair, cravat, black gown. Under: G. White Fecit. Coll Blood. Sold by S. Sympson in ye Strand near Catherine Street. H. 10; Sub. 8H; W. J l AO. D. H. 8J4; W. 7.

I. As described. II. Engraver's name and address erased, reworked, modern.

Another reproduction of the same original may be found in Lord Ronald Glower's Tower of London, VOL. II, p. 66. The daggers of Blood and Parret which were used to stab Edwards are said to be preserved in the Royal Literary Fund Society's museum, Adelphi Terrace.

The family of Blood among the earlier settlers of New England has sometimes been said to be closely connected with that of the Colonel, but there is no substantial evidence either way. (Mass. Hist. Coll.) On the other hand a tablet to the memory of Blood's cousin, Neptune, is to be found in Kilfernora Cathedral (Proc. Roy. Soc. Antiq. Irel. 1900, p. 396). A note says that he was the son and namesake of his predecessor in the Deanery and grandson of Edmond Blood of Macknay in Derbyshire who settled in Ireland about 1595 and was M. P. for Ennis in 1613. A fuller account of the plots is to be found in articles by the author of this sketch in the American Historical Review for April and July, 1909, under title of English Conspiracy and Dissent, 1660-1674.

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(1) Carte, Life of the Duke of Ormond.

(2) A famous fanatic pamphlet against the government.

(3) This spelling of the General's name has been disputed of late, such authorities as Professor Firth and Mr. KilKock preferring Monck. But the form hero used seems as good, it has much tradition and authority on its side, and the point is, after all, of no special importance.

(4) Unknown meaning.

(5) Blood's story of this exploit differs in some unimportant details, all reflecting credit on himself. He puts the number of his party at four, that of Darcy at eight. He tells how he happened on Darcy at an inn near Doncaster when almost ready to abandon the pursuit. He explains that two of Mason's party lingered behind and were put out of action by Blood and one of his companions, who then rode on to demand Mason from his guards and maintained an unequal fight with the seven men in Darcy's party for some time before reinforced by their two fellows. But Darcy's account supplemented by living's is much clearer and at least more plausible.

(6) The Somers Tracts account says that it was Edwards‘ son and a pretended daughter of Blood, but this is almost certainly incorrect.

(7) Though there is some confusion here. The cobbler who seized him exclaimed, „This is Tom Hunt who was in the bloody business against the Duke of Ormond,“ and Edwards‘ account to Talbot (Biog. Britt. II, 366) speaks of him as Blood‘s son-in-law. But his pardon was certainly made out to Thomas Blood, Jr., and there is no mention of the name Hunt. The explanation probably is that he was Thomas Hunt, Blood‘s son-in-law, but was called Blood by his father-in-law, and, like many men in that time, used either of the two names indifferently. It appears from Talbot‘s account that the cobbler and a constable who came up took Hunt to a nearby Justice of the Peace, one Smith, who was about to release him when news came of the attempt on the crown, and Hunt was then taken back to the Tower.

(8) He seems also to have been examined by Dr. Chamberlain and Sir William Waller.

(9) It was hinted that Buckingham had set Blood on to steal the crown in pursuance of some of his mad schemes for ascending the throne. And it is also charged that the King himself had employed the outlaw to get the jewels, pawn or sell them abroad and divide the proceeds. Beside such suggestions as these even Blood's letter sinks into the commonplace. At all events, as in the Ormond affair, it was and is generally believed that there were other influences at work behind his exploit.

(10) No note found.

(11) Thus Wheatley and Cunningham. John Timbs, in his Romance of London, says Blood lived first in Whitehall, then, according to tradition, in a house on the corner of Peter and Tuft Streets.