

The Third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713): His Politics and Ideas

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D.Phil., Hilary Term 1981

This thesis seeks to provide a political context for the philosophical work of the third earl of Shaftesbury. A biographical framework is adopted which details Shaftesbury's political interests, both inside and outside parliament. In attempting to trace the links between his political life and his philosophical ideas particular attention is given to Shaftesbury's debt to his tutor, Locke, as well as to the importance of his visits to the Netherlands. Shaftesbury's connections with radical whig politicians at the end of the seventeenth century are also investigated: they are an indication of his interest in practical political issues.

The main argument of the thesis is that Shaftesbury's published work is fully comprehensible only if this political context is taken into account. By concentrating solely on his importance in the history of moral or aesthetic philosophy scholars have effectively removed the political cutting-edge from Shaftesbury's work. It was precisely because Shaftesbury was aware of the political implications of his moral and aesthetic philosophy that he was such a controversial social critic in his own day.

The originality of the thesis lies in the presentation of a more complete biography of Shaftesbury than has previously been attempted. Although the Shaftesbury papers in London are the major source for the thesis, other material has been consulted, including manuscripts in the Netherlands, which gives a fuller picture of the circles in which he moved. Shaftesbury was not an important politician, but his strong political concerns need to be emphasised before his thought can be understood: politics and philosophy were continuous for him.

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ABSTRACT

The philosophy of the third earl of Shaftesbury and its influence on the subsequent history of thought has attracted the attention of numerous scholars over the past hundred years. They have drawn attention to the originality of his moral and aesthetic thought, set it against its classical and contemporary intellectual background, and discussed the ways in which it affected the work of philosophers of the Enlightenment and the early romantic period. The purpose of this thesis is to complement the work of historians of philosophy by providing a biographical account of Shaftesbury which concentrates on the way in which his published work reflected immediate personal concerns. In particular, Shaftesbury's involvement in the political life of his day is given particular prominence, as it provides a context for his thought which has been recognised in recent years, but not fully documented. The main argument of the thesis is that Shaftesbury's published philosophical work cannot properly be comprehended without reference to his political activity: he regarded politics and philosophy as continuous.

The thesis, therefore, is concerned to show Shaftesbury in a different perspective. Whereas the majority of scholars have used

Shaftesbury's published work as their primary source, the emphasis here is rather on the wealth of unpublished material in the Shaftesbury Papers, which show him to have been a man with a wide range of interests. By taking unpublished material into account a contrast may be drawn between the aloof and aristocratic author of the Characteristics, whose influence is hard to understand, and a man whose enthusiastic support for particular causes endeared him to certain people and repelled others. The Shaftesbury of the letters and notebooks is a more complex and less polished personality than the Shaftesbury of the published essays.

Hence the main problem which the thesis tries to solve has to do with his historical context; the extent to which his philosophy reflected the social and political, as well as the intellectual, concerns of his time. It is suggested in the final chapter that a fruitful way of approaching this problem may be to see Shaftesbury as a social critic, rather than an abstract philosopher, concerned to explore the relevance of the notion of sensus communis, the ability of the senses to provide knowledge, for his own day.

The method used to solve this basic problem is a combination of biography and analysis. The structure of the thesis is broadly chronological. Chapters II, III, IV, VII, and VIII provide a biography, which, although not totally comprehensive, is fuller than any previous biography of Shaftesbury. Chapters IV, V, and VI comprise the analytical core of the thesis, although they also make use of biographical material.

After a discussion of the historiography of Shaftesbury scholarship and a brief sketch of the political and intellectual background to his career, chapter I introduces the main themes of the thesis and discusses the sources used. Chapter II is concerned with Shaftesbury's early life, from his birth to his entry into parliament in 1695 as a young M.P. Attention is paid to his family background, as well as to his early grounding in philosophy and politics. The influence of his tutor, John Locke, and his work as one of the Proprietors of Carolina and the Bahamas are discussed in some detail.

Chapter III considers Shaftesbury's parliamentary career, both in the Commons from 1695 to 1699 and in the Lords from 1700 to 1702. In particular an attempt is made to make sense of his political alignment. It is argued that he came under the influence of both the Harley-Foley group of radical Country members and the more moderate 'College', of which Locke was the leading figure. By coming into contact with these two groups Shaftesbury was able to establish links on the one hand with the Commonwealthmen during the standing army controversy of 1697-9, and, on the other hand, with the Junto after 1700. But above all his independent stance as an M.P. is stressed. His primary concern was to fight for the establishment of 'virtue' in political life and to resist the growth of 'corruption'.

The death of William III in 1702 was a turning point in Shaftesbury's political career and the evidence produced in chapter VII reflects this change of mood. There was a greater concentration on

writing, and the production of a wide-ranging critique of contemporary society. However, political interests were not far from Shaftesbury's mind, although he could only influence political events indirectly. His close links with the 'Whimsical'whigs and his support for the Marlborough-Godolphin ministry are thus given prominence in the chapter. Chapter VIII discusses Shaftesbury's stay in Naples from 1711 until his death in 1713. His concern at the course of the war against France and political affairs in England is reflected in his letters to Benjamin Furly and John Molesworth. More interesting, however, was his attempt to sketch out the strong links between art and morality, culture and society, in the aesthetic works which he wrote in Naples. His ideas on this subject are discussed in some detail in the chapter, which ends with his death after a lifetime of poor health.

Chapters IV, V, and VI are primarily concerned with making use of the material presented in the biographical chapters. Chapter IV discusses Shaftesbury's electoral interest in Dorset and Wiltshire. His successful intervention in the second election of 1701 marked the zenith of his political career: he was never again to achieve similar success in an election. The evidence of his electoral activity tends to confirm the picture of Shaftesbury's political alignment suggested in chapter III, of a stubbornly independent man, whose concern was with political morality rather than the politics of party.

Chapter V, which is the most original in the thesis, consists of

a detailed discussion of Shaftesbury's relationship with the Netherlands. His life cannot be fully understood without recognising the vital part played by the people whom he met in the United Provinces in his intellectual and political development. In Rotterdam, where he stayed on three occasions, he became a member of the circle around Benjamin Furly, which included men such as Pierre Bayle, Jean Le Clerc, and Philip van Limborch. Nor was his interest in the Netherlands confined to philosophy. He was particularly concerned that English support for the Dutch should not waver during the war of the Spanish Succession, and he was in touch with those whom he termed the 'Holland Whiggs'. He distributed Harrington's Works among them and attempted to put them in touch with his political protégés in England. Chapter V investigates the various groups of politically active men with whom Shaftesbury was in contact in the Netherlands, using material from Dutch archives. This has not been attempted before.

An outline of Shaftesbury's political thought is sketched in chapter VI, which draws attention to the unsystematic nature of much of his thought. Drawing on material discussed in previous chapters, three main areas of concern in his political thought are suggested: his concern with 'corruption', his anti-French and pro-Dutch polemic, and his opposition to 'faction'. Finally, the brief concluding chapter, chapter IX, introduces the idea of Shaftesbury as a social critic and his fascination with the notion of sensus communis.

The main conclusion of the thesis is a justification of the method

adopted to investigate the historical context of Shaftesbury's thought. It is only by recognising the importance of political concerns to him that Shaftesbury's career and writing can be rooted in the life of his own time. The thesis also illustrates the importance of the political background to philosophical speculation during the early Enlightenment. Shaftesbury was one of a number of philosophers and critics actively engaged in politics who believed that their philosophy had political implications. The concern for 'liberty and letters' was widespread at the time. The cosmopolitan nature of this movement is exemplified by Shaftesbury's contacts in the Netherlands, particularly among the refugee Huguenot community, with its interest in journalism and the dissemination of ideas. Some light is also cast on the political life of Shaftesbury's day; in particular on radical whig thought at the end of the seventeenth century.

The primary sources on which the thesis is based come mainly from the Shaftesbury Papers in the Public Record Office. Family and estate papers remaining at Wimborne St. Giles have also been used. This material has been augmented by letters in the British Library and the Locke correspondence in the Bodleian Library, as well as other English archive material. Archives in Leiden, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam contain sources which have been used in chapter V.

THE THIRD EARL OF SHAFTESBURY (1671-1713):

HIS POLITICS AND IDEAS

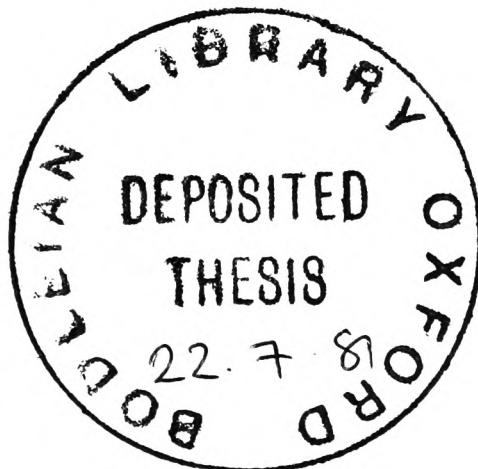
Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Oxford
(Faculty of Modern History)

Hilary Term 1981⁷⁴

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PREFACE

Most of the sources on which this thesis is based are easily accessible. However, I should like to make some specific acknowledgements. The papers at Wimborne St. Giles were consulted by kind permission of the earl of Shaftesbury: I should like to thank Lady Lettice Ashley Cooper and Mrs. Margaret Griffiths for their help in making these papers available. The writing of chapter IV was made easier by my ability to consult material held by the History of Parliament Trust: I am very grateful to Dr. Eveline Cruickshanks for her help in this respect. The background information in chapter V owes much to conversations in the Netherlands with Professor D. J. Roorda, Dr. M. van der Bijl, and Dr. E. O. C. Haitzma Mulier.

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NOTES

- A. Shaftesbury was known by three different styles during his lifetime. From 1671 to 1683 he was Anthony Ashley, from 1683 to 1699 Lord Ashley, and from 1699 until his death in 1713 earl of Shaftesbury. Throughout the text he is referred to as 'Shaftesbury'. When the name is used of his grandfather and father, the first and second earls, this is made clear in the text. References to correspondence, however, use the style appropriate to the date.
- B. As a general rule all the dates used in the text are Old Style, with the year taken as beginning on 1 January. When New Style dates occur, for example in letters written from the Continent, the distinction is made clear in the text.
- C. Many of Shaftesbury's letters are conveniently printed in RAND, which is not, however, an altogether reliable edition. All the relevant letters have been consulted in the original and quotations are usually made from the original. In these cases the page number in RAND is given in brackets for easy reference. When quotations are given from the text quoted by Rand, reference is given to the place of the letter in the Shaftesbury Papers, followed by the words, 'as cited in RAND, pp.....'.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviated forms are used:

B.I.H.R. - Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research.

C.J. - Journals of the House of Commons.

E.H.R. - English Historical Review.

FORSTER, Letters - Original Letters of Locke, Algernon Sidney and Anthony Lord Shaftesbury, edited by Thomas FORSTER, London, 1830.

H.M.C. - Historical Manuscripts Commission.

L.C. - The Correspondence of John Locke, edited by E. S. DE BEER, Oxford, 1976-.

L.J. - Journals of the House of Lords.

P.M.L.A. - Publications of the Modern Language Association of America.

RAND - The Life, Unpublished Letters and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, edited by Benjamin RAND, London, 1900.

RAND, Locke and Clarke - The Correspondence of John Locke and Edward Clarke, edited by Benjamin RAND, London, 1927.

RAND, Second Characters - Second Characters, or the Language of Forms, edited by Benjamin RAND, Cambridge, 1914.

ROBINSON - P. J. ROBINSON, 'The Third Earl of Shaftesbury and the Socialisation of Philosophy' (Edinburgh Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1978).

TOLAND - Letters from the Right Honourable the late Earl of Shaftesbury to Robert Molesworth, Esq..., edited by John TOLAND, London, 1721.

V.C.H. - Victoria County History.

WORDEN - The editor's introduction, pp. 1-80, in Edmund LUDLOW,
A Voyce from the Watch Tower, Part Five: 1660-1662, (Camden
Fourth Series, vol. 21), edited by A. B. WORDEN, London,
1978.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In his short study of Shaftesbury in Historism Friedrich Meinecke introduces a rather fanciful element at the beginning of his discussion:

Alongside English practical experience and sobriety of outlook which are such a predominant feature, there has sounded from time to time a note of refined and tender melody and lively beauty, together with a certain need for aesthetic and romantic expression, at once recognisable in the plastic arts and in lyrical poetry. The racial theorist would trace this back, with very uncertain justification, to the Celtic element in the English national inheritance. Shaftesbury was a representative of this type.¹

Such language, if not typical, is similar to that often used by writers who assert Shaftesbury's importance in the history of eighteenth century thought. Their justification for using it is not often stated very succinctly and occasionally depends on a one-sided view of his achievement. By concentrating on his limpid style and refined humour commentators have tended to ignore Shaftesbury's

1. Friedrich MEINECKE, Historism - The Rise of a New Historical Outlook, London, 1972, pp. 5-6.

political enthusiasms and unsystematic philosophy.

Critical commentary on Shaftesbury's work started during his lifetime. His publications were reviewed by Jean Le Clerc in the Bibliothèque Choisie and they were attacked in contemporary pamphlets. The Letter Concerning Enthusiasm (1708) attracted particular criticism: use of it was made by the defence counsel at Sacheverell's trial.¹ Shaftesbury's philosophy was well received on the Continent. In France Diderot and Voltaire were both, as young men, impressed by his writing. But it was in Germany that his work was best received. Lessing, Wieland, Winckelmann, Herder, and Goethe were among those German writers who reacted enthusiastically to Shaftesbury's assertion of the significance of the creative and educative power of art.²

In Britain interest in his writings was confined to the first half of the eighteenth century. Nine editions of the Characteristics appeared, from the first edition of 1711 to the Birmingham edition of 1773. The next, incomplete, edition did not come out until 1870. The latest edition appeared in 1900 and it is only in 1980 that a

1. See below, chapter VII, pp. 296-7.

2. Herder referred to Shaftesbury as the 'beloved Plato of Europe', Briefe zu Beförderung der Humanität, 1794, Letter 33. Diderot and Montesquieu made similarly extravagant claims.

scholarly edition of his work is beginning to be published.¹

This pattern is broadly repeated in the historiography of Shaftesbury scholarship. There was a flush of books on the Characteristics in the 1750s, notably 'Estimate' Brown's Essays on the Characteristics (1751), the most thorough eighteenth-century criticism of Shaftesbury, and Charles Bulkley's A Vindication of my Lord Shaftesbury (1751). By and large interest in Shaftesbury faded in Britain after 1760, with one or two exceptions, until it was revived about a hundred years later. In 1870 the first, and only, volume of Walter Hatch's edition of the Characteristics appeared, Spicker's Die Philosophie des Grafen von Shaftesbury came out in 1872, and Thomas Fowler's Shaftesbury and Hutcheson in 1882. Leslie Stephen included a large section on Shaftesbury in his History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century (1880).

From a comparatively early date the primary interest of commentators was in Shaftesbury's philosophy, and in particular his philosophical influence. For British writers the especial interest was in Shaftesbury as the forerunner of the 'moral sense' school, which moved with Francis Hutcheson, his principal disciple, into the

1. It is edited by Gerd HEMMERICH and Wolfram BENDA and will consist of fourteen volumes, including commentaries and monographs.

Scottish Enlightenment.¹ On the other hand, the assimilation of Shaftesbury's thought by German writers bore fruit in the English-speaking intellectual world when German scholarship became more widely read and revered by British scholars in the nineteenth century. Mark Pattison's essay, 'Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688-1750' in Essays and Reviews (1860), pioneered the exploration of the intellectual life of the early eighteenth century and encouraged writers like Stephen to examine it in more detail.

The deposit of the Shaftesbury Papers in the Public Record Office in 1871 served to sustain the interest in the third earl and to give it a more accurate foundation. A selection of Shaftesbury's unpublished letters and notebooks was published by the American scholar, Benjamin Rand, in 1900, and remains the primary printed source for Shaftesbury's correspondence. Robertson's two-volume edition of the Characteristics, published in the same year, is still used extensively.² Rand later published Shaftesbury's aesthetic essays in Second Characters (1914).

From an almost exclusive interest in Shaftesbury's philosophy

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1. For a recent discussion of Shaftesbury's influence on Hume see Ben MIJUSKOVIC, 'Hume and Shaftesbury on the Self', Philosophical Quarterly 21 (1971), 324-336; answered by Clive M. CORCORAN, 'Do we have a Shaftesburean self in the Treatise?', Philosophical Quarterly 23 (1973), 67-72.
 2. This edition, which is used in this thesis, was reprinted in 1963 and, with a new introduction by Stanley GREAN, in 1964.

and its influence the early years of this century saw a concern with his literary influence, particularly on the 'ethical poets' of the eighteenth century, such as Thomson and Akenside.¹ In more recent years the interest shown in Shaftesbury by literary scholars has continued, in the work of such people as A. O. Aldridge and R. L. Brett.² As one of Basil Willey's 'English Moralists', Shaftesbury has become firmly established in a line of philosophically significant writers from Bacon to Coleridge.³ It is in this context that his place as a successor to the Cambridge Platonists and a forerunner of Hutcheson has been emphasised.

On the Continent interest in Shaftesbury's philosophy continued to be confined to those who had a particular philosophical axe to grind, whether of the centrality of taste and art or Platonism.

[^] Croce in Spain and Cassirer in Germany were particularly influential, and Italian and German scholars have tended to pay more attention to

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1. C. A. MOORE, 'Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets in England, 1700-1760', Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, XXI (1916), 264-325.
 2. Among work by Aldridge see especially, 'Shaftesbury and the Deist Manifesto', Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s. 41 (1951), 297-385; R. L. BRETT, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury - a study in literary theory, London, 1951; E. TUVESON, 'The Importance of Shaftesbury', Journal of English Literary History, 20 (1953), 267-299. For a discussion of Shaftesbury and Jane Austen see Gilbert RYLE, 'Jane Austen and the Moralists', Collected Papers, London, 1971, I, 276-291.
 3. Basil WILLEY, The English Moralists, London, 1965, pp. 216-232; The Eighteenth-Century Background, Harmondsworth, 1972, pp. 60-77.

Shaftesbury than their British and American counterparts.¹

The years after the Second World War have seen a generally more critical assessment of Shaftesbury's philosophy, in line with the unfriendly climate of logical positivism and linguistic analysis - although one or two counter-attacks have been made recently.² Interest in his position as an aesthetic philosopher and artistic patron has continued unabated, again with the adoption of a more critical stance.³ Literary scholars are still concerned with his influence on eighteenth century literature, both in terms of stylistic devices - such as the dialogue - and in the pervasive theory of 'moral sense'.⁴

Although the moral and social aspects of Shaftesbury's philosophy have been included in the bulk of commentary on his work

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1. Benedetto CROCE, 'Shaftesbury in Italia', Uomini e Cose della Vecchia Italia, Bari, 1943, I, 274-311; Ernst CASSIRER, 'Shaftesbury und die Renaissance des Platonismus in England', Vorträge Bibliothek Warburg, IX (1930-1), Leipzig, 1932, pp. 136-155; The Platonic Renaissance in England, Austin, 1953, pp.159 ff.
 2. See, for example, M. J. SCOTT-TAGGART, 'Socratic Irony and Self Deceit', Ratio, 14 (1972), 1-15.
 3. Jerome STOLNITZ, 'On the Significance of Lord Shaftesbury in Modern Aesthetic Theory', Philosophical Quarterly, 11 (1961), 97-113; Felix PAKNADEL, 'Shaftesbury's Illustration of Characteristics', Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XXXVII (1974), 290-312; Richard WOODFIELD, 'The Freedom of Shaftesbury's Classicism', British Journal of Aesthetics, 15 (1975), 254-266.
 4. John BUXTON, The Grecian Taste - Literature in the Age of Neo-Classicism 1740-1820, London, 1978, pp. 28-9, 31-4, 36-8, 93; Donald DAVIE, 'Berkeley and the Style of Dialogue', in The English Mind. Studies in the English Moralists presented to Basil Willey, edited by Hugh Sykes DAVIES and George WATSON, Cambridge, 1964, pp. 98-102.

it is only during the last two decades that serious interest in his political significance has developed. Professor Holmes and Dr. Speck have made use of his observations on contemporary politics and Franco Venturi has seen him in bolder terms as the great moralist of the Commonwealth political tradition, thus giving his work a political impact emphasised in a rather different way by the German philosopher, Hans-Georg Gadamer.¹ Recent unpublished work by James Harrison, Barry Burrows and Peter Robinson has sought to investigate the political implications of the Characteristics and to extract a system of moral and political thought from the work.² A less speculative attempt to see Shaftesbury as an active politician has been briefly sketched out by Blair Worden.³

It is against this background of the reaction to Shaftesbury over

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1. See, for example, Geoffrey HOLMES and W. A. SPECK, The Divided Society: Party Conflict in England 1694-1716, London, 1967, p.145 (extensive use is made of the work of Holmes and Speck in this thesis); Franco VENTURI, Utopia and Reform in the Enlightenment, Cambridge, 1971, p.71; Hans-Georg GADAMER, Truth and Method, London, 1975, pp.24-7.
 2. J. F. HARRISON, The Moral and Political Philosophy of Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury (Durham University unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1970); B. M. BURROWS, Shaftesbury and Cosmic Toryism: An Alternative World View (University of Oklahoma unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1973); P. J. ROBINSON, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury and the Socialisation of Philosophy (Edinburgh University unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1978).
 3. Edmund LUDLOW, A Voyce From the Watch Tower, Part Five: 1660-1662, edited by A. B. WORDEN (Camden Fourth Series, 21), London, 1978, Introduction, pp. 42-6. (Cited hereafter as WORDEN).

the past two hundred and fifty years that the justification for this thesis is to be found. By and large, previous work on him has been marked by two characteristics - an interest in his philosophical or literary influence and a concentration on his published writing. This thesis concentrates rather on Shaftesbury's political interests and draws most of its material from letters and notebooks that are either unpublished or were not intended for publication. The aim is both to provide a corrective to the general trend of Shaftesbury scholarship and to attempt a more detailed investigation of Shaftesbury's politics in the light of recent interest in the subject. There is no intention of showing that Shaftesbury was a more accomplished politician than philosopher or that he should be regarded as an influential political thinker - both claims would be absurd. What is suggested is that an accurate portrait of Shaftesbury's life and thought cannot be drawn without due recognition of the importance of politics in his life and the political thrust of much of his writing, which has been largely misunderstood or ignored by previous commentators.

That Shaftesbury was particularly aware of political pressures is not really surprising. He grew up during the 1670s and 1680s, when the battle between rival political factions in England was at its height. As the favourite grandson of a leading politician, who

became Lord Chancellor in 1672, he would have been acutely aware of the family's rapidly changing fortunes during the following years. The first Shaftesbury was dismissed in 1673 for his opposition to the duke of York's marriage to Mary of Modena and thereafter became a leader of the Country opposition to the absolutist policies being worked out by Charles II and Danby. The years after this change of loyalty included his imprisonment in the Tower in 1677-8, the Popish Plot in 1678, the first Exclusion Bill of 1679, his appointment as Lord President of the Council, and his subsequent dismissal, exile and death. The discovery of the Rye House Plot in 1683, while the third earl was at Winchester, and the subsequent execution of Sidney and Russell completed the rout of the Exclusionists and marked the nadir of Whig fortunes.

Political intrigue and manoeuvring was thus in the air during the first twelve years of Shaftesbury's life and there was little indication of any prospect of the rehabilitation of his grandfather's reputation until after the Glorious Revolution. Shaftesbury's early awareness of political issues was defined in terms of family loyalty: he perceived it to be his duty to fight for the principles for which his grandfather and the Exclusionists had suffered so acutely. To this family pressure was added an acceptance of the consequences of his social status. As a young aristocrat it was natural that he should become involved in politics, at least until he succeeded to his father's

title. As a prominent local figure it would be expected of him to be involved in local politics and in the management of elections.

In this respect Shaftesbury's political activity was similar to that of many people in his position. The eldest sons of peers frequently sat in the Commons, to represent the family interests in an assembly which was growing in political significance and to prepare them for future duties in the Lords, at a time when it was expected of a peer that he should attend parliament regularly. Parliament was more than a legislative body in the late seventeenth century. In an age of slow communications it was also an important social gathering, where the most significant members of English society could meet and discuss matters of common concern. Individuals or groups requiring influence in national affairs thus found parliamentary representation to be of the utmost importance.

The central and influential place in English society which political life thus occupied was enhanced by the immediacy of the political issues facing the nation. War, first with the Dutch and then with the French, the struggle between royal prerogative and parliamentary government, and the precise relationship between crown and parliament after 1689, were concerns which affected a wide range of people. Economic trends, such as Danby's financial revolution in the 1670s and the growth of banking and the 'monied interest' in subsequent decades,

created political tensions at a time when small landowners were suffering economic hardship. Thus the position of landed property as the basis of political power and freedom became an important issue. Political theory was being formed, however hesitantly and inelegantly, by politicians, rather than by philosophers, remote in their studies. This, too, at a time when political principle was an issue which could determine individual livelihood. However pragmatic and ambitious politicians may have been, there was a strong element of principle in the debates after the Revolution.

Given the centrality of politics and the urgent discussion of political principle, it is not surprising to find that scholars and writers were involved in political life. To take only the most famous names, Newton, Boyle and Wren were all M.P.s, and Locke was in close touch with parliamentary friends, as well as sitting on the Board of Trade. It was possible, owing to shorter parliamentary sessions and the comparative lack of specialisation in intellectual life, for the member of parliament to combine his political life with a wide range of other activities. Hence the number of 'professional' politicians at the end of the seventeenth century was quite small. Most M.P.s and peers had other interests, from looking after their estates to scientific experiments; the early Fellows of the Royal Society included a number of politicians. The intellectual life of the country was,

therefore, more intricately related to political life than it is today.

Yet the relationship between politics and ideas was not confined to England. Throughout Europe similar problems were being faced and issues decided. The spectre of a dominant and absolutist Catholic France under Louis XIV haunted Protestant writers, as did the vigorous Catholicism of the Empire under Leopold I. The successes of the Counter-Reformation sharpened Protestant opinion and dealt a severe blow to the dreams of Christian unity which occupied writers like Leibniz, Molanus and Spinola. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes created a hardening of attitudes both in the political and intellectual framework of Europe. Political intolerance in England was related to the broader context of the crisis facing Europe as a whole.

Those, like Leibniz, who were convinced that a united front should be maintained against the encroachment of universal Catholic monarchy, a possibility throughout Shaftesbury's lifetime, had the advantage of a strong journalistic platform. Pierre Bayle and Jean Le Clerc, in particular, were active in publishing scholarly journals in French, by which large numbers of sympathetic people could be kept informed of the best scholarship and liberal philosophy appearing in Europe. This Huguenot publishing venture, centered on the Netherlands, has recently been given an important place in the dissemination of

liberal Protestant ideas.¹ At the same time the growth of the Dutch publishing houses increased the volume of material available to fight Catholic advances. The Dutch, in the front line of the conflict and subject to the near-paranoia which marks many aspects of seventeenth-century Dutch culture, ensured that fellow-Protestants were kept well informed of the dangers facing Europe.

Through Locke, and indirectly through his grandfather, Shaftesbury was introduced to this cosmopolitan venture at an early age and considered it to be of great significance.² The threat of absolutism and Catholicism, brought home to him by his family's predilection, was never far from his mind and he remained sympathetic to those, especially exiles, who fought for the freedom of Protestant Europe.

Both Shaftesbury and his European friends were also worried about a parallel trend in European thought: the growth of atheistic materialism. Although ambivalent in their attitudes to Cartesianism they shared a general distaste for the subversive ideas of Hobbes and Spinoza, who were made the scapegoats for much of the anti-religious

1. See, for example, Henri Basnage de Beauval en de 'Histoire des Ouvrages des Savans' 1687-1709, edited by Hans BOTS, Amsterdam, 1976. This work is one of a series on scholarly journalism in the early eighteenth century being edited by Professor Bots at the Instituut voor Intellectuele Betrekkingen tussen de Westeuropese Landen in de Zeventiende Eeuw in Nijmegen University.

2. See below, chapters II and V.

feeling current at the time as well as being regarded as having stripped away the moral basis of politics. The middle ground between religious intolerance and materialism was threatened and needed protection. This battle was as much political as philosophical.

The context of English and European politics and thought in the second half of the seventeenth century thus gave Shaftesbury ample opportunity to combine politics and philosophy, and to see the former as to some extent dependent on the latter. This is not to say that his choice was made for him; his political and philosophical awareness was conditioned by his experience and reading as much as by his background.

The structure of this thesis is relatively straightforward. Chapters II, III, VII and VIII provide a narrative biography of Shaftesbury, emphasising the relationship between his political interests and his philosophy. Chapters IV, V, VI and IX, although they also contain biographical information, are analytical chapters which attempt to make sense of the complex evidence offered in the basic narrative. Thus the thesis has a broadly chronological framework and allows detailed discussion of particular problems when they arise in the narrative. Such a structure is not ideal, but it provides greater clarity and flexibility than either a purely biographical or purely analytical approach. There needs to

be room both for the intricate detail of biography and the more imaginative pattern-making of analysis.

As far as biography is concerned this thesis offers a fuller narrative than is available elsewhere. The concentration by previous writers on the exegesis of Shaftesbury's published work has entailed a rather stunted biographical approach. However, one of the main arguments implicit in this thesis is that a more exact attention to the biographical detail can yield information about Shaftesbury's concerns and prejudices which a tidier analytical approach might ignore.

Chapter II traces Shaftesbury's early development from his birth until his election as an M.P. at the age of twenty-four. It stresses his early interest in politics and philosophy and suggests, in an argument extended into chapter III, that his friendship with John Locke was crucial to the development of both these interests. Locke, understandably, has been seen primarily as Shaftesbury's tutor and philosophical mentor. However, his activity in the political world also gave Shaftesbury first-hand experience of the political issues at stake in the 1690s.

The political side of Shaftesbury's life is the exclusive concern of chapter III, which details his parliamentary life between 1695 and 1702, the year which brought the effective end of his parliamentary

career. Shaftesbury's relationships with the various Country groupings in the House of Commons are discussed and an attempt is made to draw a coherent picture of his political allegiance during these years.

The narrative is continued in chapter VII, which traces in broad outline Shaftesbury's life between the death of William III, a turning point in his career, and his departure for Naples in 1711. These years saw the bulk of his philosophical writing and publication, and consequently his published work receives rather more prominence here than in the rest of the thesis. Nevertheless, political affairs in which he was involved are discussed and the political implications of much of his writing pointed up.

Chapter VIII brings the biography to an end with its portrait of Shaftesbury's last months in Italy. His time in Italy was remarkably productive, and, despite his poor health, he managed to cope with a considerable amount of work, particularly the preparation of the second edition of the Characteristics and the writing of the aesthetic essays, while at the same time carrying on with his voluminous correspondence. Right up to his death political concerns had a prominent place in his mind and many of his letters to English friends reflect his concern at the political state of England and Europe at the end of the War of the Spanish Succession. His relations with

local philosophers and scholars are also discussed.

Between chapters III and VII come the three main analytical chapters. Their placing allows prompt discussion of issues raised by Shaftesbury's career up to 1702 while providing essential background information for the two later biographical chapters. Chapter IV, following the discussion of Shaftesbury's parliamentary work in chapter III, concentrates on his political activity at a local level in Dorset and Wiltshire, particularly his sponsorship of candidates for local constituencies at general elections. At the same time, by going beyond 1702, it introduces political themes which are useful for the discussion of Shaftesbury's career in Anne's reign in chapter VII.

Chapter V, which probably has a claim to greater originality than the other chapters, is a discussion of the importance of the Netherlands in Shaftesbury's life, both as a place where he found intellectual companionship at crucial stages in his life, and as a paradigm of a virtuous political society battling against the absolutism of France. An attempt is made in this chapter to give some substance to the circle of Dutch politicians with whom Shaftesbury was associated and to whom he refers as the 'Commonwealth Party' and 'Holland-Whiggs'. This has not been attempted before. The possibility of tracing 'Commonwealth' ideas in Dutch political

rhetoric in the eighteenth century is also briefly discussed.

An outline of Shaftesbury's political thought, drawing on previous discussions of his political activity, is sketched in chapter VI. As elsewhere in the thesis, the unsystematic nature of Shaftesbury's thought is emphasised. It is suggested that to pay attention to three main areas of political tension in his life and thought may be more revealing of his political outlook and enthusiasms than a systematic exposition of his political ideas.

The concluding chapter, chapter IX, draws together the argument of the previous chapter and stresses the complex interaction between Shaftesbury's politics and his ideas, which reveals a rather different person from the refined and detached aristocratic writer favoured by many scholars. For Shaftesbury was a man of feeling and taste, whose overall philosophy is that of the sensus communis, the capacity of the senses to provide knowledge. Whereas the sensus communis became divested of its strong moral and political implications when introduced into German philosophy in the second half of the eighteenth century, these implications have been stressed in Shaftesbury's thought by concentration on his political career and his unpublished writings. Shaftesbury's thought is thus given back the strong civic flavour which it possessed when it was written and which it was intended to have. By concentration on his originality in aesthetic philosophy

and his advocacy of the 'moral sense' commentators since Shaftesbury's death have effectively emasculated his thought. The strong relationship between philosophy and politics in the early Enlightenment needs to be re-emphasised.

The bulk of the primary sources on which this thesis is based come from the numerous Shaftesbury Papers in the Public Record Office. This deposit contains material from dockets and estate papers to letters, notebooks, and published editions of Shaftesbury's work. Material from this collection has been published from time to time, notably in Benjamin Rand's two volumes, but the many hundreds of items relating to the third earl will continue to be a rich mine of information, particularly while the papers are sparsely catalogued. Estate and family papers which are kept at Wimborne St. Giles, the Shaftesbury family seat, have also been consulted.

Despite their volume the Shaftesbury Papers are not sufficient in themselves to give an accurate account of Shaftesbury's life and interests. Other sources have therefore been tapped. In London, letters in the Additional Manuscripts at the British Library, from the Halifax, Toland and Desmaizeaux Papers have provided evidence of Shaftesbury's literary and political friendships. Similarly the Lovelace Collection of Locke Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library includes letters from Shaftesbury to Locke, as well as letters to

and from Locke which relate to Shaftesbury. Several volumes of the Historical Manuscripts Commission have provided similar material, and letters from the Stanhope Papers in the Kent Archives Office have also been used.

When official papers have been referred to, it is usually in their published form. The Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies provides evidence of Shaftesbury's work as a Lord Proprietor of Carolina and the Bahamas in the 1680s and 1690s. The Journal of the House of Commons and Journal of the House of Lords have been used extensively in chapter III to detail his parliamentary attendance and to suggest possible parliamentary allegiances. Consular reports from Naples in the State Papers Foreign have been used in chapter VIII.

The other major group of primary sources is the collection of manuscripts located in the Netherlands. The manuscripts of the Remonstrant Church in the university library at Amsterdam and the Marchand Papers at the university library at Leiden both provide evidence of the international and cosmopolitan nature of the free-thinking groups with which Shaftesbury was associated. Notarial records in the Gemeente Archiefdienst in Rotterdam help to give some substance to the group of Dutchmen with which Shaftesbury was in contact there.

It is quite possible that relevant material exists elsewhere, but it has not yielded to persistent enquiry. In particular, it is regrettable that there appears to be no manuscript evidence surviving in Naples of Shaftesbury's stay there. As a consequence chapter VIII depends primarily on the Shaftesbury Papers and on printed material. There are also gaps in the Shaftesbury Papers which cannot be filled: the years 1690-1695 are particularly sparse. However, the available material is sufficient for a serious examination of Shaftesbury as politician and philosopher to be attempted.

CHAPTER II

SHAFTESBURY'S EARLY CAREER

1671-1695

Anthony Ashley Cooper, third earl of Shaftesbury, was born on 26 February 1671 at Exeter House in the Strand, and baptized on 7 March at St. Clement Danes.¹ He was the first child of Anthony Ashley, who became the second earl in 1683, and Lady Dorothy Manners, a daughter of the eighth earl of Rutland. His father was a weak and undistinguished man, savagely lampooned by Dryden in Absalom and Achitophel as,

.... that unfeathered two-legged thing, a son,
Got, while his soul did huddled notions try,
And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.²

The guardianship of the young child was assumed by Lord Ashley, the notorious Achitophel of Dryden's satire, in March 1674.³ Ashley had been created earl of Shaftesbury in 1672. The explanation is usually given that the first Shaftesbury, disappointed by his son's physical weakness and intellectual inadequacy, regarded his grandson with special affection and determined that he should be given the best

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/1, Copy of the entry of the birth and baptism of Anthony Ashley, February-March 1670-1.
 2. John DRYDEN, Absalom and Achitophel, 1681, lines 170-2, in The Poems of John Dryden, edited by James KINGSLEY, Oxford, 1958, I, 221.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/2, 'My son's settlement of the guardianship of my grandson', 19 March 1673-4. The first earl moved from Exeter House to Thanet House in 1676.

possible start to his life.¹

One of the earliest influences on Shaftesbury was John Locke, the medical adviser to the Shaftesbury household, who had been present at his birth.² Locke was with the infant constantly during the first few months of his life and was left in sole charge of the 'hopeful heir' in the early summer, when the mother and father visited Belvoir and Lady Ashley was also away.³ In June 1676 Thomas Stringer, a faithful servant of the family, wrote to Locke, who had left for France in November 1675, 'My Lord Ashley and his family are goeing from St. Giles only Mr. Anthony is to remane with his Grandfather by agreement & to be educated by him.'⁴ Locke returned to England in 1679 to superintend the boy's education and that of his brothers, John, born in 1673, and Maurice, born in 1675.

By far the greatest part of our knowledge of Locke's opinions on education is contained in his book, Some Thoughts Concerning

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1. For the first earl's devotion to his grandson see, for example, W. D. CHRISTIE, The First Earl of Shaftesbury, London, 1871, II, 361, 450-1, 461.
 2. K. DEWHURST, John Locke (1632-1704) Physician and Philosopher: A Medical Biography, London, 1963, p. 43.
 3. M. CRANSTON, John Locke: A Biography, London, 1957, pp. 139-40. See also CHRISTIE, op. cit., II, 38-40. There are two letters from the countess of Rutland, Shaftesbury's maternal grandmother, to Locke at P.R.O. 30/24/47/11 and P.R.O. 30/24/4/210, containing references to the young child. They are printed in The Correspondence of John Locke, edited by E. S. DE BEER, Oxford, 1976-, I, 350-1, 351-2. This edition will be abbreviated hereafter to L.C.
 4. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Locke c 19, fols 124-5, Stringer to Locke, 5 June 1676. (L.C. I, 447-8).

Education.¹ The book is based on a series of letters written by Locke to Edward Clarke, a Somerset friend and M.P., between 1684 and 1689, after his experience as tutor to the Shaftesbury children. Locke wrote the majority of the letters from the Netherlands, where he had been living since the death of his patron, the first earl, in exile in 1683. The correspondence with Clarke, of which the letters on education form a part, was published by Benjamin Rand in 1927.² The third earl received a presentation copy of both the first edition of Education, which was published in 1693, and the third edition, which appeared two years later.³

In a letter to Jean Le Clerc, written after Locke's death, Shaftesbury referred to Locke's position as his tutor:

Of Her [Lady Dorothy Manners], I, and six more of us, Brothers & Sisters, were born; in whose Education M^r Lock govern'd, according to his own Principles (since published by him) and with such success, that we all of us came to full years, with strong and healthy Constitutions: my own the worst; tho' never faulty till of late. I was his more peculiar Charge: being as eldest son, taken by my Grandfather, and bred under his immediate Care: M^r Lock having the absolute Direction of my Education, and to whome next my immediate Parents as I must own the greatest Oblig-

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1. Some Thoughts Concerning Education forms the greater part of The Educational Writings of John Locke, edited by J. L. AXTELL, Cambridge, 1968.
 2. The Correspondence of John Locke and Edward Clarke, edited by Benjamin RAND, London, 1927. (Hereafter abbreviated to RAND, Locke and Clarke). It should be noted that this edition, like much of Rand's editorial work, is wayward and inaccurate. See particularly Dr. De Beer's strictures in L.C., I, xlviiii-xlix.
 3. AXTELL, op. cit., pp. 14-15. See also RAND, Locke and Clarke, p. 361, Locke to Clarke, Oates, 28 November 1692. (L.C. IV, 587-8.)

ation, so I have ever preserved the highest Gratitude
& Duty.¹

Although it is clear from this account that Shaftesbury's education was committed to Locke it is only through circumstantial evidence that the nature of this education can be clarified. It should be stressed that for much of the time Locke's position was supervisory - the daily instruction of the Shaftesbury children was usually left to others. Between November 1675 and May 1679, for example, Locke was in France and Italy and he went to the Netherlands in 1683, where he remained until after the Glorious Revolution.² However, it seems likely that much of the material which Locke used in his letters to Clarke and later in the Education was written as a result of his experience as Shaftesbury's tutor. In particular it is probable that the three major principles of Locke's educational theory were present in Shaftesbury's education.

The first of these was the insistence upon the early formation of firm habits of mind and body based upon sound principles in the child's early years. Locke was convinced that formation of character depended on an early introduction to right habits - such as truthfulness - good parental example to prevent the child from being spoiled, and close attention to the different temperaments and patterns of development of the children under his care.³ As a result of this

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1. Amsterdam, University Library, MSS of the Remonstrant Church (MSS R.K.), J 20, Shaftesbury to Le Clerc, 8 February 1705. (RAND, pp. 328-334).
 2. CRANSTON, op. cit., chapter XIII and pp. 230, 311.
 3. AXTELL, op. cit., pp. 52, 55-6.

belief the second principle was the disapproval of forced learning and corporal punishment.¹ As Locke wrote in the Education:

Such a sort of Slavish Discipline makes a Slavish Temper. The Child submits and dissembles Obedience, whilst the Fear of the Rod hangs over him; but when that is removed, and by being out of sight, he can promise himself Impunity, he gives the greater scope to his natural Inclination; which by this way is not at all altered, but on the contrary heightened and increased in him; and after much restraint, breaks out usually with more violence.²

Corporal punishment also 'breeds an Aversion to that which 'tis the Tutor's business to create a liking to.'³ It would, in any case, have done little good to a child of Shaftesbury's delicate health.

Locke's third educational principle was the learning of Latin and French by conversational methods, rather than rules of grammar.⁴ It appears that Shaftesbury also learned Greek conversationally. He lived for a while with his brothers in a house in Clapham, where he was visited by Locke.⁵ The boys were given daily tuition by Elizabeth Birch, the daughter of an ejected clergyman, who was

1. AXTELL, op. cit., p. 56.

2. Ibid., p. 150, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, para. 50

3. Ibid., p. 149, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, para. 49

4. Ibid., pp. 323-4, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, paras 213-4.

5. RAND, p. xix.

chosen by Locke for her conversational skill in foreign languages.¹ Under her supervision Shaftesbury was introduced to classical authors at an early age and developed a marked facility for reading and writing both Latin and Greek.² In later years he is said to have kept by himself at all times Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and Xenophon's Memorabilia.

In 1682 the brothers were sent to a private school where they remained until their grandfather's death the following year.³ In November 1683 Shaftesbury entered Winchester College as a gentleman commoner and spent three unhappy years there.⁴ He was taunted by his schoolfellows, who held no high opinion of his grandfather's reputation, and was appalled by the prevalence of drunkenness and corruption in the school, encompassing both staff and pupils.⁵ Between 1686 and

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1. RAND, p. xix. Samuel Birch was formerly Vicar of Bampton. He was tutor to a number of the Harley children, including Robert Harley. It is probable that the Harleys and Shaftesburys were acquainted at this time. A. G. MATTHEWS, Calamy Revised....., Oxford, 1934, pp. 56-7.
 2. RAND, p.xix.
 3. Ibid., p. xix.
 4. C. W. HOLGATE, Winchester Long Rolls 1653-1721, Winchester, 1899, pp. 43, 50.
 5. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, ff. 101-5, Ashley to second earl, July 1689. (RAND, pp. 280-5).

1689, in accordance with Lockean educational principles, Shaftesbury travelled on the Continent with Sir John Cropley, who became his closest friend, and Thomas Sclater Bacon, under the tutorship of a Scottish physician, Daniel Denoune.¹ It is likely that Locke was responsible for choosing Denoune as a tutor for the young men but there are no surviving reports from Denoune to Locke of his charges' progress. At any rate the Scot appears to have fulfilled his duties satisfactorily, as he was appointed Maurice Ashley's tutor at Leiden shortly afterwards.²

Shaftesbury's grand tour was comparatively straightforward. His party visited France, Austria, Bohemia, a number of German states, Italy, and the Netherlands, in the course of nearly two years. A number of his letters from Europe to his father and Locke survive, giving a

1. Sir John Cropley (1663-1713), matriculated from Clare College, Cambridge at Easter 1678. He succeeded his grandfather as baronet in 1676 and was M.P. for Shaftesbury 1701-10. Alumni Cantabrigienses, edited by John VENN and J. A. VENN, Cambridge, 1922, Pt I vol. 1, p. 424.

Thomas Sclater Bacon (1665?-1736), matriculated from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1682. He assumed the name Bacon on inheriting the estates of his great-uncle in 1684. M.P. for Bodmin, 1713-5; Cambridge, 1715 and 1722-36. Alumni Cantabrigienses, I, iv, p. 89.

Daniel Denoune^{graduated}/M.D. at Utrecht, 27 June 1684, with a thesis 'de phthisi'. He was possibly the father of Dr. George Denoune of Haddington. R. W. INNES SMITH, English-Speaking Students of Medicine at the University of Leyden, Edinburgh and London, 1932, p. 66.

2. MS Locke c 7, ff. 102-3, Ashley to Locke, Richmond, 7 July (1692), RAND; p. 292. (L.C., IV, 474-6).

brief account of his impressions of other countries. His antipathy to the French, a recurring theme in his thought, is apparent at an early stage: 'I find I can conform better to their diet here than their Manners.'¹ He was pleased that his party did not have to return to England through France. He was impressed with Vienna and Berlin, thought Dresden 'one of y^e Prettyest towns I ever saw', and was well received by the elector of Brandenburg, Frederick III.²

It was probably in Brandenburg that Shaftesbury first met the elector's wife, Sophie Charlotte, and possibly accompanied her to The Hague. Sophie Charlotte was the daughter of the electress of Hanover, Sophia, who, after the passing of the Act of Settlement in 1701, became heir-apparent to the English throne. In 1684 Sophie Charlotte married the Elector Frederick III of Brandenburg-Prussia, who became King Frederick I of Prussia in 1701. In 1703 the queen of Prussia wrote to Johann Caspar von Bothmer, the Hanoverian minister in England, recalling her meeting with Shaftesbury.

Je crois que l'on ne peut pas dire la même chose de ceux que vous voyez à la Haye. Du moins Mylord Shaftesbury était très joli garçon.³

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1. MS Locke c 7, ff. 81-2, Ashley to Locke, Paris, 1 December (1687) N.S.; (RAND, p. 273) (L.C., III, 303-4).
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/21/229, ff. 302-5, Ashley to second earl of Shaftesbury, Hamburg 3 May (1689) O.S.; (RAND, pp. 275-80.)
 3. Briefe der Königin Sophie Charlotte von Preussen, edited by R. DOBNER, Leipzig, 1905, p. 35, Sophie Charlotte to Bothmer, 4 September 1703.

It is evident that both Sophie Charlotte and her mother thought highly of Shaftesbury. In 1704 he received an invitation to visit the Hanoverian court, which he had to decline. The electress was also an interested reader of the Characteristics.¹ It would be interesting to know whether Shaftesbury met Leibniz on his early tour and whether he came in contact with the Pietism of Philipp Spener, who had moved to Dresden as court preacher in 1686 and was shortly to benefit from the patronage of Frederick I. At any rate, Shaftesbury's suspicion of Catholicism was given early expression after his visit to Prague, when he wrote:

I need not describe y^r Ld^p how
miserable y^e People are, after I
tell you y^e number of Jesuits
y^t are amongst 'em: in Prague
they reckon above 2 thousand.²

The only evidence of Shaftesbury's visit to Italy is provided by his son, who, in his draft life of his father, wrote that Shaftesbury spent most of his time there learning about the arts, especially sculpture and painting. The tour also gave him an opportunity to improve his linguistic ability.³

It was at the end of his Continental tour that Shaftesbury first visited the Netherlands. The Netherlands and the people he met there provided him throughout his life with a sympathetic environment for

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 282, Shaftesbury to Gwinn, Rotterdam, 19 April 1704 N.S. (RAND, pp. 322-3). See below, chapter VIII, p. 327

2. P.R.O. 30/24/21/229, ff. 302-5, Ashley to second earl of Shaftesbury, Hamburg, 3 May (1689) O.S. (RAND, p. 278).

3. RAND, pp. xix-xx.

his philosophical studies and a powerful intellectual stimulus. He was to make prolonged visits to the Netherlands after his retirement from the House of Commons in 1698 and his withdrawal from active political life in 1703. The importance of the country in Shaftesbury's life will be discussed in a later chapter but mention should be made here of the man who was Shaftesbury's greatest friend in the Netherlands and through whom he was introduced to many of the Dutchmen and exiles who were to be of such great importance to him.¹

At the centre of the group of literary and scientific men which Locke cultivated during his stay in the Netherlands between 1683 and 1689 was Benjamin Furly, the remarkable Quaker merchant and bibliophile.² Locke stayed at Furly's house on the Scheepmakershaven in Rotterdam as a paying guest between 1687 and his return to England. Shaftesbury probably met the merchant while visiting Locke in 1689: he became very friendly with Furly and it was to his house that Shaftesbury returned on his subsequent visits to the Republic.

Furly was the son of a mayor of Colchester and had left England for the United Provinces in 1658 to learn his trade as a merchant. He proved a very successful businessman and settled in Rotterdam, where he became a much respected Quaker leader - he accompanied

1. See below, chapter V.

2. W. I. HULL, Benjamin Furly and Quakerism in Rotterdam, Pennsylvania, 1941.

George Fox on his tour of Germany in 1677 and was a close friend of William Penn.

As a young man, on his arrival in the Netherlands, he had been a zealous member of his sect and a polemicist for orthodoxy. As he grew older, however, Furly's sectarian enthusiasm waned and he adopted advanced ideas of religious toleration and political radicalism. He acted as host to a large number of liberal Protestant scholars and writers who were particularly active throughout Europe at the time, from the industrious Pierre Bayle to the more romantic figure of Francis Mercury van Helmont. His political friends included Algernon Sidney. The tolerant environment of the Republic attracted such men; some stayed for short periods, others spent the rest of their lives in the country.

Furly was also an enthusiastic book collector. His library contained over 4,500 printed books and manuscripts, including the original manuscript of the Liber Sententiarum Inquisitionis Tholosanae, an official Catholic record of the activities of the Holy Office at Toulouse in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The library was auctioned in 1714, after Furly's death. The catalogue reveals a remarkable collection of books, including a particularly comprehensive collection of contemporary theology, among which Socinian works are prominent. The catalogue includes books donated by Shaftesbury.¹

1. Bibliotheca Furliana, sive catalogus librorum Honoratiss. & Doctiss. Viri BENJAMIN FURLY....., Rotterdam, 1714, p. 189, no. 74 (Toland's 1700 edition of Harrington's Works) and p. 313, no. 323 (First edition of the Characteristics).

There is further evidence from Shaftesbury's first visit to the Netherlands which is pertinent to a discussion of his early intellectual development. He had started to criticize Locke's ideas. In the summer of 1689 he wrote a long letter to Locke vigorously defending the existence of innate ideas against Locke's theory of the absolute importance of sense-experience in the development of human consciousness, contained in the Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Peter Robinson, a recent commentator on Shaftesbury's philosophy, has called the letter 'a paper on the materiality of thought', and although it is difficult to say whether Shaftesbury fully understood the implication of Locke's suggestions, his reaction is interesting.¹ It is an indication of his early sympathy with a rather conservative philosophical attitude, reacting unfavourably to a strand of thought which he saw as running from Democritus and the Atomists to Hobbes and Locke. Shaftesbury had little respect for the two major influences on Locke's own thought, Descartes and the empiricism of Bacon and the Royal Society virtuosi. He also had a much greater interest in the attainment of moral improvement than the pursuit of knowledge. In this respect an important clue to Shaftesbury's philosophy is contained in the middle section of his letter to Locke:

1. Peter ROBINSON, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury and the Socialisation of Philosophy (Edinburgh University Ph.D thesis, 1978), p. 59. (Cited hereafter as ROBINSON).

I define thought as a Name given, not to y^e Power whereby animated boddyes are prepared and render^d capable of receiving y^e impressions of Ideas (for that nature alone is to give an account of & how matter in some boddyes is animated & in others not) but to y^e Action; y^e Evident Workings of Exteriour objects by Ideas on sensible creatures, who receive them either by y^e immediate and sensible applications of y^e senses; or more remotely and indirectly from y^e impressions they have left.¹

It is unlikely that Shaftesbury's letter caused Locke to change his mind about anything in the Essay but the pupil continued to criticise his master on philosophical matters. In a series of letters written to Michael Ainsworth between 1707 and 1709, published in 1716 as Several Letters written by a Noble Lord to a Young Man at the University, Shaftesbury both acknowledged his debt to Locke as a teacher and indicated the main area of his disagreement with the philosopher. He admitted that,

No one has done more towards the recalling of philosophy from barbarity, into use and practice of the world, and into the company of the better and politer sort; who might well be ashamed of it in other dress. No one has opened a better or clearer way to reasoning.²

1. MS Locke c 7, ff. 85-6, Ashley to Locke, (August 1689). (L.C., III, 666-71.

2. Several Letters written by a Noble Lord to a Young Man at the University, London, 1716, p. 4. Letter I, 24 February 1706-7. Ainsworth, the son of a servant on the estate at Wimborne St. Giles, was sponsored by Shaftesbury at University College, Oxford. After coming down from Oxford, Ainsworth was ordained by Bishop Burnet of Salisbury.

However, he also saw Locke falling into a trap set by Hobbes:

'Twas Mr. Locke, that struck the home Blow:
for Mr. Hobbes's Character and base slavish
Principles in Government took off the Poyson
of his Philosophy. 'Twas Mr. Locke that
struck at all Fundamentals, threw all Order
and Virtue out of the World, and made the
very Ideas of these (which are the same as
those of God) unnatural, and without Found-
ation in our Minds. Innate is a Word he poorly
plays upon: The right Word, tho' less used,
is connatural. For what has Birth or Progress
of the Foetus out of the Womb to do in this
Case? The Question is not about the Time
the Ideas enter'd, or the Moment that one Body
came out of the other: But whether the Con-
stitution of Man be such, that being adult
and grown up, at such or such a Time that
sooner or later (no matter when) the Idea and
Sense of Order, Administration, and a God
will not infallibly, inevitably, necessarily
spring up in him.¹

Shaftesbury had enough regard for Locke not to attack him by
name in his published work, although there are passages in the
Characteristics which can be seen as attacks on Locke's philosophy.
For example, in the Soliloquy (1710), Shaftesbury attacked the use
made of travel literature by Locke and other writers in their defence
of the relative nature of moral judgments:

But so far are our modern moralists from
condemning any unnatural vices or corrupt
manners, whether in our own or foreign climates,
that they would have vice itself appear as
natural as virtue, and from the worst examples
would represent to us 'that all actions are
naturally indifferent; that they have no note
of character of good or ill in themselves; but
are distinguished by mere fashion, law, or

1. Ibid., p. 39, Letter VIII, 3 June 1709.

arbitrary degree.' Wonderful philosophy! raised from the dregs of an illiterate mankind, which was ever despised among the great ancients and rejected by all men of action and sound erudition; but in these ages imperfectly copied from the original, and, with such disadvantage, imitated and assumed in common both by devout and indevout attempters in the moral kind.¹

Shaftesbury thus showed himself to be opposed to the general thrust of Locke's philosophy: that the human mind is a tabula rasa, that all our ideas come from experience, and that pure reality cannot be grasped by the human consciousness. He opposed these doctrines both because he believed them to be false and because he considered them to have subversive social implications. Shaftesbury was concerned to use philosophy as a means to lead the population, or that part of it which was educated, to correct moral thinking and freedom from faction and religious superstition. He therefore approached philosophy in a different way from Locke: although exceptionally well read and highly intelligent Shaftesbury was not a scholar and was very scornful about the academic study of philosophy. Consequently, he was not particularly concerned to discuss the philosophical ideas against which he was reacting, systematically or in any great detail. In a letter to Stanhope he explained his public reticence towards Locke:

Thus I have ventured to make You the greatest Confidence in the World, which is that of my Philosophy, even against my old Tutor and

1. Characteristics, I, 227; see also I, 63, 73.

Governour, whose Name is so establishd in the
World, but with whom I ever conceald my
Differences as much as possible.¹

Shaftesbury's public silence about Locke is not to be taken to imply assent to his ideas but is rather an indication of his personal feelings towards his old tutor.

Locke played a significant part in the development of Shaftesbury's political awareness, both before and after his election as an M.P. in 1695. Locke's parliamentary influence on Shaftesbury will be discussed in the next chapter but Shaftesbury's political interests did not come into being with his election to parliament.² He had grown up in his grandfather's household and throughout his life he strove to vindicate the first earl's reputation in the face of attacks from those who regarded the exclusionists with the deepest suspicion. He was at Winchester when the Rye House Plot was discovered, which cannot have eased his position among his contemporaries. Whether Shaftesbury met any of his grandfather's more notorious political associates is uncertain but a number of the first earl's household, including those who had suffered imprisonment for their association with him, remained faithful friends and servants of the Shaftesbury household into the next century. They included Thomas Stringer, steward to the first

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, f. 491v, Shaftesbury to Stanhope, 7 November 1709; (RAND, p. 416).

2. See below, chapter III, pp. 59-64.

Shaftesbury, at whose house Shaftesbury spent a good deal of time between 1690 and 1695, and Bennet, Secretary for Defendants in the Lord Chancellor's household and M.P. for Shaftesbury.¹ Locke, who was a close adviser to the first earl in political matters, certainly met many of the exclusionists and was driven into exile by their failure.²

Both Shaftesbury and Locke were interested in Carolina. Locke was one of those responsible for the Fundamental Constitutions in 1669 and contributed valuable service as secretary to the Proprietors between 1671 and 1675.³ Shaftesbury was a Lord Proprietor of Carolina and the Bahamas from 1688 to 1699, when his place was taken by his brother, Maurice Ashley.⁴ The post entailed visiting London two or three times a year for meetings of the Proprietors, who attempted to regulate the government and expansion of their troublesome colonies.

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1. K. H. D. HALEY, The First Earl of Shaftesbury, Oxford, 1968, pp. 207, 308.
 2. CRANSTON, op. cit., pp. 229-30.
 3. Peter LASLETT, 'John Locke, the great recoinage, and the origins of the Board of Trade', in John Locke: Problems and Perspectives, edited by John W. YOLTON, Cambridge, 1969, p. 143.
 4. Cal. S. P. Colonial. America and West Indies, vol. 12, 571, vol. 13, 179, vol. 17, 75. Shaftesbury first signed a document on 12 November 1689, although he is mentioned in the proceedings on 16 July 1688. His last signature appears on 29 November 1696. Maurice Ashley first signed a document on 23 February 1699. For a discussion of the history of Carolina at this time see Charles M. ANDREWS, The Colonial Period of American History, New Haven, 1937, III, chapters V and VI. Andrews describes Shaftesbury as 'indifferent' to American affairs on p. 223.

Their efforts had little success but the experience of colonial government and trade, which Shaftesbury took very seriously, was an invaluable introduction to the practical problems of politics as well as an interesting exercise in the attempt to establish the structure for a new political community.

Although Locke probably discussed colonial affairs with his pupil the two men did not always agree. In November 1696, for example, Locke and Shaftesbury were on opposing sides during a dispute about the status of colonial attorneys-general. Locke was one of the Commissioners for Trade who reported on the matter, basing their findings on information supplied by the Surveyor General of Customs, Edward Randolph. Randolph had made a comprehensive tour of all the American colonies in 1695 and reported that the whole system of colonial administration was disintegrating, making reform imperative. On 7 September 1695 the Commissioners for Trade addressed a memorandum to the Lord Justices urging the appointment of an attorney-general in every colony and naming Randolph as the referee of every candidate. By this means Locke, who had befriended Randolph, managed to get all his candidates chosen.¹ Shaftesbury was among the Proprietors and Agents of various colonies who, alarmed at what they saw as interference in their private concerns, petitioned the king in Council for

1. CRANSTON, op. cit., p. 400; ANDREWS, op. cit., III, 225.

permission to see and reply to the report. Among the other signatories was William Penn, who may have met Shaftesbury on this occasion.¹ The incident was a symptom of the growing friction between the new Board of Trade and the Proprietors of individual colonies.

Shaftesbury's tenure of the proprietorship is one of the few details we have of his activity between the end of his grand tour and his election to parliament. There has been an assumption among Shaftesbury scholars that these five years were devoted to study and that the foundation of his philosophy was laid during his early twenties.² There is little evidence either to support or refute this assumption. Shaftesbury's edition of Whichcote's Sermons came out in 1698 and the Inquiry in 1699. It is unlikely that all the work on them would have been concentrated in the busy years after 1695. We have seen that Shaftesbury was developing his philosophical interests in his late teens, as the letter to Locke in 1689 suggests, and it would be natural for him to have continued his reading and thinking along these lines.

On the other hand it would be wrong to assume that Shaftesbury deliberately chose to spend a few years in concentrated study to make up, as it were, for the lack of a university education. Such an assumption obscures the other pressures to which Shaftesbury was

1. Cal. S. P. Colonial, America and West Indies, vol. 15, p. 192, no. 365 I (5 November 1696).

2. See, for example, R. L. BRETT, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury. A Study in Literary Theory, London, 1951, p. 38; ROBINSON, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

subjected at the time. He was concerned with his work as a colonial Proprietor, he was working out his political ideas, and, which was the most demanding, he was forced to assume the burden of coping with family affairs, owing to his father's inability to deal with them.

His work as a Proprietor of Carolina and the Bahamas gave Shaftesbury the opportunity to articulate his political ideas in a context isolated from the immediate pressures of English political life after the Revolution. Not that the two were entirely divorced. He had received an invitation to stand for parliament at the beginning of 1690, in Weymouth, which he had turned down.¹ Although he felt that his involvement with the affairs of Carolina and family problems, as well as his youth (he was still a minor), would not let him make the best use of a parliamentary career, he recognised that it was his duty to represent the family's interests in parliament before long. In a long letter to Andrew Percival, an official of the Carolina proprietors, written in May 1691, Shaftesbury made it clear that he thought it his duty to take part in the government of England:

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, f. 13, Ashley to Sir J— M—, 14 February 1689-90; ff. 14-15, Ashley to Mr. Taylor of Weymouth, 14 February 1689-90. Sir J— M— was probably the veteran lawyer Sir John Maynard (1602-90), who sat in the Convention for Plymouth and was appointed a Commissioner of the Great Seal.

And were it not from an unmoveable Principle of Duty in my minde I should not be now doeing what I am & bee formally concernd with the Governing Part of y^e world w^{ch} (as y^e Spirrit of it now is) is the Thing in Itt y^t my nature most strives to be exempt from and y^t nothing but y^e uttmost Compulse of Duty and Necessity can drive me too.¹

In the same letter Shaftesbury gave hints of the way in which his political sympathies were moving. He promised his support for a government in Carolina,

as may best secure to every man his Naturall Rights. His Property His Enjoyment of y^e lawfull ffruits of his own Labour & Industry, and his ffreedom from Injury and violence.²

He also expressed approval of the newly-established Commission of Accounts, of which his fellow proprietor Sir Peter Colleton was a member. The Commission has been recognised as an early manifestation of Country opposition to the Court.³

Towards the end of his letter to Percival Shaftesbury extolled the 'Path of Strait Justice and Morallity' as a guide to good government unsullied by faction.⁴ Thus two principal strands of his

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, f. 113v, Ashley to Percival, May 1691. Andrew Percival, a kinsman of the Shaftesburys, was trading agent at Edisto. (ANDREWS, op. cit., p. 200n).
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, f. 114v.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, f. 121v; J. A. DOWNIE, 'The Commission of Public Accounts and the formation of the Country Party', E. H. R., XCI (1976), 33-51. (Colleton's diary in the British Library was an important source for this article).
 4. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, f. 122r.

political thought were given a firm affirmation: the moral basis of political life and a rhetoric of natural rights and the importance of property, which places him in a similar ideological position as other Country supporters, suspicious of ministerial influence and interference in the affairs of the individual property-owner. This broad political position tallies with evidence that Shaftesbury felt divided between whig and tory politics in the early 1690s and that it was not until the beginning of 1695 that he came down firmly on the whig side.¹

As a reluctant but dutiful politician Shaftesbury thought seriously about his political principles at an early age, aware that his family's political reputation depended on his efforts. The elder of his two brothers, John, died in Barbados in 1692² and the younger, Maurice, was completing his education and was too young to consider a political career. The second earl was physically weak and something of a dullard, an incompetent administrator and certainly not the kind of man to make an impression on national political life. Indeed, perhaps the most pressing of Shaftesbury's commitments after his return from Europe was the need to put some order into the family's affairs, which had fallen into a parlous state. In fact the family was divided. There

1. See below, chapter III, p. 65.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/45, f. 22, Certificate of burial of the Hon. John Ashley, 11 June 1692.

was a legal battle over the payment of the first earl's debts, the issue being whether they should be paid from his personal estates, which had passed to the dowager countess, or whether they should be charged against his entailed real estate, owned by the second earl.¹ Stringer, the first earl's steward, was instrumental in fighting the battle against the second earl. Shaftesbury himself was thus in an unfortunate position. As the ward of the first earl he found himself on the opposite side to his father in the dispute. It is significant that, on his return to England in 1689, Shaftesbury spent much of his time with the Stringers at Ivey Church, rather than staying at the nearby St. Giles's House.² The dispute dragged on through the 1690s and Shaftesbury was forced to sell Cranborne Chase in order to pay off some of his grandfather's debts, which it was decided should be the responsibility of the family, rather than the dowager countess.³

The impact of such a family division on Shaftesbury was exacerbated by the separation of his parents and the subsequent awkwardness. Lady Shaftesbury spent much of her time at the Rutland family seats of Belvoir Castle and Haddon Hall. The cause of the separation is not certain. There appears to have been some pressure from the countess's family, possibly a reflection of disappointment at the

1. Wimborne St. Giles, St. Giles's House, muniment room, estate papers.

2. MS Locke c 7, ff. 87-8, 89-90, Ashley to Locke, Ivey Church, 11 October and 15 November 1689. (L.C., III, 709-10, 721-3).

3. See below, chapter IV, pp. 123-4.

inadequacy of the second earl. Certainly Shaftesbury was himself out of favour with his uncle, the ninth earl of Rutland. It is clear that his mother regarded him as undutiful, an opinion in which she was supported by her family. It is difficult to be sure of the cause of this rift, although Shaftesbury's mother wrote to him in 1688 about the possibility of marrying into the Russell family.¹ Nothing came of the proposed match and it is probable that Lady Shaftesbury was offended by her son's refusal of the offer.

This does not explain the division between Shaftesbury's parents, however. As Shaftesbury later remarked wistfully to Rutland, 'Itt is hard for a Son to answer for whatever happens of Difference betwixt a Father & a Mother.'² It was not until 1696 that the issue was resolved. In October Shaftesbury wrote to his mother, asking her to,

no longer think me an Ill son, wch I
am sure I no longer am to you, whatever
I may have been att any tyme before.³

The following month he announced his intention of visiting her at Haddon.⁴

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/1, f. 39, Countess of Shaftesbury to Ashley, St. Jones's, 24 March 1688.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, ff. 138-9, Ashley to Rutland, April 1696. (RAND, pp. 302-3).

3. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, f. 138 Ashley to Countess of Shaftesbury, 10 October 1696. (RAND, pp. 303-4).

4. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, ff. 141-2, Ashley to Countess of Shaftesbury, 14 November 1696. (RAND, p. 305).

The visit was obviously successful, for Shaftesbury's father was able to write to him at the end of the year:

[I] am extreemly well pleased to see in your last that your mother was soe kind to you, and received you soe affectionately, for it has bee a great trouble to me y^t she should think you an undutifull Child, who has been allways y^e dutifullest and obedientst son to us both in ye world, and nothing can rejoyce me more, than to see that she is now convinced, and how happy we are both in being blessed with soe good and dutifull a son. I received a letter from your mother last night.... which confirms what I write to you to my great satisfaction, and writes to me with all y^e affection of a dutifull and loving wife, she tells me that as soon as will^{ms} is out of y^e house that she will return to me....¹

The trouble and unhappiness of a divided family obviously took up much of Shaftesbury's time. He was expected to cope with most of the family's financial affairs, including the settlement of an annuity promised to Locke by the first earl, which threatened to disrupt their good relationship.² However, he was able to devote some time to the 'retirement' he preferred, which gave him sufficient opportunity to read and write.

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1. St. Giles's House, muniment room, bound volume of papers, second earl of Shaftesbury to Ashley, 1696, with fragments of Ashley to second earl and second earl to Countess of Shaftesbury, 1696-7.
 2. There are numerous references to the annuity in Locke's correspondence with Clarke. RAND, Locke and Clarke, pp. 333-4, 338, 339-40, 342-4, 384-5, 386-7, 388-9, 390-1, 392-3. See also MS Locke c 39, f. 15, Shaftesbury to Locke, St. Giles's, 23 May 1702, for a final settlement of the problem.

It is difficult to determine with accuracy the precise content of Shaftesbury's reading during these formative years. He would have read widely in classical literature, in the original languages. His published work is studded with references to Horace, Cicero, Aristotle, Plato, Homer, and other classical authors. His three favourites, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and Xenophon would also have been studied thoroughly. From this classical foundation more contemporary works were doubtless read. He certainly knew Fontenelle's work and probably read Malebranche, Descartes, and a wide range of French literature and criticism.¹

His surviving library catalogues reveal a comparable breadth of reading in English literature and scholarship of the seventeenth century.² In philosophy it is probable that he became more closely acquainted with the work of the Cambridge Platonists and it has been claimed that he made the Cambridge school a 'philosophic force in the centuries to come.'³ An additional stimulus to the study of the Cambridge men was his friendship with Damaris, Lady Masham, in whose house at Oates Locke lived from 1691 until his death in 1704. Shaftesbury frequently visited Locke and the Mashams there.⁴ Lady Masham, a theological

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1. For Fontenelle see MS Locke c 7, f. 85v, Ashley to Locke, Rotterdam, 1689.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/12, Library catalogue, 1709. BURROWS, op. cit., p. 193.
 3. Ernst CASSIRER, The Platonic Renaissance in England, Austin, 1953, p. 160.
 4. See, for example, RAND, Locke and Clarke, pp. 327-8, Locke to Clarke, Oates, 27 December (1691) (L.C., IV, 246-8) and MS Locke c 7, f. 107, Ashley to Locke, London, 6 — 1693, ff. 114-5, Ashley to Locke, London, 27? (November 1694), (L.C., V, 192-3).

author in her own right, was the daughter of Ralph Cudworth and had been a member of her father's circle at Cambridge in the 1680s.

Cudworth's cumbersome True Intellectual System of the Universe stressed, among other things, the eternal reality of moral ideas and the reality of moral freedom and responsibility, both of which were major themes in Shaftesbury's philosophy. There were other similarities between the Cambridge Platonists and Shaftesbury: their opposition to Hobbes, their eventual distrust of Cartesianism, their religious tolerance, and their close links with Remonstrant scholars, such as Limborch.¹ It is thus unremarkable that Shaftesbury took up many of their ideas and pushed them to their logical conclusion. His first published work, which appeared in 1698, was an edition of the sermons of the Cambridge Platonist Benjamin Whichcote, with an introduction by the editor. Whichcote, a champion of the freedom of thought and the place of reason in religion, became rector of St. Lawrence Jewry in 1668, where Locke was one of his congregation.² Most of Whichcote's work was published posthumously.

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1. For Shaftesbury and the Cambridge Platonists see J. F. HARRISON, The Moral and Political Philosophy of.... Shaftesbury, (Durham University Ph.D. thesis, 1970), chapter II; J. A. PASSMORE, Ralph Cudworth, An Interpretation, Cambridge, 1951, pp. 96 ff; CASSIRER, *op. cit.*, pp. 159 ff. For related discussions see Rosalie L. COLIE, Light and Enlightenment: A Study of the Cambridge Platonists and the Dutch Arminians, Cambridge, 1957; G. A. J. ROGERS, 'Locke, Newton, and the Cambridge Platonists on Innate Ideas', Journal of the History of Ideas, XL (1979), 191-205.
 2. CRANSTON, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

Shaftesbury's introduction to his edition of Whichcote's sermons contained an obligatory attack on Hobbes and the assertion of the centrality of the 'Principle of Good-nature'. There is no need for reference to rewards and punishments in leading a moral life; there is no inducement but that of 'Love and Good-will'.¹

Yet Shaftesbury was not simply a populariser of the Cambridge Platonists. His friendship with Pierre Bayle, who attacked Cudworth, and his interest in Stoic philosophy, gave his thought a more complex pedigree. But the Cambridge school was definitely the major contemporary influence on Shaftesbury's thought and two other English philosophers who have been claimed as his predecessors were also associated with the platonism of the Cambridge men. These were Thomas Burnet and Richard Cumberland.

Thomas Burnet wrote three pamphlets against Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding, the first two in 1697 and the third in 1699. In these pamphlets and in his masterpiece, The Sacred Theory of the Earth (1681-9), Burnet 'turned the Cambridge Platonist doctrine of human nature as potentially good into that of human nature as actually good.'² In his third pamphlet against Locke, published in

1. Select Sermons of Dr. Whichcot. In Two Parts, London, 1698, Sig. A4v.

2. Ernest TUVESON, 'The Origin of the "Moral Sense"', Huntingdon Library Quarterly, 11 (1948), 241-159.

the same year as Shaftesbury's Inquiry, Burnet reiterated his defence of innate ideas:

I told you in my former Remarks, That I thought it was Necessary as a Ground for Morality, to allow a natural distinction betwixt Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, turpe & honestum, Vertue and Vice. And this distinction, I thought, was manifested and supported by Natural Conscience: whether amongst those that have or have not External Laws.¹

One assumes that Shaftesbury would have had ample opportunity to discuss Burnet's attacks with Locke and Lady Masham at Oates, although there is no surviving evidence of Shaftesbury's opinion of Burnet.

Richard Cumberland (1631-1718), appointed bishop of Peterborough in 1691, had written De Legibus Naturae in 1672, an answer to Hobbes which earned Pufendorf's commendation. Cumberland maintained that the laws of nature are ethical and immutable, and that their root-principle is that of 'Universal Benevolence'.

Therefore there arises from our common rational nature a necessity that each, by exercising universal benevolence, should always seek the common good, and should seek his own as only a part of that and consequently subordinated to it; and this is the sum of natural law.²

Although Cumberland stressed the importance of rewards and punishments

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1. Third Remarks upon an Essay concerning Human Understanding: in a Letter Address'd to the Author, London, 1699, p. 4.
 2. Richard CUMBERLAND, De Legibus Naturae, chapter V, para. xlvi, in British Moralists 1650-1800, edited by D. D. RAPHAEL, Oxford, 1969, I, 102. For Locke's interest in Cumberland see MS Locke c 22, ff. 104, James Tyrell to Locke, Oxford, 22 October 1691.

the general thrust of his thought was similar to that which Shaftesbury was to espouse.¹ It also had political implications in its development as a natural rights theory.

It can be seen, therefore, that Shaftesbury soon came to associate himself with a line of thought which opposed the individualistic theories of Hobbes and later Locke. It was a common outlook among educated men of his day who sought to avoid the extremes of strict religious orthodoxy and atheistic materialism. Many latitudinarian churchmen, including Tillotson, were proponents of this philosophy, which was to some extent the orthodoxy of its day. It is only with the subsequent reputation of Hobbes and Locke that the kind of philosophy which Shaftesbury was interested in has come to be seen as the unsuccessful opposition to the more original and radical thought of the great seventeenth-century philosophers. At the time, however, a tolerant, free-thinking philosophy with a strong ethical content, derived in part from Plato and Neoplatonist sources was an obvious position to choose. Shaftesbury's originality was in making this philosophy popular and readable and, by drawing out its social and political possibilities, attempting to use it as an instrument with which to educate the literate public of his day.

1. De Legibus Naturae, chapter I, para. x, in RAPHAEL, op. cit., I, 9.

The political implications of moral philosophy were prominent in Shaftesbury's thoughts. Writing to Locke about his studies in 1694, Shaftesbury said,

..... all that I learn by them, or cheifly strive to learn, is, what Mankind has been heretofore, in former ages, and under former Revolutions; that I may Guess the better att what they are, and may be expected to bee, in such a Turn of an Age and Time as this present one.¹

The preoccupation with the moral basis of politics, which was to concern Shaftesbury for the rest of his life, had been given expression by his early twenties. His introduction to parliamentary life in 1695 gave him the opportunity to test his theoretical ideas in the ruthless world of late-seventeenth-century politics.

1. MS Locke c 7, ff. 110-1, Ashley to Locke, St. Giles's, 8 September (1694). (RAND, p. 296); (L.C., V, 123).

CHAPTER III

SHAFTESBURY IN PARLIAMENT

1695-1702

On 21 May 1695 Shaftesbury, as Lord Ashley, was elected on the family interest as the second burgess for Poole at the by-election which followed the death of Sir John Trenchard, the secretary of state.¹ Trenchard had been seriously ill since the previous November and died on 27 April.² The writ for the election was issued on 2 May but parliament was prorogued on the following day.³ Three more prorogations followed until parliament was eventually dissolved on 12 October 1695.⁴ The first session of William III's third parliament opened on 22 November,⁵ following a general election, which, according

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1. Narcissus LUTTRELL, A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714, Oxford, 1857, III, 476; E. L. ELLIS, The Whig Junto, in relation to the development of party-politics and party-organisation, from its inception to 1714 (unpublished Oxford Univ. D.Phil. thesis 1961), p.283.
 2. Article on Trenchard by Thomas SECCOMBE in Dictionary of National Biography, LVII, 196-8.
 3. Journals of the House of Commons (hereafter abbreviated to C.J.), London, 1803, 11, 331-3.
 4. C.J., 11, 333.
 5. C.J., 11, 334.

to Narcissus Luttrell, saw the return of nearly one hundred and fifty new members.¹ On that date, after his re-election at Poole, Shaftesbury began an active parliamentary career that lasted for seven years; in the Commons from 1695 to 1698 and in the Lords between 1700 and 1702. This brief parliamentary career occurred during the turbulent years at the end of the seventeenth century, when the implications of the Glorious Revolution were being discussed with great passion and energy both at Westminster and elsewhere. The years after William's accession saw an urgent search by ministers for a secure domestic foundation from which they could prosecute an expensive and unpopular war against France. Their efforts were continually hampered by a House of Commons which was more interested in discussing its own constitutional position and restricting the authority of the king. Only during 1693 and 1694, shortly before Shaftesbury's election to parliament, was a relatively stable system of government established which began to solve the country's economic and financial difficulties. Although it was thus able to make a substantial contribution to the war effort this system foundered after the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697. Another period of political confusion resulted, which lasted until

1. LUTTRELL, op. cit., III, 548.

the end of the reign.¹

It was a chaotic time in which to be an active politician. As a consequence it is difficult for the historian to make sense of the political struggles of the late 1690s and to expose the sympathies and alignment of a particular figure, and that a rather minor one. For much of Shaftesbury's parliamentary career we have to rely on retrospective evidence or contemporary evidence which is incomplete. The correspondence which survives from the years before Shaftesbury's succession to the earldom is sparse and contemporary commentators did not have much interest in the fate of an inexperienced M.P. In broad outline, however, his political sympathies are reasonably clear.

The years from 1695 to 1702 saw Shaftesbury's enthusiastic support for those who declared themselves enemies of 'corruption' and its most tangible manifestation, the maintenance of a standing army after Ryswick. Towards the end of William's reign Shaftesbury's attitude towards ministerial corruption became less outspoken. More important matters appeared to be at stake than high-minded attacks on the government's use of its extensive patronage. The Junto leaders faced the wrath of the House of Commons, and Louis XIV's

1. E. L. ELLIS, 'William III and the Politicians', in Geoffrey HOLMES (Ed.), Britain after the Glorious Revolution 1689-1714, London, 1969, pp. 115-134.

France seemed a greater threat to Protestant Europe than ever before. After William's death Shaftesbury withdrew from the public arena, faced with a hostile new regime and disillusioned by the cynical dealings of the political world. The vigorous young politician became a more reflective and sceptical observer of 'Publick Affaires', exerting his influence indirectly and turning to the consolations of philosophy.

The transformation, however, was partial. Shaftesbury's political career contained an internal logic. He remained loyal to the cause for which his grandfather went into exile and this made him, as J. H. Plumb has pointed out, a strangely old-fashioned figure in the sophisticated political world of Queen Anne's reign.¹ For Shaftesbury was one of those politicians who firmly believes that political questions are basically moral ones. During the standing army controversy of 1697-9 the Commonwealthmen, with whom Shaftesbury was associated made their first important mark on English political life. It was also their last: in the years which followed they felt increasingly isolated and their political philosophy became redundant, although it was to attract the attention of the American founding fathers. Shaftesbury, a sensitive and

1. J. H. PLUMB, The Growth of Political Stability in England 1675-1725, London, 1967, p. 134n.

somewhat melancholy man, suffered from the same sense of isolation and betrayal but remained convinced that he and his sympathisers had an important message for educated men in general and the political world in particular. After his retirement from public life Shaftesbury attempted to reach this audience through his philosophical writing and by bringing pressure to bear on political leaders who had some sympathy with his ideas.¹

Although the 1695 general election was taken to be a whig triumph it soon became apparent that some of the new whig members, including Shaftesbury, would not necessarily support the Junto leaders in their bid for predominance at Court and in the Commons: the potential strength of the ministry's opponents was obvious as soon as the Commons assembled.² In particular the Harley-Foley group of M.P.s had been strengthened by the election results; Paul Foley was elected Speaker and Robert Harley took a leading part in the early debates of the session. It is not easy to determine precisely where Shaftesbury stood in the complicated alignment of groups and parties in the Commons: until his death he retained a particularly independ-

1. See chapter VII for a discussion of Shaftesbury's political involvement during Anne's reign.
2. Henry HORWITZ, Parliament, Policy and Politics in the reign of William III, Manchester, 1977, pp. 158, 161.

ent, and sometimes rather eccentric, stance on political issues.

It is likely, however, that Shaftesbury, the scion of an important whig family and related to others, was regarded as a particularly valuable addition to their ranks by those, such as the Harley-Foley group, who were critical of the government's measures and concerned to extend the power of parliament at the expense of the monarchy. Henry Horwitz has summarised the attitudes of the Harley-Foley 'connection' very succinctly.

Political groupings were further complicated by the appearance in the 1690s of a 'flying squadron' led by Paul Foley and Robert Harley. At the beginning of the reign, the Foleys and Harleys can be identified as Whigs; in the early mid-1690s, Paul Foley and Robert Harley increasingly dissociated themselves from the emerging Junto (and some of their own kinsmen) by stressing measures, not men; in the late 1690s, especially after Foley's death, Harley came to the fore in the attack upon both Junto measures and ministers; and in William's last year Harley was denounced even by country Whigs such as Sir Richard Cocks and the Earl of Shaftesbury as 'a pupil' of Rochester and a man 'desperately engaged in party'.¹

In fact Shaftesbury always retained a certain regard for Harley and appears to have been won over by the latter's apparent sincerity and undoubted political skill. In January 1702 he wrote to Furlly of Harley that,

He is ours at y^e Bottom. I cannot call him truly

1. HORWITZ, op. cit., pp. 317-8.

a Man of Vertue for then he had not been lost to us by any dis-obligation or Ill-usage wch he has had sufficient. He is truly w^t is called in the World a Great Man and it is by him alone that that Party has raised itself to such a Greatness as allmost to destroy us.¹

And to William Stephens he later wrote of Harley,

.... he is my old Friend, and in Young Days was my Guide and Leader in Publick Affairs nor have I ever broke Friendship with him tho different judgments in Publick affairs has long broke all Correspondence between us.²

Such a fascination with Harley, who may be seen as the able and experienced politician looking after the newcomer with a famous name, is itself a strong argument for associating Shaftesbury with the Harley-Foley 'flying squadron' in the Commons, and this would in turn make sense of his association with the Commonwealthmen, who were allied with Harley's 'New Country' party during the late 1690s. Yet there was another group in parliament that was anxious to win Shaftesbury's support.

There is evidence to suggest that Shaftesbury and his wayward

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/55, Shaftesbury to Furly, Chelsea, 30 January 1701-2. For Shaftesbury's early acquaintance with Harley see J. A. DOWNIE, Robert Harley and the press. Propaganda and public opinion in the age of Swift and Defoe, Cambridge, 1979, p. 22. Shaftesbury's grandfather and Harley's father were associates; K. H. D. HALEY, The First Earl of Shaftesbury, Oxford, 1968, pp. 220, 229.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, ff. 179-80, Shaftesbury to Stephens, Chelsea, 17 July 1706. (RAND, p. 355)

brother, Maurice Ashley, M.P. for Weymouth, were close to the group of M.P.s and lawyers which had gathered round the former tutor to the Shaftesbury household, John Locke. Locke, who delighted in forming small clubs of kindred spirits, gave the group the name of the 'College'. Locke had become one of the Commissioners for Trade in 1696 and used the influence which this post gave him to strengthen his position as a parliamentary reformer. His published economic work played a conspicuous part in the decision to call in the English coinage and reissue it at its traditional weight and fineness in silver. In 1694 and 1695 he had led a campaign inside and outside parliament which was largely responsible for the final disappearance of the licensing of the press in England.¹ Peter Laslett has written:

It could be claimed that in the Lockean group in the parliaments after the revolution we have an association of politicians with something like a set of rationally conceived policies, a programme based not only on a common sentiment, but on superior information.²

The patron of the 'College' was John Somers, Lord Keeper since 1693 and the rising whig statesman of the day. As a young lawyer, Somers had first met Locke in the early 1680s and turned to the

1. HORWITZ, op. cit., pp. 152-3.

2. P. LASLETT, 'John Locke, the great recoinage, and the origins of the Board of Trade: 1695-1698', in John Locke: Problems and Perspectives - a collection of new essays, edited by J. W. YOLTON, Cambridge, 1969, p. 146.

philosopher for advice throughout his parliamentary career.¹ The other members of the group, besides Locke himself, were Edward Clarke, M.P. for Taunton, for whom Locke wrote the main principles of Some Thoughts Concerning Education, and the lawyer, John Freke. Freke was a cousin of the Wiltshire landowner and M.P., Thomas Freke, who became a leading partner in Shaftesbury's plans to maintain a strong Country presence in Wiltshire and Dorset.² Associated with the 'College' in the Commons were Sir Walter Yonge, M.P. for Honiton and a supporter of Shaftesbury's grandfather, and Sir Francis Masham, who sat for Essex and was the husband of Ralph Cudworth's daughter and Locke's friend, Damaris Masham. To these names may be added those of Shaftesbury and Maurice Ashley, though their allegiance was not so firm.

Locke's support was not confined to the Commons. Besides Somers, who was raised to the peerage as Lord Chancellor in 1697, he could rely on the influence of Charles Mordaunt, earl of Monmouth and later (1697) of Peterborough. Although Peterborough was not an important figure at this time he was destined to win fame in the next reign as a military commander during the War of the Spanish Succession, on whose staff Shaftesbury secured a post for one of Benjamin Furly's

1. William L. SACHSE, Lord Somers - A Political Portrait, Manchester, 1975, pp. 105-6.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/39, Shaftesbury to Freke, London, 14 November 1701; 30/24/20/46, Freke to Shaftesbury, Shroton, 13 December 1701; 30/24/20/64, Freke to Shaftesbury, Shroton, 12 July 1702. See below, chapter IV, pp. 125-7.

sons.¹ Peterborough was temporarily in favour with the king in 1695 but a more prestigious supporter of Locke's political programme was Thomas Herbert, earl of Pembroke. Pembroke was Lord Privy Seal between 1692 and 1699, a Lord Justice, cabinet councillor, and Lord of Trade. Moreover he was the dedicatee of Locke's privately circulated epitome of the Essay Concerning Human Understanding. He had discussed the draft form of the Essay with Locke and persuaded him to publish both the epitome and the complete work. During Locke's visits to Wilton House each man gained from the other's company and Pembroke may be regarded as one of Locke's pupils.² Shaftesbury had a high regard for Pembroke and wrote appreciatively of him to Furly.³

Locke's attitude to government was one in which Shaftesbury would have found much to admire. Laslett describes it thus:

When he sat at the Board of Trade.... John Locke did not concern himself with the pursuit of abstractions. What interested him was the creation of a policy, and the significance of his presence there is not so much the content of his political thinking, as his insistence that men capable of abstract thought were also the men who could and should create policy.⁴

The emphasis on the virtue of independent political action by the

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/66, Shaftesbury to Furly, St. Giles's, 4 November 1702. (RAND, pp. 312-3) Peterborough's son John, Lord Mordaunt, was a friend and associate of Shaftesbury in the Commons.
 2. M. CRANSTON, John Locke: A Biography, London, 1957, pp. 289-90.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/93, Shaftesbury to Furly, n.d.
 4. LASLETT, art. cit., p. 160.

well-informed citizen and the strong relationship between philosophy and politics became central to Shaftesbury's political thought, although ill health precluded him from being as politically active as he wished. During the 1690s he had the opportunity to study these principles being put into action at the highest level by his old tutor.

It appears that Shaftesbury was expected to do more than admire Locke's political attitude; he was expected actively to support it as well. Writing to the 'College' from Oates, Masham's house, in January 1696 Locke referred to Shaftesbury's maiden speech on the bill for regulating trials in cases of treason.

I hear some talke here of a speech my Lord
Ashley made in the house. I should be glad
to know a little more of the matter and forme
of it, and the opinion people have of it for
I am concernd for that yonge Gent as you know
and shall always wish he may doe well espetially
when he appears in publique.¹

Three months later it appears that Shaftesbury had not taken the 'College' line on a particular issue, for Locke wrote to his friends in London:

I am extremely glad of the good service you
mention to be done by an yonge Gent I shall
always be concernd for. I hope this will

1. MS Locke b 8, no. 78, Locke to 'College', Oates, 27 January 1696.
(L.C., V, 524-6; RAND, Locke and Clarke, pp. 327-8)

bring him back into better hands, pray make that use of it. Get him and Cherish him and gently passe by mistakes, he is a yonge man whom I hope time and experience will better enlighten.¹

It is not surprising that Shaftesbury refused to give his support to the 'College' on certain issues. He was never a rigid party man and consequently was vilified by those members of his own party who regarded him as disloyal. As John Toland wrote in 1721, 'Apostate Whigs could not endure him.'² We have seen that he was associated with the Harley-Foley group in the Commons and also, through the 'College', with Somers and the Junto leaders, a friendship which was to prove an important factor in his political alignment after 1700. To the evidence assembled so far may be added a number of retrospective notes written by Shaftesbury in 1711, which give a clearer indication of his independent stance and his desire to fight for principles rather than political parties.

In the Public Record Office there is a copy of Rider's British Merlin Almanac for 1711 which is full of memoranda by Shaftesbury, relating primarily to details of the forthcoming second edition of

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1. British Library, Addit. MS 4290, ff. 80-1, Locke to 'College', Oates, 16 April 1696; as cited in L.C., V, 605. (RAND, Locke and Clarke, pp. 461-2)
 2. John TOLAND (Ed.), Letters from the Right Honourable the late Earl of Shaftesbury to R. Molesworth Esq., London, 1721, p. viii. This edition is hereafter abbreviated to TOLAND, Letters.

the Characteristics.¹ At the back of the book, however, are a few autobiographical notes headed '... Acc^t of my Principles.'² As these brief jottings were not intended for public consumption there is little reason to doubt that they represent Shaftesbury's personal thoughts about his career in the Commons. He begins by describing his position shortly before he entered parliament:

Found myself engagd early between two Partys
equally pretending service to ye Crown & Governmt
& equall merit in y^e Revolution.³

Confused by the lack of a clear distinction between the two parties, Shaftesbury called to mind the 'Precept & Law of y^e wise Athenian "Chuse one" (viz^t Party).'⁴ And he continues,

Accordingly divided and in doubt notwithstanding Birth which I was resolved should not outweigh. But when I saw our own such as L^d Pet/erborough L^d Warr/ington in y^e Treasury Old Hampden &c so corrupt And L^d Lonsdale (then S^r J. Lowther) so honest, & S^r C. Musgrave (as then appeard) so Patriot like. Also L^d Rochester L^d Not/tingham &c: that had not some Impeachments come soon after (viz^t L^d D of Leeds, Speaker Trevor, H. Guy &c) & shewn y^e Old Corruption of the old Reigns and Cheif of y^e Tory Party I had by this been deluded. I chose therefore my Party & am a Whigg.⁵

The proceedings against Leeds, Trevor, and Guy took place during the early months of 1695, before Shaftesbury had been elected for

1. P.R.O. 30/24/24/13.

2. Ibid., p. 99.

3. Ibid., p. 99.

4. Ibid., p. 99.

5. Ibid., pp. 99-100.

Poole but at a time when he knew that his entry into national politics would not be delayed for long. It would appear that he threw in his lot with the opponents of the ministry, whose untrustworthiness had been revealed to him by its 'corruption'. Such a reaction against the ministers would explain his early alliance with the Harleys and Foleys. Foley had zealously chaired the committee appointed in March 1695, which had uncovered the evidence leading to Trevor's expulsion from the house on a charge of bribery.¹ On 27 March Thomas Wharton had obtained a motion to impeach Leeds, for alleged bribery.² Wharton, who had important electoral interests in Wiltshire, was the most effective organiser among the Junto leaders. It is probable that Shaftesbury's qualified support for him dates from 1695-6. Shaftesbury, a rather priggish man, continued to be fascinated by Wharton's outrageous character, detecting in it a compound 'of the very best and the very worst.'³

Although Shaftesbury saw himself as having been rescued from the clutches of the Tories somewhat fortuitously, he insisted on seeing his political commitments in terms of principle. His notes in the 1711 almanac make this clear.

But this y^e Foundation of all

1. B. W. HILL, The Growth of Parliamentary Parties 1689-1742, London, 1976, p. 62.

2. Ibid., p. 63.

3. Geoffrey HOLMES, British Politics in the Age of Anne, London, 1967, p. 240.

An Enemy to Corruption. This Monster
to be subdu'd. Else nothing.¹

Later he mentions corruption again, together with another principle:

1. Monster Corruption, warrd ag^t.
2. Not stand on y^e Defensive & Passive.
But (as in Warr) some scheme advancing
(& y^e good Ministry at the head) to lead
& employ y^e spirit of y^e People & of y^e
Good: To gain Volunteers (nor all Hirelings
& Interested for of this no end) to y^e
Government.²

The stress on corruption, the commitment to measures rather than men, and the desire for detachment from the corrupting influence of the centre of political power are all ideas which were central to Shaftesbury's political thought and practice. They were ideas which were largely forged from his experience as a young M.P.

On entering the House of Commons in November 1695 Shaftesbury immediately became involved in administrative and committee work. He was appointed one of the Lord Steward's deputies to assist in the administration of the oaths.³ In this task he was joined he was joined by a number of men who were to become political associates: Lord Paulet, later duke of Bolton, Charles Montagu, later earl of

1. P.R.O. 30/24/24/13, p. 100.

2. Ibid., p. 102.

3. C.J., 11, 334.

Halifax, a Junto lord and godfather to Shaftesbury's son, the Foleys, and Robert Harley. At the same time he was appointed to the large permanent Committee of Privileges and Elections¹ and four days later to the committee to prepare an address to the king.²

In December he became involved in the question of coinage, which was of crucial interest to Locke and his friends. He was a member of the committee of 5 December,³ established after pressure from the Lords, which formulated the eleven resolutions put before the Commons by Granville on 10 December.⁴ The committee's resolutions followed Locke's thinking on recoinage in suggesting a recoinage on the old standard with the cost to be borne by the taxpayer. But in the recommendations about the means for implementing the recoinage the committee reflected the earlier suggestions of Isaac Newton, to which Locke was opposed. On 12 December Shaftesbury was one of those responsible for the Commons' address to the king to issue a proclamation establishing deadlines for the use of the various

1. C.J., 11, 335.

2. C.J., 11, 339.

3. C.J., 11, 354.

4. HORWITZ, op. cit., p. 163. An admirable survey of the complex recoinage question is provided by Ming-Hsun LI, The Great Recoinage of 1696 to 1699, London, 1963.

denominations of the old coin.¹ There is no evidence that Shaftesbury was deeply involved in the subsequent debates on recoinage, which included the discussion of two new recoinage bills in the early months of 1696, but it is probable, as Locke's second letter to the 'College' suggests, that he could not be relied upon to support the Court policy on recoinage. He appears as a member of the committee of 18 February to examine the account of guineas minted, a committee which included Lord Paulet and Robert Molesworth.²

However, Shaftesbury had been engaged on more notable affairs. On 12 December 1695 he made his maiden speech in the Commons, in support of the bill for regulating treason trials. The measure was dear to the hearts of reformers and critics of the government.³ It had been pressed persistently since the revolution and finally reached the statute book in January 1696, in an attempt to mollify Country politicians.⁴ That it did become law was probably due in part to Shaftesbury's effective speech in its favour, and particularly that part of the bill which permitted the defendant prior knowledge of the charges against him together with the granting of defence counsel. Various accounts of the speech have appeared since 1695:⁵

1. C.J., 11, 359.

2. C.J., 11, 453.

3. HORWITZ, *op. cit.*, p. 164

4. ELLIS, The Whig Junto..., p. 285.

5. See, for example, the fourth earl's life of his father (P.R.O. 30/24/21/225), published in RAND, pp. xii-xxxi; Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England, London, 1809, V, 966.

Macaulay's deserves extensive quotation:

Among those who supported the bill appeared a young Whig of high rank, of ample fortune, and of great abilities which had been assiduously improved by study. This was Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Ashley, eldest son of the second Earl of Shaftesbury, and grandson of that renowned politician who had, in the days of Charles the Second, been at one time the most unprincipled of ministers, and at another the most unprincipled of demagogues. Ashley had just been returned to Parliament for the borough of Poole, and was in his twenty-fifth year. In the course of his speech he faltered, stammered, and seemed to lose the thread of his reasoning. The House, then, as now, indulgent to novices, and then, as now, well aware that, on a first appearance, the hesitation which is the effect of modesty and sensibility is quite as promising a sign as volubility of utterance and ease of manner, encouraged him to proceed. "How can I, Sir," said the young orator, recovering himself, "produce a stronger argument in favour of this bill than my own failure? My future, my character, my life are not at stake. I am speaking to an audience whose kindness might well inspire me with courage. And yet, from mere nervousness, from mere want of practice in addressing large assemblies, I have lost my recollection: I am unable to go on with my argument. How helpless, then, must be a poor man, who, never having opened his lips in public, is called upon to reply, without a moment's preparation, to the ablest and most experienced advocates in the kingdom, and whose faculties are paralysed by the thought that, if he fails to convince his hearers, he will in a few hours die on a gallows, and leave beggary and infamy to those who are dearest to him!"¹

1. T. B. MACAULAY, The History of England - from the Accession of James the Second, London, 1864, IV, 127-8.

Macaulay continues:

It may reasonably be suspected that Ashley's confusion and the ingenious use which had been made of it had been carefully premeditated. His speech, however, made a great impression, and probably raised expectations which were not fulfilled.¹

Such a conceit would have been quite in keeping with Shaftesbury's character and the substance of Macaulay's account is common to other reports of the speech.

After a busy and conspicuous start to his parliamentary career Shaftesbury sat on a number of minor committees concerned with naturalization bills,² the settlement of estates,³ and the answering of petitions.⁴ He also dealt with more important matters. His work on the Committee of Privileges and Elections, which met on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays as required, continued throughout the session. He sat on committees to examine the establishment of the Scottish East India Company,⁵ to alter part of the act for abrogating the oath of supremacy in Ireland,⁶ and to examine the working of the ecclesiastical

1. Ibid., IV, 128.

2. C.J., 11, 432.

3. C.J., 11, 438, 459.

4. C.J., 11, 369, 553.

5. C.J., 11, 365.

6. C.J., 11, 386.

courts.¹ On a number of these committees his name coincides with those of some of his political associates, Molesworth, Paulet, Harley, and the Foleys.² He also sat in committee with Walter Moyle,³ who was to be a leading figure in the standing army controversy and has been called 'the last really authentic "classical republican."⁴ Moyle, like Shaftesbury, was attracted to Xenophon's writings⁵ and appears, like Shaftesbury, to have been associated with Charles D'Avenant during the late 1690s.⁶

There is evidence that Shaftesbury was an enthusiastic committee man. Christopher Pitt, his doctor, wrote an account of Shaftesbury's indisposition in May 1705 which included a brief history of his health. He began his account by looking back to Shaftesbury's time in the House of Commons and explained the effect on his health of the life led by a committed M.P.:

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1. C.J., 11, 533.
 2. C.J., 11, 365, 369, 386, 432, 440, 453, 533, 553.
 3. C.J., 11, 356, 369, 386, 432, 438, 533.
 4. Z. S. FINK, The Classical Republicans: An Essay in the Recovery of a Pattern of Thought in Seventeenth-Century England, Evanston, 1962, p. 174.
 5. Moyle's translation, for D'Avenant, of Xenophon's Tract on Improving the Revenue of the State of Athens appeared in 1697.
 6. Anthony HAMMOND, The Whole Works of Walter Moyle, Esq. That were Published by Himself. To which is prefixed some Account of his Life and Writings, London, 1727, III, 6, 21.

But when in y^e House, He constantly attended the Service of the House by Day, and was late at night at y^e Committees in a close Room, with a Croud of People where he was often carried into an Eagerness of Dispute. He contracted such a Weakness of Lungs, as to bring on a Convulsive Asthma.... and by the frequency of the fitts his Sight has been since extremely impair'd.¹

Shaftesbury spent a good part of his life convalescing, either abroad or in the country. The amount of time he could spend in the smoky atmosphere of London was limited and consequently his routine while in the capital was particularly strenuous, further weakening his health.

At the beginning of 1696 the Commons debates about the projected parliamentary council of trade ended in a Court defeat by one vote (175-174) on a motion that the members of the proposed council should be named by parliament.² The majority, led by Speaker Foley, included a number of the new whig M.P.s. In the face of its defeat the government decided upon a course of retaliatory action when the project was discussed in committee on 20 January. Two supplementary motions were moved by Wharton, Comptroller of the Household. The first resolution was intended to prevent M.P.s from sitting on the council; the second sought to impose an abjuration oath on those who were chosen.

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/100.

2. HORWITZ, op. cit., pp. 164-5.

The resulting crisis came to a head on 31 January, when Wharton's amendments were put before the House. They were both rejected but the voting figures throw interesting light on Shaftesbury's political stance. He appears to have voted against the resolution barring M.P.s from the council, thus voting with the Harley-Foley group against the Court. However, he voted for the abjuration oath, together with Lord Spencer, later third earl of Sunderland, and Molesworth.¹ In doing so he voted on the Court side against both the Harleys and 'all the Foleys' with their tory support. It is evident that Shaftesbury was anxious not to associate himself too closely with either the Court whigs or the opposition Country alliance led by Harley and Foley but to attempt an independent strategy based on political principle. He was shocked by the evidence of 'corruption' and undue ministerial patronage in the House and expressed his views a fortnight after the crucial votes on the council of trade to Thomas Stringer, an experienced lawyer who had been a member of his grandfather's household. Shaftesbury is writing about a bill to regulate elections and prevent bribery:

You could, I believe, scarcely imagine with yourself, who these are in the world, or who they are in the house, who oppose this, and all other such bills as this might and main; and who they are, that are condemned of flying

1. Ibid., p. 165.

in the face of the government, as they call it, by being for such things as these are, and pressing such hard things on the prerogative or court. In short, you would hardly believe, that your poor friend, that now writes to you, has sentence (and bitter sentence too) every day passing upon him, for going, as you may be sure he goes and ever will go on such occasions as these; whatever party it be, that is in, or out at court, that is in possession of the places, and afraid of losing their daily bread by not being servile enough, or that are out of places, and think, by crossing the court, and siding with good and popular things against it, to get into those places of profit and management.¹

On two of the other major political issues of 1696, the Association and the attainder~~of~~ of Sir John Fenwick, Shaftesbury gave his vote to the government without hesitation. Both measures resulted from the discovery during February of a plot to assassinate William III.² However critical he may have been of royal authority Shaftesbury was a staunch supporter of the Revolution and regarded Jacobites with extreme distaste. In the case of the Fenwick attainder this led him to vote against Harley and his followers.

Given his evident concern about the influence of the Court and the evidence of 'corruption' among his fellow M.P.s it is not

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/21/225, Ashley to Stringer, 15 February 1695-6. As cited in Letters of the Earl of Shaftesbury, Author of the Characteristicks, collected into one volume, London, 1746, pp. 116-7.
 2. HILL, op. cit., p. 68.

surprising that Shaftesbury came to be associated with that group of radical critics of the Court who have come to be known as the Commonwealthmen.¹ Although much of the activity of these men was extra-parliamentary it focussed particularly on the standing army controversy of 1697 to 1699 which took place inside parliament, and it is not inappropriate to consider them here.²

It should not be thought that the Commonwealthmen were a homogeneous body. They were a collection of writers and politicians deeply concerned with what they saw as the excessive power held by the monarchy and government at the expense of parliament. They considered this a repudiation of everything the Glorious Revolution had set out to achieve and feared that unless the disturbing trend was reversed an absolutist regime would take over the government. In this belief they were confirmed by three interconnected lines of thought. First, their reading in English and European history encouraged them to stress the virtues of a supposed 'Ancient' or 'Gothick' constitution, the purity of which had been sullied by generations of tyrannical government.³ Much was made by whig theorists of the excellence of

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1. For the Commonwealthmen see particularly FINK, op. cit.; Caroline ROBBINS, The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, Cambridge, Mass., 1961; J. G. A. POCKOCK, Politics, Language and Time, London, 1972, chapter 4.
 2. For the standing army controversy see Lois G. SCHWOERER, "No Standing Armies!", Baltimore, 1974 and 'Chronology and Authorship of the Standing Army Tracts', Notes and Queries, CCXI (1966), 382-90.
 3. For a discussion of the effect of historical scholarship on constitutional thought in the seventeenth century see J. G. A. POCKOCK, The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law, Cambridge, 1957.

the witenagemot before its destruction by the Norman military power. It was thought that if the former modes of government were restored a new and more just pattern of political relationships would emerge. In classical history the Commonwealthmen were introduced to the idea of political action by independent citizens, whose freedom was guaranteed by their ownership of property and who were not, therefore, susceptible to the patronage and bribes of the monarch or political leaders. Republican Rome was taken to be the paradigm in this instance.¹

Such an interpretation of history was not new. Broadly speaking the Commonwealthmen may be seen as members of an intellectual tradition which includes Machiavelli, Harrington, and Nevile. The second of these men was a particular favourite with the Commonwealthmen: Toland brought out an edition of Harrington in 1700.²

The context of political disruption and uncertainty in which Harrington wrote his Oceana gave a second, and more recent, stimulus to the Commonwealthmen's concerns. The second group of ideas on which the Commonwealthmen thrived were those connected with the conflicts

1. A discussion of the influence of Roman examples is to be found in FINK, op. cit., pp. 3-10.

2. The Oceana of James Harrington, and his other works, London, 1700.

of the recent past. In particular they were concerned with the Exclusion Crisis and the Country opposition to the crown led by the first earl of Shaftesbury. The drive towards absolutism in the 1680s, which saw the collapse of this opposition, the exile of Shaftesbury, and the execution of Algernon Sidney and other whig heroes, gave the Commonwealthmen a sense of urgency. Sidney's Discourses Concerning Government, published posthumously in 1698 as part of the Commonwealthmen's campaign, has been described as a 'textbook of revolution':¹ a dramatic claim, perhaps, but there can be no doubt that many of the Court's opponents in 1697-9 had personal memories of the troubled 1680s. Henry Nevile, whose Harringtonian tract of 1681, Plato Redivivus, was published in 1698, survived until 1694 and Slingsby Bethel, one of the survivors of the radical wing of the first Shaftesbury's party, did not die until February 1697. The third earl had himself been involved in the whig defeat and his memory was long. His schooldays at Winchester had been made worse by the taunts of his contemporaries after the discovery of the Rye House Plot.²

To the historical perspective and the immediate background of the years after the revolution may be added, thirdly, the contemporary

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1. Caroline ROBBINS, 'Algernon Sidney's Discourses concerning Government: Textbook of Revolution', William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, 4, (1947), 267-96.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/21/225.

fears and sympathies of the Commonwealthmen. Robert Molesworth, in his Account of Denmark (1694),¹ had drawn attention to the ease with which tyrannical government could be established by those who had the will and sufficient military backing to do so. William III's desire to retain a permanent standing force after the Treaty of Ryswick appeared to the Commonwealthmen as a definite sign of what to expect if immediate action was not taken. Their study of history and the recent past had made them nervous about armies and they preferred to stress the virtues, drawn from classical history, Machiavelli, and Harrington, of a citizen militia, which would have no desire to overthrow the government and which would be much more efficient when fighting for a political system which represented its best interests. They were unrealistic in this, as in much of their polemic. They failed to answer the cogent practical case for maintaining a standing army, however distasteful it might be, which was put forward by Somers and his supporters.²

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1. Robert MOLESWORTH, An Account of Denmark, as It was in the Year 1692, London, 1694.
 2. SCHWOERER, "No Standing Armies!", pp. 178-9, 184-6. See in particular John SOMERS, A Letter, Ballancing the Necessity of Keeping a Land-Force in Times of Peace; With the Dangers that May Follow on It, London, 1697; Daniel DEFOE, An Argument Shewing, That a Standing Army, with Consent of Parliament, Is Not Inconsistent with a Free Government, London, 1698.

To the lessons of history, long memories, and contemporary threats of tyranny Shaftesbury added a more detached and philosophical point of view, which stressed the ways in which individual virtue is a function of social virtue. What is good for society, said Shaftesbury, is also good for the individual, who should therefore strive to exercise his 'virtue' in terms of social and political action.¹ Morality and politics were closely linked in Shaftesbury's thought: 'corruption', the bugbear of the Commonwealthmen, was necessarily wrong, regardless of the political results which it achieved. It was probably no accident that Shaftesbury's Inquiry Concerning Virtue, Or Merit was published by Toland in 1699, at the height of the Commonwealth campaign, whether or not he had the author's permission to do so.² The Inquiry was not the first of Shaftesbury's philosophical works -- he had edited Whichcote's Sermons in 1698 -- but it contains the core of his thinking on the moral relationship between the individual and society, together with his assertion, following Bayle, that religion and morality are not connected.³

It is possible to analyse in this, or a similar, fashion the

1. An Inquiry Concerning Virtue, Or Merit, edited by David WALFORD, Manchester, 1977, pp. 38-9.

2. Ibid. This new edition of the Inquiry compares Toland's edition with the final, improved, version, which appeared in the Characteristics.

3. Ibid., pp. 2-3.

intellectual and political modes of thought and action which gave the Commonwealthmen their particular place in the spectrum of political allegiance during the 1690s. Such dispassionate explanations, however, often carry a certain lack of conviction. Their interpretation of history, the recent past, and contemporary politics made the Commonwealthmen what they were. Yet it may be that the psychological character of the period in which they were active was the most important aspect of their appearance at the forefront of politics. It is always difficult to express the 'mood' of an historical period accurately, but the 1690s were a decade of great uncertainty.¹ The monarchy had incurred severe limitations of its power, to which it still had to adapt successfully. The Church of England was no longer the political force it had been when Sheldon and Sancroft attempted to enforce church attendance through the ecclesiastical courts and forge a powerful political alliance with the country gentlemen.² The country gentlemen themselves sustained

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1. See a number of the essays in Geoffrey HOLMES (Ed.), Britain after the Glorious Revolution 1689-1714, London, 1969, particularly those by Angus McINNES (pp. 80-95), W. A. SPECK (pp. 135-154), and G. V. BENNETT (pp. 155-175); J. P. KENYON, Stuart England, London, 1978, p. 278.
 2. G. V. BENNETT, The Tory Crisis in Church and State 1688-1730, Oxford, 1975, pp. 3-22.

the shock of large taxes with their consequent debilitating effect on agriculture. The establishment of the Bank of England and the National Debt saw the rise to political importance of economists and financiers, who often had little sympathy with the plight of the landed interest. The expiry of the Licensing Act in 1695 led to an outburst of literature distressing to many churchmen and country gentlemen, who regarded it as highly subversive. The country was engaged in a major war and domestic comfort had to be sacrificed to military efficiency.

All these factors gave the Commonwealthmen their opportunity. Their politics tended towards republicanism and their religious views to Socinianism, but their appeal was deceptively nostalgic. They were not, on the whole, able to develop their thought to embrace modern political and economic developments. They looked backwards rather than forwards to their golden age. By allying with Harley and his 'New Country' party of Tories and disgruntled Whigs their basic bewilderment with the political world was revealed. It is this nostalgic and backward-looking approach of the Commonwealthmen which helps to explain their attraction to Shaftesbury and his espousal of their causes.

Ideologies consist of an intricate network of myth and truth. Both are apparent in the thought of Shaftesbury and the Commonwealth-

men. They are often difficult to disentangle. Faced with the truth of a political nation which was uncertain how to deal with the legacy of the Glorious Revolution and whose parties were divided amongst themselves the Commonwealthmen used the myths of the 'Gothick constitution' and the 'virtue' of a citizen militia with great effect. Their political harassment of the government was accompanied by a remarkable publishing venture, which saw the establishment of a 'whig canon' of literature. Shaftesbury was closely concerned with both aspects of the campaign.

Much light has recently been thrown on the complex subject of the relationships which held the Commonwealthmen together by Blair Worden, in his introduction to the fifth part of Edmund Ludlow's memoirs, A Voyce from the Watch Tower. Ludlow's memoirs were an important component in the Country whig publishing campaign at the end of the seventeenth century. Worden sees the literature produced by the Commonwealthmen during the standing army debates as 'partly designed... to broaden the appeal of republicanism by an appeal to country party sentiment.'¹ He points out that the years between 1697 and 1699 were distinguished by the temporary removal of the French threat; a threat which acted as an important unifying influence on the whigs before

1. WORDEN, pp. 39-40.

and after these years, as the discussion of Shaftesbury's political fortunes after 1700 will show.¹

The main target of the Commonwealthmen's attack during the standing army controversy was the whig Junto. By supporting the retention of William III's land forces after Ryswick, Somers and his colleagues appeared to the Commonwealthmen to have reneged on the achievements of the Revolution years, 1688-9. Worden argues that this feeling of anger towards the whig leaders, which had been contained before 1697 by the fear of France, gave the Commonwealthmen the opportunity 'to create a respectable ideological and historical pedigree for the cause which had fallen with the first earl of Shaftesbury and which, they believed, had been betrayed since 1688-9 by the junto.'²

Worden distinguishes two groups, or perhaps methods of approach, among the radical whigs, although he admits that firm categorisation is unwise.³ These were the 'Calves-Head' whigs, depicted by tory propagandists, such as Ned Ward, as ardent republican members of the

1. See below, pp. 100-2.

2. WORDEN, p. 39.

3. WORDEN, p. 40.

mythical 'Calves-Head Club',¹ and the 'aristocratic' or 'Roman' whigs. Although Shaftesbury did not belong to the 'Calves-Head' group he worked with such of its members as John Toland and William Stephens. Worden sees him rather as a 'Roman' whig and would couple him with Robert Molesworth in this respect. Molesworth's Account of Denmark appeared in 1694 and caused a good deal of comment in political circles, as it dealt with the topical subject of the establishment of absolutism after an unsuccessful revolution. ~~In his introduction to~~ In his introduction to the 1721 edition of Hotman's Franco-Gallia Molesworth, 'the most widely quoted and probably the most influential among the liberal Whigs',² wrote what is the closest one can find to a 'Roman' whig manifesto.³ A wealthy Irish landowner and politician, he was one of the closest of Shaftesbury's political associates, particularly during Anne's reign, when he often acted as Shaftesbury's mouthpiece in London.⁴ Molesworth and Shaftesbury had other interests in common; they were both interested in gardens,⁵ and Molesworth was

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1. Edward WARD, The Secret History of the Calves Head Club, London, 1703; J. P. KENYON, Revolution Principles, Cambridge, 1977, pp. 76-7.
 2. ROBBINS, The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, p. 92.
 3. Franco-Gallia: or, An Account of the ancient free state of France, and most other parts of Europe, translated by the author of the Account of Denmark, London, 1721.
 4. See, for example, P.R.O. 30/24/20/136, Cropley to Shaftesbury, 15 December 1707; P.R.O. 30/24/20/137, Molesworth to Shaftesbury, 18 December 1707.
 5. For Molesworth's interest in gardens see Edward MALINS and the Knight of Glin (Desmond FITZGERALD), Lost Demenes. Irish Landscape Gardening, 1660-1845, London, 1976, pp. 14-17.

an enthusiastic admirer of Shaftesbury's philosophy. After Shaftesbury's death Molesworth attempted to establish a Shaftesburean circle at his house outside Dublin.¹ Francis Hutcheson, a member of the group, took Shaftesbury's ideas to Scotland, where they became influential in the Scottish Enlightenment.²

Early in May 1697 peace negotiations to end the expensive continental war began in the castle of Ryswick, near The Hague. The treaty between France, the Netherlands, England, and Spain was finally signed in September. It has been seen as the first serious check to the aggression of Louis XIV and as recognition by the French that the work of the Glorious Revolution could not be undone.³ In England, however, the immediate concern was with the fate of William's large and victorious army of professional soldiers. The king eventually lost his attempt to maintain the army during peacetime. In 1697 parliament voted to reduce the army to ten thousand men. This measure was followed in 1698 by one to reduce it further, to seven thousand British soldiers, and the following year by the disbanding of the king's Dutch Guards. By the end of the controversy a compromise was

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1. Letters of Hibernicus: A Collection of Letters and Essays on Several Subjects, lately Publish'd in the Dublin Journal, London, 1729.
 2. W. R. SCOTT, Francis Hutcheson: His Life, Teaching and Position in the History of Philosophy, Cambridge, 1900, especially pp. 21-9.
 3. David OGG, England in the Reigns of James II and William III, Oxford, 1969 (paperback edition), pp. 437-9.

reached and a small standing force allowed.¹

By the end of 1699, however, the previous two years had seen a significant change in political allegiances, which had been brought about by the treaty. Worden shows that this change drew the 'Calves-Head' and 'Roman' whigs together in an alliance with Harley's anti-Court party.² Both groups had in common their concern with corruption and the apostasy of the Junto. Yet there were significant differences between them. The 'Calves-Head' men were interested in immediate political gain and were willing 'to exploit ignorance, material fears, and resentment against high taxation' in their attack on standing armies.³ The 'Roman' whigs, on the other hand, took a broader view of current political troubles, placing them in the historical and intellectual context which has been mentioned earlier. Although they were not afraid to 'dirty their political knees', as their collaboration with Toland and Stephens shows, Shaftesbury and Molesworth were as much concerned about the underlying causes of corruption and bad government.⁴ It was here that the stress on Roman republican

1. SCHWOERER, op. cit., p. 156.

2. WORDEN, pp. 39-40.

3. WORDEN, p. 39.

4. WORDEN, p. 41.

virtue, the Machiavelli-Harrington tradition, and the moral view of politics became relevant. By attempting to bring theory and practice closer together Shaftesbury played a significant part in the development of whig ideology at this time. He achieved this both by his own writing and by his patronage and support for those who needed the protection which a man of his standing could give.

As might be expected from a political outlook which depended so much on historical enquiry and political speculation the bulk of the evidence for the radical whig programme consists of the numerous publications of the Commonwealthmen. The standing army literature itself is well known. An Argument, Shewing that a Standing Army is Inconsistent with a Free Government..., by John Trenchard and Walter Moyle, with Toland's collaboration, appeared in 1697. Trenchard was a distant relative of the secretary of state in whose place Shaftesbury was elected at Poole and Moyle, as we have seen, sat with Shaftesbury on a number of committees in the Commons. Trenchard published his Short History of Standing Armies in 1698, probably with the cooperation of Moyle and Toland. On the subject of militia reform Toland wrote The Militia Reformed... in 1697, addressed to Shaftesbury.¹ A Discourse concerning Militias and Standing Armies by Andrew Fletcher,

1. J. A. DOWNIE, Robert Harley and the press. Propaganda and public opinion in the age of Swift and Defoe, Cambridge, 1979, pp. 31-2.

the Scottish patriot, came out in the same year and was reprinted in 1698 as A Discourse concerning Militias. Fletcher, a pupil of Gilbert Burnet, was one of the more shadowy members of the radical whig group and it is difficult to establish his connection with any of the more prominent men.¹ This enigma is the more vexing because Fletcher's writing on the subject contained some of the most imaginative suggestions made by opponents of the standing army.

These hectic years also saw other publications by the Commonwealthmen, ranging from flimsy election manifestos to biographies and substantial editions of collected works. In 1694, the year of Molesworth's Account of Denmark, Machiavelli's Works were reissued and James Tyrell's Bibliotheca Politica appeared. 1698 was a particularly fruitful year. Anne Baldwin published Henry Nevile's Harringtonian tract Plato Redivivus, Algernon Sidney's Discourses concerning Government were published by John Darby senior, adding greatly to Sidney's posthumous reputation, and Shaftesbury collaborated with Toland on the election manifesto, The Danger of Mercenary Parliaments.²

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1. Fletcher's biographer does not throw much light on this problem. See W. C. MACKENZIE, Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun - His Life and Times, Edinburgh, 1935.
 2. For The Danger of Mercenary Parliaments see DOWNIE, op. cit., pp. 34-5. This manifesto is also published in The Harleian Miscellany, London, 1745, I, 582-90, wrongly dated 1690.

In 1698-9 Ludlow's Memoirs came out, in an edition attributed by Worden to Toland,¹ and in 1699 Toland published his Life of Milton and the Memoirs of Denzil Lord Holles. Moyle's An Essay Upon the Constitution of the Roman Government appeared in the same year.² Toland followed his previous publications with his edition of Harrington's Works in 1699-1700, which Shaftesbury distributed in the United Provinces, and the Art of Governing by Partys and Anglia Libera in 1701. Throughout these years Toland was encouraged in his work by Harley and Shaftesbury. In 1702 Toland and Shaftesbury wrote the Paradoxes of State.³

In the space of a few years a new canon of whig literature had been written, which was to exercise considerable influence in England and America during the eighteenth century. Of particular significance were the volumes of biography and collected writings of members of the whig pantheon which Anne Baldwin and John Darby had published, with Toland's help, between 1698 and 1700. Darby and his son were two of the most prominent whig publishers of the time, producing many

1. WORDEN, pp. 17-39.

2.. This was republished in 1796 by J. Thelwell at Norwich with the title Democracy Vindicated.

3. There is an MS version of Paradoxes of State at P.R.O. 30/24/44/79.

of the pamphlets connected with the standing army controversy and later publishing the central volumes of the whig 'canon', State Tracts (1705-6) and State Trials (1719).¹ Shaftesbury had most of his work published by the younger Darby during the early years of the eighteenth century.

Detailed comment on those works produced during the years of the standing army controversy which throw light on Shaftesbury's political attitudes will be reserved for a later chapter on his political thought.² It is evident, however, that Shaftesbury, a young M.P. who had made his independence apparent in the Commons, was a friend and patron to a number of the Commonwealthmen and collaborated with Toland on matters which he considered to be particularly urgent. His stress on civic virtue as the only defence against vice and corruption, a nostalgic and moralistic political attitude, ran counter to the more realistic and pragmatic approach of the whig Junto and its supporters, who had to cope with the practical problems of financing 'King

1. For information on the Darbys and other prominent whig publishers see H. R. PLOMER, A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers who were at Work in England, Scotland, and Ireland from 1668 to 1725, London, 1968; Leona ROSTENBERG, 'English "Rights and Liberties": Richard & Anne Baldwin, Whig Patriot Publishers' in Literary, Political, Scientific, Religious & Legal Publishing, Printing & Bookselling in England 1551-1700, New York, 1965, II, 369-415.

2. See below, chapter VI.

William's War'. Yet it was an outlook which appealed to the independent country gentlemen sitting in the Commons, concerned at the encroachment of high taxation and the new political influence of the monied interest.

Throughout his life Shaftesbury, while giving financial support and encouragement to radical writers, was anxious not to have too public an association with their work.¹ He was afraid that his title and position made him especially vulnerable to attacks about his connection with polemicists who were regarded with deep suspicion by many of his colleagues in the Lords after 1700, particularly among the Junto whigs. Such caution was amply justified by the embarrassment caused to him after his sponsorship of the republican clergyman, William Stephens.² Did he therefore take any part in the discussions at the Grecian coffee house in Devereux Court, where many of the standing army pamphlets were discussed and formulated? Until his death in 1691 the leading light at the Grecian had been Henry Nevile, who ensured that the political tradition which had its roots in Machiavelli and Harrington survived into the late seventeenth century.³ Moyle and Trenchard, both of whom Shaftesbury knew,

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1. Shaftesbury had publications falsely attributed to him by opponents. British Library, Addit. MS 4288, ff. 95-7, Shaftesbury to Desmaizeaux, St. Giles's, 17 February (1701).
 2. J. A. DOWNIE, 'William Stephens and the Letter to the Author of the Memorial of the State of England Reconsidered', B.I.H.R., L (1977), 253-9. The Stephens affair is discussed below, chapter VII, pp.267-70.
 3. WORDEN, p.40

frequented the Grecian, and Toland could often be found there when he was in London.¹ However, there is no direct evidence that Shaftesbury visited the Grecian; it might have been a dangerous place with which to be associated.

Yet it may have been among these men that Shaftesbury attempted to attract support for a group of M.P.s which he formed. His son, who wrote a draft life of his father for inclusion in Birch's General Dictionary of 1734-41, commented that 'several gentlemen in the House of Commons, who were of the same sentiments with my father, formed a little society by the name of the Independent Club, of which he was a member and had the chief hand in setting up, but this club was of no long duration.'²

In the course of a discussion of Shaftesbury's relations with William Stephens, J. A. Downie has suggested that the 'Independent Club' was a group of 'neo-Harringtonians' which met at the Grecian coffee house.³ There is no firm evidence for this assertion and it is unlikely that Shaftesbury's club was the same society as that

1. The Whole Works of Walter Moyle Esq....., p. 5; British Library, Addit. MS 7121, f. 61r, Toland to Shaftesbury, 10 March 1702-3.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/21/225. As cited in RAND, p.xxii n.l.

3. DOWNIE, art. cit., p. 254.

frequented by Trenchard, Moyle, and Toland. It is more likely that Shaftesbury attempted to create a body of support based on backbenchers of an independent disposition, weary of the pressure exerted on them by party leaders. Maurice Ashley, Lord Spencer, and Lord Paulet, none of them Commonwealthmen, may have been associated with Shaftesbury in this unsuccessful venture.

Shaftesbury's reminiscences in the 1711 almanac show his indecision as a new M.P. and warn us against committing him too closely to a particular faction. Perhaps it would be more accurate to see him as a Country whig loosely attached to the Harley-Foley group and with strong Commonwealth sympathies between 1697 and 1699, rather than as a committed republican. Shaftesbury, whose concern to re-establish his grandfather's reputation was a central tenet of his political outlook,¹ saw an opportunity during the standing army controversy to establish the first Shaftesbury and his associates as heroes in the authentic whig tradition. A tory pamphleteer in 1710 showed how this argument could be turned against the whigs by writing

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, ff. 157-60, Shaftesbury to Le Clerc, St. Giles's, 8 February 1704-5, (RAND, pp. 328-34); ff. 152-3, Shaftesbury to King, St. Giles's, January 1704-5, (RAND, pp. 325-6); MS Locke c 7, Shaftesbury to Locke, Chelsea, 7 September 1704; P.R.O. 30/24/20/88, King to Shaftesbury, Inner Temple, 18 January 1704-5.

a satirical 'martyrology', in which the first Shaftesbury was included.¹

Shaftesbury's association with the Commonwealthmen was strengthened by the interest which he shared with some of them in Socinianism, anti-clericalism, and free thought. The relationship between philosophy and politics exercised Shaftesbury's mind throughout his life and he drew his political opinions as much from his connection with liberal thinkers in England and the Netherlands as from his interpretation of current political events. His writing on the subject has a conservative tone, reflecting his distrust of radical change, which could lead to absolutism. To this distrust was linked a belief that no society is entirely corrupt and that the 'natural' elements present in any society should be preserved. At the same time he exhibited a strong antipathy to parties or factions in political life, which he saw as fragmenting the basic structure of society.² It is quite possible that this later public disavowal of party stemmed from his experience its debilitating consequences in parliament. It should serve as a further warning against an attempt to label Shaftes-

1. The History of King Killers; or, the 30th of January Commemorated in The Lives of Thirty One Fanatick Saints, famous for Treason, Rebellion &c. Being one for every Day in the Month. To be continu'd throughout the Year., London, n. d. (1710?).

2. Characteristics, I, 74-7.

bury's political allegiance too exactly.

Shaftesbury's association with the opposition to the Court during the standing army debates came to a premature end in July 1698, when he resigned his seat at the dissolution of parliament, owing to ill health.¹ He was present during the debates of December 1697, which led to the reduction of the land forces to ten thousand men, and was involved in the measures taken against Knight, Duncomb, and Burton. The three men, associates of Sunderland, had been encouraged to attack Montagu for alleged profiteering on exchequer bills early in January 1698.² Montagu dealt with the attack and showed that Duncomb himself, an M.P. for Downton, had been guilty of fraudulent practices with regard to the bills. After Duncomb had been sent to the Tower, Harley and his tory supporters attacked Montagu, who triumphantly defeated his critics in the Commons. It is probable that Shaftesbury supported Montagu in this matter. He sat on the committee to prepare the bills for punishing Knight, Duncomb, and Burton, which was established on 1 February.³ Lord Hartington, the eldest son of the duke of

1. Parliament was prorogued on 5 July 1698. C.J., 12, 343.

2. HILL, op. cit., pp. 74-5

3. C.J., 12, 78.

Devonshire, chaired the committee and was responsible for introducing the necessary measures in the House. On 7 March Shaftesbury was appointed, with Hartington, Spencer, and others, to manage a conference with the Lords about Duncomb, who had influential support in the upper house.¹ On 16 March Shaftesbury had a prominent place on the committee appointed to investigate the journals of the House of Lords and report what they found there of the proceedings in relation to Duncomb.² During the session he was also concerned with Sir John Phillips's bill for the suppression of profaneness, which involved him in committee work in the Commons and a conference with the Lords.³

After the dissolution of July 1698 Shaftesbury went to Rotterdam, where the air was better for his lungs. It was while he was in the United Provinces that his Inquiry concerning Virtue, or Merit was surreptitiously published by Toland from a manuscript which the author later claimed to be imperfect. However, it is quite possible that Shaftesbury collaborated with Toland to prepare the treatise for publication as a component of the radical whig literary campaign. Shaftesbury encouraged Pierre Desmaizeaux, whom he met in the Netherlands

1. C.J., 12, 147.

2. C.J., 12, 161.

3. C.J., 12, 276, 284.

and brought back to England, to translate Toland's edition into French.¹

On 10 November 1699 Shaftesbury's father died and the young politician and philosopher succeeded to the earldom.² He returned to England to take his estates in hand and the following year, on 19 January, he rode post-haste from Wimborne St. Giles to London, at the urgent request of Somers, to take his seat in the House of Lords, where his attendance became regular.³ Until the prorogation of parliament in April 1700 the whig leaders came under severe pressure from the tories. Somers and Portland were the particular targets of the malcontents and the whig ministry was reduced to reliance on tactics of disruption over such measures as the Resumption Bill.⁴ One must assume that Shaftesbury played his part on Somers's side until the prorogation in April and the latter's subsequent dismissal, which presaged the collapse of the whig ministry. In November the remaining whig ministers, with the exception of Vernon, were removed and Hedges, Rochester, and Godolphin joined the ministry.⁵ Montagu

1. British Library, Addit, MS 4288, ff. 98-9, Shaftesbury to Desmaizeaux, St. Giles's, 5 August 1701.

2. LUTTRELL, Brief Historical Relation..., IV, 580.

3. Journals of the House of Lords (hereafter abbreviated to L.J.), XVI, 497.

4. HILL, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

was removed from his most dangerous sphere of influence by his elevation to the peerage as Baron Halifax.

The dissolution of parliament was delayed until 19 December by the news of the death of Charles II of Spain, which reached London at the beginning of November.¹ The problem facing William III was that Charles left his possessions in Europe and America to Louis XIV's grandson, Philip of Anjou. This revelation prompted Louis to renounce the second partition treaty, which had been signed in March 1700.² The treaty was necessitated by the death of prince Joseph Ferdinand of Bavaria in January 1699. The electoral prince had been the beneficiary of the first partition treaty, agreed in October 1698, which had assigned most of the Spanish empire to him on Charles's death. The second treaty divided the empire between the Dauphin and the imperial candidate, the archduke Charles. It was this treaty which Louis renounced in an attempt to increase the French possessions in Europe. At the same time he effectively renounced the Dauphin's right to Spanish territory in Naples and Sicily in favour of a much larger share for his grandson. In England the tories were not too alarmed by Louis's renunciation of the treaty, arguing that Philip

1. HILL, op. cit., p. 84.

2. For the partition treaties see OGG, op. cit., pp. 440-58.

of Anjou was far enough from the French succession to have little chance of joining to France the territories left to him in Charles II's will.¹

Shaftesbury and his whig friends, on the other hand, were extremely concerned at what appeared to them to be tory support for French aggrandisement. After the dissolution of parliament on 19 December Shaftesbury supported the whigs during the fiercely fought general election which followed. In a letter to Benjamin Furly of 11 January 1701 he wrote:

Wee are now in the midst of our Elections of w^{ch} the West of England having much the greatest share and I being here plac'd with my Fortune & all my Interest, You may imagine I am not a little solicitouse at this time of danger having explain'd to you y^e Extreimity of our Affaires by these rash Councils for a Dissolution at this Conjunction w^{ch} I am satisfyed the King 'ere this is fully convinc'd was a wrong measure, enough to ruine us all.²

Later in the same letter Shaftesbury expressed a forthright view of the tories:

The only thing to be hoped and pray'd for, is, that the Tory party may not be superior: for, if but ever so little inferior, their numbers will be of service rather than of injury: for, as it is said of water or fire, so it may be said of them, that they are good servants, but ill masters;

1. HILL, op. cit., p. 84.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/53, Shaftesbury to Furly, St. Giles's, 11 January 1700-1.

and, as by principles they are slaves, so they are only serviceable when they are kept so, and their slavery and subjection is the only pledge of our freedom, or of the freedom of the world, as far as we in England are contributors to it, and let our friends in Holland know their friends here, and take notice that it is that party that hate the Dutch and love France, and the Whiggs the only contrary party that can now save them and England...¹

That Shaftesbury should respond to a specific request from Somers to take his seat in the Lords is an indication of the change that took place in his political allegiance after 1697-8 and the excitements of the standing army controversy. It became clear that the treaty of Ryswick was only a truce and that the French threat had not been effectively neutralised. After his visit to the United Provinces, which were in the front line of European warfare, Shaftesbury realised the necessity of a united whig front to resist the two connected perils of the tories at home and the French in Europe. It became evident to him that the intellectual concerns of the 'Roman' whigs were a luxury during such a crisis. After the tory election victory at the beginning of 1701 he maintained his attendance in the Lords at a time when the whig leaders were under a considerable amount of pressure.² The tory majority in the Commons was anxious

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/53. As cited in R. L. BRETT, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury..., London, 1951, p. 40.

2. HORWITZ, op. cit., pp. 281-2.

for peace and disposed to attack those ministers who had concluded the partition treaties for doing so without recourse to parliament. During the first half of 1701 the Commons moved to impeach the Junto lords and Shaftesbury leaped to their defence. He was present throughout the debates on the partition treaties, which had begun with criticism of Portland's part in negotiating the second treaty. Throughout the debates, however, Shaftesbury appears to have been anxious to show that his regard for principle had not deserted him and he was willing to criticise the way in which details of the negotiation had been withheld from parliament. On 14 March he was a member of the committee, chaired by Nottingham, which drew up an address to the king suggesting that in future he should consult the privy council and parliament on such matters.¹ He also sat on a number of committees connected with the impeachment proceedings, which provoked many clashes between the two houses during the 1701 session.²

Portland was voted guilty of his misdemeanours in connection with the second treaty on 29 March and the Junto lords - Somers, Halifax, and Orford - were impeached on 15 April, for being privy to

1. L.J., XVI, 622.

2. L.J., XVI, 654, 667, 671, 732, 746.

the negotiations for the first treaty. The main target of the impeachment was Somers. Shaftesbury, by supporting Somers and his colleagues throughout the impeachment proceedings, acted against his old 'leader', Harley, now Speaker of the Commons and one of the leading critics of the Junto. After the vote in the Commons against the Junto lords Shaftesbury was led to say:

Our Friends are given up as a Peace-offering to the Tory-Party who have promis'd all shall go smoothly & without opposition to y^e King on these Terms of their dis-abling the late Ministry from coming in to Place again.¹

It appears that among the minority in the Commons were Sir Walter Yonge, associated with Shaftesbury and Somers in the 'College', and Thomas Stringer, a faithful servant of the Shaftesbury family.²

Somers and Orford were confident that the charges laid against them would not stand up to critical scrutiny. Therefore they pressed the Lords to proceed with the trial. This the Lords tried to do but met with opposition from the majority in the Commons, who charged the upper house ^{with} attempting to encroach on the Commons' right to regulate the procedure of the trials. In late May and early June the impasse between the two houses led the Lords to postpone their debate on the land tax bill after it had been sent up to them on 10 June.³

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/22, Shaftesbury to Furly, London, 15 April 1701.

2. HORWITZ, op. cit., p. 288.

3. Ibid., p. 291.

On 13 June Haversham, at a conference between the houses to which Shaftesbury and his friend the duke of Newcastle were appointed as additional managers the following day, accused the Commons' managers of acting partially by impeaching only some of those involved in negotiating the partition treaties.¹ The Lords refused to accede to the Commons' demands to censure Haversham. This refusal was seen by the Commons as ample justification for their decision not to proceed with the trials of the Junto lords. However, the upper house continued to hold up the passage of supply bills until they had dealt with the impeachments. Somers was acquitted by 56 votes to 32 on 17 June, Shaftesbury voting with the majority.² The other acquittals followed, Orford's coming on 24 June, the day the session was ended.

As Professor Kenyon has suggested, the Junto leaders ultimately benefitted from their spiteful treatment at the hands of the lower house and attracted support from those in the political nation who were worried by the Commons' indifference to foreign affairs and the prospect of war.³ Kenyon points out that 'the Junto Whigs emerged as a constructive party vowed to support strong constitutional monarchy at home and defend the Settlement and Protestant Religion

1. HORWITZ, op. cit., p. 291.

2. Ibid., p. 292; L.J., XVI, 352-3.

3. J. P. KENYON, Stuart England, London, 1978, pp. 292-3.

abroad.'¹ It was this stand in the face of the French threat which won Shaftesbury's support for the Junto throughout 1700 and 1701, when so much appeared to be at risk.

Shortly before the Junto impeachment proceedings took place the Commons had dealt with the Kentish Petitioners.² Alarmed by the aggressive action of Louis XIV in moving into the Spanish Netherlands after his renunciation of the second partition treaty the Grand Jury of Kent asked the Commons to abandon factional struggles and vote the necessary supplies for the government to prosecute a war against France. The lower house promptly voted down the petition as 'scandalous, insolent, and seditious', and, 'tending to destroy the constitution of Parliaments.' The five principal petitioners were placed under arrest. As may be expected, Shaftesbury supported the action of the petitioners.³ They had expressed his own view about the disadvantages of faction and they had been in tune with his pro-Dutch and anti-French prejudices.

1. KENYON, op. cit., p. 292.

2. HORWITZ, op. cit., p. 289; L. K. J. GLASSEY, Politics and the Appointment of Justices of the Peace: 1675-1720, Oxford, 1979, pp. 145-6.

3. The History of the Kentish Petition, 1701, was reprinted in Somers' Tracts, London, 1809-15, XI, 242-7. See also SACHSE, Lord Somers, p. 296.

The prorogation of June 1701 was followed by decisive events abroad during the summer. Louis XIV showed no sign of relaxing the firm line he had taken after his recognition of Charles II's will. The French ambassador was expelled from The Hague and Louis prepared to ban the entry of English goods into France. On 5 September the exiled James II died and Louis, despite the advice of some of his ministers, recognised the late king's son as James III, king of Great Britain; a violation of Ryswick. William broke off diplomatic relations with Louis and the recognition of the 'Old Pretender' prompted a rash of petitions to the crown, declaring against James III, the 'pretended Prince of Wales.' The concern of parliament, which had passed the Act of Succession earlier in the year, was freshly engaged.¹

Despite the advice of Godolphin to the contrary William decided to follow the recommendation of Sunderland and Somers to dissolve parliament.² Shaftesbury's was one of the earliest voices in favour of dissolving the squabbling parliament of 1701. During May he had

1. HORWITZ, op. cit., p. 296.

2. For Somers's brilliant propaganda campaign to discredit the government and force an early general election, appealing to public opinion, see DOWNIE, Robert Harley and the Press, p. 4. For the dissolution see also GLASSEY, op. cit., p. 148.

written to Furly that, 'the Voice of the People has to overcome this very Parlem^t,¹ in June he had claimed that the Lords were now favourites with the people,² and in August that 'the Honest people of England' were 'being deluded & made to judg amiss by the behaviour of the Court', adding revealingly that the government 'act the Commonwealth-men.....',³

When the dissolution finally came, on 11 November, Shaftesbury threw himself into the ensuing election with an impressive fervour that brought political dividends. His determination to see the whigs successful led him to write to friends in Dorset and Wiltshire, asking them to support those of the 'honest Party' who were candidates.⁴ These latter included his brother, Maurice Ashley, who stood for Wiltshire. Detailed comment on Shaftesbury's 'connection' in the West Country will come in the next chapter, on his activity as a local politician:⁵ the strong West Country element among the Commonwealthmen has been recognised and deserves further investigation. However, on 29 December Shaftesbury could write to Furly of the success of his efforts.

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/25, Shaftesbury to Furly, London, 23 May 1701.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/27, Shaftesbury to Furly, Chelsea, 20 June 1701.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/31, Shaftesbury to Furly, St. Giles's, 26 August 1701.
 4. See P.R.O. 30/24/20/42-7 for some examples of this correspondence.
 5. See below, chapter IV.

I believe you hardly wonder at my silence this last Month, when you consider how great a Scene has open'd for the Publick in w^{ch} I was call'd to be so great an Actor, having strongly oblig'd myself to be so. For as on one hand (you know well) I was determin'd to retire absolutely from all Publick Affaires & never to have stirr'd out of my Privacy in the Country, had the King persisted in the Resolution of keeping the last Parlement & Ministry; - the other hand having been at one time almost the single man alive that peremptorily insisted on a Dissolution & having try'd all along both by my Friends here & in Holland to evince y^e Ministry of it, & to bring it to Effect (in w^{ch} perhaps I may have been some Instrument) I had y^e strongest Obligation on Earth upon me to act with Vigour as I have done since y^e Opportunity the King has most happily given us & it has pleased Providence to bless me with great success. For having my Province (& that a very hard one) in two Countyes long in the hands of y^e most inveterate of the Advers Party, I notwithstanding carryed all that I attempted in both. In one of them (viz^t Wilts) w^{ch} my Brother & his Friend represent instead of 2 inveterate Tories wee have there mended the Elections by 8, w^{ch} is a difference of 16 in parlement. And in Dorsetshire (my own County) we have gain'd also considerably: My Friend Mr Trenchard being in the room of a Constant ill Vote from the County: & my Friend Sir John Cropley being also brought in by me at y^e Place of my name Shaftesbury, w^{ch} was ever intirely in their hands since my Grandfather's death, but w^{ch} I have now intirely recover'd & made Zealouse. And as a Token that the King himself is right as we would wish, he yesterday gave me most hearty Thanks for my Zeal & Good Services on this Occasion, and this before much Company w^{ch} is a sufficient Declaration against S^r Edward Seymour & that Party to whome my Opposition was personal & who himself in person &

by his Relations oppos^d me every where in the Elections, tho' I thank God were everywhere defeated.¹

Shaftesbury's enthusiastic assessment of the election returns was not shared by all his contemporaries. Estimates varied considerably, although the election had been fought more along bipartisan lines than was usually the case during the period. Harley reckoned that his own supporters had the majority in the Commons but it was generally accepted that the choice of ministers depended on the king's inclination.² William soon made it clear that his preference was for the whigs. Carlisle succeeded Godolphin at the Treasury and the king intimated that he favoured Sir Thomas Littleton as Speaker of the Commons. Sir Charles Hedges was dismissed from his secretaryship of state on 29 December after refusing to promise to vote for Littleton in the election for Speaker.³ Hedges' dismissal occurred on the same day that Shaftesbury wrote his triumphant letter to Furly. It is probable that the negotiations surrounding the appointment of a successor to Hedges gave rise to the assertion of the fourth earl that William told Shaftesbury that his efforts in the West Country during

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/49, Shaftesbury to Furly, Chelsea, 29 December 1701. (RAND, pp. 309-10)

2. HORWITZ, op. cit., pp. 298-9.

3. Ibid., p. 299.

the election had turned the scales and offered him the post of secretary of state in the new government.¹ According to the fourth earl Shaftesbury declined the office on grounds of ill-health.

Nearly two years later Shaftesbury wrote his own account of his attitude to the king and to taking office.

My Zeal for the Revolution & the late King's Cause made me active for the support of that Government & for the Establishment of the Protestant Succession: and it was my good Fortune to have my services well thought of by the King, & acknowledg'd by him with great Favour. I had the Honour of many Offers from him: but thinking I could best serve Him & my Country in a dis-interest'd Station, I resolv'd absolutely against taking any Employment at Court. The only Favour I ever ask'd of the King was a small Office for a Friend of mine who had been assistant to me in serving him. He kindly granted it: But I lost the benefit of his Promise by the greatest of Losses that happen'd soon afterwards in his Death.

As this was the only favour I ever ask'd of the King, so it is the only one I shall ever ask of Those after him who I know have a just Regard to his Memory, & whose Wisedome will shew them that this happy Succession has been owing to that Prince, his Cause & Friends. And it will be the greatest Satisfaction to me, to be thus oblig'd by Those whome I am by Principle oblig'd to serve, & will serve still with the hazzard of all I have in the World.²

In his son's draft life we are told that, despite his refusal to

1. P.R.O. 30/24/21/225.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/73, 9 July 1703.

accept office, Shaftesbury, 'was not prevented from giving the King his advice, who frequently consulted him on matters of the highest importance; and it is pretty well known that he had the greatest share in composing that celebrated last speech of King William, 31st December, 1701.'¹

At the age of thirty-one Shaftesbury had made his mark at the centre of the political world. He had fought strenuously for a whig victory at the polls, he had moved close to the king, while at the same time he retained the reputation of a man, who, as he had shown during the standing army debates, believed principle to be the paramount guide of political action. He had reached the zenith of his political career. Although, owing to his ill-health, he did not think it wise to accept the burdens of office he could look forward at the beginning of 1702 to a number of satisfying years combining writing with political counsel at the highest level.

The fourth earl of Manchester, a distant relation, was appointed to the vacant secretaryship of state and, although Littleton was defeated by Harley in the poll for Speaker, it seemed that the whigs would be able to consolidate their position at Court and in the Commons. In this aim they were assisted by William III's tremendously popular speech on the day after the opening of parliament, 31 December

1. P.R.O. 30/24/21/225. As cited in RAND, pp. 310-1.

1701. William told parliament that England was now 'at the Head of the Protestant Interest' in Europe and that all available resources should be mobilised to counter the invidious manoeuvres of the French.¹

It is not certain whether the fourth earl's assertion of his father's part in the composition of William's speech is accurate. Stanhope and Campbell both ascribed it to Somers, as did Hardwicke, who, in his Miscellaneous State Papers of 1778, claimed to have seen a draft of the speech in Somers's handwriting.² This view is followed without question by Henry Horwitz in his book, Parliament, Policy and Politics in the Reign of William III, and by William Sachse in his recent biography of Somers.³ However, Shaftesbury and Somers were close friends and it is possible that the former was one of a number of people consulted by Somers during his composition of the speech.

What is certain is Shaftesbury's membership of the committee which drew up one of the strongly-worded addresses of support for the king voted by the Lords, and his authorship, with Toland's assistance, of the Paradoxes of State, a pamphlet based closely on William's last speech, which appeared in January 1702. In this pamphlet Shaftesbury expressed his attitude towards contemporary

1. HORWITZ, op. cit., p. 300.

2. Philip Yorke, 2nd earl of HARDWICKE, Miscellaneous State Papers, 1501-1726, London, 1778, II, 399.

3. HORWITZ, op. cit., p. 300; SACHSE, Lord Somers, p. 214.

party labels.

...whatever Names may have bin formerly coin'd to distinguish Parties here in England, there is at present neither Whig nor Tory, Williamite or Jacobite, nor any real Distinction but between those that are in a French, and those that are in an English Interest.¹

At the same time as he was writing the Paradoxes of State Shaftesbury, together with Wharton and Haversham, moved the Lords to bring in an Abjuration Bill against James III.² Although Hedges, the dismissed secretary of state, moved a similar bill in the Commons, the differences between whig and tory on this issue soon became apparent. The whigs proposed a voluntary oath of abjuration, which was to be tendered to the members of both houses. This would, as Shaftesbury pointed out, enable the compilation of a list of those who were opposed to the provisions of the Act of Succession.³ The tories, fearful of exposing divisions in their ranks, advocated a compulsory oath. The tories eventually won their case and compulsory abjuration was accepted by both houses.

Throughout February each party won advantages in the evenly divided Commons. On 23 February the king fell while riding in Richmond Park and sustained a broken collar-bone. Although his injury was

1. Paradoxes of State, Relating to the Present Juncture of Affairs in England and the Rest of Europe; Chiefly grounded on his Majesty's Princely, Pious, and most Gracious Speech, London, 1702, p. 3.

2. HORWITZ, op. cit., pp. 301-2.

3. Ibid., p. 301.

not regarded as a cause for serious concern he contracted a fever while convalescing. He died on the morning of 8 March 1702. Shaftesbury was present in the House of Lords when the king's death was announced.¹

Shaftesbury's optimistic outlook at the beginning of 1702, which found expression in his confident attacks on the tories in the Paradoxes of State, was suddenly clouded. Shortly after Anne's accession he was removed from the vice-admiralty of Dorset, the only office he ever held, and he was forced, by his poor health and his unpopularity with the tories, to curtail his political activity. He continued to sit in parliament infrequently until the end of 1702, when it became apparent that he was no longer a welcome figure at the centre of national politics.² In August 1703 he left for the United Provinces, where he stayed for a year. While he was abroad his proxy in the Lords was held by Somers.³ After his return to England Shaftesbury contented himself with influencing political affairs indirectly, through his friends and associates who remained in parliament. He also devoted his time to the study of the less controversial issues of moral and aesthetic philosophy, which were the main intellectual diversions of his last years.

The evidence for Shaftesbury's political activity and interests

1. L.J., XVII, 63.

2. L.J., XVII, 63-71, 100, 182, 184, 191.

3. ROBINSON, p. 115; P.R.O. 30/24/20/87, Somers to Shaftesbury, December 1704.

during his parliamentary career is fragmentary and often oblique. It shows that it is not possible to attach a rigid party label to him, largely because, for much of the time, he regarded politics with a certain detachment, cautious about being drawn into the vortex of political power and regarding the more dubious of acquaintances with disdain. His ethos was that of the 'club', in which educated and tolerant men would settle the nation's affairs without recourse to verbose pamphlets and vitriolic speeches. He combined a naive and superficially appealing belief in the ability of right-thinking men to agree on fundamental issues with a puritanical attitude of righteous indignation at the machinations of those whom he regarded as his political enemies. This prompted him to respond to their attacks in an uncharacteristically intemperate way, either in his own writing, such as the Paradoxes of State, or in his support of those, such as Toland and Stephens, who were more adept than he at scoring political points. It is true that the rage of party politics at the time forced those who wanted a hearing to adopt underhand tactics to achieve their goal, but from time to time in Shaftesbury's correspondence we may detect his anxiety at the methods employed by his political allies.

Shaftesbury's political career is a particular example of the difficulty of forcing a man's ideas into a preconceived political framework. Depending on which particular polarisation of politics is chosen he can be called a 'Whig', a 'Commonwealthman', a 'Country Whig',

a 'Junto Whig', a 'neo-Harringtonian', a 'Roman Whig', and so on. There are arguments for all these labels but to pick just one of them to describe Shaftesbury's political allegiance is not to give a simple guide but to evade responsibility.

However, some order may be discerned among the evidence. The stimulus of pro-Dutch and anti-French sympathies, together with the desire to enhance his grandfather's reputation, remained constant throughout Shaftesbury's adult life. They caused him to throw in his lot with the whigs in 1695 and he remained a whig, unlike Harley, to whom he was attracted as a young M.P. His acquaintance with Molesworth and Toland brought him into contact with the Commonwealthmen, for whom he retained some sympathy. Agreement with the Commonwealthmen was reflected in Shaftesbury's philosophy, for we should heed Professor Pocock's warning that 'republicanism in England was a language, not a programme; a language which was shaped by a standing confrontation with contingency and emergency as a means of resolving problems.'¹ Franco Venturi has stated that Shaftesbury made the greatest contribution to the ethics of the Commonwealthmen in his description of the 'ethical drive of an entirely worldly society, wholly directed to bringing about happiness among men.'² The Inquiry concerning Virtue,

1. The Political Works of James Harrington, edited by J. G. A. Pocock, Cambridge, 1977, p. 15. For a recent criticism of Pocock's view of 'neo-Harringtonianism' see an article by J. P. Kenyon in The Times Literary Supplement, 3,974 (2 June 1978), p. 613.

2. Franco Venturi, Utopia and Reform in the Enlightenment, Cambridge, 1971, p. 71.

or Merit was published, and may have been completed, at the height of the standing army controversy, which saw the first and last appearance of the Commonwealthmen as an important force, acting as a reasonably coherent body.

No doubt Shaftesbury's political outlook at the time was affected by the economic and financial pressures which landowners were experiencing. He was not very wealthy. Political campaigning ravaged his purse as well as his health and in 1703 he seriously contemplated selling St. Giles's House to help redeem his debts.¹ His dislike of 'corruption' and his concern for the political liberty of M.P.s, based on their ownership of property and freedom from the temptations of the Court, places him in the 'neo-Harringtonian' tradition, or Pocock's 'civic humanism':

In the forty years or so between Harrington and Locke - and affected during its subsequent history, I believe, more by the former - there can be seen emerging a concept of politics which constitutes a distinctively English, or rather Anglo-American brand of civic humanism. True to the main Aristotelian tradition, this declared that the individual as citizen might be known by the autonomy of his participation in politics, but it was peculiarly concerned with the material basis of that autonomy. The function of property was to render the individual independent and the ideal paradigm - though not, by any means, the only form - of the property which did this was an inheritable

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/78, Shaftesbury to Wheelock, Rotterdam, 6 November (1703) N.S.

freehold in land.¹

The tradition had received a stimulus from Shaftesbury's grandfather and John Locke: it was, therefore, one to which Shaftesbury could lay some sort of proprietary claim.

During 1700 and 1701 Shaftesbury recognised the need to renounce former factional interests and come out in favour of the Junto and against the 'French Interest.' This was to be the mainspring of his political thinking until his death in 1713, despite being coloured by his 'Country whig' sympathies.

I would like to suggest that this mature and realistic attitude towards politics, held in tension with Commonwealth sympathies, was due in part to his association with the 'College', and especially with Locke and Somers. His occasionally uneasy alliance with them before 1700 confronted Shaftesbury with the necessity of working cautiously and painstakingly to fashion policies capable of implementation. When he decided that the extravagances of radical opposition to the Court were no longer justified, in the face of a renewed French threat, he had friends in high places to whom he could turn and with whom he did not feel uneasy. He was able to do this without renouncing his previous views, which were seen by his allies

1. POCOCK, Politics, Language and Time, pp. 90-1.

as a sincere attempt to introduce an element of principle into political discussion. Shaftesbury needed the respectable but inventive policies of the Lockean circle as well as the republican rhetoric of Molesworth, Toland and others, to whom Shaftesbury's grandfather was an heroic figure battling against tyranny.

The recognition of political issues which were worth fighting for, even if they brought disadvantage in the short term; the recognition that these battles needed to be postponed in the face of a more serious danger; and the desire to maintain a certain detachment from the corrupting influences of Court and City provided the internal logic to Shaftesbury's parliamentary career. They brought him dividends, and temporary success on a national scale. Although the triumph was rudely broken by William III's sudden death Shaftesbury continued to battle away on the same issues. He was deeply concerned about the state of contemporary politics, the influence of the Court, and the conduct of the war with France. The concern was genuine and if at times there escapes from his pen a cutting generalisation about the crass behaviour of politicians, it is a sign more of his exasperation than his cynicism. Anne's reign offered little prospect of political success for Shaftesbury, but battles could be fought through friends and through books. When, ill and disappointed, he sailed to Rotterdam in August 1703 it was to prepare for the next

round in the fight against the dangerous moral and political forces prowling round Europe. His political effort during Anne's reign was to be concentrated in the management of elections, which had brought him such success in 1701.

CHAPTER IV

SHAFTESBURY'S ELECTORAL INFLUENCE

This chapter is concerned with Shaftesbury's political activity in Dorset and Wiltshire only to the extent that it had significance at a national level. It would be possible, using the estate papers at Wimborne St. Giles, to provide a more detailed account of the land owned by Shaftesbury, his relations with his tenants, and his handling of the numerous minor duties incumbent upon him as a local magnate. All these concerns were important in establishing Shaftesbury's reputation among the local population and it was probably for these, rather than his more notable achievements, that he was known to many inhabitants of Dorset. They were, however, politically neutral actions, which had no repercussions at Westminster. The bulk of the chapter, therefore, will be concerned with Shaftesbury's conduct at general elections and his attempts to strengthen the whig, and particularly the Country whig, representation of the two counties in which he had an 'interest'. His electioneering was at times extremely active, at times half-hearted and despondent. Success tended to coincide with the former mood, failure with the latter. He had to be goaded into action, either by a political crisis or by the exhortation of his political allies. The latter, in all likelihood, found him an

exasperating man with whom to work. Urged to secure the election of sound party men he would take offence at the slightest hint of interference from other whigs. If he thought, as he often did, that he was not given adequate support by the whig leaders, or that one of them was opposing his 'interest', he would abandon his efforts until a hasty, soothing letter from Somers assured him that all was well.

Shaftesbury took little part in local politics until his succession to the title late in 1699. From that date until 1710, when his health finally broke, he was involved in six general elections; the two elections in 1701 and those in 1702, 1705, 1708, and 1710. The greatest impact of the Shaftesbury 'interest' on the election results came in the second election of 1701, which coincided with the zenith of Shaftesbury's political achievement at Westminster. The successes which he organised at the polls in November and December 1701 were not sustained. Not only did the death of William III, in March 1702, put an end to Shaftesbury's hopes of influencing the ministry but the ensuing election in the summer also heralded a recovery by the Tories of much of the ground they had lost in Dorset and Wiltshire. The Shaftesbury 'interest' quickly faded as a significant political force. There was a brief revival of hope in 1707-8, during the abortive negotiations to attract independent support to the Marlborough-Godolphin-Harley triumvirate; but this hope was soon disappointed.

There was a good deal of scope for influencing elections in the

notoriously over-represented counties of Dorset and Wiltshire. A mere ten thousand electors chose over fifty members of parliament to represent them at Westminster. As a consequence the concern shown by Shaftesbury and his Commonwealth associates, many of them West Country M.P.s, for electoral reform probably struck contemporaries as offensively hypocritical. Shaftesbury appears to have had no qualms about fulfilling the tasks expected of him as an important local figure, although he often found local politicians and their intrigues extremely trying. Yet most of his influence on elections was of a personal, rather than an aristocratic, nature. Although his estates were substantial and he was by no means a poor man, he was not a great landowner. Most of his land was in sparsely populated rural areas, with the exception of land leased from the bishop of Ely in Holborn. Nor did he have the money to distribute lavish patronage to candidates and electors. The election expenses of his brother, Maurice Ashley, were a continual source of worry.¹ The Shaftesbury estates had been depleted by the legal battles caused by the first earl's will, with its attendant family squabbling, and the financial incompetence of the second earl and his servants.² In 1695 Shaftesbury had to sell Cranborne Chase and its lodges to Thomas Freke for

1. See below, *op. cit.* 138.

2. K. H. D. HALEY, The First Earl of Shaftesbury, Oxford, 1968, p. 734; ROBINSON, p. 12; estate papers at Wimborne St. Giles. See above, chapter II, pp. 43-6.

for £3,500, in order to acquire immediate and much-needed income.¹

As a consequence Shaftesbury was not able to exercise the consistent and ruthless control of constituencies which one might have expected from a man in his position. In fact, for most of the period under consideration, he could only ensure the election of one or two members of parliament. This makes his achievement at the end of 1701 the more impressive. Working carefully with a low budget, Shaftesbury, by the judicious cultivation of family and friends, temporarily established himself as an important force in local politics, whose efforts were thought worthy of special praise by William III. Financial considerations played their part but the results reflected Shaftesbury's strong personal appeal to the landed interest in 1701.

Nor was his influence confined to rigid 'party' interests. As in his interventions at Westminster, Shaftesbury pursued an independent Country line in his attempt to have 'honest' men elected to parliament. He supported friends regardless of the party to which they adhered in the Commons, provided that their attitude towards the war against France was trustworthy. Such an independent attitude did not always help his electioneering. It appears that he had to deal with opposition from local whigs as well as tories. His relations with Poole, the borough which he had represented in parliament, were

1. John HUTCHINS, The History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset (third edition), London, 1861-74, III, 411.

particularly difficult and he found it impossible to get his nominees elected there. He also resented the interference of the second duke of Bolton, the whig lord-lieutenant of Dorset, whose eldest son was a protégé of Shaftesbury and travelled to the Netherlands with him in 1703.¹ His old friend Lord Spencer, now the third earl of Sunderland, was also regarded by Shaftesbury with some suspicion. Sunderland and Bolton had their own views about suitable candidates for elections and were not above sharp practice to get their men elected.²

In the election of January 1701, called after the dismissal of the Junto ministry, Shaftesbury's ambitions and achievements were modest. His independent outlook is evident at once, for he did not attempt to choose a whig candidate for Dorset. The two sitting knights of the shire were Thomas Freke and Colonel Thomas Strangways, both of whom are recognised by modern scholars as tories.³ Freke, who had sat for Dorset since 1679, supported the first Shaftesbury during the Exclusion Crisis.⁴ He was the cousin of John Freke,

1. Narcissus LUTTRELL, A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714, Oxford, 1857, V, 460.

2. See below, pp. 146-7.

3. See, for example, HORWITZ, op. cit., pp. 347, 355. For a contemporary whig evaluation of the strong tory leanings of members of the Freke and Strangways families in parliament see A Collection of White and Black Lists.... (third edition), London, 1715, pp. 4, 6, 10, 13, 16, 19, 30, 33.

4. HALEY, op. cit., pp. 386, 626, 711.

the London lawyer, who was a leading member of Locke's 'College'. He was also the man to whom Shaftesbury had sold Cranborne Chase in 1695. Shaftesbury evidently regarded Freke as a better representative of Country interests than any man of his own choosing. In a letter to John Freke, written some time before the election was called, Shaftesbury had indicated his intentions in those constituencies where he had an 'interest':

...I discover more and more y^e Endeavours against us Country Gentlemen & our Interest... I have heard from Weymouth y^t my Bro: may have a secure Interest there; but I am tender of crouding in, lest Mr. Thomas ffrekes Interest should be any ways disturbed, his Interest being of more moment to support there, than my Brothers... As for my Brother in Law, if he may help to stop a gap att poole, and y^t y^e Country Gentlemen (Now S^r Nathaniel [Napier] does not stand) pitch upon him for y^e post, I will doe my best to support him, & have had some overtures of that kind made to me.¹

Shaftesbury's uncertainty about his brother's plans was eventually settled with Freke's cooperation. On 19 December 1700 Freke wrote to Shaftesbury to tell him that he had been asked by Viscount Weymouth to support the candidature of Weymouth's son, Henry Thynne. He had told Thynne that he was committed to Maurice Ashley. Thynne asked Freke to suggest that the two interests might be joined and

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/14, Shaftesbury to Freke, St. Giles's, 10 September 1700.

Freke informed Shaftesbury that he was now engaged on this task.¹

The result of the negotiations was that Ashley and Thynne, a tory, were both elected.²

At Poole Shaftesbury's efforts were not so successful: he failed to secure the election of his brother-in-law, Edward Hooper. Hooper had married Shaftesbury's second sister, Dorothy, and held estates at Hurn Court, near Christchurch, and Boveridge, about three miles north-east of Wimborne St. Giles. His eldest son, another Edward, became M.P. for Christchurch in 1740 and assisted the fourth earl of Shaftesbury in his militia work in Dorset.³ The elder Hooper's failure at Poole was due in part to the opposition of some of the local whigs.⁴ Poole was a safe whig borough, and it is indicative of the low standing which he enjoyed among some whigs that Shaftesbury was never able to make much headway in this whig stronghold. Whether or not he encountered opposition from the strong merchant interest in Poole is not known, although it is possible that during his brief tenure of

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/16, Thomas Freke to Shaftesbury, Shroton, 19 December 1700.
 2. Robert WALCOTT, English Politics in the Early Eighteenth Century, Oxford, 1956, pp. 193-4. For Thynne's toryism see A Collection of White and Black Lists..., pp. 6, 10, 33.
 3. Romney SEDGWICK, The House of Commons 1715-1754, London, 1970, II, 147; HUTCHINS, *op. cit.*, III, 385.
 4. London, History of Parliament Trust, draft biography of Lord Ashley by Paula WATSON, p. 6.

the vice-admiralty of Dorset in 1701-2 Shaftesbury had to enforce trading restrictions which were prejudicial to the Poole merchants.

Another, older, relation of Shaftesbury was a member of parliament during the period discussed in this chapter. Francis Stonehouse was some sixteen years older than Shaftesbury. He was educated at Oxford and the Middle Temple and owned land at Great Bedwin, near Marlborough. He sat for Bedwin between 1678 and 1681, and again between 1694 and 1705, when he stepped down in favour of a member of the Bruce family.¹ In 1704 he married Shaftesbury's eldest sister, Frances Ashley. Judging from the surviving correspondence it does not appear that Shaftesbury was particularly happy about the match, although he did not prevent it from taking place.² It would be stretching the claims of family relationship as an indicator of political allegiance rather too far to regard Stonehouse as a member of the Shaftesbury 'interest'.

We have already seen, in the previous chapter, that the election

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1. Joseph FOSTER, Alumni Oxonienses... 1500-1714, Oxford, 1891-2, IV, 1429; Historical Manuscripts Commission, Fifteenth Report, Appendix, Part VII, Somerset, Ailesbury, & Puleston MSS, London, 1898, pp. 188-9 (Lord Bruce to Earl of Ailesbury, London, 30 January 1704-5) and 191-2 (C. Beecher to Lord Bruce, 30 April 1705).
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 280, Shaftesbury to Bishop of Salisbury, Rotterdam, 5 February 1704 N.S. (RAND, pp. 320-1); Shaftesbury to Lady Frances Ashley, Holland, 18 March 1704 N.S. (RAND, pp. 321-2) See also P.R.O. 30/24/22/1, ff. 6-7, Lady Frances Stonehouse to Shaftesbury, Great Bedwin, 2 September 1704.

of December 1701 saw an impressive attack by Shaftesbury and his supporters on the tories, and especially the followers of Sir Edward Seymour, in Dorset and Wiltshire.¹ The election, for which Shaftesbury claimed he was one of the first to call, came at a time when the country appeared to be particularly threatened.² The impeachment of the Junto lords and the growing threat of French domination had convinced Shaftesbury that every effort had to be made to secure an overwhelming 'honest' and anti-French majority at Westminster. He worked tirelessly to this end with impressive results.

However impressive the results may have been, they still contained disappointments. During November and the first half of December Shaftesbury was involved in detailed negotiations with his candidates and their supporters. Although the Mayor of Poole offered to put Hooper's name forward as a candidate, Shaftesbury declined the invitation on his brother-in-law's behalf.³ He was careful to explain to the mayor that Hooper's refusal was not an indication of his lack of desire for the honour but of his unwillingness to commit himself to a task which he might be unable to fulfil. It seems likely that Shaftesbury was unwilling to risk the humiliation of a second reverse at Poole within a year. In the middle of November he received an

1. See above, chapter III, pp. 107-110.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/25, Shaftesbury to Furly, 23 May 1701.

3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/42, Shaftesbury to Mayor of Poole, St. Giles's, 21 November 1701.

address from the mayor and corporation of Shaftesbury thanking him for his services in the last parliament and asking him to nominate a 'friend' as M.P. for the borough.¹ The offer was accepted on Sir John Cropley's behalf and he was duly elected.

Shaftesbury was also involved in the county elections. Thomas Freke wrote to him on 14 November to say that although he was willing to stand for Dorset again he was uncertain whether his poor health would allow him to do so.² Freke died in December and Shaftesbury was forced to make some rapid adjustments among his candidates. Colonel Thomas Trenchard, a member of an influential Dorset whig family and M.P. for Dorchester since January 1701, was persuaded to take Freke's place; he was duly elected as a knight of the shire, with Strangways, on 10 December.³ Trenchard had been re-elected at Dorchester on 24 November, so a by-election was necessary, at which Shaftesbury backed another of his friends, Thomas Freke II, a son of the former county member. On 13 December Freke agreed to stand at Dorchester, but warned that he could not promise constant attendance in the Commons if he was successful.⁴ In the event such considerations

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/43, Shaftesbury to Bennet, 15 November 1701. (RAND, p. 308)
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/40, Freke to Shaftesbury, Shroton, 14 November 1701.
 3. London, History of Parliament Trust, draft essay on Dorset constituency, 1690-1714.
 4. P.R.O. 30/24/20/46, T. Freke II to Shaftesbury, Shroton, 13 December 1701.

were irrelevant. At the by-election of 4 February 1702 Sir Nathaniel Napier, Shaftesbury's former partner at Poole, was elected to join his own son as a burgess for Dorchester.

Rather unexpectedly, Shaftesbury faced a similar state of affairs in Wiltshire. His brother, Maurice Ashley, who had been returned to the third seat at Weymouth and Melcombe Regis, was asked by Wharton to stand for Wiltshire.¹ Ashley made sure that Sir George Hungerford, the tory member, was not standing again before going forward. On 28 November Hungerford assured Ashley of his support² and on 3 December he told Shaftesbury that, although he could not promise to be at Ashley's election, he would encourage his friends 'in our dirty parts' to vote for him.³ Hungerford fulfilled his promise and one of his letters, to Robert Hall of Salisbury, has survived in the Shaftesbury papers. Hungerford explains that he has been ill, is still indisposed, and has decided not to stand for Wiltshire. He asks Hall to tell his friends to vote for Ashley.⁴

Ashley's successful candidature in Wiltshire entailed another

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1. E. L. ELLIS, The Whig Junto....., p. 451.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/43, Hungerford to Ashley, Cadnam, 28 November 1701.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/44, Hungerford to Shaftesbury, Cadnam, 3 December 1701.
 4. P.R.O. 30/24/20/45, Hungerford to Hall, Cadnam, 3 December 1701.

by-election, for which Shaftesbury had to find a candidate. Before Thomas Freke II decided to stand at Dorchester he was offered the chance of representing Weymouth and Melcombe Regis. In a letter of 11 December, arranging a meeting of his supporters at Dorchester on the following day, Shaftesbury told Freke of the serious problem caused by the two by-elections and the necessity of finding suitable candidates:

We have loss enough by your declining at Weymouth but should you now decline Dorchester I know not how a Breach can be prevented w^{ch} I fear will be very injuriouse to the honest Interest. You know there is much time between this & that. I heartily wish you may, 'ere that, be so far out of Private affaires as to be able to attend y^e Publick w^{ch} I truly think stands in need of help: or if you could not possibly attend the Parlemt: this Winter; yet your being chosen here, would prevent very great mischief. If you cannot give your Consent, give me at least your Advice & Thoughts about it; for now my hand is to the Plough I would go on & do w^t service I could for this Season & lay the best Foundation I could to break the neck of that Tyrrany w^{ch} I have done something towards; & w^{ch} might certainly be perfected could we now prevent Divisions amongst our own Friends & act with a good Correspondence with one another.¹

Freke's refusal to stand at Weymouth caused Shaftesbury to support Anthony Henley, from a Hampshire family which sent several of its members to Westminster during the first half of the eighteenth

1. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, Forster MSS., Shaftesbury to T. Freke II, St. Giles's, 11 December 1701.

century. Although a government pensioner, Henley remained a staunch whig.¹ He was elected to the vacant third seat in the joint boroughs and later held the second seat between 1702 and 1705 and the fourth from 1705 until his death in 1711.²

Mention has been made in the previous chapter of Shaftesbury's exultant letter to Furly, written on 29 December 1701, in which he commented on his opposition to Seymour and the West Country Tories and the royal approval of his efforts in the elections.³ It is certain that the second election of 1701 meant a great deal to Shaftesbury. It provided him with a paradigm of virtuous political action in defence of the 'Friends of the Revolution'. References to the election occur frequently in Shaftesbury's later correspondence and writing. Writing to Sunderland in December 1706 Shaftesbury indicated the extent of the sacrifice he had made to ensure success at the election.

Your LordP knows that after I first quitted the Publick Service on y^e Account of my ill Health, I return'd again to it as unfitt as I was, & in y^e last year of y^e King's Reign exerted all y^e Interest & Power I had in his Service & that of his sinking Friends; not without the Flattery

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1. Geoffrey HOLMES, British Politics in the Age of Anne, London, 1967, pp. 360-1.
 2. WALCOTT, op. cit., pp. 194-5. Walcott describes Henley as a litterateur and man-about-town.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/49, Shaftesbury to Furly, Chelsea, 29 December 1701. See above, chapter III, pp. 107-9.

of having in some measure succeeded.¹

Unfortunately for Shaftesbury the euphoria and sense of purpose, which prompted him to write the Paradoxes of State, were not to last. William III died at the end of March 1702 and his successor's ministers were unsympathetic to whigs in general and to whigs like Shaftesbury in particular. Shaftesbury soon came to see the last year of William's reign as a golden age, as far as his own career was concerned. In doing so he was able to justify his earlier opposition to the king. He wrote to Furly in August 1702 that, apart from during 1701, William 'did on all occasions sacrifice & deliver up those Wretches called Whiggs to the fury of their Enemyes', using them to extract taxes but not allowing them to pass 'a single popular Act.'² An exaggeration, of course, and a distortion of the events to justify his political allegiance in retrospect - but it was a view of English political life which Shaftesbury found convincing. It strengthened the suspicion with which he regarded most ministers; a strong indication of Country distrust of the executive.³

Apart from ruining his political career the king's death landed Shaftesbury with a third general election in eighteen months. The

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 290r, Shaftesbury to Sunderland, St. Giles's, 7 December 1706. (RAND, pp. 369-70)
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/65, Shaftesbury to Furly, (St. Giles's), 10 August 1702.
 3. For a brief account of Country ideology before 1714 see H. T. DICKINSON, Liberty and Property, London, 1977, pp. 102-118.

single session of William's last parliament ended on 23 May 1702. The parliament was dissolved on 2 July and the elections took place during the same month.

Shaftesbury's reduced activity at a national level after the king's death was reflected in Dorset, and his election plans were drastically curtailed. At the end of May he wrote to Lord Kent, asking for his support for Maurice Ashley in Wiltshire.¹ Shaftesbury and Trenchard also tried to persuade Trenchard's uncle, Major-General Thomas Erle, to stand for Dorset.² Erle, who had been Ginckel's second-in-command in Ireland during the 1690s, was Governor of Portsmouth and M.P. for the borough. He also had an electoral interest at Wareham. He did not stand for the county seat but was elected at both Wareham and Portsmouth, choosing to sit for the latter.³ Nor was Shaftesbury's circular letter to the Dorset electors of any avail.⁴ Thomas Chafin II, a kinsman of the Frekes but not a Shaftesbury nominee, joined Strangways as a knight of the shire. Shaftesbury's lack of success in the county election is surprising. It seems likely that his independent Country line, which entailed

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/61, Shaftesbury to Kent, St. Giles's, 30 May 1702.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/62, Trenchard to Shaftesbury, Wolverton, 30 May 1702; P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 101-2, Erle to Shaftesbury, Dublin, 27 June 1702.
 3. WALCOTT, op. cit., pp. 166, 216-7.
 4. P.R.O. 30/24/20/63, Shaftesbury to Trenchard, St. Giles's, 31 May 1702.

co-operation with friends who were considered to be tories, irritated the more orthodox whig Charles Paulet, second duke of Bolton, who succeeded the third earl of Bristol as lord lieutenant of Dorset in 1699. Bristol had supported the elder Thomas Freke, the first Shaftesbury's ally during the exclusion crisis.¹

Shaftesbury's only successes in the 1702 election were the election of Cropley at Shaftesbury and Henley, whose support was more tenuous, at Weymouth and Melcombe Regis. Ashley failed in Wiltshire and Thomas Freke II at Weymouth. Freke had persuaded his father-in-law and friends to vote for Cropley and had suggested to Shaftesbury the possibility of intervening at Cricklade, which had just over a hundred voters.² Shaftesbury does not appear to have attempted anything there although the borough was contested at every election in Anne's reign. It is possible, however, that he thought of intervening at Downton, another Wiltshire borough, where the controlling interest was held by his Junto acquaintance, Wharton.³

Shaftesbury blamed the court for the tory victory in 1702. In his letter to Furly of 10 August he gave news of the election and composition of the new parliament, claiming,

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1. However, for the antagonism between Bristol and the first Shaftesbury see HALEY, *op. cit.*, pp. 386-8, 407.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/64, Freke to Shaftesbury, Shroton, 12 July 1702.
 3. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS 585 1075; cited by ROBINSON, p. 112.

However, it is no treason to say y^t that
Party whome the Court has favoured have
obtain'd their Victory in allmost all parts:
by what means or practice, lawfull or
unlawfull, moderate or violent I will not say.¹

He complained to Furly that all the local government officials,
magistrates, sheriffs, and militia officers, were controlled by
the high church party and that the changes in offices had been made
just before the elections.² Shaftesbury himself suffered in the purge.
The vice-admiralty of Dorset, to which he had been appointed in June
1701, was taken from him a year later. He was replaced by Colonel
Strangways, the tory member for Dorset.³

In November 1702 Shaftesbury told Furly that he would now be
doing little in public affairs, 'from w^{ch} I am now much withdrawn.'
He gave poor health and the impropriety of acting against a hostile
regime as his reasons and looked forward to his forthcoming visit to
Furly in Rotterdam and 'the Retirement I love.'⁴

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/65, Shaftesbury to Furly, St. Giles's, 10 August 1702.

2. For confirmation of Shaftesbury's claim that the receipt of commissions of peace during the 1702 election was a deliberate government stratagem see L. K. J. GLASSEY, Politics and the Appointment of Justices of the Peace: 1675-1720, Oxford, 1979, p. 157.

3. HUTCHINS, op. cit., I, lv.

4. P.R.O. 30/24/20/66, Shaftesbury to Furly, St. Giles's, (4) November 1702. (RAND, pp. 312-3)

One of the most pressing problems facing Shaftesbury in his concern with electoral management was that of expense. His brother's election expenses, which Shaftesbury was obliged to underwrite, amounted to £700 for the three elections of 1701 and 1702.¹ The greater part of the money was spent on travel and lodging throughout Wiltshire and Dorset to gather support. The sum was not particularly large compared with the expenditure of some politicians but, added to his own expenses, it was enough to make a deep impression on Shaftesbury's income, which amounted to about £3,000 a year at this time.²

The election results of 1702 showed that Shaftesbury's brief influence as an electoral force was on the wane and he was not to achieve the successes of December 1701 during Anne's reign. He was still a figure of some political stature, however, and Somers in particular was anxious to use Shaftesbury's position in Dorset to secure the return of Junto supporters at subsequent elections. The background to Shaftesbury's political concerns during Anne's reign will be more fully discussed in chapter VII. It need only be said ~~that~~ that the hopes that were occasionally expressed during the reign, that Shaftesbury might once again aspire to national importance as a

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/77, Wheelock to Shaftesbury, 29 October 1703.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/85, Wheelock to Shaftesbury, Purton, 17 February 1703-4.

political adviser, were not matched by a suitably impressive performance in the elections.

Shaftesbury returned from his last visit to the United Provinces in August 1704. The crossing was extremely uncomfortable and he retired directly to the country.¹ He was soon reminded of his electoral duties when, in December, he received a letter from Somers asking him to persuade his brother to stand for Wiltshire at the election which was due the following year.² The tory ministry was near to collapse and an attempt by some of the more extreme tories to tack an Occasional Conformity Bill to the annual grant of the land tax had been defeated on 28 November.³ Although parliament was not prorogued until 14 March 1705 and dissolved at the beginning of April, early preparations were made for an election necessitated by the Triennial Act.

It was part of Somers's plan for the election that Maurice Ashley should stand for Wiltshire with William Ashe. He told Shaftesbury that the scheme had the support of Somerset, Bolton, Wharton, and

1. London, British Library, Addit. MS. 4743 f. 156, Cropley to Henry Davenant, 7 September 1704.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/87, Somers to Shaftesbury, (5) December 1704.

3. B. W. HILL, The Growth of Parliamentary Parties, 1689-1742, London, 1976, pp. 99-101.

Kingston. Somers, who held Shaftesbury's proxy in the Lords, assured him that 'no one living lays the public interest more nearly to heart than you do.'¹ Four years earlier Shaftesbury would have leaped at the opportunity to make a name for himself at the polls. His attitude at this election, the most closely fought of the reign, can hardly have pleased Somers. He replied that he preferred to allow Ashley to make up his own mind about his candidature.² This show of high-minded indifference to political detail was thrown back in Shaftesbury's face by his brother, who decided to stand at Weymouth instead of Wiltshire. Shaftesbury's discomfiture at this public exposure of his apparent inability to control his brother's candidature was turned to anger when he heard of a rumour that he had dictated Ashley's decision. Towards the end of January he received a letter from Daniel Burgess, the son of the famous dissenting minister, expressing the hope that Ashley would stand for Wiltshire. Burgess had heard that, 'A Great Man, in high place near y^e Queen', thought that Shaftesbury was restraining Ashley from standing.³ Shaftesbury promptly replied that there was no truth in the allegation and asked Burgess to assure the 'Great Man' that Ashley had made his own

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/87, Somers to Shaftesbury, (5) December 1704.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/1, ff. 72-3, Shaftesbury to Somers, London, 28 December 1704.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/89(1), Burgess to Shaftesbury, London, 20 January 1704-5.

decision: the 'Great Man' was Somerset, the queen's favourite.¹ Finally, on 27 January, Burgess told Shaftesbury that Somerset had been told the true story and that Somers had also been informed.² Eventually Ashley was elected to the third seat at Weymouth and Melcombe Regis.³ In October he confirmed the trust put in him by the Junto by voting for the Court candidate for Speaker.⁴ His occasional opposition to Shaftesbury's Country viewpoint during the parliament was a source of great concern to the latter.

Apart from his routine support for Cropley, Shaftesbury was actively concerned with one other candidate in the 1705 election. Awnsham Churchill had been a bookseller in London since 1681. In 1690 he had taken his brother, John, into partnership: their first publication was Locke's A second Letter concerning Toleration. They went on to publish many volumes, including more of Locke's work and, between 1704 and 1715, Rymer's Foedera.⁵ Awnsham Churchill amassed a considerable fortune from his business and bought an estate in his

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, ff. 155-6, Shaftesbury to Burgess, St. Giles's, January 1704-5; P.R.O. 30/24/22/1, ff. 67-8, Shaftesbury to Ashley, January 1704-5.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/89(2), Burgess to Shaftesbury, 27 January 1704-5.

3. WALCOTT, op. cit., p. 194.

4. London, History of Parliament Trust, draft essay on Maurice Ashley by Paula WATSON; see P.R.O. 30/24/22/5, f. 368.

5. For details of the Churchill brothers see Henry R. PLOMER, A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers who were at work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1668 to 1725, London and Oxford, 1968, pp. 69-70.

home town of Dorchester. He was anxious to secure Shaftesbury's support for his candidature at Poole, for Shaftesbury had known the Churchill brothers for many years. Shaftesbury turned down the request, owing to his failure to achieve any electoral success at Poole.¹ However, he was pleased to support Churchill at Dorchester, where he came top of the poll in a contested election on 14 May.² He held the seat until 1710.

Two letters written in February 1705 give some indication of Shaftesbury's reluctance to throw himself whole-heartedly into the elections. On 1 February Churchill sympathised with Shaftesbury's sense of grievance at the government's ingratitude to him after the death of William III but hoped that he would not allow it to restrict his efforts in public affairs.³ On 24 February Shaftesbury himself wrote to Sir Rowland Gwinn, envoy in Hanover and a former parliamentary colleague:

But in my present State and Circumstances, I
am so remote from all Concernment in the approach-
ing Elections that I know no more of them than
by uncertain Rumours: nor do I know concerning
my nearest Relations or Friends whether they stand
or no; or for what Places. So y^t I am pretty

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/90, Churchill to Shaftesbury, London, 1 February 1704-5.
 2. London, History of Parliament Trust, draft essay on Dorchester constituency. The duke of Newcastle succeeded Thomas Freke I as High Steward of Dorchester after the latter's death in 1701.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/90.

secure against such a Censure in a future House of Commons, as was designd me in the beginning of this by the Tory party, for meddling to much in the affair of Elections.¹

Party strife reached its height during the first few years of the eighteenth century and the elections of 1701, 1702, and 1705 were particularly rancorous.² Party struggle was popularly regarded as a fight to the death, with one party permanently victorious and the other completely vanquished. Supporters of a defeated ministry were always open to extravagant threats from the victors. It appears that Shaftesbury received such threats after 1702. Later in the reign tory distrust of Shaftesbury's politics was exacerbated by the appearance of his philosophical and critical work, which won him a reputation in some quarters as a subversive libertine writer.³

Despite any hopes he may have had the ministerial changes after 1705 were not particularly advantageous to Shaftesbury. Members of the Junto were given ministerial office but did not feel inclined to allow him any influence in policy. Cropley, his principal associate at Westminster, took part, with Robert Molesworth, in a number of

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, f. 160v, Shaftesbury to Gwinn, St. Giles's, 24 February 1704-5. (RAND, pp. 334-5)
 2. Geoffrey HOLMES and W. A. SPECK, The Divided Society: Party Conflict in England 1694-1716, London, 1967, pp. 1-7.
 3. BRETT, p. 46. For the reputation of Shaftesbury's work at the time of the Sacheverell Trial see below, chapter VII, pp. 296-7. For the false attribution of libertine works to Shaftesbury see British Library, Addit. MS. 4288, ff. 95-7, Shaftesbury to Desmaizeaux, 17 February 1701.

informal meetings with Godolphin.¹ The Lord Treasurer had found tory and Junto support equally unreliable and was concerned to gather as much independent support round his ministry as possible. Although Shaftesbury had very little influence over whig M.P.s, apart from Cropley and one or two others, Cropley himself was emerging as an independent Country whig leader, acting as spokesman for a modest contingent of about thirty Country members.² Godolphin was under extreme pressure to keep the triumvirate afloat during the stormy session of 1707-8, while under attack from the Junto. Shaftesbury, who suspected Junto sympathizers of having jeopardized his election plans in 1705 and was more concerned with foreign than domestic policy at this juncture, was willing to support Cropley's negotiations.

Godolphin also seemed capable of providing material benefits in return for Shaftesbury's support. In December 1707 he finally promised a place in the Transport Office to Shaftesbury's close friend and relation, Thomas Micklethwayte, who was to see the second edition of the Characteristics through the press.³ The office had been

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1. See, for example, P.R.O. 30/24/21/144-6, 148, 150, 153, Cropley to Shaftesbury, January to April 1708.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/114, Cropley to Shaftesbury, February 1705-6. For the 'Whimsical Whigs' see below, chapter VII, pp.279-82.
 3. For Micklethwayte's appointment see William A. SHAW (Ed.), Calendar of Treasury Books, XXII, part II, London, 1950, p. 204; P.R.O. 30/24/21/145(2), Cropley to Shaftesbury, 4 February 1707-8. For Micklethwayte and the Characteristics see Shaftesbury's numerous letters to him in P.R.O. 30/24/23/8 and 9, several of which are cited below in chapter VIII.

promised by William III shortly before his death. It had taken five years to secure and further disposed Shaftesbury favourably towards Godolphin. Earlier, in December 1705, one of Godolphin's ministers, Cowper, had heeded Shaftesbury's request that Edward Hooper, his brother-in-law, should be excused from being appointed sheriff of Dorset. This was a prospect which Shaftesbury regarded as 'an unspeakable mortification', as it would involve the family in great expense and inconvenience, with no political benefits. He recommended William Whitaker,

who, if I or my Interest here ever served the Government, has as zealously disserved it, having been, next the Papists and Nonjurors, one of the fiercest opposers of the interest which the Government has now owned and countenanced.¹

Whitaker was appointed.²

The immediate result of Cropley's negotiations with Godolphin was a promise that the court would not interfere in the next elections, due to take place in 1708.³ Shaftesbury was urged by his friend to do no more than to secure Cropley's own election at Shaftesbury and that of Hooper at Poole. By limiting Shaftesbury's activity to

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, f. 69r, Shaftesbury to Cowper, St. Giles's, 2 December 1705. (RAND, p. 344)

2. HUTCHINS, op. cit., I, xliii.

3. P.R.O. 30/24/21/144, Cropley to Shaftesbury, Red Lyon Square, 15 January (1708). Glassey refers to this letter as a justified whig complaint that ministers were reluctant to use their patronage, GLASSEY, op. cit., p. 186.

supporters of Godolphin, Cropley hoped to establish publicly Shaftesbury's lack of enthusiasm for the Junto and declare his intention to support the triumvirate. Shaftesbury appears to have been quite willing to do what was asked of him. At Shaftesbury he consented to a deal with the local tories, whereby Edward Nicholas, their leader, would be returned with Cropley unopposed.¹ He had reckoned without the Junto. At the last minute Henry Cornish, another whig candidate, intervened, claiming, much to Shaftesbury's annoyance, that he was standing on the instructions of Sunderland.² Fortunately for Cropley, Cornish decided that he stood little chance of success at Shaftesbury. Cropley's gain was Hooper's loss, however. Cornish transferred to Poole and defeated Hooper. It was at this point that Shaftesbury came closest to breaking with the Junto, seven years after his enthusiastic campaign on their behalf. On 13 May he wrote bitterly to Somers of his treatment at the hands of the Dorset whigs in general, and the supporters of Sunderland and Bolton in particular.³ Somers replied with one of those soothing letters, which usually succeeded in winning Shaftesbury round. He explained that Sunderland had

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/141(1), Cropley to Shaftesbury, (1708). For Nicholas see HOLMES, British Politics in the Age of Anne, pp. 256-7.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/21/156, Shaftesbury to Cropley, 26 April 1708.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 318, Shaftesbury to Somers, 13 May 1708.

warned Cornish to do nothing without first consulting Shaftesbury. Furthermore, Bolton had 'often expressed so very particular esteem of yor Ldps great Character.'¹ The rift was healed, though Shaftesbury still complained about whig treachery at Poole.² Not all was lost, however, as the Churchill brothers were elected at Dorchester.

In effect the general election of 1708, which saw the largest whig majority since 1688, was the last in which Shaftesbury was an active participant. The collapse of the Junto after the Sacheverell fiasco in 1710 and the subsequent change of ministry, combined with his poor health, prompted Shaftesbury to withdraw further from political life. He was not entirely dormant, however. Writing to Jean Le Clerc from Reigate on 19 July 1710 he explained that he was,

oblig'd to take instantly a journey into the West of England (where my Concerns lye) and this cheifly too on Publick account, because of the Ferment which the seditious high Church-man (Sacheverell) has rais'd in those and other Parts of the Kingdome, I am forc'd to dispatch this with great haste and Confusion.³

On 10 August Cropley tried to draw Shaftesbury back into activity by writing of an interview he had just had with Harley, at the latter's request, in which Harley's business was 'to desire me to acquaint you

1. P.R.O. 30/24/21/158, Somers to Shaftesbury, 18 May 1708.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 320, Shaftesbury to Somers, 22 May 1708.

3. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, f. 459r, Shaftesbury to Le Clerc, Reigate, 19 July 1710. (RAND, pp. 422-4)

that nobody on earth honoured you more than he did.'¹ This conversation was evidently part of Harley's desperate attempt to win whig support for a non-party ministry which would rapidly conclude peace with France, in recognition of public weariness at the prolongation of the war. Shaftesbury replied bluntly that though he had a high regard for Harley he did not trust his peace policy:

The Measure of my Regard towards Ministers
is from their Measures towards France.²

Nevertheless, Harley remained anxious to win Shaftesbury's support. On 11 August Charlwood Lawton, one of his correspondents, told Harley that he was going to stay with Shaftesbury at Wimborne St. Giles for a few days.³

Other people were concerned about the Shaftesbury interest. In a letter to General Erle, dated 16 September, Robert Walpole wrote:

I understand that Sir John Cropley is like to have an opposition at Shaftesbury where their Interest is so very considerable that I must desire you will give Sr John all the assistance you possibly can & exert yourself in behalf of so honest a Gentleman who has all the merit that a steady perseverance in the true interest of his country can give, & is besides so particular a friend to honest Stanhope that I am sure

1. P.R.O. 30/24/21/235, Cropley to Shaftesbury, 10 August 1710.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, f. 501.

3. H.M.C., Fifteenth Report, Appendix, Part IV (Portland MSS.), London, 1897, p. 561, Lawton to Harley, Worcestershire, 11 August 1710.

he will ever acknowledge your civility to him, & if my recommendation can add any weight to your zeal, pray give me leave to ask this favour of you... Pray appear at Shaftesbury in person.¹

At about the same time Shaftesbury told Erle of his hopes for the election and hinted at the cause for which he had fought since the 1690s:

Pray God our success at home in our Elections may but in any proportion answer our Success abroad; that the Struggle of more than 20 years, & the Lives & Labours of so many brave men may not at last be thrown away, & a conquering Cause given up by a perfidious & corrupt Party at home.²

The election results were disappointing. The Tories swept to a commanding victory and Harley finally achieved his ambition. Shaftesbury's search for the political group which best represented his views about the ordering of society and politics appeared to have been unsuccessful. The following summer saw a rapid decline in his health and his escape to Naples, where he died in February 1713.

Shaftesbury's career as an electoral manager had faded into virtual insignificance by 1710. He had neither the determination nor the money to achieve electoral feats comparable to those of Wharton in Wiltshire. However, he was not totally insignificant. He had

1. Cambridge, Churchill College, Erle MSS., Walpole to Erle, 16 September 1710. Cited in HOLMES, op. cit., p. 232.

2. Erle MSS. 2/61, Shaftesbury to Erle, Munday Morn.

the potential to strengthen or ruin the whig effort in Dorset, and whig leaders in London could not afford to leave him out of their calculations. That he did not do more for them is an indication of his distaste for the mechanics of political action. He was too sensitive a man to trample over his neighbours' finer feelings in the pursuit of electoral gain: his mind was too active for him to feel able consistently to endorse a particular party line. His attitude, especially after 1702, was that of an outsider giving politicians the benefit of his advice. When this was ignored, however politely, he did not feel disposed to exert himself politically. When his supposed allies, including his brother, ignored his opinions Shaftesbury reacted with disappointed anger and declared himself to be completely indifferent to the vagaries of political life.

Shaftesbury's political weakness was his inexperience of ministerial office. The only post he held, apart from the proprietorship of Carolina early in his career, was the vice-admiralty of Dorset, which involved him in routine affairs, such as the impressment of seamen and the regulation of trade embargoes.¹ It was not an onerous job and it gave very little indication of the practical difficulties of making and enforcing policy. Although

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/51, Orders and Instructions from the Admiralty to Lord Shaftesbury, Vice-Admiral of Co. Dorset, 1701-2.

he was upset when he lost the post in 1702, there is little evidence that Shaftesbury particularly enjoyed the job.¹ It was an extra burden at a time when his thoughts were turning to the conclusion that he would be unable directly to influence political affairs. After the death of William III Shaftesbury's main pre-occupation was an attempt to influence subsequent generations through his writing.²

The evidence we do possess about Shaftesbury's political activity at a local level reinforces, by and large, the conclusions which may be drawn from his parliamentary career and his infrequent incursions into national politics after 1702. His strong support for the Junto in 1700-1 became rather less robust by 1706, when he thought that the best way of enforcing a strong anti-French policy was to co-operate more closely with the Marlborough-Godolphin-Harley triumvirate. At all times his comparatively independent political outlook is apparent. He backed Cropley's Country campaign from 1705 and after that date it becomes very difficult to give him a convenient political label, a

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/66, Shaftesbury to Furly, St. Giles's, November 1702. (RAND, pp. 312-3). For a different point of view, suggesting Shaftesbury's lack of concern at his dismissal see the fourth earl's draft life of his father, RAND, p. xxv.

2. ROBINSON, p. 269.

reflection of the fragmentary nature of English politics. He retained his links with the Junto, but on a basis of individual friendship rather than political principle. Shaftesbury had become, in fact, a rather old-fashioned political figure by the middle of Anne's reign, concerned more with political morality than party intrigue.¹ Ironically the last overture he received from a leading politician was from Harley, his old mentor, whose position had changed beyond recognition, while Shaftesbury had stayed in much the same place. Harley, politically, had adapted and won; Shaftesbury had remained true to his supposedly timeless ideals, and lost hopelessly.

1. HOLMES, op. cit., p. 221; HOLMES and SPECK, op. cit., p. 145; J. H. PLUMB, The Growth of Political Stability in England 1675-1725, London, 1967, p. 134n.

CHAPTER V

SHAFTESBURY AND THE NETHERLANDS

As the most remarkable European society of the seventeenth century the Netherlands attracted a great deal of attention. The archetypal Dutch virtues of hard work, thrift, and domestic tranquillity were widely admired by contemporary protestant commentators and ridiculed by catholics. Yet even her protestant neighbours found Dutch success wearying. In England the Dutch were pilloried as an arrogant and conceited race; the grandiose collective title of the States General, Their Noble High Mightinesses, was deridingly reduced by English commentators to 'Hogens-Mogens'. Those who most admired the Dutch were continually perplexed by the tarnished image on the other side of the Dutch coin. For Dutch culture in the seventeenth century was a complex of pride and paranoia. Throughout Dutch life the uneasy tension between piety and profit, the sacred and the mundane, was apparent. The Dutch were obsessed both by the worldly task of creating wealth on a massive scale and the ascetic urge, stoked by the fulminations of Calvinist predikanten, to duty, cleanliness, and moral living. The tension is epitomised in Dutch art by the restrained opulence of regents and their families in the

innumerable portraits which pack every local art gallery and museum in the Netherlands. From a distance the immediate impression is of puritanical fervour and vigour; the determined expressions on the faces, the stark simplicity of the black and white clothes. On closer inspection the paradox becomes apparent. There is often an uneasiness in the expressions, a sense of living on borrowed time. The black of the clothes turns out to be the finest satin, the white, intricate lace-work. The rug on the table is exquisitely made; fine jewellery makes a discreet appearance.

It was this dichotomy which perplexed and enraged contemporaries. Pious English visitors in the middle of the century travelled to Amsterdam as if to the New Jerusalem - they returned appalled by the greed, the conspicuous consumption, the immorality, and the profanity which marked much of Dutch life. Nor were the visitors' disappointments restricted to private expression. Much of the popular rhetoric during the period of the Anglo-Dutch wars drew on the deep-seated distrust of the English for the enormous cuckoo which had grown up in the protestant nest. All sorts of disturbed ideas were projected on to the Dutch and used as a justification to go to war with them. Most prominent was the disappointment caused by the evidence that the supposed epitome of protestant virtue was by no means a well-conducted

and contented society.¹

At about the same time as Shaftesbury's first visit to the Netherlands, in 1689, two events took place which changed English and European attitudes towards the Dutch. First, in 1685 Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes. As a result the Netherlands, a haven for political and religious refugees, became host to thousands of Huguenots, and in particular scholars and publishers, who were to establish their new home as the foremost intellectual centre in Europe by the end of the century.² Although it is surprising that their presence did not have more effect on the intellectual life of the indigenous population, their efforts attracted to the Netherlands the attention of people who might otherwise have taken little notice of it. Secondly, from 1689 England and the Netherlands had the same ruler, the stadhouder-king William III. Dutchmen became public figures in England and the Dutch and English became united in the struggle against France. Although the distrust remained, and became explicit at moments of crisis, it became more fashionable and convenient to regard England and the United Provinces as the twin

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1. Hogan-Moganides: Or, the Dutch Hudibras, London, 1674 is one example of a prolific genre.
 2. See, for example, R. L. COLIE, 'John Locke in the Republic of Letters', in Britain and the Netherlands, edited by J. S. BROMLEY and E. H. KOSSMANN, London, 1960, pp. 111-129; G. C. GIBBS, 'Some Intellectual and Political Influences of the Huguenot Emigrés in the United Provinces c. 1680-1730', Bijdragen en Mededeelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden, 90 (1975), 255-287.

beacons of liberty and tolerance in a darkening world.

Both aspects of the change in the late 1680s concerned Shaftesbury. Intellectually he owed much to the Huguenot refugees who had settled in the Netherlands. He visited them, wrote to them, helped their friends, and represented them in England. Politically he was concerned to see that their philosophical work was allowed to continue both in England and the United Provinces and that the right conditions for such activity should be maintained. He was quick to see the threat to Dutch intellectual freedom posed by the stadholdership of William III, and to that extent he was anti-Orangist. He perceived, however, that William III in the Netherlands was not the same as William III in England. As a consequence his attitude towards the stadholder-king was ambivalent. Above all Shaftesbury saw that his own efforts to achieve a satisfactory set of political attitudes in both countries would prove worthless if the French were allowed to make further headway in Europe.

Shaftesbury's affection for the Netherlands had deep roots. His grandfather died in Amsterdam in 1683, an exile from the absolutist policies of Charles II and Danby. His tutor, John Locke, became an exile in the Netherlands at the same time and stayed there until after the Glorious Revolution. On his visits to the country, therefore, Shaftesbury met many people who had known Locke or the first earl.

Indeed, many of the philosophical and political contacts which he made in the United Provinces grew out of meetings with old associates of his grandfather and tutor, together with their younger friends and relations. We have seen in the discussion of his links with the Commonwealthmen that there was a strong retrospective, even nostalgic, element in that group's political sympathies and alliances.¹ The same is true of his political contacts in the Republic - he met and corresponded with members of the De Witt and Paets families and was particularly concerned to rehabilitate the heroes of the First Stadhouderless Period of 1650-1672, whom he saw as the Dutch equivalent of his grandfather's allies in the 1670s and 1680s.

At the house of Benjamin Furly, the Quaker merchant whose importance as a patron of liberal thinkers has been mentioned in an earlier chapter, Shaftesbury was given the opportunity to discuss philosophical and religious matters with some of the outstanding figures in European intellectual life, whose friendship he owed to Locke's introduction.² Among them was Philip van Limborch, the Remonstrant professor from Amsterdam who was a close friend and correspondent of Locke and to whom the latter addressed his Epistola de Tolerantia in 1689.³ Limborch had also corresponded with Ralph Cudworth, the

1. See above, chapter III, p. 82.

2. See above, chapter II, pp. 31-2.

3. M. CRANSTON, John Locke: A Biography, London, 1957, p. 326.

Cambridge Platonist, and was thus able to strengthen Shaftesbury's interest in that group of philosophers.¹ Limborch's son, Frans, later became a merchant in London and was a frequent visitor to both Shaftesbury and Locke.²

Another of the men whom Shaftesbury met at Furly's house was Jean Le Clerc, Limborch's assistant and a scholarly journalist.³ Le Clerc, whose enthusiastic expressions of friendship could be embarrassing to the recipient, came to regard Shaftesbury as his major English patron. He dedicated an edition of Menander to him, which incurred Bentley's severe criticism, and wrote favourable reviews of Shaftesbury's work in his journals.⁴ One of Le Clerc's most successful publishing ventures was to secure from Locke in 1687 an epitome of the Essay Concerning Human Understanding for publication in his journal, the Bibliothèque Universelle. Locke also distributed the epitome privately and thus ensured that public demand was stimulated for the appearance of the complete work in December 1689.⁵

1. For Shaftesbury and the Cambridge Platonists see above, chapter II, pp. 47-9.

2. MS Locke c 13, ff. 183-4, F. van Limborch to Locke, London, 15 April 1701; ff. 185-6, F. van Limborch to Locke, London, 28 April 1701.

3. See Annie BARNES, Jean Le Clerc et la République des Lettres, Paris, 1938.

4. Bibliothèque Choisie, Amsterdam, XIX (1709), 427-38; XXI (1710), 177-97; XXIII (1711), 89-168.

5. CRANSTON, op. cit., pp. 289-90.

By the time Shaftesbury made his first visit to the Netherlands, Le Clerc and Pierre Bayle were no longer on good terms and were to argue violently over their rival interpretations of Cudworth's philosophy. Shaftesbury's debt to Bayle in intellectual terms, although difficult to establish with precision, was probably much greater than that owed to Le Clerc. It seems likely that Bayle encouraged Shaftesbury to question received opinion with a vigour unusual in a young aristocrat of the late seventeenth century. We know that the two men disagreed on many issues but retained a high regard for each other. Writing to Shaftesbury in May 1699 Bayle expressed his admiration for his noble friend:

J'ai beaucoup de confusion de n'avoir pas eû
plûtôt l'honneur de vous écrire pour vous
temoigner l'admiration que j'ai connu pour les
rares qualités que vous possédez, & la profonde
reconnaissance que je conserverai toute ma vie
pour les honnêtetés dont vous avez usé envers
moi.¹

In a letter to Pierre Coste in April 1704 Bayle further indicated his regard for Shaftesbury:

C'est avec un extrême Satisfaction, que je
jouis assez souvent de la Conversation de
Mylord Shaftesbury. Je ne saurois assez me
louer de ses Bontez.²

For his part Shaftesbury was equally enthusiastic about the

1. Leiden, University Library, MS Marchand 4, f. 166, Bayle to Ashley, Rotterdam, 19 May 1699 (N.S.).

2. Paul DIBON, Pierre Bayle. Le Philosophe de Rotterdam, Amsterdam, 1959, p. 41, Bayle to Coste, 18 April 1704.

friendship. Shortly after Bayle's death he wrote a letter to Jacques Basnage, a prominent Calvinist theologian and church historian and the brother of the literary journalist Henri Basnage de Beauval, summarizing his relationship with Bayle. After thanking Basnage for his condolences on the death of 'so great a man' Shaftesbury wrote:

I know very well that it is in Religion and Philosophy as in most things; that different opinions usually create not only dislike but Animosity and Hatred. It was far otherwise between Mon^r Bayle & my Self, for whilst we agreed in Fundamentall Rules of morall Practice & believ'd our selves true to those the continuall differences in Opinions, and the constant disputes that were between us, serv'd to improve our Friendship.¹

Bayle's argument in the Pensées sur la Comète (1682) that, religion and morality being independent of one another, all the private and social virtues may be equally practised by atheists was one which Shaftesbury found congenial, as he too argued forcefully for the divorce of morality from religion in the Inquiry concerning Virtue, or Merit. Indeed, the opening lines of the Inquiry immediately take up Bayle's hypothesis.

Religion and Virtue appear in many respects so nearly related, that they are generally presum'd inseparable Companions. And so willing we are to believe well of their Union, that we hardly allow it just to speak, or even think of 'em apart. It may however be question'd, whether the Practice of the World, in this respect, be answerable to our Speculation.²

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 294v, Shaftesbury to Basnage, St. Giles's, 21 January 1706-7. (RAND, pp. 372-7)
 2. An Inquiry Concerning Virtue, or Merit, edited by David WALFORD, Manchester, 1977, p. 2.

Shaftesbury, however, drew back from the full extent of Bayle's critical approach and perhaps the Frenchman's direct influence is to be seen in the more contentious of Shaftesbury's works, such as A Letter Concerning Enthusiasm and Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour, where the author extols ridicule as an effective test of religious truth. The two men kept in touch until Bayle's death in 1706. An important intermediary in their friendship was the ubiquitous Pierre Desmaizeaux, the author of a life of Bayle which was prefixed to the Dictionary. Desmaizeaux's Life was written at Shaftesbury's suggestion:

After the death of Mr. BAYLE, the Earl of SHAFTSBURY his friend, desired me to communicate to him all that I could gather concerning his life and writings. I addressed myself immediately to Mr. BASNAGE, who furnished me with a great many particulars, which I inserted in the account my Lord SHAFTSBURY had desired of me, a very imperfect English translation of which was published in 1708.¹

As a consequence Shaftesbury is given particular prominence in the Life. Bayle had many enemies. In 1706, shortly before his death, they were particularly concerned to make capital out of his friendship with the Marquis d'Allegre, a member of the French govern-

1. Mr. Bayle's Historical and Critical Dictionary. The Second Edition, To which is prefixed, The Life of the Author by Mr Des Maizeaux, Fellow of the Royal Society, London, 1734, I, ii.

ment taken prisoner during the war of the Spanish Succession. Those who regarded Bayle as a subversive writer were quick to point out that by consorting with an enemy of the Anglo-Dutch alliance he was acting traitorously. Sunderland, the English secretary of state, was rumoured to be on the point of asking for Bayle's expulsion from the United Provinces, whereupon Desmaizeaux persuaded Shaftesbury to act on Bayle's behalf. Desmaizeaux claimed that Bayle's opponents,

left no means unessayed to prejudice the Earl of Shaftesbury against him. But they were disappointed in their attempts upon this noble Lord: he was too well acquainted with Mr. Bayle, with whom he had entertained a close friendship, during the stay which he had made at Rotterdam. He perceived the motives of this accusation, and diverted himself with it among his friends.¹

At the moment of crisis Shaftesbury promised to see Sunderland. At the same time he suggested that Bayle, who took little interest in political matters, should take the opportunity to praise the allies in some way as a sign of good faith.

He [Bayle] added, that no body knew his principles concerning government better than my Lord Shaftesbury, since he had the honour to converse with his Lordship more than once on that subject. He prayed that he would undeceive the Lord Sunderland. My Lord Shaftesbury did it with success.²

Bayle's safety and integrity were preserved. He died soon afterwards

1. Ibid., p. cviii.

2. Ibid., p. cviii.

in the country of his adoption.

It was on his first visit to the Continent, in 1689, that Shaftesbury met Sophie Charlotte, the daughter of the electress of Hanover, Sophia.¹ His close contact with the Hanoverian court was to make him an interested party in the negotiations over the succession, especially at the time of Macclesfield's embassy to Hanover in 1701. However, there were philosophical dividends as well. Both Sophia and her daughter were interested in philosophy and befriended many of the leading scholars in Europe. Sophia's mother was Elizabeth of Bohemia, the 'Winter Queen', who had known a number of the men who moved freely throughout Europe. One of Sophia's sisters, Elizabeth, was a correspondent of Descartes, who dedicated the Principles to her.² The Hanoverian court thus became part of the fascinating web of cosmopolitan intellectual relations between England, the United Provinces, and Germany, which was characterised by a tolerant, liberal protestant outlook combined with anti-absolutist political sympathies. This cosmopolitan group may be seen as one of the precursors of the Enlightenment later in the eighteenth century. The

1. See above, chapter II, pp. 29-30.

2. Bernard WILLIAMS, Descartes: The Project of Pure Enquiry, Harmondsworth, 1978, p. 22.

leading philosophical figure on the German side was Leibniz, who had settled in Hanover in 1676 at the request of Duke Johann Friedrich of Brunswick-Lüneburg. He spent the rest of his life in the service of the Brunswick family and was particularly close to Sophia and Sophie Charlotte, whom he frequently visited in Berlin after her marriage.¹ He came to know of Shaftesbury through his two friends as well as through the presence in Hanover of Englishmen such as Gwinn and, in 1701, Macclesfield and Toland. It is unlikely that Shaftesbury and Leibniz ever met, although they spoke appreciatively of one another. In particular Leibniz was lavish in his praise of Shaftesbury's book The Moralists: A Philosophical Rhapsody, which appeared in 1709, a year before the only philosophical work by Leibniz to be published in his lifetime, the Essais de Theodicée. Leibniz, who wrote a series of 'Remarks on the...Characteristics', was surprised to find that so much of his own thought had been anticipated by Shaftesbury:

I found in it [The Moralists] almost all of my Theodicy before it saw the light of day... If I had seen this work before my Theodicy was published, I should have profited as I ought and should have borrowed its great passages.²

Shaftesbury's respect for Leibniz prompts a question which is

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1. Nicholas RESCHER, Leibniz - An Introduction to his Philosophy, Oxford, 1979, p. 4.
 2. G. W. LEIBNIZ, 'Remarks on the...Characteristics', in Philosophical Papers and Letters, edited by Leroy LOEMKER, Chicago, 1956, II, 1030.

more directly related to his visits to the Netherlands. Was he influenced by Spinoza? Spinoza had died in 1677. A year earlier he had met Leibniz but there is no evidence of the conversation between the two philosophers. As Stuart Hampshire has written:

In the whole history of philosophy there have been no unreported conversations which anyone interested in philosophy would have overheard with greater pleasure and profit.¹

Hampshire goes on to point out that the two men had very different temperaments and conceptions of the philosopher's task, although they were concerned with the same fundamental questions. Leibniz was a courtier, engaged in a great many activities and interested in all kinds of scholarly work. Spinoza was a recluse, working painstakingly to establish a monumental metaphysical system, unrelated to contemporary events. Shaftesbury had both characteristics - at times an active politician, at times withdrawn and studious. But the question of influence remains unsettled. Shaftesbury was probably introduced to Spinoza's work in the Netherlands, either in 1689 or 1698. That he did not mention Spinoza in his published work is unsurprising, for the Dutchman was regarded by many of his contemporaries as a subversive atheist. However, there are parallels between Shaftesbury's Inquiry and Spinoza's Ethics, and the Inquiry was considered atheistic in tendency by some contemporary commentators. Certainly Bayle

1. Stuart HAMPSHIRE, Spinoza, Harmondsworth, 1951, p. 233.

was no friend of Spinoza's philosophy and may have persuaded Shaftesbury that Spinoza was a dangerous influence. At any rate, J. M. Robertson's claim that Shaftesbury was the leading English disciple of Spinoza at the end of the seventeenth century is implausible.¹ Spinoza, in fact, did not leave a group of disciples to establish a Spinozist succession. His thought was poorly understood by contemporaries and is remarkable for the weakness of the impact it had on the intellectual life of Europe.²

Shaftesbury's second visit to the Netherlands, in 1698-9 was also a fruitful one. He met Bayle for the first time and spent many hours in conversation with the refugee scholar. He renewed his friendship with other members of the Furly circle, including Limborch and Le Clerc. At the same time he met a number of Furly's Dutch friends who were more interested in politics than ideas.

We have already seen that Shaftesbury, during the parliament of 1695-8, allied himself with the Harley-Foley group of Country

1. Characteristics, I, xxxii-xxxiv.
2. For the reception of Spinoza in England see two articles by R. L. COLIE, 'Spinoza and the Early English Deists', Journal of the History of Ideas, XX (1959), 23 - 46; 'Spinoza in England 1665-1730', Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, CVII (1963), 133 - 219.

members and also associated with the Commonwealthmen.¹ His pamphlet, The Danger of Mercenary Parliaments, was an election manifesto for 1698, pointing out the threat posed by a powerful ministry corrupting the independence of M.P.s by offering them places and paying them substantial pensions. It was, therefore, in a mood of great political concern that Shaftesbury crossed the North Sea to Rotterdam. He was worried by the extent to which the promise of constitutional reform held out in the Revolution Settlement had been swept aside by William III and his ministers in their attempt to deal with the problems caused by the expensive war with France. It was his belief that only a fundamental change in the structure of political morality and allegiance could prevent England from drifting back into the absolutism from which she had only recently been rescued, and by which she was threatened in the shape of Louis XIV's France. Shaftesbury urged his contemporaries to take political responsibility seriously and fight to protect their freedom from corruption. To regard politics as a public entertainment in which skilful actors could earn a reputation was the way to political ruin.

Throughout his life Shaftesbury affected to see in the Netherlands a model of virtuous political action. Certainly the Dutch political

1. See above, chapter III, pp. 57-9, 83-8.

system was rather different from the English. It was much more fragmented: the centres of power were the major towns, where the vroedschappen (town councils) were composed of a very small section of society, the regent class. The regents preserved their hold on government by judicious marriage alliances and the securing of minor posts for younger members of their families, who would then work their way up into the important positions on the vroedschap itself. The States General, sitting in The Hague, was a loose federation with very little power of its own to take the initiative in matters of political importance, such as foreign policy and national security. What power it had was delegated to it by the sovereign provincial states, to which bodies all important matters had to be referred. It is true that there were important central figures, such as the stadhouder himself and the grand pensionary of Holland, who often acted as foreign minister, but they could do little without the approval of the regents. Owing to their economic superiority the provinces of Holland and Zeeland were by far the most influential in the Netherlands, and also those where pro-regent and anti-Orangist sentiment was at its strongest. Within those provinces Amsterdam possessed an overriding authority during the seventeenth century. The largest and wealthiest city in the United Provinces, it was also the most prominent centre in European trade and finance, bringing vast

amounts of money into Dutch coffers every year. The Amsterdam regents consequently had a particularly high view of themselves and their city and vigorously defended it against the threat of Orange influence.

In crude terms it could be said that there was a basic division in Dutch political life during this period, a division which had become reasonably clear by the middle of the seventeenth century. It was between the Orangists and the republican opposition. Both major groupings used their interpretation of the Dutch revolt against Spanish rule at the end of the sixteenth century as historical justification for their positions. It was an assumption common to both parties that the answers to the important constitutional questions facing the Dutch were to be found in the first years of the Eighty Years War, and in particular the Union of Utrecht (1579), the Abjuration of Philip II (1581), and Franken's Deductie. The Orangists believed that the Republic owed its existence to the leadership of the Orange family; William the Silent, Maurice of Nassau, Frederick Henry, and William II. They considered that the Dutch needed at least a semi-monarchical leader (Eminente Hoofd) to provide both a focus of loyalty and a final constitutional authority. In practical terms they had a number of advantages which gave authority to their theoretical argument. The Prince of Orange had a number of important powers

and privileges. He was head of the army and navy, he was stadhouder in most of the provinces, and had the support of both the nobility and, more significantly, the Calvinist Reformed Church. The prince was thus an important unifying force, particularly in times of crisis such as 1672 and 1747. The republican 'party', known variously as the staatsgezinden or Loevesteiners, after the castle where William II incarcerated six leading Holland regents in 1650, declared the sovereignty of the individual provinces to be inviolable and stressed the rights and privileges of towns and town oligarchies. For the republicans the whole point of the Revolt had been the revocation of a centralised and monarchical system of government. They believed that the Revolt had been the result of political rather than religious grievances and were not sympathetic to the claim that the house of Orange was responsible for the Dutch victory. The Loevesteiners thought that decisions on matters of mutual concern should be taken by agreement between the provinces, although they recognised that the Prince of Orange could be useful as a focus of loyalty and could help to achieve political compromise. Yet they were extremely wary of the monarchical tendencies of the stadhoudership. Finally, republican thought was in favour of religious toleration and had close links with the liberal, Remonstrant, element in Dutch protestantism.¹

1. For a brief survey of party ideology see Herbert H. ROWEN, The Low Countries in Early Modern Times, London, 1972, pp. 176-7.

The model is a static one and open to a number of criticisms. There were many different kinds of Orangists and republicans - some regents were Orangist, some Orangists were more liberal than others, and the gulf between aristocratic regents and more radical republicans was as wide, if not wider, than that between regents and Orangists. In practice regents tended to be just as autocratic as stadhouders when they were given the freedom to exercise their power, as in 1650 and 1702. Later in the eighteenth century, during the Doelistenbeweging of 1748, radical politics became virtually the monopoly of Orangist supporters.

A more important criticism is that the division between Orangists and staatsgezinden is an artificial one, developed long after the events took place. Professor Roorda, in his important study of the political crisis of 1672, Partij en Factie, suggests that it was not until new political parties came into being in the Netherlands, in the second half of the nineteenth century, that interest was aroused in the existence of parties in the Republic.¹ Certainly there is a markedly partisan tone to the writing of the great Dutch historians of the nineteenth century, such as Fruin and Groen van Prinsterer. Roorda posits a more dynamic model of Dutch political

1. D. J. ROORDA, Partij en Factie, Groningen, 1961. An English abstract of the book, 'Party and Faction', is to be found in Acta Historiae Neerlandica, II (1967), 188-221.

life, in which faction, rather than party, is given prominence. By a faction he means a group of local potentates and their immediate followers, by party a political grouping with an ideological bond. Roorda further argues that parties only came to the fore in times of crisis like 1618, 1650, and 1672, when factions tended to band together temporarily in ideological units at moments when the future of the Republic seemed to be at stake. He also stresses the way in which the constitutional structure of the Republic was peculiarly suited to breeding local cabals, pointing to the autonomy of local oligarchies and the tension in towns between the regent class, self-perpetuating and firmly in control, and the non-regents. In particular, the brede burgerij, the group just below the patriciate, is singled out for attention. This group was composed of the 'middling sort', lesser merchants, shopkeepers, literati and the like, who were ambitious people and held some of the minor posts. These 'hangers on' of faction became active during crisis years and temporarily bridged the gap separating political insiders and outsiders.¹

With this more sophisticated analysis in mind it is possible to discuss Shaftesbury's political interest in the Dutch. The Dutch experience struck a sympathetic chord in his conception of the need

1. Acta Historiae Neerlandica, II, 199-200.

for independence and virtue in political life. The Dutch republican tradition, like the English, had its martyrs - Oldenbarneveltdt and the De Witt brothers - and had experienced a long struggle against the absolutist tendencies of the Prince of Orange. Its reliance on local regents, rather than a centralised monarchical system, provided some of the independence which Shaftesbury thought necessary as a defence against corruption. Moreover, Dutch republicanism had a strong moral flavour to it; Dutch political rhetoric was often couched in moral terms. Also, the United Provinces had been fighting a war against France and were to do so again, although those politicians who were in favour of an aggressive war policy tended to be Orangist rather than republican.

It is tempting, given Shaftesbury's association with the Commonwealthmen, to posit a similar political grouping in the United Provinces - a kind of Dutch 'neo-Harringtonian' movement with a clearly defined programme for political reform. Unfortunately the analogy cannot be sustained. Dutch political parties, in so far as they existed, had no organisation and very little cohesion. It is dangerous to assume that the Orangists were 'tories' and the Loevesteiners 'whigs'. It is very difficult, therefore, to show that there was a 'radical whig' element in the Netherlands with which Shaftesbury was in touch. On a theoretical level the analogy falls down owing to the nature of Dutch republicanism in the seventeenth century. It was short-lived and relatively autonomous. A real re-

publican political theory had only appeared in the United Provinces by about 1650 and faded very quickly after 1672, when the overbearing presence of William III and further developments in political theory along more pragmatic lines, in the work of men like Willem van der Muelen, prevented republican theory from developing any further. Furthermore, Dutch republican thought during the years around 1672 remained Machiavellian in character, lacking the new stimuli which were available in contemporary England. There were, it is true, similarities between the theories of Harrington and those of Spinoza and Pieter De La Court. De La Court actually corresponded with Harrington in 1671, at the latter's request. But there was no trace of a 'Harringtonian' movement, similar to that which took place in England during the last quarter of the seventeenth century.

As part of the publishing campaign in which the Commonwealthmen were involved John Toland produced an edition of Harrington's Works in 1699-1700.¹ On his return to England at the end of 1699 Shaftesbury arranged for the distribution of copies of the book to friends he had met during his stay. Writing from Rotterdam in July 1700, Furlly told Shaftesbury that he had given 'Mr. Paets' a copy but that

1. The Oceana of James Harrington, and his other works, London, 1700.

'Mr. Varburgh' and 'Mr. Van Twedde' had not received theirs.¹ Furly added that Paets approved of what he read in Harrington. The following year van 't Wedde thanked Shaftesbury for his copy and wrote enthusiastically about it.²

It appears that Shaftesbury was also responsible for pressing two other works on his Dutch friends. The Paradoxes of State, which Shaftesbury and Toland wrote after William III's last speech to parliament in December 1701, was sent to the Netherlands. The first reference to the Paradoxes in Shaftesbury's correspondence is contained in a letter he wrote to Furly in January 1702:

I know not if M^r Hystermann has communicated to you some propositions w^{ch} I hastily drew up & sent to a Friend to have finish'd call'd Paradoxes of State. If they are made publick I will send you them.³

At the end of the month he wrote again to Furly to tell him that, 'The Paradoxes are printed & I have sent one to you with one to M^r Hystermann...& one to M^r Van Twedde.'⁴ Earlier in 1701 Toland wrote Anglia Libera in defence of the Act of Settlement. He presented a

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 34-5, Furly to Shaftesbury, Rotterdam, July 1700.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24 45, ff. 43-6, van 't Wedde to Shaftesbury, Rotterdam, n.d.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/52, Shaftesbury to Furly, Chelsea, 6 January 1701-2.
 4. P.R.O. 30/24/20/55, Shaftesbury to Furly, Chelsea, 30 January 1701-2.

a copy of the pamphlet to the Hanoverian court at the time of Macclesfield's mission to Hanover in 1701 to guarantee the protestant succession. Toland was a member of Macclesfield's party, whether owing to the influence of Harley, Shaftesbury, or another person is not certain, for Macclesfield himself was very unhappy about Toland's antics.¹ Two Dutch translations of Anglia Libera were published in Rotterdam in 1701, possibly at the instigation of a member of the Furly circle. Copies of both translations are listed in the auction catalogue of Furly's library.² Whether Engeland Vrygemaakt was widely read in the United Provinces is not known, although Furly probably circulated it among his friends.

In the years surrounding the Macclesfield mission, therefore, there is evidence that Shaftesbury and his friends were engaged on a campaign, carried out through publications and personal contact, to strengthen the Anglo-Dutch alliance against the French and, in particular, to unite people of republican sympathy on either side of the North Sea. From the moment of his arrival in England late in

1. WORDEN, p. 45.

2. Bibliotheca Furliana..., Rotterdam, 1714, p. 217, no. 398 (Toland's Engeland vrygemaakt: item, het Hof van Hanover en de gewaande Prins van Wallis tym een gestelt: item, een Slang in 't Gras, en Wonderspreuken van Staat, Rotterd., 1701) and no. 399 (Engeland vrygemaakt, of de Bepaling en Successie der Kroon, Rotterd., 1701). J. A. DOWNIE, Robert Harley and the Press, Cambridge, 1979, pp. 44-5.

1699 Shaftesbury was in touch with his Dutch friends about the necessity for England and the Republic to stand firm against Louis XIV. In October 1700 Willem Hystermann, later to be an agent for Harley, reported on the state of Anglo-Dutch relations.¹ In March the following year Shaftesbury wrote a reassuring letter to Furly, who feared that the Dutch would be abandoned by the English in the aftermath of the furious arguments about the signing of the partition treaties.² On 1 April he assured Furly that,

...I who am naturally so un-active, am
working day & night for their Service &
for the Common Interest of Holland & this
Country. On this Union all depends.³

He also enclosed a letter giving details of English political affairs, which Furly was to pass on to his Dutch friends. In May Shaftesbury regretted that, 'few of us of y^e Country Party here in England' had any contact with similarly disposed politicians in the Netherlands.⁴ He wondered whether he could introduce any of the younger M.P.s and peers to members of the 'right party' in the Netherlands. He mentioned Lord Paulet, later duke of Bolton, and Henry Paget, later first earl of Uxbridge, as possible candidates. Both Paulet, whom Shaftes-

1. P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 41-2, Hystermann to Shaftesbury, Amsterdam, 5 October 1700 (N.S.).

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/20, Shaftesbury to Furly, 25 March 1701.

3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/21, Shaftesbury to Furly, London, 1 April 1701.

4. P.R.O. 30/24/20/24, Shaftesbury to Furly, London, 9 May 1701.

bury took with him to Rotterdam in 1703,¹ and Paget proved to be unfortunate choices for the dubious honour of immersion in Dutch politics. However close they may have been to Shaftesbury's point of view in 1701 they soon reacted against it.

Throughout the second half of 1701 Shaftesbury received information from his correspondents about the progress of the Macclesfield embassy, and particularly Toland's part in it. Hystermann sent news of Toland² and in July Henry Wilkinson, one of Shaftesbury's protégés, who was learning his trade in Rotterdam, wrote:

Mr. Toland is arrived & gone for the Court of Hanover, & his book is translating into Dutch. My Lord Macclesfield is also arrived & gone post to the King at Breda, who is expected in the Hague about the middle of next week to sit in council with the States General, and we have small hopes of a war this Summer.³

Wilkinson went on to explain the desire of the Rotterdam merchants for war with France. The French wine and brandy trade was an integral part of Rotterdam commerce. Merchants had stocked up with these commodities in the expectation of war and stood to be ruined if hostilities did not break. On 25 July Shaftesbury wrote anxiously to Furly

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1. Narcissus LUTTRELL, A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714, Oxford, 1857, V, 460.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/45, f. 59, Hystermann to Shaftesbury, Amsterdam, 19 August 1701; P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 88-9, Hystermann to Shaftesbury, Amsterdam, 20 December 1701.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/45, f. 52B, Wilkinson to Shaftesbury, Rotterdam, 23 July 1701.
 4. P.R.O. 30/24/20/29, Shaftesbury to Furly, St. Giles's, 25 July (1701).

about a letter he had received from Toland, in which the Irishman had boasted of the assistance he was giving to the hapless Macclesfield:

I had a Letter from M^r Toland w^{ch} I answer'd to, this post. I am sorry but not surpriz'd that he should not take his measures more justly so as not to offend or Dis-oblige my Lord Macklesfield in his present Character & Circumstances.¹

Although Macclesfield died at the end of 1701 Toland returned to England in time to assist Shaftesbury with the Paradoxes of State.

In the same letter in which he gave Furly notice of the Paradoxes, Shaftesbury expressed his dissatisfaction with William III's policy, especially over the choice of a Speaker, while hoping that English co-operation with the Dutch had a brighter future:

But I allways hop'd that y^e Holland Whigg-Party & Friends of Liberty (such as M^r Hystermann & his Friends) better knew or at least in time would come better to know their Friends here & who they were y^t on y^e one side only could support & on y^e other side could never but supplant this our present Governm^t.²

Later in January 1702 he urged Furly to,

...let our Friends in Holland know their Friends here & take notice y^t if that Party y^t hate y^e Dutch & love France, & y^e Whiggs

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/29, Shaftesbury to Furly, St. Giles's, 25 July (1701).

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/52, Shaftesbury to Furly, Chelsea, 6 January 1701-2.

y^e only contrary party y^t can now save them
& England.¹

Nor did the political situation change very much after the death of William III. In England the tories came to power and in the Netherlands the Second Stadhouderless Period (1702-1747) was not remarkable for a republican victory. Roorda has written that 1702 should not be seen in 'party' terms as a year of Loevestein reaction; it was 'more a matter of rehabilitating unsuccessful Orangists.'² A recent commentator has seen the Republic as beginning 'a long period of retrenchment and decline' in 1702 and goes on to say:

The death of the Stadhouder-King in 1702 brought with it the same sort of shock to the body politic as had the death of his father fifty-two years before. The result was that however much the Republic represented a united front in its international obligations and the conduct of the War of the Spanish Succession, it was internally wracked with a constitutionally incurable disorder...In each province, the favorites of William who had become the settled 'old gang' (oude plooi) were threatened by those whom they had replaced and who now claimed their 'rightful' places. This 'new gang' was as much an interest group as the old; there was no question of fundamental party or ideological differences.³

The factional struggle after 1702, the plooiërijen, left the basic

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/53, Shaftesbury to Furly, St. Giles's, 11 January (1701-2).
 2. Acta Historiae Neerlandica, II, 221.
 3. I. L. LEEB, The Ideological Origins of the Batavian Revolution. History and Politics in the Dutch Republic 1747-1800, The Hague, 1973, p. 57.

ideological questions unresolved.¹ The Republic under Heinsius, Fagel, Hoornbeck, and Slingelandt drifted uncertainly towards a more violent attempt to resolve the problems in the Doelistenbeweging of 1748 and the Patriot and Batavian revolutions of the 1780s and 1790s.

But this is to anticipate. There was a revival of libertarian spirit in the Netherlands after 1702 which Shaftesbury regarded as an important element in the future prosperity of protestant Europe. In a letter to Le Clerc in March 1706 he claimed,

There is a mighty Light w^{ch} spreads its self over the world, especially in those two free Nations of England and Holland; on whome the Affairs of all Europe now turn.²

However, English friends of the Dutch were faced with a difficult struggle against prejudiced and uninformed opinion. Shaftesbury told a Dutch friend:

There is no need I shou'd tell you that in all our Nation the only Lovers of Holland are the Lovers of Liberty call'd Whiggs. The contrary Party (the Tory's) are inveterate & I remember a saying of one of the best and wisest of our latter Patriotts who us'd often to give it for a Rule, if you wou'd discover a conceal'd Tory, Jacobite or Papist, speak

1. For a discussion of the plooierijen in Gelderland see A. H. WERTHEIM-GIJSE WEENINK, Democratische Bewegingen in Gelderland 1672-1795, Amsterdam, 1973, chapter II.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, ff. 175-6, Shaftesbury to Le Clerc, St. Giles's, 6 March 1705-6. (RAND, pp. 352-4)

but of the Dutch and you will find him
out by his passionate Rayling.¹

As well as reassuring his Dutch correspondents, Shaftesbury frequently wrote to leading English politicians in an attempt to apprise them of Dutch reactions to English policy. Somers and Marlborough received letters from him expressing concern about the parlous state of the Anglo-Dutch alliance and the lack of enthusiasm shown by the English for their allies.² Whether Shaftesbury fully understood the tensions in the relationship between the two countries is less certain. It has been claimed that the study of the Anglo-Dutch alliance during the War of the Spanish Succession has been, historically, a chiefly English affair, with the Dutch as the English allies during 'Marlborough's War'.³ Relations with the United Provinces played a large part in English party politics at the time, as is attested by the large number of contemporary pamphlets, and as the war progressed it became increasingly common to blame the Dutch for the failure to resolve it. Tories blamed the Dutch for the extension of war aims in 1703, the prolongation of war in 1706, and the fail-

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, f. 171r, Shaftesbury to van 't Wedde, St. Giles's, 17 January 1705-6. (RAND, pp. 347-52)
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 293, Shaftesbury to Somers, January 1706-7. (RAND, pp. 371-2)
 3. J. G. STORK-PENNING, 'The Ordeal of the States - some Remarks on Dutch Politics during the War of the Spanish Succession', in Acta Historiae Neerlandica, II (1967), 107.

ure to obtain peace in 1709 and 1710. Yet this criticism was unfair. Ironically, the slogan to which Shaftesbury and his fellow whigs adhered, 'No peace without Spain', was initiated by English statesmen and the Dutch were threatened and cajoled into supporting it, being brought in by the Barrier Treaty in 1709-10. From 1705 onwards the overwhelming majority of the Dutch regents wanted peace, but, from the Dutch point of view, the opportunity to conclude a satisfactory one never really presented itself. For the Dutch saw themselves as fighting a defensive war; peace to them meant security, rather than a satisfactory settlement of the European balance of power.¹

This state of affairs was complicated by the uneasiness of Anglo-Dutch relations. England and the Netherlands were still rivals in trade, although allies in war. For the Dutch the war with France involved trading restrictions and a general dislocation of commerce, leading to economic hardship; they felt vulnerable and consequently were anxious to stop the hostilities. The idea of a separate peace treaty with France was utterly inconceivable - the Dutch were forced, as it were, to cry 'No peace without England'. Consequently, any proposals from France had to be fully discussed and the English government sounded out. Owing to the extraordinarily complex and

1. Ibid., p. 113.

cumbersome machinery of policy making in the Republic, discussions took a good deal of time, exacerbating the Anglo-French distrust of peace 'preliminaries'.¹ The Republic, therefore, rather than seeing itself as defending the principles of protestant Europe against the creeping tyranny of catholic France, felt increasingly vulnerable as it was ground between the two millstones of England and France.

This is not to say that the Republic was merely a plaything of her more aggressive neighbours. The temptation to see the Netherlands in the eighteenth century as an Anglo-French puppet must be firmly resisted, as Simon Schama has shown.² Dutch diplomacy and politics reflected national traditions, prejudices and character, even when they were at their weakest. However, one is led to ask quite what Shaftesbury was trying to achieve if, as seems likely, his general view of Dutch motivation in the war was as far from majority Dutch sentiment as anything his tory enemies were claiming.

The first task in trying to formulate an answer is to look more closely at the men with whom Shaftesbury was in contact during his visits to the Netherlands, and with whom he corresponded. They fall into three interrelated groups. First, and probably the earliest

1. Ibid., pp. 114-5.

2. Simon SCHAMA, Patriots and Liberators. Revolution in the Netherlands 1780-1813, London, 1977.

chronologically, were two Dutch elder statesmen, supporters of peace, who had had some contact with English politicians during the second half of the seventeenth century. Secondly there was what became the nucleus of Harley's intelligence network in the Netherlands. Thirdly, and rather more interesting in terms of the movement of political ideas, there was a group of men in Rotterdam in ^{the} early years of the eighteenth century. The available evidence suggests that the first two groups were significant in Shaftesbury's dealings with Dutch politicians up to about 1702, that is to the beginning of the war and the Second Stadhouderless Period. He was interested in the third group beyond 1702.

The major problem in discussing the relationship between Shaftesbury's Dutch friends is created by the paucity and fragmentary nature of the Dutch primary sources. There is no central archive to which the historian may turn to find information about Dutch political life at this time. Each town of any size in the Netherlands has its own Gemeente Archief or municipal archive, in which local records and the correspondence of local residents are kept. Yet Dutch political correspondence is not as voluminous or informative as one might expect. Owing to the small size of the country and especially the short distances between the major towns in the dominant province of Holland, Dutch politicians did not express their views in letters in the way

that characterizes English political life of the period. Leading politicians and close friends saw each other very frequently and had less need of letter writing to keep in touch with each other. Consequently the main source of information in this instance is Shaftesbury's own correspondence with his Dutch acquaintances, rather than their correspondence between themselves.

Throughout Shaftesbury's life there is a pervasive sense of nostalgia. His philosophy was old-fashioned in many respects and his politics owed much to the Country tradition, in which his grandfather had been a leading figure. The same nostalgic element is evident in his dealings with the Dutch, and particularly with the first group I have delineated - the older politicians. Two men in particular are of interest to us here. The first is Nicolaes Witsen.¹ Witsen was born in Amsterdam in 1641. When he was fifteen years old he accompanied his father on a diplomatic mission to England, where he met Cromwell. After studying at Amsterdam and Leiden he went, in 1664, on a mission to Russia. This visit stimulated his interest in the Near East and Asia. Over the next twenty years he worked on a definitive map of Asia, as well as translating works on the history and culture of Tartary. It is this work which has led Witsen to be called

1. Johan E. ELIAS, De Vroedschap van Amsterdam 1578-1795, Haarlem, 1903-5, I, 544.

the 'greatest promoter of scientific geography of the century.'¹ He also wrote a standard work on shipbuilding and corresponded with Leibniz. From 1682 to 1705 Witsen was burgomaster of Amsterdam and represented the city in the States-General. In 1697-8 he acted as host to Peter the Great during the Czar's visit to the Netherlands to learn about Western commerce and industry. He died in 1717. A number of his relations, including his son, held office on the Amsterdam vroedschap at the end of the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth.²

Among the Shaftesbury papers there is a letter from Witsen to Shaftesbury, written in August 1701. The Dutchman thanked Shaftesbury for his continuing support for the Dutch during 'ce temps de Crise & d'épreuve.'³ Politically Witsen should be seen as exercising a moderating influence. There were two kinds of Orangist at the end of the century, the court variety, and the moderate variety. William III definitely preferred the former and Witsen, one of the latter, found himself mediating between the stadhouder and his own colleagues on the Amsterdam vroedschap. Witsen himself was not as important a figure in Dutch politics as some scholars have thought. He was not

1. B. H. M. VLEKKE, Evolution of the Dutch Nation, New York, 1945, p. 245.

2. ELIAS, op. cit., I, 544 ff.

3. P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 60-2, Witsen to Shaftesbury, Amsterdam, 19 August 1701 (N.S.).

in favour of war with France and his influence on Dutch affairs faded rapidly after 1702.¹ He is interesting to the historian principally for his links with East and Central Europe.

We cannot be certain where Shaftesbury stood in relation to Witsen. No doubt he approved of a man who was a scholar as well as a politician. Witsen had also visited England in 1689 and Shaftesbury may have met him either in England or the Netherlands at that time. Alternatively, it is quite likely that he would have been acquainted with the first earl of Shaftesbury, during the latter's exile in Amsterdam. In that case it would have been natural for Shaftesbury to get in touch with Witsen.

There is a possible connection with the first Shaftesbury in the other member of the first group of Shaftesbury's associates. Godard Willem van Tuyll van Serooskerke, heer van Welland, may have met Shaftesbury's grandfather in Amsterdam. Welland, Amerongen's nephew, was born in 1648. He is a difficult man to categorise politically. In 1672 he surrendered the province of Utrecht to the French, an action which made it impossible for him to be regarded as an Orangist in subsequent years. There was no new Loevestein party after

1. A. PORTA, Joan en Gerrit Corver. De politieke macht van Amsterdam (1702-1748), Assen and Amsterdam, 1975, pp. 27-9, 128, 269.

1672. So Welland remained in political limbo. Like Witsen, however, he was a supporter of peace and became leader of the peace party in Utrecht. More interesting from our point of view is Welland's connection with people in Rotterdam who had republican tendencies in the 1670s and 1680s, particularly those associated with the Remonstrants. Welland's second marriage, in 1683, to a member of the Pesser family cemented his interest in Rotterdam and his attempts to establish an 'inter-provincial faction' among the tiny minority of men who sympathised with his ideas.¹ Among the people with whom Welland was in touch were Limborch, whom we have met already, Johan Pesser, Willem Pedy, who had known Algernon Sidney and the first Shaftesbury, Adriaen Paets, Bayle's patron, and Joachim Oudaen, the poet and tile-baker. Paets is an especially interesting figure. He died in 1686 and may be classed as one of the very last of the sincere Loevesteiners, a survivor of a time when, briefly, Dutch political debate was conducted in terms of ideology rather than pragmatic considerations. In this sense he was an analagous figure to the Country heroes of the Commonwealthmen, although he did not suffer unduly under Orangist rule, keeping his place on the Rotterdam vroedschap until his death.

Welland's 'connection' in Rotterdam was small but quite active.

1. M. VAN DER BIJL, 'Utrechts weerstand tegen de oorlogspolitiek tijdens de Spaanse Successieoorlog. De rol van de heer van Welland van 1672 tot 1708', Van Standen tot Staten. 600 Jaar Staten van Utrecht 1375-1975, Utrecht, 1975, p. 198 n. 250.

Like the Commonwealthmen the group included booksellers and publishers, although of a scholarly, rather than primarily political, persuasion. Among them was Furlly's friend Pieter Rabus, schoolmaster and publisher, whose periodical, De Boekzaal van Europe, ran from 1694 to 1701.¹ Rabus, a liberal who doubted the sincerity of William III when he became king of England, published two Dutch editions of Molesworth's Account of Denmark, in 1694 and 1696.² As a consequence of Rabus's enthusiasm:

Robert Molesworth's ideology - at the time known as 'L'Esprit d'Anglois and later as 'The Principles of a real Whig' - achieved a popularity on the Continent which was only rivalled by his own popularity at home.³

It is likely that Rabus was introduced to Molesworth's work by Pierre Bayle, who thought highly of the Account. Bayle considered that the book was the reason for,

l'estime que tout le monde doit avoir par Monsieur [Molesworth] dont les illustres qualitez on paru avec tout d'éclat, et que j'honore infinement.⁴

Molesworth responded to Bayle's testimonial by sending his sons to stay in Bayle's house as part of their education.⁵

1. C. L. THIJSSSEN-SCHOUTE, 'Hermanns Lufneu, Stadsarts te Rotterdam', Rotterdamse Jaarboekje, 1960, p. 207.

2. Paul RIES, 'Robert Molesworth's "Account of Denmark": A Study in the Art of Political Publishing and Bookselling in England and on the Continent before 1700', Scandinavica, VII (1968), 120.

3. Ibid., p. 121.

4. Ibid., p. 116.

5. Ibid., p. 116.

The first group of Shaftesbury's Dutch contacts, therefore, provided him with the basis on which to attempt to build a more coherent political and philosophical faction, distinguished by the twin aims of resistance to France and an international protestant alliance, which could withstand the threats posed by absolutism and the Roman church. Although Witsen and Welland were not warmongers themselves, many of their associates considered war with France a regrettable necessity if protestant integrity was to be preserved.

The second group of Dutchmen with which Shaftesbury had ties was the intelligence network set up by Harley at the beginning of Anne's reign to provide him with reliable information about Dutch political affairs. Harley was possibly the man responsible for securing Toland's place on the Macclesfield embassy to Hanover in 1701 and it was in the context of this delicate mission to secure the protestant succession that Shaftesbury, who still had ties with Harley, was in touch with men who were to become Harley's agents. The intelligence network expanded as Harley took on much of the work in Anne's reign, for which the Duumvirs, Marlborough and Godolphin, felt unqualified. Henry Snyder, in his edition of the Marlborough-Godolphin correspondence, has given a brief outline of the network and the major figures involved in it.

Adam Francke was the Resident in London of

the East and West India Companies of Holland. He also held a clerkship at the English Post Office. At the beginning of the reign Harley engaged him as a confidential agent and sent him over to establish contacts with leading Dutchmen. Pensionary Buys of Amsterdam was one whom he persuaded to correspond with Harley. Another was William Hystermann of Amsterdam, who in turn showed Harley's letters to Burgo-master Witsen and had them translated into Dutch for his colleagues. The Duumvirs considered Harley's efforts to establish a good rapport with the United Provinces of great importance and Marlborough encouraged him to broaden his base of correspondents... Francke returned to England in the autumn of 1703, but continued to make trips back to the Continent and supplied Harley with intelligence for which he was paid £50 per annum. His letters to Harley, in Latin, extend from 1702 to 1710.¹

We have already seen that Shaftesbury regarded Hystermann as a leader of the 'Holland Whigg-Party', with which he sought to establish contact.² Shaftesbury corresponded with Hystermann and sent him copies of Harrington and the Paradoxes of State.³ He also received letters from Adam Francke.⁴ Yet the interesting characteristic of the letters written by or about Hystermann and Francke is that they were written

1. The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, edited by H. L. SNYDER, Oxford, 1975, I, 160n.

2. See above, pp. 175, 177.

3. Hystermann to Shaftesbury at P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 41-2 (5 October 1700), f. 59 (19 August 1701), and ff. 88-9 (20 December 1701).

4. Francke to Shaftesbury (all from London) at P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 39-40 (September 1700), ff. 56-7 (14 August 1701), ff. 65-6 (13 September 1701), ff. 68-9 (6 October 1701), ff. 75-6 (18 October 1701), and ff. 85-6 (14 December 1701).

between 1700 and 1702. In other words they are rather earlier than the surviving Harley correspondence. Could it be the case that Harley took over a number of informal contacts from Shaftesbury and put them to his own use, expanding them and putting them on a formal basis? Does this also mean that Shaftesbury had more to do with Macclesfield's mission than Harley? Leibniz thought that Toland had been sent with Macclesfield as a spy, which could point to Harley.¹ It was Shaftesbury, however, who received news of the embassy, and particularly Toland's part in it, through Hystermann and his other friends in the Netherlands: Macclesfield appears to have been known to the Furly circle.² Alternatively Harley may have been acting through Shaftesbury at the earlier date and have taken over the machinery of intelligence when Shaftesbury dropped out of political life after 1702.

The extent of Shaftesbury's relationship with Harley in terms of their interest in the Netherlands may never be known precisely. That they both used Hystermann and Francke as sources and disseminators of information is established. Hystermann and Francke had a wide acquaintance among Dutch politicians, including Welland and Witsen. Hystermann also knew Joannes Van Dale, a Haarlem doctor.³ Van Dale's

1. WORDEN, p. 45.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/45, f. 52A, Furly and Benjohan Furly to Shaftesbury, n.d. (July 1701); f. 52B, Wilkinson to Shaftesbury, Rotterdam, 23 July 1701 (N.S.); ff. 71-2, Furly to Shaftesbury, Rotterdam, 14 October 1701.

3. Amsterdam, University Library, MSS of the Remonstrant Church (MSS R.K.), I 37, Hystermann to Van Dale, Amsterdam, 5 October 1701.

father, Antonius, was a correspondent of Le Clerc and Oudaen; another link in the intricate social network of politics and ideas in the Netherlands.¹

That Shaftesbury had little to do with Hystermann and Francke after 1702 may be a reflection either of Harley's use of their services, and Shaftesbury's growing distrust of Harley's political motives, or simply a reflection of Shaftesbury's lack of interest in detailed political negotiations after the death of William III. However, the United Provinces were not far from his thoughts in the disturbing war years. He visited Furly in Rotterdam for the last time in 1703-4 and kept up his correspondence with the younger members of the republican circle there.

The fact that there was no republican 'party' in the Netherlands at the beginning of the eighteenth century has been mentioned earlier. As the discussion of Welland's 'connection' in Rotterdam has shown, however, the position there was rather different from that in the rest of the country. In fact Rotterdam was an exception to the general rule, particularly after 1702.² The city was becoming more and more important, its trade proving an increasingly important factor in the

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1. Amsterdam, MSS R.K., C 47, Antonius Van Dale to Le Clerc, Haarlem, 27 December 1704, 11 September 1705, and n.d.; L 42, Antonius Van Dale to Oudaen, Amsterdam, 11 May 1667. Paul HAZARD, The European Mind 1680-1715, Harmondsworth, 1973, pp.193-5.
 2. I am indebted to Professor D. J. Roorda for much of the information contained in this paragraph.

framework of the Dutch economy. Rotterdam was the home of many refugees, widely-travelled merchants, and an assortment of active, well-informed lesser merchants, teachers, shop-keepers, and others of the 'middling sort', who tended to resent the aristocratic pretensions of the Rotterdam patriciate. As a consequence of this growth in economic significance and the presence of a cosmopolitan and liberal element among those responsible for the city's growth, Rotterdam experienced more of a popular movement during the period 1702-20 than anywhere else in the Netherlands. Two things happened. The citizenry began to complain about the autocratic power of the regents, and some more liberal regents were appointed to the vroedschap. The result was a series of factional clashes between 1710 and 1720, in which factions on the vroedschap showed themselves willing to play on the resentment of the citizenry. In some ways this factional struggle in Rotterdam may be seen as a foretaste of the Doelistenbeweging in 1748 and the Patriot revolution in the 1780s.

Yet Shaftesbury's acquaintance with Rotterdam merchants and politicians reveals connections with members of the old Loevesteiner families. This reminds us that pre-1672 rhetoric was still available for republicans to draw upon. Members of the Paets and De Witt families are mentioned in the Shaftesbury correspondence. Cornelis De Witt, possibly a nephew of the De Witt brothers murdered in 1672,

wrote to Shaftesbury in 1705 and is mentioned in a number of his letters.¹ Adriaen Paets, the elder son of Bayle's patron, was sent a copy of Harrington's Works and expressed his approval of it through Furly.²

Two of the men mentioned most frequently in Shaftesbury's Dutch correspondence were 'Mr. Van Twedde' and 'Mr. Varburgh'. Both were recipients of a Harrington and 'Mr. Van Twedde' received a copy of the Paradoxes of State. Jan Dirckszoon van 't Wedde was a well-established Rotterdam merchant. His son, who died in 1701, was in charge of the day-to-day running of the business. Van 't Wedde became an important figure in maritime affairs in Rotterdam and held several positions connected with finance, including the directorship of the municipal insurance company.³ A significant guide to his political sympathies is his marriage into the Paets family. He married Willemmina, a niece of old Adriaen Paets, in March 1672. Van 't Wedde was also one of the signatories of a 'Memorial of Rotterdam Merchants against Trade with France' in 1706.⁴ Rotterdam's trade with England

1. P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 217-8, De Witt to Shaftesbury, Doexhis?, 29 April 1705; f. 263, De Witt to Shaftesbury, Votesdam, 19 August 1705 (N.S.); ff. 237-8, Furly to Shaftesbury, Rotterdam, 25 June 1705 (N.S.).

2. P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 34-5, Furly to Shaftesbury, Rotterdam, July 1700.

3. E. A. ENGELBRECHT, De Vroedschap van Rotterdam 1572-1795, Rotterdam, 1973, p. 208.

4. P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 135-6, Memorial of Rotterdam Merchants Against Trade with France, 1706.

grew substantially throughout the eighteenth century and the fact that the Rotterdam merchants were now looking more towards England may have made the reception of English political ideas there somewhat easier.

In January 1706 Shaftesbury wrote a long letter to van 't Wedde giving his analysis of the tension in Anglo-Dutch relations. The letter is probably the fullest expression of Shaftesbury's views of Dutch political life and deserves extensive quotation. He began by examining the confusion caused by William III's dual role as stadhouder and king:

...Holland being it self free & joyn'd in Interest thus naturally to the free Party in England in opposition to y^e Tyrranicall sort who wish its Destruction, one wou'd think it impossible that the Whiggs here shou'd favour any but those of the same Principle with them in Holland, or that the Whiggs of Holland shou'd be jealouse of the Whiggs here. But as for our Whiggs y^e Case lies thus. They were deliver'd, rais'd, supported by K. W^m; who what ever he were to You, was in truth to us the very founder of Liberty our Good Law Giver and establisher of our State. What was acted in forreign Affairs during the greatest part of his reign was chiefly by himself, without much privity of his Ministers here. Those who were rais'd under him, and by degrees let into the Secrett, were of the Whigg Party, and having no other inlet but by the King & those of his Party in Holland, haveing no Acquaintance or Correspondence but with his Friends and Creatures, and having the highest Veneration for him & all that he did, how was it possible but that they shou'd be led

wrong and take all their Notions perversely from the very Originall whilst they were thus estrang'd from the Common Wealth party in Holland, & look'd upon the Prince of Oranges Interest with the same Eye in Holland as in England: taking all who were in any degree his Enemys to be Enemys in the same degree both of y^e Protestant Religion and common Cause.

After explaining the cause of the misunderstanding Shaftesbury proceeded to outline the present task:

This is the unhappyness which to this very Day we Labour under and I wish the Misunderstanding were only on our side. But there is as unhappy, as fatall, as unjust, and as wrong a jealousy on your side w^{ch} helps to estrange the Common Wealth Party from ours, and that is the jealousy of a mere Common Wealth in England & the mistrust of an Ambitious Temper, w^{ch} is too Naturall in us, and w^{ch} wou'd more readily break out in such a Form, with more advantage against its Neighbours. I own it. Truth & the Love of Mankind forces the Confession from me tho' to y^e disadvantage of my Country. But then I will avere y^t Imposture it self can produce nothing more fals, fulsome and vain than this Insinuation that the Whiggs in England think of a Common Wealth other than w^t they enjoy, or that any other is or can be practicable in Britain. Yet is this base insinuation the constant means made use of by our Arbitrary Party to poison our prince's Ear and hinder him from confiding in his People. But the senseless Notion is grown at last so stale and common, after having been so long made use of to serve the purposes of that Party that is indeed despis'd by every One amongst us as I doubt not but it is by your self and all other good Patriotts who are as knowing as You are in the common Affairs of both Nations. The

only Labour therefore will be on our side to inform the heads of the honest Party and lett them into a better knowledge of Men and things abroad than what they acquird under their great Patron when alive and now since his death is transmitted to them by his Friends and Ministers with whom alone they have any Correspondence. So that by what I have said, it will be less a Riddle to You to hear it a common expression with our Whiggs Alas what will become of Holland without a Stateholder! so little do they know what a Stateholder is, or wou'd prove to their private as well as to y^e common Cause.

Finally, Shaftesbury assured van 't Wedde that he had buoyant hopes for the future if the alternative channels of communication were established:

I intreat You therefore and your Friends not to be alarm'd, or imagine any Mistery from such Speeches or Discourses of our innocent deluded Whiggs who as their Eyes open, and as they are better inform'd will be far enough from giving their Voice or helping hand to any such pernicious attempt, by w^{ch} they wou'd be self Murderers and cutt the Throat of their own Cause. 'Tis said that a Disease is half cur'd when known. I have endeavourd to show You the Disease, if in time I discover any thing worse than I now suspect you shall not fail to hear of it: nor shall I be tender of our Ministry whenever I discern any foul dealing or tampering in your home affairs, In the meantime Heaven Grant an undisturb'd Union and mutuall good Correspondence between our Ministers and Generalls in the common affairs of both Nations, against the common Enemy, whom we may now press on all hands with a happy prospect of effectually reducing him if we follow our Blow & stop not our hand after such signall advantages Providence has given us. But if through private jealousyes or hopes, or flattering prospects of separate advantages and the sweet sound

of Peace & Syren Tongues of France (much sharper than their Swords) are able to prevail over us we and our posterity may then deservedly and justly Groan for ever under greater Miserys and a heavier Yoak than any that was ever yet brought upon the world by those Universall Monarchys w^{ch} former Ages have felt. But this Judgment I pray Heaven avert. Nor am I one of the fearfull or ill boding sort as You know very well. I am full of hopes, especially when I see such Spiritts as Yours and your Friends...¹

The letter reveals the mainspring of Shaftesbury's concern with the Netherlands during these years; to facilitate communications between English and Dutch politicians of similar outlook and to remove some of the prejudices and misunderstandings between the English and the Dutch which were hindering the war effort.

The 'Mr. Varburgh' of Shaftesbury's correspondence was probably the Rotterdam merchant Dionys Verburg, or Verburgh. Verburg had extensive trading connections with England and France.² He had business dealings with Lamborch's son, Frans, now a merchant in London.³ In December 1701 he married Clara Bouwens, the widow of Gysbertus van Meel, a merchant associated with the East India Company and a member of the Rotterdam patriciate.⁴ Members of the Verburg

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, ff. 170-2, Shaftesbury to van 't Wedde, St. Giles's, 17 January 1705-6. (RAND, pp. 347-52)

2. Rotterdam, Gemeente Archiefdienst (G.A.R.), Notarial Records, 1622, ff. 25-6, 171-2, 291-2, 349-51, 614-5, 647-8, 652-8, 660-2, 709-11, 721-2.

3. G.A.R., Notarial Records, 1622, ff. 77-8.

4. ENGELBRECHT, op. cit., p. 299.

family were active in Rotterdam at the end of the seventeenth century. Dirck Verburg was a militia officer and municipal official in the 1690s;¹ Petronelletje Verburg had been a correspondent of Oudaen.²

It is also possible to identify others of Shaftesbury's acquaintance in Rotterdam. Nicolaes Anthoniszoon Flinck was the son of Govaert Flinck, who was one of Rembrandt's most successful and accomplished pupils.³ The younger Flinck was also a painter and worked for a while at Chatsworth, before settling in Rotterdam, where he died in 1723.⁴ Flinck married Anna van Berckel in 1694.⁵ The Berckels had close family connections with the De Witts. Flinck's travels in England had put him in touch with a number of aristocratic families; he was regarded by Shaftesbury as an important figure in his plan to bring the two countries closer together.⁶

1. Ibid., p. 266.

2. Amsterdam, MSS R.K., J 65, L 120-2 (1660-9).

3. Jakob ROSENBERG, Seymour SLIVE, and E. H. ter KUILE, Dutch Art and Architecture: 1600-1800, Harmondsworth, 1966, pp. 90-2.

4. ENGELBRECHT, op. cit., p. 170.

5. Ibid., p. 170.

6. P.R.O. 30/24/20/24, Shaftesbury to Furly, London, 9 May 1701.

Shaftesbury also knew members of the Vroesen family, which included several members of the Rotterdam vroedschap after 1672 and also had family ties with patrician families in other parts of the Netherlands. The Vroesens had been part of Welland's 'connection' in Rotterdam.¹

Although it has not been possible to identify all the Rotterdam figures to whom Shaftesbury sent information and political propaganda, a tentative picture of the group can be drawn. Its members were liberal in their political and religious outlook. They disliked the idea of a strong French presence across their border but were divided over the nature and necessity of the war. Although they tended to be of the 'middling sort' many of them either held office in Rotterdam or were connected by marriage with regent families, especially those which had flourished during the First Stadhouderless Period. They were in no way democratic. They included a strong merchant element but there were also writers and teachers among them, capable of making use of the printing press to publicize their ideas. Their political interests tended to be set in the context of a wider framework of moral and philosophical considerations, such as the evils of absolute monarchy, the freedom of thought and its expression, and the threat of Catholicism.

It was to this group that Shaftesbury returned for the last time

1. VAN DER BIJL, op. cit., pp. 143, 198.

in August 1703. Soon after his hectic efforts in English politics had ended he felt the need to retire to Rotterdam in order to think out the philosophical basis of his political activity as well as to renew his acquaintance with the Furly circle. In January 1703 Shaftesbury wrote to Wilkinson:

I hope it will be but few months 'ere I see you in Holland where I think of coming to retire for some months in the greatest Privacy, & rest me from the Fatigues I have endur'd in the Publick affaires & Buisness w^{ch} has much wasted me, & injur'd my Health.¹

In June he asked Furly to find him a quiet set of rooms in Rotterdam to enable him to recover his health,

w^{ch} I have mightily impair'd by my Fatigues in y^e publick Affaires these last three years and am now as bad again as when I retir'd for respite & recover'd my self by my last Retreat in Holland.²

Later in the month he told Furly about the necessity of finding quiet lodgings, where people would not interrupt him. Harking back to the great 'Publick Part' he had played he ventured the thought that his notoriety would,

place a great many Eyes upon me y^t will seek for Mistery where there is none & think my Retirement rather a Pretext than a Reality, as a certain Party of men have allready represented it to our Superiours as a Talk, w^{ch} it seems the Suspicion of it has occasion'd.³

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/69, Shaftesbury to Wilkinson, Chelsea, 12 January 1702-3.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/71, Shaftesbury to Furly, Chelsea, 11 June 1703.

3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/72, Shaftesbury to Furly, Chelsea, 25 June 1703.

A passport for Shaftesbury and two servants to go 'beyond y^e Seas' was finally issued on 5 August.¹ The visit was certainly a quiet one. Shaftesbury settled down to some concentrated philosophical study, particularly in the Stoics - Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. Many of the notes he made, later published by Rand in 1900 as the Philosophical Regimen,² were written during the visit and other notebooks were filled with his reflections on art, politics, and philosophy.³ Peter Robinson has suggested that there was a contrast between Shaftesbury's private and public philosophy. The former, to a large extent worked out in the Netherlands, was Stoic in character and confined to notebooks which were only published many years after his death. The latter, which appeared in the Characteristics, had a more relaxed, buoyant, Epicurean character and reflected Shaftesbury's position as a man of some consequence in England. Robinson further argues that it was Shaftesbury's great admiration for Horace which transformed the austere, subjective thought of the notebooks into the livelier and more daring writing of the Characteristics. By thus 'socialising' his philosophy he made it available to a wider public in his attempt to create a new intelligensia with an alternative set of cultural values.⁴

It is necessary to remember the important part the Netherlands

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/76, Passport, 5 August 1703.

2. RAND, pp. 1-272.

3. P.R.O. 30/24/27/10-3, MS note books, 1703-4.

4. ROBINSON, p. 374.

played in Shaftesbury's philosophical development. Not only did he meet well-known thinkers there. He was also able to relax and spend time on his own to an extent that was not possible in England, owing to the demands of politics, estate management, friends, and relations. One consequence of his rather spartan existence in Rotterdam was that his numerous friends might feel that he was cutting himself off from their society. Robinson gives a sense of the determination which permeated Shaftesbury's last visit:

The Stoic concerns of Shaftesbury in Holland, especially from 1703-4, were perhaps the most radical and thorough-going immersion in philosophical ideas that he had, as yet, experienced. The personal aspect of his studies at this time, even if we allowed for the exaggeration of a mind under pressure, points to a greater personal commitment than we are able to find at earlier periods. Moreover, there is throughout this time, a greater sense of direction, a sense that Shaftesbury went to Holland, and despite psychological pressures, went with the intention of pursuing a vigorous Stoic revolution.¹

Although one may disagree with Robinson's appraisal of the extent to which Shaftesbury changed his political outlook at this time, the sense of commitment is very prominent. Writing to Locke from Amsterdam in June 1704 Le Clerc expressed concern about Shaftesbury's singularity of purpose:

Mylord de Schaftesbury est toujours à Rotterdam, ou il ne voit presque personne. J'ai peur que ce Seigneur n'ait eu quelque chagrin, et qu'il se donne dans la melancholie. Ce seroit un très

1. ROBINSON, pp. 173-4.

grand dommage. Je l'ai vu ici avec beaucoup de plaisir, et si j'en avois le temps, j'irois à Rotterdam pour le voir. Il me parla beaucoup de l'étude de la langue Grecque. Ce seroit en effet un agréable amusement pour lui, s'il avoit quelqu'un qui l'aidât en cela et qui lui aplanit les difficultes, ce qu'il ne savoit trouver a Rotterdam. Je voudrois être à portée de l'aller voir souvent; je tâcherois de lui rendre un petit service.¹

At the end of his stay Shaftesbury turned down an invitation from Sir Rowland Gwinn to visit the Hanoverian court.² He landed in England at the end of August 1704 after a particularly bad crossing, which damaged his health.³

Shaftesbury kept up his voluminous correspondence with Furly after his return, frequently mentioning news of the war, in which Arent Furly was now serving, and asking after his Dutch friends. In July 1708 he returned to the theme of Anglo-Dutch relations in the light of allied successes in the war:

...I was over and above indebted to you for your succeeding Letter w^{ch} brought such glorious News. [Oudenarde] Nor do I wonder that y^e particulars you gave at first were not so exact; for there be not in y^e world one who admires the Prince Eugene more than I; yet have I long observ'd that both in England and Holland he has many pretended Admirers who cry him up to y^e Skyes, for no Love to himself but hatred to other People. But I will have done

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1. Lettres Inédites de Le Clerc à Locke, edited by G. BONO, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1959, p. 130.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 282, Shaftesbury to Gwinn, Rotterdam, 19 April 1704 (N.S.). (RAND, pp. 322-3)
 3. London, British Library, Addit. MSS 4743, f. 156, Cropley to Henry Davenant, 7 September 1704.

with these Subjets; having long pleaded in vain wth certain Persons on your side in the behalf of the Sincerity and Good Designs of our Ministry here at home, and of some great Persons who tho I will not justify some Infirmities of others, and many Misbehaviours in their former Lives, yet have given such Proofs long since of their Fidelity to y^e Interest of Europe & Zeal of y^e common Cause, that nothing but a Spirit of Detraction can call it in Question. This was a Doctrine I preachd from y^e first coming of our Queen to y^e Crown. I am sure I had no obligation to her Ministry. They were far from being Personally my Friends, or any way reconcil'd (as they are now more and more indeed) to that whch I esteem the right Party in my Country. This I had y^e good Fortune to convince Mijn Heer Wellant of when I first came into Holland y^e first year of y^e Queens Reign. But great Jealousyes have grown up since. Mijn Heer Wellant is now Dead. I have none that seek my Opinion (as he then did) and so I am free of the Burden of justifying Courtiers, & Great Men, wch to such a one as I am, is a hard Task at best, since great Men will have great Faults, and when their Politicks are good their Moralls will be ill; and their Lives give scandall to such a Formall Liver as I am, who neither aim at Riches, nor ever admire what the world (especially People of my Rank) call Pleasure.¹

After 1708 Shaftesbury's thoughts turned increasingly to philosophy, and especially aesthetics. No longer considered an important authority on Dutch affairs, he wrote less about them, although he continued to keep in touch with Furly and his friends.

What kind of impact did Shaftesbury have on politics and thought

1. P.R.O 30/24/22/4, f. 322, Shaftesbury to Furly, Chelsea, 22 July 1708. (RAND, pp. 387-8)

in the Netherlands? There are echoes of Shaftesbury's concerns throughout Dutch thought in the eighteenth century but it is not possible to prove that he had any connection with them. For example, there was a circle of freethinkers around Prosper Marchand in The Hague, with which Toland was closely associated in 1708-10. Margaret Jacob has uncovered a good deal of information about the social framework of the 'radical enlightenment' and the important part played by the English Commonwealthmen in providing the foundation for an expansion of free-thinking political ideology, 'pantheistic materialism', on a European scale.¹ Jacob sees John Toland as a pivotal character in this movement, introducing the more radical Commonwealth ideas to a literary circle around Marchand, the editor of Bayle's Dictionnaire.² Part of her analysis is rather strained, but there are parallels with Shaftesbury's Dutch friends: freethinking philosophical tendencies and republican politics, together with a strong Huguenot representation and admiration of Bayle.

One of the Marchand circle was Jean Rousset de Missy, the translator of Anthony Collins's Discourse on Freethinking and later official historian to the stadhouder William IV. He was also responsible for the publication of the 'most dangerous and outrageous freethinking

1. Margaret C. JACOB, 'Newtonian Science and the Radical Enlightenment', Vistas in Astronomy, 22 (1979), 545-555.

2. Ibid., pp. 549-50.

work of the Enlightenment', La Vie et l'Esprit de Spinoza, in which 'pantheistic materialism' was used as the 'foundation for an attack on all established institutions.' The work had been copied by the bookseller Charles Levier, another member of the circle, from an original manuscript in Furlly's library, which was 'one of the finest libraries of clandestine and heretical literature in Europe.'¹ Pierre Desmaizeaux was also associated with the group.²

There is also a Shaftesburean tone to a later group of intellectuals who had anti-Orangist sympathies. At the centre of the group was Petrus Burmannus Secundus, professor of rhetoric, poetry, and history at Franeker. Burmann was a leading figure in the mid-century Wittenoorlog, the pamphlet war which used De Witt and his life as a convenient peg on which to hang notions of liberty, the true nature of the Republic, and the most effective way to solve constitutional problems. Burmann was a strong advocate of the extreme Loevestein case in the battle. He soon became a central figure in the so-called 'Socratic War', which began by examining the figure of Socrates and ended by discussing the broadest philosophical questions. From 1758 until his death in 1778 Burmann's country estate at Santhorst became the 'centre of all political and ecclesiastical freedom movements

1. Ibid., pp. 548, 551.

2. Ibid., p. 548.

and their influence.'¹ A number of like-minded spirits, all of them connected with the regent oligarchy, gathered round Burmann at Santhorst to discuss political and philosophical questions. They espoused a system of 'Liberty, Piety, Friendship, Peace, and Toleration.'² The group published works in defence of the Loevestein tradition; the crutch on which Oldenbarneveldt had leaned on the scaffold was kept as a relic at Santhorst.

It would be a fruitless task to argue that Shaftesbury had any direct influence on such manifestations in eighteenth century Dutch intellectual life. A more convincing case might be made for seeing Commonwealth influences at work in the Netherlands during the period, for example in van der Capellen and other Patriot leaders.³ This would require detailed argument and documentation beyond the scope of this thesis, and even then the evidence would be fragmentary and circumstantial. The Dutch had any amount of material available on which to draw, without borrowing ideas from radical English politicians. Moreover, Dutch political theory is a phenomenon more of the end of the sixteenth and eighteenth, rather than the seventeenth,

1. LEEB, op. cit., pp. 96-7.

2. Ibid., p. 97.

3. Simon SCHAMA, 'Municipal Government and the Burden of the Poor in South Holland during the Napoleonic Wars', in Britain and the Netherlands VI, edited by A. C. DUKE and C. A. TAMSE, The Hague, 1977, pp. 95-6.

centuries.

Nevertheless, when discussing Shaftesbury's relations with the Dutch and his attempts to introduce them to English political thought, it is important to take into account the later manifestations of a liberal republican and anti-Orangist nature in Dutch history, especially when these political sympathies are demonstrably allied to political concerns with which Shaftesbury was associated. Wolff, the systematiser of Leibniz, was an important influence in Dutch Patriot ideology.¹ Wolff and Shaftesbury had much in common as philosophers and it would be surprising if the latter's works were not read by kindred spirits in the Netherlands.

Shaftesbury's philosophical debt to the Netherlands has long been recognised by intellectual historians, who have seen him as one of the numerous writers associated with refugee scholars and publishers at the end of the seventeenth century. To be an admirer of Bayle and a patron of Le Clerc was not uncommon among the circles in which Shaftesbury moved. Bayle's work had an impressive impact on European intellectuals and there were few such men whom Le Clerc did not know. Shaftesbury's political interest in the country, on the other hand, has only recently attracted the attention of scholars. On the whole they have been content to depict him as a philosopher, whose subsidiary political interests encouraged him to discuss political matters

1. SCHAMA, Patriots and Liberators, p. 69.

with his scholarly friends.

The major argument of this thesis, however, is that Shaftesbury was a more deeply involved politician than people, other than his contemporaries, have given him credit for. To be sure, his philosophy and politics were closely connected; in both he was concerned to uncover the psychological and moral sources of virtuous conduct, both of a private and social nature, which he believed to have been obscured by the repressive action of scholastic thought and corroded by the pragmatic and empirical nature of contemporary scientific thought. Political 'corruption' and the tyranny of absolute monarchy were two aspects of the confusion and self-deceit which were a result of the distortion of the straightforward desire for virtuous conduct in human nature.

In particular, I have argued in this chapter that Shaftesbury's political interest in the Netherlands was not, for him, subsidiary to the intellectual stimulus which he drew from his visits there. The fact that the intellectual liberty which he cherished was threatened by France, by repressive government in the Republic, and, more disturbingly, through misunderstanding between the English and the Dutch, drove him to the conclusion that such freedom would only be safeguarded by taking an active political interest in Anglo-Dutch affairs. If the freedom of men like Furly, Bayle, and Le Clerc to discuss and publish

their ideas was to be preserved, active steps had to be taken to prevent it from being overthrown by default. It was for this reason that Shaftesbury was gravely concerned about the delicate state of Anglo-Dutch relations; if the alliance was broken, both countries would succumb either to the forces of tyranny being actively disposed by France or to the insidious absolutist tendencies of the tories in England or the Orangists in the Republic. The advent of the Second Stadhouderless Period in 1702 gave Shaftesbury some encouragement on the latter score but the French threat was still immediately apparent.

As in domestic politics Shaftesbury's view was old-fashioned and the categories in which he thought were somewhat outdated. Yet, and this is the paradox, such ideas had a wide currency among Shaftesbury's intellectual circle. There is a curious amalgam of the outdated and the very modern in some of the ideas of Shaftesbury and his associates. The way in which the heroes of both the first whigs and the Loevesteiners were regarded as patron saints in a political ideology with nostalgic and sentimental characteristics has been remarked.

In order to express these ideas Shaftesbury dug rather deeper into Dutch political life than his immediate literary acquaintance. He was in touch with senior politicians, Dutchmen who had an interest in Macclesfield's embassy of 1701, and the younger generation of politic-

ally active burgerij in Rotterdam. The mixture of young and old is again apparent. As through his philosophical writing Shaftesbury hoped to create a new intelligensia, so through his political activity, in England and the Netherlands, he hoped to show this intelligensia that it had political obligations, from which it could not escape.

Shaftesbury's interest in the Netherlands was, therefore, more complex, and, I think, more interesting than a mere question of intellectual influence. As an 'arch-Batavophile'¹ Shaftesbury possessed a great interest in the welfare and reputation of the Dutch nation. For him the future health of Europe depended on maintaining the strength of a chain of intellectual and political involvement, in which the Republic was a vital link. His attempts to preserve the strength of that link deserve more attention than they have yet been given.

1. Douglas COOMBS, The Conduct of the Dutch: British opinion and the Dutch alliance during the War of the Spanish Succession, The Hague and Achimota, 1958, p. 148.

CHAPTER VI

SHAFTESBURY'S POLITICAL THOUGHT

To speak of Shaftesbury's political thought is a slight misconception. At no time did he write a systematic account of his political philosophy, and it is important to resist the temptation to mould the surviving material which expresses his political ideas into a coherent and watertight system. Such an exercise would not have pleased a man who sought to remain free from the constraints of systematic thought. The task facing the student of Shaftesbury's political thought is a more complex one. It is to relate the mass of relevant material, published and unpublished, to the political problems with which Shaftesbury and his contemporaries were concerned. Many of these political battles may strike us as petty or unworthy but to contemporaries they were matters of crucial importance, involving personal and national livelihood. Political disagreements stimulated fresh notions of the complex network of relationships in post-Revolution England: between Crown and Parliament, ministers and M.P.s, Church and State. Shaftesbury's contribution to political life as an active politician and electoral manager has been discussed

in previous chapters.¹ This chapter should not be seen in isolation from them. Much of Shaftesbury's overtly political writing was a response to actual political events. His notions of the best structure of government for his time were subject to modification by his experience of political life. Above all, his interest in politics extended far beyond the detail of parliamentary and diplomatic disputes. His conviction that all aspects of human behaviour and creativity have political implications, particularly with regard to morality and art, gives a political gloss to much of his work. It was a conviction which stemmed from his view of the world as essentially harmonious. This encouraged him to think of all human activities as being dependent on each other. A change in a constituent part of the whole could have a profound effect on the entire system. Perhaps it was this view of the world which led him to sympathize with the political thought of the Commonwealthmen early in his parliamentary career. The 'neo-Harringtonian' view of 'corruption' as an imbalance in the delicate harmony of the polity has parallels with Stoic notions of the threats to a harmonious universe, which Shaftesbury took up from his classical reading and attempted to re-state in modern terms.

The task of reconstructing - as far as it is possible - Shaftes-

1. See above, chapters III and IV.

bury's political thought is, therefore, a complex one. This is not to say that there are no guidelines to make the attempt easier. Previous writers have tended to place Shaftesbury within particular 'traditions', both in terms of his political and philosophical alignment. On the whole such attempts have over-emphasised one aspect of his thought in the face of contrasting, and occasionally contradictory, evidence. Thus he has been seen as a 'Roman Whig' or 'Junto Whig', a 'Country Whig' or 'Cosmic Tory', a Platonist or a Stoic.¹ I intend to argue in this chapter that none of these labels does sufficient justice to his intellectual development and changing political concerns. His views could be changed by political events - he was unexceptional in this respect - and a more acute knowledge of his political thought is to be gained by discarding the notion of a consistent point of view or a continuously maturing political philosophy. It is necessary to generalise but not to force the evidence into a preconceived mould.

The available evidence is wide-ranging. It includes the Characteristics, which, if not primarily political in intention, has political resonances, and the various tracts which Shaftesbury published or supported between 1698 and 1702. There is work not published until

1. For conflicting political interpretations see, for example, Caroline ROBBINS, The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, Cambridge, Mass., 1961, and B. M. BURROWS, Shaftesbury and Cosmic Toryism: An Alternative World View (University of Oklahoma unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1973). For a discussion of Shaftesbury's philosophical alignment see Stanley GREAN, Shaftesbury's Philosophy of Religion and Ethics: A Study in Enthusiasm, Ohio, 1967.

many years after his death and probably never intended for publication: much of this material was written in notebooks. Finally, there are many letters which discuss political matters, as well as brief memoranda in notebooks and almanacs. If this material is viewed against the background of the political narrative of the period and Shaftesbury's own biography, a reasonably coherent, though incomplete, picture begins to emerge.

The Characteristics was the main published work on which Shaftesbury fixed his attention. His last years were spent making detailed notes for the preparation of the second edition.¹ It is not unreasonable, therefore, to assume that he regarded his comments on political morality in the work to be a reflection of his considered opinion on the matter. The constituent works in the Characteristics were written over the years from 1699 to 1710: indeed the earliest work, the Inquiry concerning Virtue, or Merit, was probably written before 1699. It was not, therefore, essentially a late work but one with a long period of gestation.

One of the major hermeneutical problems of the Characteristics is its inconsistent and unsystematic nature. This has led scholars to adopt a variety of approaches to the work. Attempts to extract

1. The Shaftesbury Papers are full of instructions and memoranda concerning the content and design of the second edition. P.R.O. 30/24/23/8 and 9, letter-books of 1711-13, including many letters to Thomas Micklethwayte. See also P.R.O. 30/24/26/3, concerned with design.

the basic core of a moral and aesthetic philosophy with political implications have given way in recent years to a more tentative approach, which respects the fragmentary nature of the work and is not as confident about drawing general conclusions from it.¹ The caution which prompts this approach is laudable - to treat the Characteristics as a fully-rounded and methodical book would be to do violence to the author's intentions and method. On the other hand, it does not appear that a sensitive approach should necessarily preclude the construction of a broad outline of Shaftesbury's thought. Taken by itself the Characteristics is open to a variety of interpretations. Taken in conjunction with other evidence the range of interpretation becomes more limited; limited enough for it to be possible to establish beyond reasonable doubt the main outlines of Shaftesbury's moral and political philosophy. The interpretation offered in this chapter is not particularly new or unusual - it seeks rather to place Shaftesbury's political thought in the context of the political interests outlined in previous chapters.

There can be little doubt that the main thrust behind Shaftesbury's political thought was the attempt to relate morality to the political life of the nation. Throughout his writing there is an emphasis on the particular nature of this task. It is the Europe of his day which he wishes to see emerging from the political strife

1. A recent example of this approach is ROBINSON.

and corruption with which it is beset. He is not concerned to posit an ideal political theory or an ideal state. The immediacy of current political crises is the context in which the Characteristics should be read and it colours the author's reflections on morality, as well as explaining some of the allusions in the text.

What did Shaftesbury mean by morality? It is essential to the understanding of his political thought that his moral philosophy be examined, for the one flows directly from the other to form a general basis for his political ideas and action. In discussing the relationship between the two I shall follow to a large extent the recent analysis offered by Dr. J. F. Harrison, although much of what Harrison says is not particularly controversial.¹

Harrison argues for a dual basis to Shaftesbury's moral philosophy - the 'rational' and 'emotional' elements. Both strands are present in his thought and both have political implications. The 'rational' element, which is particularly prevalent in the Inquiry, establishes Shaftesbury's belief in the harmony of the universe and the moral character of man. From this it follows that factional political strife is a distortion of the true state of affairs, an

1. J. F. HARRISON, The Moral and Political Philosophy of Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury (University of Durham unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1970). I owe the discussion of the dual basis of Shaftesbury's moral philosophy in pp. 220-2 to Harrison, although the application of this analysis to politics and culture is largely original to this thesis.

imbalance in the harmonious structure of the world.¹ It is not hard to see that his views on this matter had certain similarities with the Commonwealth concern for 'corruption', a commonplace in Country rhetoric. Whether this apparent similarity was a reflection of commonly held views about the characteristics of human nature and society, which was what Shaftesbury wrote about, will be discussed later in this chapter.²

The 'emotional' approach to moral philosophy is to be found throughout the Characteristics. Its major function is the establishment of the 'moral sense', or something close to it, by which the moral man possesses the innate ('connatural' in Shaftesbury's vocabulary) ability to recognise right and wrong, good and evil. Shaftesbury, like Rousseau after him, believed that all virtuous people would come to the same view of important issues and that the appearance of political parties was again a distortion of human nature and aspirations, fragmenting the basic harmony of human society. Analogous to the 'moral sense' in Shaftesbury's writing is the 'aesthetic sense', by which man may recognise and respond to beauty. This entails a close connection between art, culture, politics, and morality in his thought, and shows him at his most interesting and original.

1. For a discussion of faction in Shaftesbury's thought see below, pp. 250-8.

2. See below, pp. 235-9.

The 'rational' and 'emotional' elements of Shaftesbury's thought are not unrelated. Both contain characteristics which set him in a philosophical tradition at odds with that of his tutor, Locke.¹ He rejected the empiricist theory of knowledge developed by Bacon, Hobbes, and Locke.² Instead he drew his inspiration from a wide range of classical philosophy and literature; the writing of Plato and Aristotle, the Stoics, Horace, the Neoplatonists, and their seventeenth-century successors, the Cambridge Platonists. Of particular importance in a discussion of his political thought is his acceptance, in the face of fashionable egoistic theories, of Aristotle's view that man is by nature a sociable and altruistic being.

Both of Shaftesbury's approaches to moral theory involve the belief that the universe is a perfectly organised whole, that we behave morally when we consciously pursue the public welfare, and that we maximise our happiness by behaving morally. The conviction that the virtuous behaviour of the individual is intimately connected with the public good permeates his writing and was a cause of his

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1. For the suggestion that Shaftesbury did not write on political thought because he would have had to attack Locke, see BURROWS, op. cit., p. 146. Yet Burrows also recognises that Shaftesbury thought the Characteristics to be a political work, appealing to a Ciceronian political elite, p. 37.
 2. Quentin SKINNER has argued forcefully that an ambivalent attitude to Hobbes was reflected by many contemporaries, including Shaftesbury. See his article, 'The Ideological Context of Hobbes's Political Thought', The Historical Journal, IX (1966), 286-317, and especially pp. 292 and 298.

acute distress at the behaviour of individuals like Harley: the individual has the potential to destroy the balance of the society of which he is a member.

To love the public, to study universal good, and to promote the interest of the whole world, as far as lies within our power, is surely the height of goodness, and makes that temper which we call divine.¹

The 'rational' strand in Shaftesbury's moral philosophy was earlier than the 'emotional', which became more significant as his thought developed and as he became more disenchanted with political life in England. The 'rational' is also the least original element in his thought, reflecting his debt to classical writers and, more recently, to English philosophers such as the Cambridge Platonists, Thomas Burnet, and Cumberland.² It is that part of his philosophy, so to speak, which places him in a discernable intellectual tradition and provides an intellectual framework for his political ideas.

To talk of the 'rational' part of his moral theory is not to suggest that he was interested in epistemology - he was not particul-

1. A Letter Concerning Enthusiasm, section IV. Characteristics, I, 27.

2. See above, chapter II, pp. 47-51.

arly concerned with the theoretical pursuit of truth and knowledge. His moral philosophy was geared to action, the ways in which man can become virtuous. It is to this basic problem that his earliest philosophical work, the Inquiry concerning Virtue, or Merit, is addressed. He comes to the conclusion that moral obligation is based on the individual's pursuit of happiness, or self-interest? If the universe is harmonious and rationally organised, and if it is also moral, then we act morally by pursuing our ends as part of that whole. Man is a social and altruistic being, who is made unhappy by selfish behaviour. Therefore, by exercising the 'natural affections', as Shaftesbury calls them, we will gain the greatest happiness. The 'natural affections' consist of those actions and states of mind 'which lead to the Good of THE PUBLICK', such as love, good-will, and sympathy towards the species.¹ These affections bring with them the greatest happiness and so, if we are to realise our happiness (or self-interest) we must also realise the common good. In other words, when we pursue our self-interest intelligently the balance created between the various 'affections' (self, natural, and unnatural) will be such as to effect a pursuit of the public interest. The consequence of the 'rational' approach to morality in Shaftesbury's

1. An Inquiry Concerning Virtue, Or Merit, edited by David WALFORD, Manchester, 1977, p. 54. Characteristics, I, 286.

thought is a delicately constructed moral framework which depends on a fine balance of 'affections' within the individual and, by extension, within society as a whole. He makes the point clear in Book II of the Inquiry:

Whoever is the least vers'd in this moral kind of Architecture, will find the inward Fabrick so adjusted, and the whole so nicely built; that the barely extending of a single Passion a little too far, or the continuance of it too long, is able to bring irrecoverable Ruin and Misery.¹

Such a fragile structure places a daunting responsibility on the individual to discern the correct balance between his passions and 'affections'. Shaftesbury was well aware of this and, though he continually stressed the need for virtuous action, he was convinced that human nature, pace Hobbes, was well equipped for the tasks he demanded of it. Earlier in the Inquiry he wrote:

'Tis impossible to suppose a mere sensible Creature originally so ill-constituted, and unnatural, as that from the moment he comes to be try'd by sensible Objects, he shou'd have no one good Passion towards his Kind, no Foundation either of Pity, Love, Kindness, or social Affection. 'Tis full as impossible to conceive, that a rational Creature coming first to be try'd by rational Objects, and receiving into his Mind the Images or Representations of Justice, Generosity, Gratitude, or other Virtue, shou'd have no Liking of these, or Dislike of their Contrarys; but be found absolutely indifferent towards whatsoever is presented to him of this sort...Nor can any thing besides Art

1. Ibid., p. 84. Characteristics, I, 314.

and strong Endeavour, with long Practice and Meditation, overcome such a natural Prevention, or Prepossession of the Mind, in favour of this moral Distinction.¹

'Virtue', which finds its fulfilment and completion in 'piety', is defined in social terms:

We have found, that to deserve the name of Good or Virtuous, a Creature must have all his Inclinations and Affections, his Dispositions of Mind and Temper, suitable, and agreeing with the Good of his Kind, or of that System in which he is included, and of which he constitutes a PART. To stand thus well affected, and to have one's Affections right and intire, not only in respect of one's self, but of Society and the Publick: This is Rectitude, Integrity, or VIRTUE. And to be wanting in any of these, or to have their Contrarys, is Depravity, Corruption, and VICE.²

The classical humanist contrasting of 'virtue' with 'corruption' is thus repeated by Shaftesbury, whose concern about the latter is apparent throughout his life and writing.³

In Book I Part iii of the Inquiry Shaftesbury introduces the concept of 'moral sense':

Sense of Right and Wrong therefore being as natural to us as natural Affection itself, and being a first Principle in our Constitution and Make; there is no speculative Opinion, Persuasion or Belief, which is capable immediately or directly to exclude

1. Ibid., pp. 25-6. Characteristics, I, 259-60.

2. Ibid., p. 48. Characteristics, I, 280.

or destroy it.¹

Here there is an early indication of the second strand of Shaftesbury's moral philosophy, which Harrison identifies as 'non-rational' or 'emotional'. It is significant that the passage should appear in one of his most 'rational' works: he never clearly distinguished between the two approaches to morality himself. Rather the distinction is a useful tool with which to explore his thought. Shaftesbury was consciously unsystematic in his writing - he was greatly concerned to combat the false kind of 'enthusiasm' which he considered to be a feature of systematic and dogmatic ways of thought, particularly in religion.² We find, therefore, that his methodology is not particularly watertight or independent: it is one of the engaging characteristics of his work that he introduces new ideas into the argument as he sees fit.

The 'emotional' theory equates virtue and beauty. This has come to be known as the 'moral sense' theory, although it is difficult to determine whether Shaftesbury ever developed a comprehensive theory of the 'moral sense' in the way achieved by his follower Francis Hutcheson.³ Shaftesbury claimed that man has the ability immediately to perceive the beautiful, which he saw as the standard of excellence

1. An Inquiry, p. 26. Characteristics, I, 260.

2. Characteristics, II, 195.

3. Francis HUTCHESON, Illustrations on the Moral Sense, edited by Bernard PEACH, Cambridge, Mass., 1971.

in both aesthetic and moral issues. This approach to morality stresses the independence of moral values and establishes Shaftesbury's interest in the psychological aspects of moral questions - the extent to which morality is a reflection of the human personality. He stressed that it is in man's nature to perceive good and evil, beauty and corruption; the characteristic is innate in man, or 'connatural' as Shaftesbury preferred to term it. This explains his attack on Locke's empirical theory of knowledge in the letter of August 1689¹ and in later letters.² In a letter to Michael Ainsworth he exhibited his conviction of the superiority of the 'emotional' approach:

But be perswaded, in the mean Time, that Wisdom
is more from the Heart, than from the Head.
Feel Goodness, and you will see all Things fair
and good.³

By equating truth and beauty Shaftesbury establishes a necessary connection between art and morality. The 'aesthetic sense', which distinguishes beauty, also involves an enthusiastic desire to possess beauty, thus eliminating the problem of moral obligation. Therefore, the enthusiasm for beauty, the stimulus for virtuous action, is the means whereby the 'moral sense', which distinguishes right from wrong,

1. See above, chapter II, pp. 33-4.

2. See above, chapter II, p. 35.

3. Several Letters written by a Noble Lord to a Young Man at the University, London, 1716, p. 32.

can function. Moreover, the beauty to be found in a moral or virtuous person is superior to the beauty to be seen in the material world: beauty becomes a mental, rather than material, quality.

It follows from this philosophical assumption that Shaftesbury was interested in the points where culture and politics meet. He commented on the way in which a nation's culture is a function of its moral and political organisation and was in the forefront of the move to establish a national standard of taste or style in England, which would reflect the greater degree of liberty in the country after the Glorious Revolution.¹ This was a subject which particularly occupied his mind towards the end of his life. The Letter concerning Design applied his ideas to architecture, with its criticisms of Wren and Vanbrugh, considered by him to be proponents of a corrupt French style.² Much of Shaftesbury's polemic on this subject bears a resemblance to the holistic and historicist view of architectural development exposed by David Watkin in his book, Morality and Architecture.³ There are echoes of Shaftesbury's conviction about

1. See, for example, Soliloquy, or Advice to an Author (1710), Part II section 1. Characteristics, I, 137-50.

2. For a fuller discussion of Shaftesbury's views on art and culture, see below, chapter VIII, pp. 317-325. Written in Naples in 1712, the Letter concerning Design is accessible in RAND, Second Characters, pp. 17-29. For a recent discussion of its contemporary significance see Kerry DOWNES, Vanbrugh, London, 1977, pp. 77-8. See also Rudolf WITTKOWER, Palladio and English Palladianism, London, pp. 179-80.

3. David WATKIN, Morality and Architecture, Oxford, 1977.

the intimate connection between architecture and political morality in the works of Pugin and Pevsner.

Political considerations were thus a necessary extension of Shaftesbury's moral thought. In an essay not published until 1900 he wrote:

The end or design of nature in man is society
...the perfection of human nature is in that
which fits and accommodates to society, for
he who wants those natural affections which
tend thither, is imperfect and monstrous.¹

He was not interested in the idea of a pre-social 'state of nature' or of a 'golden age'. He saw government and society as necessarily implying each other and 'virtue' as consisting of the welfare of the community in which man has been placed by nature.

Yet Shaftesbury was not as urbane about the practical problems of politics as his writing may imply. In this chapter three broad areas of political concern in his thought will be discussed. Although they will be described in chronological order these key areas should not be thought of as falling into distinct periods of his life - he was concerned about them throughout his career. In the same way that they span his life these ideas also cross the indistinct boundary between political philosophy and practical politics, indicating the

1. RAND, p. 49. Essay on 'The End'.

danger of trying to separate the two strands. Perhaps they could profitably considered as points of tension in his thought, where his philosophical reading was brought face to face with political reality. The three ideas, or points of tension, are, first, the relationship between 'harmony' and 'corruption' in political life; secondly, his anti-French and pro-Dutch sympathies, with their implications for patriotism and a broader vision of European politics; and thirdly, the place of non-party government in one of the most prominent periods of 'faction' in English political history. The first cluster of ideas particularly attracted Shaftesbury's attention as a young M.P. in the 1690s, the second between 1700 and 1702, and the third after 1702.

One of the mainsprings of Shaftesbury's political thought and activity was the belief that man's ethical potential, the rational reflection on the 'moral' and 'aesthetic' senses which turns 'goodness' into 'virtue', was usually not fulfilled in society owing to the 'corruption' of that potential by political and religious institutions. The battle against 'corruption' and the defence of 'liberty' was the keynote of his political campaigning during the 1690s and the first decade of the eighteenth century. His letter to Stringer in February 1696 is an early indication of his first-hand experience of 'corruption' at work in the House of Commons.¹ In particular

1. See above, chapter III, pp. 74-5.

he was concerned about the threat of absolutism, both religious and political, which he saw in contemporary France under Louis XIV, the latest manifestation of an insidious power at work in history:

And as happy as we are in this establishment at home, we are still held in a perpetual alarm by the aspect of affairs abroad, and by the terror of that Power which, ere mankind had well recovered the misery of those barbarous ages consequent to the Roman yoke, has again threatened the world with a universal monarchy and a new abyss of ignorance and superstition.¹

Shaftesbury considered absolute monarchy to be subversive of both liberty and morality² and he regarded with great suspicion, as previous chapters have indicated, the tendency of the Court to spread its web of patronage to trap and coerce independent M.P.s and turn them into government pensioners. His grandfather had fought Danby's attempt to strengthen the position of the monarchy with great vigour and had suffered for it, a struggle and exile that was not forgotten by his grandson.

His concern for freedom from Court influence and 'corruption' helps to explain Shaftesbury's connection with the Commonwealthmen, which has been discussed in an earlier chapter.³ The support he gave

1. Soliloquy, Part II, section i. Characteristics, I, 141.

2. Characteristics, I, 138.

3. See above, chapter III, pp. 75-92.

to Toland is an indication of the extent to which he was willing to give time and money to the Commonwealth campaign. He collaborated with the Irishman on a number of publishing ventures, including the 1698 election manifesto, The Danger of Mercenary Parliaments.¹ Written for a particularly rancorous campaign, which saw a growing division in popular understanding between Court and Country,² the pamphlet was an attack on placemen, discussing, 'the Choosing or Refusing of such Persons, who are now possessed of any Places and Preferments, depending upon the Gift and Pleasure of the Court.'³ The blame for the 'corruption' of parliaments, which the authors took to be a recent phenomenon, was placed firmly on the shoulders of Charles II, who fostered a growth of French power - and this shows Shaftesbury's prejudices at work - which the Commons were unable to stop.

Equally worrying to the Shaftesbury-Toland combine was the failure of the Court, and particularly the Junto leaders, to augment the achievements of the Glorious Revolution.

We were filled with golden Dreams, not only of
a bare Security for our Estates and Lives, but
an inexhausted Affluence of all Manner of
Blessings a Nation is capable of enjoying. But,
though we have dreamt the Dreams, yet have we
not seen the Visions. And though the Nation

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1. See WORDEN, p. 44 n. 190, for a discussion of the authorship of the pamphlet. It is often attributed to Toland.
 2. Henry HORWITZ, Parliament, Policy and Politics in the reign of William III, Manchester, 1977, pp. 237-40.
 3. The Danger of Mercenary Parliaments, in The Harleian Miscellany, London, 1745, I, 582. In this edition the pamphlet, which is at pp. 582-90, is wrongly dated 1690.

is, by this Time, sadly sensible, how wretchedly they have fallen short of their expected Happiness, yet are they not all acquainted with the true Spring and Fountain from whence all their Misfortunes flow; which is, indeed, no other, than that bare-faced and openly avowed Corruption, which, like an universal Leprosy, has so notoriously infected and overspread both our Court and Parliament. It is, from hence, are plainly derived all the Calamities and Distractions under which the whole nation at present groans.¹

After lamenting the 'wretched Degeneracy of the Age we live in', the authors pressed home their attack on placemen, who,

represented not their Country, but themselves, and always kept together in a close and undivided Phalanx, impenetrable either by Shame or Honour, voting always the same Way, and saying always the same Things, as if they were no longer voluntary Agents, but so many Engines, merely turned about by a mechanick Motion, like an Organ, where the great humming Bases, as well as the little squeaking Trebles, are filled but with one Blast of Wind from the same Sound-board.²

The common excuse that political caution must be exercised for fear of the scheming of the exiled James II is condemned and William III is acclaimed as 'the most auspicious Prince that ever yet swayed the English Scepter.' Finally, Shaftesbury and Toland justified the public expression of their concern:

Since, therefore, those, who are making us Slaves, think it no great Difficulty to effect their Purposes, I see no Reason, why I ought to

1. Ibid., I, 586.

2. Ibid., I, 587.

be so tender as to forbear Expressing my
Fears and Apprehensions of their Success.¹

Such was the message of The Danger of Mercenary Parliaments. It was a broadly-based attack on placemen and the danger of 'corruption', with very few constructive suggestions as to the political shape the nation should be taking. As such the pamphlet is not untypical of the Commonwealth approach, strident and hectoring when attacking the Court, subdued and insubstantial when on the defensive. The Commonwealth attitude was not a political theory in any scientific sense. Rather it was a series of assumptions and a rhetorical vocabulary designed to activate the political conscience of the nation at times of crisis.²

Broadly speaking, the classical republican theory, which traced its intellectual descent in a line that included Aristotle, Polybius, Cicero, and Machiavelli, and its English antecedents in Milton, Marvell, Neville, Harrington, and Algernon Sidney, was that each of the pure forms of polity (monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy) was prone to degeneration.³ The degeneration was particularly dangerous when the balance between the forms was damaged owing to the encroachment by

1. Ibid., I, 590.

2. The Political Works of James Harrington, edited by J. G. A. Pocock, Cambridge, 1977, introduction, p. 15.

3. Donald WINCH, Adam Smith's Politics. An Essay in Historiographic Revision, Cambridge, 1978, pp. 30-33.

one of the constituent elements on the others, thus putting the 'harmony' of the whole polity at risk. The chief antidote to this 'corruption' was the renewal of the public spirit, or 'virtue', of the citizenry. The independent and virtuous republican citizen was thought to be the independent freeholder, who, by owning property, was immune from the danger of 'corruption' in the form of bribes by the government and who would defend his independence at that of his fellow men against moral and political coercion. Such citizens would also form the militia, a crucial element in the polemic of the standing army debates.¹

We have seen from the brief survey of moral and political ideas in the Characteristics, at the beginning of this chapter, that Shaftesbury found much with which to sympathise in this outlook. On the whole, he and men like Robert Molesworth, the 'Roman Whigs' of Worden's analysis,² stood rather aloof from the practical political suggestions being put forward by such men as Trenchard and Moyle.

Unfortunately the scholarly discussion of the ideas and intellectual background of the Commonwealthmen has not yet been augmented by a thorough investigation of their organisation and strategy. It seems unlikely, given the informal nature of much political debate in

1. For the standing army controversy see Lois G. SCHWOERER, No Standing Armies!, Baltimore, 1974. For the attempt to relate arms to citizenship see POCOCK, Harrington, pp. 43-61.

2. WORDEN, p. 40.

in the late 1690s, that the relationships between members of the group will be clearly delineated. Nor does it seem possible to establish the extent to which they regarded themselves as a cohesive group. Attempts have been made to put the Grecian coffee house in Devereux Court at the centre of Commonwealth political debate, a meeting place for Henry Neville, the father-figure of the Grecian until his death in 1694.¹ Less convincing have been the attempts to equate that group with other whig pressure groups, such as Locke's 'College' and Shaftesbury's 'Independent Club'.² Clubs of politicians and literati were common in London after the Revolution. Some, such as the Junto 'Rose Club', served a useful parliamentary purpose and attracted large numbers of M.P.s to their meetings. There were countless smaller societies, among which the Grecian should probably be included. The overriding impression of political organisation in the 1690s is of a fragmentation and informality which withstand attempts to force men into simplistic party-political moulds.

One is not surprised, therefore, to find differences of approach among those men to whom Commonwealth sympathies can be attributed. Shaftesbury was more interested than many of the Commonwealthmen in the foundation of political morality and virtue than in pursuing a

1. WORDEN, p. 40.

2. For the latter equation see J. A. DOWNIE, 'William Stephens and the Letter to the Author of the Memorial of the State of England Reconsidered', B.I.H.R., L (1977), 253-9. The equation is not given such prominence in Downie's Robert Harley and the Press, Cambridge, 1979, although Shaftesbury is still rather loosely described as patron to many of the Grecian writers, p. 22.

party programme. His idea of 'corruption' was not entirely of the Aristotelian or Polybian character apparent in Professor Pocock's 'neo-Harringtonians'. It stemmed rather from his own perception of contemporary political events coloured by the prejudices of commonplace whig history - a view shared by many country gentlemen regardless of their philosophical discrimination. Concern about 'corruption' was, so to speak, in the air after 1688: it was an integral part of the political context, woven into the texture of ideology and propaganda. It was not the prerogative of a small group of politicians who were interested in the relevance of classical models to English political life. At the same time 'corruption' was a problem which Shaftesbury was prompted to take seriously both by his awareness of political affairs seen in the light of whig history and his family's recent history in particular, and also by his philosophical interests, in which the influence of Stoicism is more apparent than Aristotelianism. The view of a natural harmony in nature and man, which is capable of distortion by the abuse of religious or political power, becomes in Shaftesbury's thought conflated, and sometimes confused, with concrete political concerns. He is apt to see the distortion, about which he theorises so eloquently, acted out in front of his eyes. To this extent his thought is empirical in its

thrust.¹ In the same way in which his moral theory is built up from an investigation of the individual personality, so the 'corruption' of the individual and society is given first-hand expression by the machinations of scheming politicians. The point is made quite clearly in his discussion of the starting-point of political theory:

For to understand the manners and constitutions of men in common, 'tis necessary to study man in particular, and know the creature as he is in himself, before we consider him in company, as he is interested in the State, or joined to any city or community.²

The practical and theoretical elements cannot be divided; the two overlap again and again. It is easy to associate him with the Commonwealthmen, and their interest in the virtue of the Roman republic and the archetype of the Roman senator as the virtuous independent citizen, themes brought out during the discussions about the standing army and militia. Yet, as has been argued in an earlier chapter, it is not possible to see Shaftesbury as a straightforward 'party' man.³ Drawn into politics by a sense of duty towards his family's political standing and his own sense of the responsibilities of an independent landowner, he was related to various associated groups in the Commons. A Country whig with a mind of his own, he threw himself in to the

1. John Vladimir PRICE, 'Religion and Ideas', in The Eighteenth Century, edited by Pat ROGERS, London, 1978, p. 128.

2. The Moralists, A Philosophical Rhapsody (1710), Part I, section i. Characteristics, II, 5.

3. See above, chapter III.

daily grind of political life, from which he learned to tailor his political thought to practical ends.

The second major point of tension in Shaftesbury's political thought derived from his suspicion of France and was mirrored by his admiration for the Dutch. His francophobe attitude developed early in his career and we have seen how he mentioned his dislike of France in letters to his father during his continental tour.¹ The feeling stayed with him throughout his life. He was extremely alarmed about French cultural influence in England, which he thought corrupt and insensitive to national sentiment, the architecture of Wren being singled out for special opprobrium.² Yet he was even more disquieted by the political and religious absolutism of France under Louis XIV. Many of his European friends, such as Bayle and Le Clerc, were Huguenots who had been driven out of France by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Shaftesbury was particularly sensitive to the plight of refugees from religious intolerance: his sponsorship of Paul Crellius, or Crell, a member of the famous Polish Socinian family, is an indication of his personal

1. See above, chapter II, p. 29.

2. See above, p. 229.

concern. Crellius was the brother of Samuel Crellius, a friend of Burnet and Bayle. Paul was introduced to Shaftesbury, who already knew his brother, by Arent Furly. Shaftesbury sponsored his university education at Leiden and Cambridge and later employed him as his librarian. Crellius accompanied his patron to Italy, where he was present at Shaftesbury's death. Although he received a pension in Shaftesbury's will Crellius returned to the Continent as a pastor. He died at Andreaswalde in 1760. Both the Crellius brothers contributed to later editions of Bayle's dictionary and Samuel was associated with the Marchand circle.¹

Shaftesbury saw the priesthood as one of the major corrupting influences in history, whether it was the Egyptian priesthood in the ancient world, or the Roman Catholic church in his own day.² Some of the emblematic drawings which he commissioned for the second edition of the Characteristics were intended to express pictorially the ills which followed the establishment of a dominant priesthood.³

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1. Robert WALLACE, Antitrinitarian Biography: or Sketches of the Lives and Writings of Distinguished Antitrinitarians, London, 1850, III, 468-70, 473-4, 483. For Paul Crellius's numerous progress reports from Leiden see P.R.O. 30/24/45. There are numerous references to Samuel Crellius in Leiden University Library, MS Marchand 4.
 2. Miscellany II (1711), chapter I. Characteristics, II, 181-5, 188-94, 205-6.
 3. Felix PAKNADEL, 'Shaftesbury's Illustrations of the Characteristics', in Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XXXVII (1974), 290-312, especially p. 310.

Yet his concern about France was not derived purely from his religious tolerance. The political system and military aspirations of Louis XIV appeared to Shaftesbury and others to be a real threat to the future of Protestant Europe. This was a fear shared by Protestant writers throughout Europe, men like Leibniz and Le Clerc. It was not original to Shaftesbury and, indeed, much of his Francophobia was an indication of the common stock of anti-French prejudices available in England at the time - the Commonwealth conviction that Charles II had sold the country into French slavery died hard.¹ Xenophobia was common in England, and this makes Shaftesbury's admiration for the Dutch, rather than his hatred of the French, the more surprising.

As the last chapter has suggested, Shaftesbury was interested in the Dutch from an early age and was given ample opportunity to strengthen contacts.² In this way the Netherlands remained close to his interests throughout his life, both as a foil to the French threat, as part of a strong Protestant alliance, and as an exemplar of a virtuous citizenry.

His admiration for the Netherlands did not, in his eyes, make him unpatriotic, although supporters of the Dutch were apt to be

1. For the chauvinism inherent in the English attitude towards Continental absolutism see John DUNN, Western Political Theory in the Face of the Future, Cambridge, 1979, p. 67.

2. See above, chapter V.

accused of this during the War of the Spanish Succession, particularly after the failure of peace negotiations in 1708-9. In Part III of the Miscellaneous Reflections published in the Characteristics he made his position clear:

Of all human affections, the noblest and most becoming human nature is that of love to one's country. This, perhaps, will easily be allowed by all men who have really a country, and are of the number of those who may be called a people, as enjoying the happiness of a real constitution and polity by which they are free and independent. There are few such countrymen or freemen so degenerate as directly to discountenance or condemn this passion of love to their community and national brotherhood.¹

Later he commented:

The relation of countryman, if it be allowed anything at all, must imply something moral and social. The notion itself presupposes a naturally civil and political state of mankind, and has reference to that particular part of society to which we owe our chief advantages as men and rational creatures, such as are naturally and necessarily united for each other's happiness and support, and for the highest of all happinesses and enjoyments, 'the intercourse of minds, the free use of our reason, and the exercise of mutual love and friendship'.²

Finally he confessed,

I have been apt sometimes to be very angry with our language for having denied us the

1. Characteristics, II, 244-5

2. Ibid., II, 246.

use of the word Patria, and afforded us no other name to express our native community than that of country, which already bore two different significations abstracted from mankind or society.¹

The constructive use of this patriotic attitude against the French became the lynch-pin of Shaftesbury's political thought between 1700 and 1702, although the theme had been announced earlier in his career and was to remain until his death. His hatred of the French was not primarily a philosophical construct, although his expression of it was sometimes couched in abstract terms. It is rather an example of the way in which moral concerns and contemporary political events mingled to create an ideological commitment.

The importance of Shaftesbury's awareness of the French threat in 1700-1 and the way in which it drew him from the broad Country opposition of the 1690s towards the Junto has been outlined above.² Of particular significance in this respect was the pamphlet which Shaftesbury wrote, with Toland's help, modelled on William III's last speech to parliament, in December 1701. In the Paradoxes of State, which appeared the following month,³ Shaftesbury sought to re-structure English political debate along pro-French and anti-French

1. Ibid., II, 248.

2. See above, chapter III, pp. 100-1.

3. See above, chapter V, p. 175.

lines, by tarring the tories with the French brush. The pamphlet also indicates Shaftesbury's political position at the end of William's reign, when he was at the zenith of his political fortunes. The first proposition of the pamphlet asserts, 'That the particular Interests of the Court and Contry, of Prerogative and Privilege, of the King and People, may be and are at this time actually the same.'¹ The second represents Shaftesbury's conviction of the need for a united front against the French as a means of separating the king's friends from his enemies.

That whatever Names may have bin formerly coin'd to distinguish Parties here in England, there is at present neither Whig nor Tory, Williamite or Jacobite, nor any real Distinction but between those that are in a French, and those that are in an English interest.²

In this section he explains that, 'when all the Court, and a great Part of the Church, were in direct opposition to our civil and spiritual Liberty', there were sufficient grounds for opposition to royal policies in England. But now, with the son of James II proclaimed in France as King of England, 'there is no other real Distinction among us, but of those who are for the Protestant Religion and the Present Establishment, and of those who mean a Popish Prince and a French Government.'³ The attack on the tories is carried a stage further

1. Paradoxes of State, Relating to the Present Juncture of Affairs in England and the Rest of Europe; Chiefly grounded on his Majesty's Princely, Pious, and most Gracious Speech, London, 1702, p. 1. The MS of this pamphlet is at P.R.O. 30/24/44/79.

2. Ibid., p. 3.

3. Ibid., p. 4.

later in the pamphlet, when Shaftesbury uses political terminology in an interesting way. He claims that the enemies of the state are now acting as 'Commonwealthmen', 'and that the real Promoters of a Popish hierarchy and Spiritual Tyranny, are such as contend for the Rights of Presbyters against the Episcopal and Metropolitical Authority in the Church', an attack on the lower house of Convocation.¹ Shaftesbury regards the existing constitution to be 'the best, the most equal, and freest Commonwealth in the World', and those who attack it or attempt to disrupt it are guilty of 'unpardonable Villany when Liberty and the Protestant Religion are the only Pillars that support the present Government.'²

Turning to foreign affairs Shaftesbury stresses the necessity of war with France, his opposition to partition as a solution of the European problem, and the importance of closer co-operation with the Dutch. The tone of his discussion is illustrated by the fifth proposition:

That the Spirit of those who, in the present circumstances of the Nation and of Europe, wou'd declare for Peace and against a War, is in Reality a Spirit of Sedition, intestin War, privat Revenge and Cruelty; and tends directly to such a War, as must end in the Conquest of these Nations, and in the Establishment of a French Government in England

1. Ibid., p. 4.

2. Ibid., p. 5.

by the Administration of the pretended Prince of Wales, as it is already in Spain by that of the Duke of Anjou.¹

In fact Paradoxes of State is a work of Junto propaganda, part of the campaign to attack the ministry for its lack of concern about problems of national security. It is also very favourable to William III, as may be seen in the brief conclusion to the work:

To conclude. Since we have a Prince, to whom we owe that Religion and Liberty of which we are yet possest; of whose consummat Prudence and Experience, of whose Truth and Justice, of whose indefatigable Labors and heroic Valor in our Cause and that of Christendom, we have had such signal and constant Proofs; and since likewise we have had so long Experience of the Clemency and Moderation of his Government; since we have so perfect a knowledge of those just and pious purposes he is pursuing, and are so fully appriz'd, by his late most excellent Speech, of those divine Maxims whereby he intends to govern us, and which must make us the happiest of People under his Reign: if we are any way wanting at this Time in supporting him, who is thus supporting us all, then we must justly bear the eternal Imputation and Brand of being the worst of Subjects and of English-men, the most inexcusable of all Protestants, the most luke warm and worst principl'd of all Christians, the most detestable and, in a word, the most ungrateful of Men.²

Paradoxes of State is the most explicitly pro-Junto of all Shaftesbury's published works. The speech on which the pamphlet was based

1. Ibid., p. 8.

2. Ibid., p. 21.

has been ascribed to Somers, whose astute use of the printing-press in 1701 put him on a par with Harley as a propagandist.¹ Because it is so obviously a party tract it is difficult to determine how accurately it represents Shaftesbury's political ideas at the time and what place it should be given in the corpus of his political writing. The fact that he changed his political allegiance after his return from the Netherlands in 1699 has been established. To that extent the Paradoxes of State reflects his point of view in 1701 with a force and pungency which, in all likelihood, owes more to Toland than to Shaftesbury.

Writing to his old ally, Molesworth, in 1708 and 1709, Shaftesbury looked back to his position in 1701:

For I was one of those sorrowful Whigs who bemoaned the sad case of our Constitution, according to which the power of Peace and War was wholly in the Prince; whilst the Tories saw plainly that it was otherwise, and cou'd impeach a Lord Chancellor for placing the Seal, where I sincerely thought he cou'd not refuse to do it at his Prince's command.²

It was this tory stratagem which stirred him to patriotic action:

I had always something of an Interest in my Country, and with the plain honest people: and sometimes I have experienced both here

1. J. A. DOWNIE, Robert Harley and the Press, chapter 2 (pp. 41-56).

2. TOLAND, Letters, p. 22. Letter VII, 6 January 1708-9.

at home, and abroad, where I have long liv'd, and made acquaintance (in Holland especially) that with a plain character of Honesty and Disinterestedness, I have on some occasions, and in dangerous urgent times of the Publick, been able to do some good.¹

It was fear of France, coupled with tory moves to impeach whigs for their services while at court, which convinced Shaftesbury that 'dangerous urgent times of the Publick' had arrived. His long-standing suspicion of French character and motives received new force when he saw tories acting overtly 'in the French Interest', as he saw it.

Nor was he ever to renounce his hatred of France. An important element in his political thinking after 1702 was the need actively to prosecute the war in Europe. In 1706 he wrote to a friend,

That there shou'd be a Ballance of Power in y^e World is one of y^e plain Principles which the World (thank God) is pretty well possess'd of in this rising Age...But a Warr I fear we must have, which ever Way it go.²

At the end of his life, after passing through France on the way to Italy, he wrote to John Wheelock, his steward,

But tho I dye there [Naples] I shall have much greater satisfaction than to have been obligd to France so much as I shoud have

1. Ibid., p. 10. Letter III, 23 October 1708.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 359v, Shaftesbury to 'Tere(i)sias', St. Giles's, 29 November 1706. (RAND, p. 367). It has not been possible to identify the recipient of this letter.

been, & at last have dy'd there.¹

The prejudice first enunciated in youthful letters to his father, and owing something to the distrust of the French engendered by whig mythology, survived as an axiom in the writing of a mature philosopher in the face of death.

Shortly before Paradoxes of State was published Toland had written a book, the Art of Governing by Partys, with Harley's approval.² A forerunner of Simon Clements's Faults on Both Sides (1710) in the Harleian canon, the Art of Governing set out the arguments against reliance on factional government and 'those fatal Distinctions of Whig and Tory.'³ Toland, although recognising that 'faction' had been introduced by the early Stuarts,⁴ traced its renaissance to the reign of Charles II, the bogey of Country whigs. Classical comparisons are drawn, particularly between a properly constituted parliament and the Roman senate.⁵ The younger Pliny's letter to Cornelius Nepos on the senate is quoted in full.⁶

The Art of Governing by Partys appeared at the beginning of a

1. P.R.O. 30/24/21/193, Shaftesbury to Wheelock, Rome, 6 November 1711 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 445).

2. WORDEN, p. 42; DOWNIE, op. cit., pp. 42-4.

3. DOWNIE, op. cit., p. 43.

4. John TOLAND, The Art of Governing by Partys, London, 1701, p. 9.

5. Ibid., p. 166.

6. Ibid., pp. 168-72.

period when whigs found themselves required to provide a disciplined defence of their position. As John Kenyon has pointed out, the attack on the Junto in 1701, Anne's accession in 1702, and the campaign against Dissent waged by tory churchmen and politicians, laid great pressure on the whigs to establish their particular identity and fight for it, or face the consequences - possible elimination as a party.¹

The Art of Governing is hardly a whig manifesto. It attacks the Junto and is an indication of the way in which Shaftesbury and Harley began to draw apart after 1700.² Yet Shaftesbury could never entirely shake off his Harleian heritage: the basic theme of the book was one with which he could sympathize, even if he found some of its particular attacks irresponsible.

It was at this point and against this background that Shaftesbury's connection with the whig leadership began to slacken. With Somers, as always, he maintained close links. Halifax remained 'an old friend',³ but, as Shaftesbury confessed to Molesworth in 1708, 'with all other Lords of the Junto, I have maintain'd only a very cool and distant acquaintance.'⁴ Instead he adopted, particularly after his visit to the Netherlands in 1703-4, a line of political thought and

1. John KENYON, Revolution Principles: The Politics of Party 1689-1720, Cambridge, 1977, p. 101.

2. DOWNIE, op. cit., pp. 43-4.

3. TOLAND, Letters, p. 9. Letter III, 23 October 1708.

4. Ibid., p. 16. Letter V, 20 November 1708.

action which is not easily distinguishable in 'party' terms. With his constant antipathy to tories he combined a suspicion of the motives of some whig leaders, particularly Wharton and Sunderland,¹ and took refuge in a more Harleian attitude to political affairs, without adopting Harley's interest in the political advantages to be gained from such a stance.

How far was this dislike of 'faction', culminating in Shaftesbury's approaches to Godolphin in 1708, a fresh response to political circumstances, and to what extent did it reflect long-standing political and philosophical interests?

The way in which his concern for the prosecution of a vigorous land war against France prompted Shaftesbury to support the Marlborough-Godolphin ministry will be examined in the next chapter.² Mention has been made in an earlier chapter of his negotiations with Godolphin, conducted largely through Cropley and Molesworth, between 1705 and 1710.³ It appeared to him that the position of the Junto after the general election of 1705 was not sufficiently strong to guarantee the maintenance of the war effort and he decided that it would be in the interest of the whigs and the country as a whole to

1. For Wharton see TOLAND, Letters, p. 16. Letter V, 20 November 1708. For Sunderland see above, chapter IV, pp. 146-7.

2. See below, chapter VII, *passim*.

3. See above, chapter IV, pp. 143-6.

support the triumvirate and to win Junto support for the Lord Treasurer. He saw in Godolphin, to whom he had been recommended by Molesworth - now a 'Lord Treasurer's Whig' - the crucial figure of the honest man in politics for whom he had been searching, a search which is one way of describing Shaftesbury's political career.¹ Harley and Somers had filled this position earlier in Shaftesbury's life, and Somers was never to lose the accolade. Godolphin proved immediately attractive to Shaftesbury, who attempted to bring Somers and the Lord Treasurer together. At the end of 1708 he wrote to Molesworth,

I must confess I ever wish'd well to this correspondence, there now is between Lord Somers and our Lord [Godolphin], but can pretend to have had no share in it... [I] believe so well both of our Lord and him, that the Union between them is upon a handsomer and better bottom, than that of giving up their particular Friends on either side.²

In January 1709 he was even more exultant:

...this Ministry is the very delivering of both [the Country and the World], and the foundation of a nobler structure of Liberty (by a just Balance of Power at home and abroad) than ever was yet laid by Mankind.³

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1. E. L. ELLIS, The Whig Junto, in relation to the development of party-politics and party-organization, from its inception to 1714, (Oxford University unpublished D.Phil. thesis, 1961), Appendix C, pp. 11-12.
 2. TOLAND, Letters, p. 16. Letter V, 20 November 1708.
 3. Ibid., p. 21. Letter VII, 6 January 1708-9.

There is evidence to suggest, therefore, that Shaftesbury genuinely supported the attempt of Godolphin to govern without relying on a particular party or faction, especially after Harley's fall in 1708. By 1708-9 this support had become an informal alliance with the Lord Treasurer at a time when the latter was facing hostile criticism from the Junto, whose sympathizers Shaftesbury suspected of having jeopardised his election plans in 1705. Thus he did what Godolphin and Cropley asked of him in the 1708 election.¹ Godolphin's appointment of Micklethwayte to a post in the Transport Office in 1708 established his honesty and reliability in Shaftesbury's eyes.

Shaftesbury's desire for non-party government can thus be seen in political terms, involving his position as a patron, electoral manager, and Francophobe. In 1709 he published Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour. In Part III section ii of the work he discusses the 'herding principle' in man, which he sees as the necessary precondition of 'civil society and government'. By 'combining' men may more easily perceive their task within society. They can, so to speak, break down the vague and abstract notion of 'universal good' into manageable components. The 'combining principle', however, needs to be guided by 'right reason' if it is to 'find exercise for itself in so remote a sphere as that of the body politic

1. See above, chapter IV, pp. 145-6.

at large.' If this guidance is not present, 'the close sympathy and conspiring virtue is apt to lose itself, for want of direction, in so wide a field.'¹ Ironically, the 'combining spirit' is seen at its most intense in war, 'for heroism and philanthropy are almost one and the same...by a small misguidance of the affection, a lover of mankind becomes a ravager; a hero and deliverer becomes an oppressor and destroyer.'²

Shaftesbury then addresses himself to the phenomenon of large states, which he regards as 'unnatural', especially because,

...be they ever so well constituted, the affairs of many must, in such governments, turn upon a very few, and the relation be less sensible, and in a manner lost, between the magistrate and people...³

The political lesson is then pointed out:

'Tis in such bodies as these that strong factions are aptest to engender. The associating spirits, for want of exercise, form new movements, and seek a narrower sphere of activity, when they want action in a greater. Thus we have wheels within wheels. And in some national constitutions (notwithstanding the absurdity in politics) we have one empire within another. Nothing is so delightful as to incorporate...And the associating genius of man is never better proved than in those very societies, which are formed in opposition to the general one of mankind, and to the real interest of the State.⁴

1. Characteristics, I, 75.

2. *Ibid.*, I, 76.

3. *Ibid.*, I, 76.

4. *Ibid.*, I, 76-7.

Finally he defines faction:

In short, the very spirit of faction, for the greatest part, seems to be no other than the abuse or irregularity of that social love and common affection which is natural to mankind.¹

In other words, 'faction' is an example of that 'corruption' which occurs when the balance of the 'affections' set out in the Inquiry is distorted - it is a form of disharmony.²

Did such political and philosophical considerations work in parallel, were they coincidental, or was the philosophy used to justify political actions? The evidence I have discussed in this and earlier chapters suggests that Shaftesbury was never entirely happy about associating with particular 'party' or factional groupings, although he was prepared to support particular groups during political crises - the standing army debates, the impeachment of the Junto leaders, and the war against France. Moreover, it has been argued that party labels have not always been used with sensitivity by modern historians and that there are dangers in trying to be too explicit in assigning coherent policies to particular groups.³ Contemporary usage of political terminology in this respect frequently

1. Ibid., I, 77.

2. Shaftesbury also attacked the tyranny of faction in his allegorical Fable of the Oaks, Pines, and Pinasters: see below, chapter VIII, pp. 325-6.

3. See above, chapter III, pp. 115-6.

throws more light on the author than on the man he is trying to describe: this is a commonplace of political life.

Such a line of argument tends to excuse Shaftesbury from the charge of writing his philosophy to justify his political stance. There is a sense in which his philosophy, understood broadly, is prior to his political activity. Yet it does not establish with any precision the relationship between the two. It has been suggested by Peter Robinson that Shaftesbury's visit to the Netherlands in 1703-4 was used as an opportunity to reflect on his political misfortunes after Anne's accession and attempt to apply Stoic reading in a rigorous way to his political and intellectual plight.¹ By this means, Robinson argues, Shaftesbury, with the imaginative use of Horace, was able to link the cosmopolitan Stoic politics portrayed in Epictetus with Commonwealth ideas, while equating the Court with Epicureanism.² Certainly much of Shaftesbury's political thinking can be seen in a Stoic framework - particularly his concern with 'harmony' and 'corruption', as well as his stress on the importance of one's mental attitude towards the

1. ROBINSON, pp. 173-4. See above, chapter V, pp. 204-5.

2. Ibid., pp. 176, 187, 189-90.

external world in achieving 'virtue' or 'happiness'.¹ In the face of serious illness and political failure Shaftesbury was able to use such Stoic doctrines to distance himself from the frenetic political activity going on around him. This gives a philosophical tone to his renunciation of 'party'. In his notebooks at the time of his stay in Rotterdam he discussed political 'narrowness':

For what is knavery but narrowness? - myself,
that is to say, my purse against the public
purse, my family against the public family,
and what difference between this, and my nation
or commonwealth against the world? my country
laws against the universal laws? my fancy against
the Divine decree?²

It is possible to see Shaftesbury trying to work this out in practical terms after 1704, although his more detached and relaxed attitude to political events may have been as much a result of his declining health and political disappointment as a rigorous application of Stoic 'virtue' to the party intrigues of Anne's reign. By 1712 he could write, 'In reality I think my-self grown wonderfully temperate and cool in Politicks';³ but this did not prevent him from taking a keen interest in them.

I have attempted to indicate in this chapter a method of examin-

1. F. H. SANDBACH, The Stoics, London, 1975, pp. 29-30.

2. RAND, p. 103. Essay on 'Political Affairs'.

3. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 101v, Shaftesbury to Chetwynd, Naples, 5 April 1712 N.S. (RAND, p. 483)

ing Shaftesbury's political thought which does sufficient justice to his reading and political experience, rather than adopting a purely propositional approach to his writing. It is true that a certain untidiness ensues from looking at his thought in a less systematic way. Yet the evidence suggests that Shaftesbury was not a man who wrote in isolation from the world. He was concerned about the political life of his day and yet did not claim to have answers to every problem. In this respect to speak of areas of tension in his thought helps to reveal the urgency with which he thought and wrote. He was neither a detached philosopher nor a political activist but was one of that group of people who recognise that their philosophical interests have political implications. As a consequence political considerations were reflected in Shaftesbury's thought, creating a kind of internal dialectic, a stimulus to further thought.

CHAPTER VII

SHAFTESBURY'S POLITICS AND IDEAS

1702-1711

Much of Shaftesbury's political thought was given written expression after 1702. But, although the years following William III's death saw a change in Shaftesbury's mood and outlook, it would be wrong to assume that he entirely abandoned political interests for the consolation of philosophy. He certainly became more detached politically; an observer and adviser rather than an active participant, although he maintained his electoral interest in Dorset and Wiltshire. These years also saw the publication of the greater part of his philosophical output. Yet it does not follow from this that he consciously set out to change his approach to political life: he was forced to adapt to circumstances. Faced with an unfriendly regime he saw little scope for continuing an active political career immediately after Anne's accession. He thought it wise to stay quiet for a while. In any case his poor health was a severe limitation on the time and energy he could spend on political business, as it meant that London was virtually closed to him for long periods. The smoky atmosphere there

was extremely uncomfortable for him.

However, he made use of the opportunities that were available throughout Anne's reign to exercise such political influence as he retained. When the sharpness of the tory reaction after William's death became blunted by whig advances, Shaftesbury felt able to tender his advice to the queen's ministers and keep in close touch with his parliamentary friends, Cropley, Molesworth, and Stanhope. At the same time he maintained his link with Somers. This chapter will be concerned with his attitude to some of the major political issues of Anne's reign and the ways in which he sought to change political opinion. This entails a brief discussion of the extent to which the philosophical work he published during the reign may be conceived as politically motivated.

Shaftesbury's retirement from political life at Westminster did not follow immediately on the king's death. He sat infrequently in the Lords for the remainder of the session, which ended on 23 May 1702, and attended the House occasionally during the first session of the new parliament, after taking part in the general election which preceded it.¹ It appears that he attended the Lords for the last

1. L.J., XVII, 63-71, 100, 182, 184, 191.

time on 17 December 1702.¹

It was soon evident that the tide was turning against the whigs, and especially Country whigs. Writing to Furly in August 1702 with news of the election, Shaftesbury complained bitterly about the methods which the 'High-Church party' had adopted to ensure its success, purging local office-holders and magistrates just before the election.²

Three months later he was convinced that his political career was at an end. He told Furly that he would be doing little in public affairs, 'from w^{ch} I am now much withdrawn'. He gave two reasons, referring first to, 'this season in w^{ch} it is not so proper for such as I am to act' - a reference to his fear of tory reprisals - and secondly to his health. He looked forward to 'the Retirement I love' and 'the Happiness of seeing you in Holland.' His earlier complaints against William III were obviously not permanent, for he told Furly that he was expecting Portland, William's favourite, to stay the night with him and expected they would pass the evening cheerfully, celebrating the late king's birthday and the news of the destruction

1. L.J., XVII, 191. For Shaftesbury's limited influence in the Lords after 1702 see HOLMES, British Politics in the Age of Anne, p. 221. Holmes cites Lord Hervey and the second earl of Warrington as followers of Shaftesbury's 'austere code'.

2. See above, chapter IV, pp. 136-7.

of the French fleet at Vigo Bay.¹

Shaftesbury did not stay in England much longer. In August 1703 he sailed to Rotterdam, where he spent a peaceful year reading, writing, and talking to Furly and his friends.² On his return to England at the end of August 1704 he had to spend some weeks in the country recovering from an uncomfortable crossing.

While in Rotterdam, he had been in correspondence with Sir Rowland Gwinn, formerly a parliamentary ally and now English agent in Hanover. In January 1704 Shaftesbury confirmed, in response to Gwinn's query, that he had left public affairs:

I kept in 'em as long as I was able; but by a Constitution unfitted for the fatigue of Buisnes I had long since been forced to quit, but that I chose to suffer any thing rather than not come in heartily and all my strength att that last hour [the general election of December 1701] when I apprehended not my Country only but Mankind was sinking, had not the Prince, then alive, been supported, a War enter'd into, and an English Protestant Succession establish'd. I have lived to see the cheifest of those Ends compass'd, & those good Laws pass'd for the Establishment of our Constitution, wch I wish'd for att the Revolution...³

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/66, Shaftesbury to Furly, St. Giles's, (4) November 1702. (RAND, pp. 312-3)

2. See above, chapter V, pp. 202-6.

3. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 279r, Shaftesbury to Gwinn, 23 January 1704 N.S. (RAND, pp. 318-20)

Yet life in Rotterdam was not wholly devoted to intellectual pursuits. Pressing domestic and estate matters had to be dealt with and Shaftesbury was in close touch with his steward, John Wheelock. With the family finances crippled by the costly legal actions which had taken place in his youth there was a pressing need to economize. At one point it looked as though Shaftesbury was seriously considering selling, or moving out of, St. Giles's House, the family seat in Dorset. He wrote to Wheelock in November 1703:

I should have been glad to have liv'd in the way y^t is called hospitable in my Country. But Experience has but too well shewn me, y^t I cannot do it. Nor will I ever live again as I have done & spend to y^e full of my Estate in House & a Table...If my Estate cannot besides my House & Rank yield me five or six hundred pounds a year to do good with (as that Rank requires) my House & Rank may both go together.¹

Such drastic action did not have to be taken. Shaftesbury kept St. Giles's House. However, at about the time of his marriage in 1709 he bought a house in Reigate, where he was to spend the greater part of his time, vacating his Chelsea home in the following year. Since 1708 he had taken to staying with Cropley at Beachworth, not far from Reigate, where he could enjoy the benefits of country life relative-

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/79, Shaftesbury to Wheelock, Rotterdam, 16 November (1703) N.S.

ly close to London.¹

By the time Shaftesbury returned to England in August 1704 the political climate appeared to be rather more favourable. By November he had recovered from the crossing² and although he realised that he would be unable to take a direct part in public life there were political and intellectual issues which attracted his attention and prompted him to take up his pen once more.³ 1705 proved a particularly busy year for him.

On 28 October 1704 John Locke, Shaftesbury's tutor, died at Oates. Shaftesbury soon became involved in some of the repercussions attendant on the death of a prominent person. He was in touch with Locke's nephew and heir, Peter King, an M.P. and future Lord Chancellor, about Locke's relationship with the first earl.⁴ At the same time he was writing a memoir of Locke and the Shaftesbury family for Le Clerc, who published a tribute to Locke in the Bibliothèque Choisie. The document, now preserved in the Amsterdam University Library, is an important source of information about Locke's

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1. Shaftesbury House in Chelsea was bought in 1710 by Narcissus Luttrell, who lived there until his death in 1732. Shaftesbury had bought and rebuilt the house in 1700. Thomas FAULKNER, An Historical and Topographical Description of Chelsea and its Environs, London, 1810, p. 343; Thea HOLME, Chelsea, London, 1972, pp. 44-5.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 160-1, Wilkinon to Shaftesbury, Rotterdam, 18 November 1704 N.S.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/45, ff. 196-7, Furly to Shaftesbury, February 1705.
 4. P.R.O. 30/24/20/88, King to Shaftesbury, 18 January 1705. For Shaftesbury's reply see RAND, pp. 325-6.

position in the Shaftesbury household.¹

Nor was more serious and original writing neglected. There has been some dispute as to the genesis of the Sociable Enthusiast, the forerunner of The Moralists. There is a strong likelihood that an early version of the work was written in Rotterdam in 1703-4, although that version has now been lost.² Nevertheless, it is fairly certain that Shaftesbury completed a revised version of the earlier treatise in the summer of 1705 and sent a manuscript copy to Somers.³

The major political event of 1705 in which Shaftesbury took part was the general election in May. His reluctance totally to commit himself to electioneering has already been noticed.⁴ But there was no abating of his political enthusiasm or his desire to see the war prosecuted with the utmost vigour. The sense of constraint imposed by the possibility of further attacks by extreme Tories helped to dampen his public ardour, as did his health; he suffered a relapse in

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1. Amsterdam, University Library, MS R.K., J 20, Shaftesbury to Le Clerc, St. Giles's, 8 February 1705. See also Le Clerc to Shaftesbury at P.R.O. 30/24/27/19, 30/24/20/95 and 104, January-September 1705.
 2. S. F. WHITAKER, 'The First Edition of Shaftesbury's Moralists', The Library, fifth series, VII (1952), 235-41.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, ff. 285-8, Shaftesbury to Somers, Chelsey, 20 October 1705.
 4. See above, chapter IV, pp. 139-43.

February.¹ His physical condition was such that he had continual trouble with his eyes; a serious drawback for one whose main contact with political life was through correspondence. However, his desire for political changes and his truculent hatred of the French remained as strong as ever. As he told Arent Furly in February:

Tis Liberty indeed that can only polish & refine the Spirit & Soul as well as Witt of Man. Tis Liberty that exalts him to Mankind & makes him differ more from the Slave, than y^e Slave differs from the Beast...I never yet knew one single Frenchman a Freeman. Nor do I think it is in Nature possible if they have Early suckd that Air or been bred (tho in forreign Nations) amongst People & Books of their own kind.²

Shaftesbury's next excursion into public affairs was unsolicited by him, and caused him great embarrassment. It also provided party leaders with evidence that he might be unreliable. The cause of the affair was the reaction to the publication of a tory pamphlet attacking Godolphin's attempt to attract moderate whigs to support his ministry.³ The Memorial of the Church of England was published in

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/91, Shaftesbury to Arent Furly, St. Giles's, 18 February 1704-5.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/91.

3.. A detailed survey of the affair has been given by J. A. DOWNIE, Robert Harley and the Press, chapter 4, pp. 80-100 ('The Memorial of the Church of England (1705): a case study'). Also see his article, 'William Stephens and the Letter to the Author of the Memorial of the State of England Reconsidered', B.I.H.R., L (1977), 253-9.

July 1705 during the campaign for the election of a Speaker. Godolphin had agreed to back the Junto candidate, John Smith, in an attempt to secure whig support for his administration. The publication of The Memorial, a vigorous high-church attack on Godolphin's friendliness towards the whigs and his supposed lack of concern for the fate of the established church at the height of the 'Church in Danger' campaign, rallied support around the tory candidate, William Bromley.¹ Smith won the contest.

Government propaganda at the time was in the capable hands of Harley, who commissioned John Toland, recently reconciled to Harley and breaking his ties with Shaftesbury, to write a reply. Toland's Memorial of the State of England, In Vindication of the Queen, the Church and the Administration appeared in October. This did not bring an end to the debate, however, for it led to an attack on the ministry from the whig side.² A vicious attack on Marlborough and Harley, A Letter to the Author of the Memorial of the State of England was brought out at the end of 1705 or the beginning of 1706. The suspected author was William Stephens, rector of Sutton and archdeacon of Surrey, a republican and a literary protégé of Shaftes-

1. DOWNIE, Robert Harley and the Press, p. 82.

2. Ibid., pp. 89-90.

bury. Stephens had also shared lodgings with Toland.¹ He was duly tried in February 1706, published a public apology in the Flying Post in March, and was sentenced to the pillory and fined in May. Yet Stephens eventually escaped the pillory, owing to Marlborough's intercession with the queen, and there is still some confusion as to the precise authorship of the pamphlet.²

However, Stephens was deeply implicated in the affair and it was believed that he had Shaftesbury's support: Marlborough and Godolphin thought that Shaftesbury had sued on his behalf.³ The position was acutely embarrassing for Shaftesbury. At a time when he was eager for the whigs to be associated with the strong foreign policy of the Duumvirs he had no wish to see his more extreme acquaintances attack the very men with whom he sought to do business. It was even worse

1. For Shaftesbury, Toland, and Stephens, see WORDEN, p. 44.

2. DOWNIE, op. cit., pp. 90-1. The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, edited by H. L. SNYDER, Oxford, 1975, I, 544, Marlborough to the Duchess of Marlborough, Burchloen, 9 May 1706, and n. 4, for the duchess's intercession with the queen on Stephens's behalf; also I, 556, Marlborough to the Duchess of Marlborough, Merlebeck, 20/31 May 1706: 'I am very glad you have prevailed with the Queen for the pardoning of Stevens. I should have been uneasy if the law had not found him guilty, but much more uneasy if he had suffered the punishment upon my account.'

3. DOWNIE, op. cit., p. 97.

that they should claim his support for their views. In July 1706

Shaftesbury wrote a severe letter to Stephens:

The early Apology you made me for your late
unfortunate piece of Work gave me indeed some
sort of Satisfaction, w^{ch} might have lasted,
had your publick Apologies been answerable.¹

He castigated Stephens for giving the impression that he had received the forthright opinions expressed in the Letter from conversations with Shaftesbury and others. He further reproached him for attacking Marlborough, to whom Shaftesbury made it plain he had never had any obligation, and Harley, who remained a friend although the grounds for a political alliance had long since disappeared. Eighteen months later Shaftesbury was still having to ask Molesworth, a 'Lord Treasurer's Whig', to make clear his position over the Stephens affair to Marlborough and Godolphin. He complained of his 'hard usage' at the hands of opponents since the beginning of Anne's reign, and that 'They were indeed extraordinary officious Persons who so charitably made use of my name in behalf of Parson Stephens.'²

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/2, f. 179r, Shaftesbury to Stephens, Chelsea, 11 July 1706. (RAND, pp. 354-5) For Shaftesbury's earlier sponsorship of Stephens see British Library, Addit. MSS., 4288, f. 100v, Shaftesbury to Desmaizeaux, Rotterdam, 2 November 1703 (N.S.). (RAND, pp. 313-4)

2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 307r, Shaftesbury to Molesworth, St. Giles's, 13 December 1707. (RAND, pp. 383-5) Richard Molesworth, the son of Shaftesbury's friend, had saved Marlborough's life at Ramillies, giving his father some favour with Marlborough; Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, I, 585. For Shaftesbury's private financial dealings with Marlborough see Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, I, 172 (1703), and P.R.O. 30/24/20/123 (1706).

It is not difficult to appreciate Shaftesbury's anger at a time when he needed as much help as he could get to re-establish himself as a respected political figure. Whether or not Stephens's sentiments originated from Shaftesbury and his circle, public assumption of that fact was a serious matter.¹ Yet it was not an isolated incident. Throughout his life Shaftesbury ran the risk of being associated with views which he either did not hold or wished to be kept quiet. This might happen with his own writing, which was published anonymously and occasionally contained material offensive to tories and churchmen. Hence his expressed annoyance at Toland's surreptitious publication of the Inquiry in 1699² and his embarrassment when his authorship of the Letter concerning Enthusiasm became known in 1708.³ A more constant worry was the possibility that friends and protégés might make fools of themselves in print and place him in an awkward position, especially when political points could be scored in the most oblique ways. The Stephens fiasco is the principal example of such a case. In 1709 Jean Le Clerc published an edition of the fragments of Men-

1. Shaftesbury and Stephens are linked in a poem of February 1706, 'The Lawyer's Answer to the Country Parson's Good Advice to My Lord Keeper', Poems on Affairs of State, Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714, edited by Frank H. ELLIS, vol. 7, New Haven and London, 1975, p. 161.

2. See above, chapter III, p. 80.

3. See below, pp. 286-7.

ander. The work was savagely attacked by Bentley, who brought out his own edition in the following year.¹ Le Clerc's edition was dedicated to Shaftesbury, who suffered Bentley's attacks by proxy, as it were.² Both Le Clerc and Toland made good use of their association with prominent people, without much regard for the feelings of the patrons concerned. Toland's publication, mercifully posthumous, in 1721 of Shaftesbury's letters to Molesworth, with their information about his abortive attempt to marry a wealthy heiress, was the final blow. It is little wonder that the fourth earl was anxious to play down Toland's connection with his father.

As well as such specific instances, which tended to work against the image which Shaftesbury wished to project of himself as an independent figure of impeccable principles, there was the irritation of having libertine and republican works attributed to himself and his friends.³ A corollary of the publication of anonymous pamphlets was

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1. Menander et Philemonis Reliquiae cum notis H. Grotii et J. Clerici, Amsterdam, 1709. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, Shaftesbury to Le Clerc, Reigate, 6 November 1709. (RAND, pp. 411-3)
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/20/143, Shaftesbury to Ainsworth, Reigate, 10 July 1710; 30/24/22/7, ff. 493-5, Shaftesbury to Le Clerc, Reigate, 19 July 1710. (RAND, pp. 421-4)
 3. London, British Library, Addit. MSS., 4288, f. 96r, Shaftesbury to Desmaizeaux, St. Giles's, 17 February (1710?). For rumours of Shaftesbury's part-authorship of Swift's Tale of a Tub see Robert M. ADAMS, 'In Search of Baron Somers', in Culture and Politics. From Puritanism to the Enlightenment, edited by Perez ZAGORIN, Berkeley, 1980, p. 188.

the speculation indulged by an interested public about their authorship or inspiration. As a man known to have sympathies with liberal writers and politicians, Shaftesbury was particularly well placed to be put under suspicion from time to time. For a man in his position in society no real danger ensued from such associations. Rather there was a feeling of constraint which tended to limit the range of possible actions.

At the end of 1706 Shaftesbury was particularly anxious that his public reputation should remain intact. He hoped to use his support for the Marlborough-Godolphin ministry as a bargaining counter with which to secure an office for his friend and relation, Thomas Micklethwayte. This ambition had been prompted by William III's promise of an office for Micklethwayte at the end of 1701 and had lain in abeyance during the difficult years at the beginning of Anne's reign. At the same time Shaftesbury took a sympathetic interest in the attempts of the 'Whimsical Whigs' - whose leaders included Cropley, Stanhope, and Peter King - to force a stringent place bill through parliament.

Shaftesbury's campaign to secure an office for Micklethwayte was the most important of several attempts to get posts for his protégés. Like his sponsorship of Arent Furly, the Micklethwayte appointment involved Stanhope, and the two men became closely attached.

Micklethwayte looked after Stanhope's interests in London while the latter was in Spain.¹

Beginning his effort on Micklethwayte's behalf, Shaftesbury first wrote to Sunderland in December 1706. The Junto had recently been involved in a long battle to get Sunderland into the Cabinet as secretary of state. Shaftesbury wrote to him immediately after this appointment, reminding Sunderland of his efforts on behalf of the whigs in 1701 and pointing out that Micklethwayte had been promised a position by William shortly before the king's death. He asked Sunderland to pass on a letter to Marlborough and claimed, 'I know not whether I am worth Obliging; but I believe noBody can be Oblig'd at less Cost'.² Shaftesbury's electoral influence in the West Country was mentioned frequently throughout the letter; a hint rather at odds with his strict views on political morality.³ The enclosed letter to Marlborough was more restrained. Shaftesbury simply suggested that his misfortunes

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1. Basil WILLIAMS, Stanhope. A Study in Eighteenth-Century War and Diplomacy, Oxford, 1932, pp. 116 n.1, 134. Stanhope also took both Joseph Micklethwayte and Arent Furly into his service. Furly died in Spain. Shaftesbury was again instrumental in these two appointments.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 290v, Shaftesbury to Sunderland, St. Giles's, 7 December 1706. (RAND, p. 370).
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 290, Shaftesbury to Sunderland, St. Giles's, 7 December 1706; (RAND, pp. 369-70). Also Shaftesbury to Sunderland, f. 299, Chelsea, 22 July 1707, and f. 300, Chelsea, 3 August 1707.

at the hands of Anne's government had been a little undeserved.¹

Unfortunately for Shaftesbury the matter was not settled as quickly as he wished. A year later Molesworth was interceding with Godolphin about the Micklethwayte affair and Stanhope, to whom Micklethwayte had been introduced by Shaftesbury and Cropley, was also involved.² The evidence suggests that the major stumbling block was Marlborough, who was still wary of Shaftesbury's intentions after the damaging attacks which Stephens had made.

Eventually Shaftesbury's efforts bore fruit. In December 1707 Godolphin was able to promise Micklethwayte a place in the Transport Office, to which he was appointed in February 1708.³ In July Cropley wrote to Stanhope:

Its time to thank you for the good offices you
did my Ld Shaftesbury & me in helping M^r
Mickthwait to a place a few days after you went.
My Lord Treasurer gave him a place and tho tis
not what my Lord desired for him or would be
acceptable in itself to my Lord Shaftesbury for
him, yet the manner my Lord Treasurer did it in
the strong assurances he gave me he shall be

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 289, Shaftesbury to Marlborough, St. Giles's, 7 December 1706. (RAND, p.371).
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 307, Shaftesbury to Molesworth, St. Giles's, 13 December 1707; (RAND, pp. 383-5). See also Shaftesbury to Godolphin, f. 308, St. Giles's, 15 December 1707, and f. 309, St. Giles's, 29 December 1707.
 3. Calendar of Treasury Books, XXII (1708), part II, edited by William A. SHAW, London, 1950, p. 204; P.R.O. 30/24/21/145 (2), Cropley to Shaftesbury, 4 February 1707-8.

hereafter better providd for, has made my
Lord Shaftesbury very well pleasd wth his
friends...¹

As a token of his regard for Godolphin, Shaftesbury then promised his support for the Lord Treasurer in the general election of 1708.²

Micklethwayte was treasurer to the Commissioners of Transport from 1708 to 1715, an appointment which secured him a respectable political career. He became M.P. for Arundel in 1715 - he sat until 1718 - a Lord of the Treasury from 1717 to 1718, and, ten days before his death in 1718, Lieutenant-General of the Ordnance.³ In 1713 he succeeded to Cropley's estates, leaving them to his brother Joseph, another of Shaftesbury's protégés, who later - in the 1720s - became first a baron and then a viscount in the Irish peerage.⁴ Thomas Micklethwayte was to play a significant part later in Shaftesbury's life, when he edited the second edition of the Characteristics.⁵

1. Maidstone, Kent Archives Office, Stanhope MSS., U 1590 C9/31, no. 14, Cropley to Stanhope, Beachworth, 18 July (1708).

2. See above, chapter IV, pp. 145-6.

3. Romney SEDGWICK, The House of Commons 1715-1754, London, 1970, pp. 256-7.

4. Ibid., p. 256. Joseph Micklethwayte's will was proved in 1734 by his mistress, Anne Ewer - Shaftesbury's sister-in-law; for Micklethwayte family see George POULSON, The History and Antiquities of the Seignory of Holderness, Hull, 1840-1, II, 201-2.

5. See below, chapter VIII, pp. 323.

Although he secured Micklethwayte a lucrative position there can be little doubt that Shaftesbury was not in the front rank of political patrons. He supported Micklethwayte's cause so vigorously because he regarded it as an important piece of unfinished business left over from the previous reign. His ability to secure such an appointment was also a useful indicator of his own political power and, perhaps of more signifi- cance in Shaftesbury's eyes, a sign of the sincerity of Godolphin in his desire to draw on moderate men regardless of their party grouping.

Before Shaftesbury was willing to give practical support to Godolphin, however, he was an interested observer during one of the most remarkable clashes between Court and Country interests during the reign - the attempt to force a Country-sponsored place bill through parliament in the teeth of fierce opposition at the beginning of 1706.

The background, detail, and significance of the crisis has been admirably documented by Geoffrey Holmes and there is no point in detailed repetition of his analysis.¹ What is of particular interest is the evidence that Shaftesbury was kept closely informed of

1. G. S. HOLMES, 'The Attack on 'The Influence of the Crown' 1702-1716', B.I.H.R., XXXIX (1966), 47-68.

developments by Country leaders in parliament and that political concerns still occupied a large part of his time.

Place bills, or 'self-denying clauses' as they were known by contemporaries, were a regular method of attack by independent Country members on the Court. Their aim was to curb or eliminate the capacity of the Crown to 'corrupt' the Commons by distributing patronage among M.P.s; over a hundred office-holders and pensioners sat in the Commons. Such bills were tabled in nearly all sessions of parliament after the Revolution. Shaftesbury had supported such bills when he was an M.P.¹ The principal thrust of the bills was to reduce the number of office-holders eligible to sit as M.P.s. While it is true that various groups of placemen were excluded in Place Acts passed between 1694 and 1702, the increase in their numbers during the early years of the War of the Spanish Succession prompted a higher level of public concern about 'corruption' than had been the case for many years. By accepting such legislation the Crown appeared to Country members to be admitting the general principle of the exclusion of placemen, and independent M.P.s were encouraged to press home their attack on 'influence'.² This could be done either by

1. See above, chapter III, pp. 74-5.

2. HOLMES, art. cit., p. 51.

introducing limited measures for exclusion or by specifying those office-holders eligible to sit in the Commons and excluding the rest.¹

A bill along the former lines was introduced by Peter King, Locke's nephew, in January 1705. King's bill was intended to exclude the holders of offices created since the death of Charles II. It failed to pass the Commons after a Lords amendment had been added to it.² A tory-sponsored measure of the latter type - an amendment to the Regency Bill - also failed, amid wrangling amongst the parties interested in place legislation. The result was that the way was cleared for genuine supporters of a limited place bill to press for it at a time when the administration was anxious to secure the rapid passage of the Regency Bill.³

King was still interested in the bill, as Cropley, writing from St. Giles's House, told Stanhope in July 1705:

Peter King has been wth us here & is hearty still for his bill & I believe very prudent as well as satisfactory measures will be taken in it.⁴

Cropley added that King hoped to have Stanhope's support. No doubt

1. Ibid., pp. 52-3.

2. Ibid., pp. 53-4.

3. Ibid., p. 54.

4. Kent Archives Office, Stanhope MSS., U 1590 C9/31, no. 1, Cropley to Stanhope, St. Giles's, 28 July 1705. For the political alignment of Stanhope, Molesworth, and others, see The Parliamentary Lists of the Early Eighteenth Century, edited by Aubrey NEWMAN, Leicester, 1973, p. 73.

Shaftesbury was involved in the conversations between Cropley, King, and Stanhope, as they and other Country whig leaders decided to insert a clause in the Regency Bill dealing with the place clause in the Act of Settlement. This clause became known as the 'Whimsical Clause' which, between 12 January and 16 February 1706, 'gave rise to the fiercest struggle between Court and Country in Anne's reign.'¹

As it emerged from the Committee of the Whole House between 12 and 21 January, the 'Whimsical Clause' named a limited number of major office-holders who would be permitted to sit in the parliament which met after Anne's death under the terms of the Regency Bill, and subsequent parli¹⁹aments. All others were to be excluded unless they resigned their offices within ten days of parliament's meeting.² The clause united backbenchers, both tory and Country whig, but the ministers considered that the clause would ruin the bill, and were relieved when they were only defeated by 23 votes at the report stage on 24 January.³

The scene was set for a furious tussle between the Crown and the independent M.P.s, with the Lords amending the clause out of all

1. HOLMES, art. cit., p. 55.

2. Ibid., p. 55.

3. Ibid., p. 56.

recognition; only to have their amendment rejected by the Commons. After a fortnight's deadlock, marked by formal conferences and informal discussions, the Court began to make some headway against the opposition. The desirability of naming those offices to be excluded rather than those to be retained was stressed by ministerial spokesmen, as well as the inconvenience of a large number of by-elections when the whigs needed all the support they could muster. Eventually, after concessions were forced from Country whig leaders, the 'Whimsical Clause' was lost by eight votes in a House of over four hundred on 18 February. Cropley and King were active in their defence of the clause until the last.¹

The day after the defeat Cropley wrote two letters. To Stanhope he wrote:

I know you must be impatient to know y^e fate of our clause so I will not keep you in suspense but tel you tis gone we have lost it. However we lost it very honourably & advantagiously for England for next to the carryeing it the crown has made y^e greatest concessions yⁿ ever here obtain^d.²

He gave a more detailed report to Shaftesbury:

The Court yesterday proposd an expedient for a clause to commence at the end of this parliament. It excludes in this manner: no offices to be

1. Ibid., pp. 56-8.

2. Kent Archives Office, Stanhope MSS., U 1590 C9/31, no. 3, Cropley to Stanhope, 19 February 1706.

erected for the future for members to be in;
no comm of the prizes; no sub-com of the prizes;
no agents of regiments; no comptrollers of the
accounts of the army; no com of wine license,
transports, sick & woundd; no com of the navy
in the out ports; no governours nor deputy
governours of the plantations; no pensions
durante bene placito; proviso that no more
persons nor commissioners shall be at any time
in any office than are at present or have been.

Here comes the best. No man to take any
place after being elected a member of parliament,
but accepting such a place shall make his
election void...Tis what we should last year
have thought a great deal, but in exchang for
our clause a very sorry matter. But our clause
being in reversion and this in present makes it
goe down. We shall have this good. Tis a
foundation for more & I will defye any serious
to pass wthout bills & divisions agst the army
& household.¹

If it had passed through parliament the 'Whimsical Clause' would
have had a profound effect on the constitution and system of govern-
ment of Hanoverian England. In fact the measures accepted by the
Court changed little. The electorate was not as eager to turn out
placemen at by-elections as Country whigs expected - an indication of
the difficulty of putting ideas of political morality to practical
purpose.

Despite the brush with the Court in which the 'Whimsicals' had
taken part, Shaftesbury was gradually drawing closer to the Marl-

1. P.R.O. 30/24/20/114, Cropley to Shaftesbury, 19 February 1706.
As quoted by HOLMES, art. cit., pp. 58-9.

borough-Godolphin administration, while keeping his connection with the Junto, at a time when the Junto was increasing its pressure on the Court. The years between 1705 and 1708 saw the triumvirate yielding to whig demands until the whig ascendancy brought about its disintegration with the dismissal of Harley, who had advised against too great a dependence on the whigs.

It was natural that Shaftesbury should approve of Godolphin's friendly overtures towards the Junto and other whig leaders. Of particular concern to ministers in 1706 and 1707 was the success of the Treaty of Union with Scotland, which depended on whig support. Shaftesbury was an enthusiastic advocate of the Union, which became law in March 1707 and came into operation on 1 May. He saw a great advantage in diplomatic terms in a united Britain and also considered the Union to be a stimulus towards the development of a truly national culture.¹ He looked forward, in a letter to Somers of January 1707, to 'the glorious day of a British union' when Britain would become an even greater power in Europe to oppose the evil of 'universal monarchy'.²

During the years of Country agitation against placemen and the

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, ff. 358-9, Shaftesbury to 'Te(i)resias', St. Giles's, 29 November 1706. (RAND, pp. 366-9) See also P.R.O. 30/24/20/117, Shaftesbury to Furly, 11 October 1706.
2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 293, Shaftesbury to Somers, St. Giles's, January 1706-7. (RAND, pp. 371-2)

debates over the Union, Shaftesbury had been concerned with an issue which prompted him to write the Letter concerning Enthusiasm in September 1707. Public opinion had been excited by the arrival of French protestant refugees from the Cévennes, the Camisards, flying from the persecution caused by their revolt against Louis XIV.¹ These fanatically religious people, with their prophesyings and emotional extravagances, became known as the 'French Prophets' and were viewed with distaste by many English people, some of whom recommended active persecution as a means of extirpating their religious excesses. Public debate about the Camisards reached a climax in 1707. At first Shaftesbury was concerned to give what aid he could to victims of French intolerance, especially those threatened by English intolerance as well. He told Jacques Basnage in January 1707 that he had made representations to the government on behalf of those French protestants in exile who were worried about their future should England sign a peace treaty with the French, and was concerned to reassure his Huguenot friends in the United Provinces.² The Camisards, however, appeared to him to be as intolerant and fanatical as any Roman Catholics. The Letter

1. For English support for the Camisard revolt see Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, I, 169 n. 2, 177 n.6, 377 n.1.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, ff. 294-6, Shaftesbury to Basnage, St. Giles's, 21 January 1706-7. (RAND, pp. 372-7)

concerning Enthusiasm gave him an opportunity to discuss the broader problems of religious enthusiasm while attacking the fanaticism of the Camisards. The treatise was published anonymously in 1707-8 and Shaftesbury sent a copy to Somers in July.¹ R. L. Brett has explained the work's message and reception as follows:

The burden of Shaftesbury's Letter was that the most effective way to treat fanaticism was by ridicule and that the test of truth was whether a belief or principle could stand up to such treatment. The Letter was greeted with a storm of abuse and its opponents rushed into print against what they considered an attack on religion itself. One can understand the suspicion which met the view that religious truths should be tested by 'good humour' and 'raillery', and the belief that Shaftesbury was a Deist was given an early start by this Letter. The later essay Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour (1709), where he elaborated his views, did nothing to remove that impression. By many people in the eighteenth century Shaftesbury was regarded as a sceptic, and the downfall of Miss Williams in Roderick Random, for instance, was attributed in the first place to her reading of 'Shaftesbury, Tindal and Hobbes'.²

Once again Shaftesbury found himself at odds with the churchmen. The Letter contained a reference to Edward Fowler, the bishop of Gloucester:

Even a good Christian, who would needs be over-good, and thinks he can believe enough, may, by

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 321, Shaftesbury to Somers, 12 July 1708.

2. R. L. BRETT, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury - a study in literary theory, London, 1951, p. 46.

a small inclination well improved, extend his faith so largely as to comprehend in it not only all scriptural and traditional miracles, but a solid system of old wives' stories. Were it needful, I could put your lordship in mind of an eminent, learned, and truly Christian prelate you once knew, who could have given a full account of his belief in fairies.¹

Fowler was one of the authors who replied to the Letter, and he was particularly severe with Shaftesbury.² Evidently, somebody of Somers's acquaintance had exposed Shaftesbury, though it is difficult to determine how inconvenienced Shaftesbury was by the exposure, for he was not above dropping hints about his authorship of anonymous pamphlets.³ He discussed the affair in the covering letter he sent to Somers with the Soliloquy in 1710:

Had not y^r LdP interposd y^r good Offices & Interest in behalf of wt was formerly addressd to you, I shoud have been forc'd perhaps, agt my Inclination to have taken a graver Tone & justify'd my self in form. Not that I shoud be brought to do so in any case except where I thought there was really need of some publick Apology & Excuse. For yr Ldp well knows yt I had little intention of exposing yt good Protestant bishop, or bringing any Contempt on our good Reformers of early time. What one writes freely to a Friend in private is very different from what one writes for

1. Characteristics, I, 7.

2. Reflections upon a Letter concerning Enthusiasm to my Lord *****.
In another Letter to a Lord, London, 1709.

3. S. F. WHITAKER, art. cit., pp. 239-40.

publick View. I know not wt the meaning was of a certain person, whom I ever thought y^r Ldp's Friend and Servant, to act as he did in that affaire & expose me in such a manner to so many and such as he did. I hope he never will betray yr Ldp, nor any Friend of yrs in such a manner hereafter...As for the former Accident wch happend by his means, I am very far from being sorry for it, notwithstanding y^e Combustion it had like to cause: since it has let me into a Power of doing more Good than my weak state of Health woud let me hope. I am now in no Apprehension of wt may happen from him or any other, in such a way. I have writ nothing since, nor shall at any time for ye future in such an incautiouse Manner as may give offence to People whom I esteem, or with whom at least, I think it my Duty to keep fair. Let those whom I may happen to offend by this enclosd exclaim as they think fit: I shall make no Apology for my self, nor think of making them any reparation.¹

As the nuances in this letter make clear, Shaftesbury considered himself to have a marked capacity for being misunderstood when he went into print, in the same way that his political allegiances were continually misinterpreted. Once again Somers was the recipient of Shaftesbury's tart observations about the vagaries of the reading public. In a letter sent with The Moralists in 1708, Shaftesbury wrote:

For hardly will our Clergy-men find any thing here to take offence at. The Fear is that the

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, ff. 352-3, Shaftesbury to Somers, Reigate, 26 May 1710. (RAND, pp. 420-1)

Men of Witt will rather think the Author retain'd on the Priests side, and will despise him as much for an Enthusiast in this Piece as the Priests have revil'd him for an Atheist in another.¹

With Sensus Communis the following year Shaftesbury predicted the opposite outcome:

...a supposd Enemy of the Church. For such the Author of this Essay will infallibly be esteemd; tho he names neither Church nor Priest, nor says any thing concerning any Mystery of Religion... All his Aim is, in plain sense to recomend plain Honesty wch in the Bustle made about Religion is fairly dropt.²

The Moralists, at least, found one appreciative reader. Leibniz, whose Theodicee appeared in 1710, was surprised to find that so much of his own thought had been anticipated by Shaftesbury.³ Even if Leibniz's detailed remarks on Shaftesbury's work were a matter of political solidarity and friendship, rather than philosophical analysis, the similarities in the thought of the two men, in so far as the Theodicee may be called representative of Leibniz, are notable.

By the time Shaftesbury was worrying about his publishing ventures his political position seemed to be more secure. 1708 had seen the

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 327r, Shaftesbury to Somers, 10 December 1708. (RAND, pp. 394-5)
2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 334r, Shaftesbury to Somers, (B)eachworth, 2 June 1709. (RAND, pp. 400-2)
3. P.R.O. 30/24/26/8 and 9 are an MS copy and a translation of 'Jugement de M. Leibnitz sur les Differens Ouvrages qui composent les Characteristicks'. See above, chapter V, p. 164.

defeat of the Harleyites and the beginning of a second period of Junto government in harness with the Duumvirs, which was to last until the disasters of the Sacheverell trial and the ensuing general election in 1710. Although the election in the spring of 1708 had involved friction with certain Junto leaders, Shaftesbury was convinced of Godolphin's worth and the sense in an attempt at political moderation. Now that Harley was out of the administration the way was open for unqualified support. The successful termination of the Micklethwayte saga, which had been a continual source of anxiety, added to the general sense of well-being.

Cropley kept Shaftesbury well informed about the events leading up to Harley's enforced resignation on 10 February 1708.¹ Cropley had his information about the ministerial crisis from Stanhope, a close friend of Godolphin. In January Cropley hinted at the nature of the ministry to Shaftesbury: 'I find this a ministry so different from all I have known.'² Benjamin Furly was told of Shaftesbury's new-found favour and was asked to make the appropriate noises in the right quarters concerning the Anglo-Dutch alliance.

I have just lately experienced some particular

1. See especially some of the papers from Cropley to Shaftesbury, dated February and March 1708, at P.R.O. 30/24/21/145-6, 148, and 150. Use is made of this correspondence by G. S. HOLMES and W. A. SPECK in their article, 'The Fall of Harley in 1708 Reconsidered', E.H.R., LXXX (1965), 695-6, and by Edward GREGG in his discussion of the ministerial crisis in Queen Anne, London, 1980, pp. 258-9.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/21/144, f. 2r, Cropley to Shaftesbury, Red Lyon Square, 15 January (1708).

Favours & have receivd marks of such regard from our Ministry (I mean in particular our two great Lords) from whome I may be able by improvement of my Interest to do some publick service; that I am extreamly willing to shew I do not ill deserve their Compliments.

I am seldome behind-hand in good Terms with anyBody. But here I may truly say I have been before-hand & I shoud be highly pleased to shew them so much, tho' as matters stood before, when I was ill usd, I had too much stomach (as they say) to let it be known how much I was in their Interest & by some silly Mistakes of Pamphlets written & spightfull things dispersed, I was really taken by them for an Antagonist instead of a Champion & Stickler for them, as I had been abroad & at home.

I know not what Acquaintance Myn Heer Wellant has kept with our great Duke. But if they stand tollerably well together & are upon easy conversing Terms, I shoud be mighty glad if when he comes over a Word or two could be dropt in Discourse concerning me, & that Myn H: Wellant woud only say as by Chance what Idea I very early gave him of our Queen [and] Ministry & in particular of L^d Marlborow both as to his Minister & Souldier-Capacity.¹

The attempt to influence Anglo-Dutch affairs was augmented in May the following year, when Shaftesbury wrote to Townsend, about to leave for The Hague as a plenipotentiary to the abortive peace negotiations, recommending Furly:

His th(o)rough Experience in the Affairs of Holland and his zeal for the Protestant Religion,

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/21/166, f. 73r, Shaftesbury to Furly, 5 January 1708. For Welland and Shaftesbury see above, chapter V, pp. 188-9. Marlborough was in the Low Countries at the time, moving between The Hague and Brussels, but there is no record of a meeting with Welland, who died shortly afterwards.

the common Cause, and the Interest of the two Nations, are Qualitys which will make him valewd by Your Lordp and may perhaps render him usefull to You, in the present Conjunction of Affairs.¹

Molesworth, too, had been told of Shaftesbury's hopes for the future.

I am highly rejoiced, as you may believe, that I can find myself able to do a little more public service than what of late years I have been confined to in my country, and I own the circumstances of a Court were never so inviting to me as they have been since a late view I have had of the best part of our Ministry. It may perhaps have added more of confidence and forwardness in my way of courtship, to be so incapacitated as I am from taking anything there for myself. But I hope I may convince some persons that it is possible to serve disinterestedly, and that obligations already received (though on the account of others) are able to bind as strongly as the ties of self-interest.²

Later, in November 1708, Shaftesbury told Molesworth of his pleasure at the rapprochement between Godolphin and the Junto. With both Godolphin and Somers in the administration he felt able to give a high degree of trust to the Court.³ With men of virtue and honesty in power the conditions were perfect for disinterested political activity.

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 333, Shaftesbury to Townsend, Chelsea, 28 May 1709. (RAND, pp. 399-400)

2. RAND, pp. 389-91. Shaftesbury to Molesworth, Chelsea, 30 September 1708.

3. TOLAND, Letters, p. 16. Shaftesbury to Molesworth, Chelsea, 20 November 1708. See above, chapter VI, p. 253.

The heady combination of political intrigue and writing social and philosophical comment was not sufficient to fill all of Shaftesbury's time. In 1708-9 he tried unsuccessfully to win the hand of a wealthy heiress in London, and married instead a distant cousin. Marriage was not uppermost in Shaftesbury's mind before these years, although those around him had been more concerned about the matter. When it became apparent in 1705 that his health was deteriorating and that his brother was unlikely to marry, Shaftesbury's friends began to urge him to think seriously about the future of his title. Outside parties also took an interest in the issue, as is evident from a letter from Lady Wentworth to her son Lord Raby, later earl of Strafford, in Berlin. The letter, written in July 1707, provides an interesting account of Shaftesbury's character:

My daughter Wentworth carryd me yesterday to Chelsey to see Mrs. Skinner, whoe is with Lord Shasbury not as a sarvent but as a freind. She was to see me and invyted us to walk in the Gardens, prommisseing me I should not see my Lord, but he sent to her to know who we wear, and came to us and showed us his gardens and all his ingenious contryvencis in his hous, gave us fruet and french wyne and sack, and Tea, and spoake very hansomly of you, and hee is come to see me at Twittnam. I am in lov with him, and alsoe with his wey of living, it is very delightfull; he is very obliging and has a mighty ingagin way, but he looks as if he was very short lived, which is pety. Was he twenty years older and I as many years younger, I would lay al the traps I could to gett him, his youmore and myne are soe alyke, and he has many contryvencis in his hous that is just to my fancy. I wish Betty

had him, he would be next to you in my affection; he is one that I would sooner be in lov with then anybody I ever yett see, he managis his hous, and many of his affairs very lyke you, and is neet in his person lyke you. I wonder my sister Batthurst gott him not for neic Batthurst...¹

Persuaded of the need to marry, Shaftesbury attempted, at the end of 1708, to gain the hand of the wealthy daughter of an 'old Lord' in London, who suspected the suitor of being more interested in his money, and did not agree to the match. Shaftesbury was hampered by his bad health during the negotiations: he was forced to retire to the country at the crucial moment, and his opportunity was lost. It appears that Halifax was a rival suitor. There can be little doubt that the lady was Lady Anne Vaughan, daughter of John Vaughan, third earl of Carbery - a member of the Kit-Cat Club.² During this affair Shaftesbury wrote a number of letters to Molesworth, telling him of his misfortune and asking him to make representations on his behalf.

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1. The Wentworth Papers 1705-1739, edited by James J. CARTWRIGHT, London, 1883, p. 59, Lady Wentworth to Lord Raby, 8 July 1707.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 325, Shaftesbury to Ld C—y, 11 December 1708; The Wentworth Papers, pp. 101-2; Peter ROBINSON, 'The Third Earl of Shaftesbury and Lady Anne Carbery in 1708', Notes and Queries, 23 (1976), 484-6. Lady Anne Vaughan eventually married the marquess of Winchester (later duke of Bolton), who had travelled to the Netherlands with Shaftesbury in 1703. Winchester left his wife a few weeks after their marriage.

The letters also contain information about Shaftesbury's view of the government in 1708-9. In 1721 these letters were published in a mercenary fashion by Toland, who thus enraged all the parties concerned.

As a result of the failure of Shaftesbury's advances his marriage to a distant relative was quickly arranged. Jane Ewer was the youngest daughter of Thomas Ewer of Bushey Hall in Hertfordshire.¹ Like Shaftesbury she was related on her mother's side to the ubiquitous Montagu family and was thus a cousin to her husband-to-be. Shaftesbury told Wheelock of his choice in July 1709:

But as particular Friends as they are, I have not seen any of 'em this 8 or 9 Year since my Health chang'd, and I retir'd from Town and Business.

I have determin'd on the youngest of the Daughters. The eldest was a grown Woman when I us'd to be much with the family.²

The couple were married in August 1709 and, despite the unpromising nature of the contract's genesis, the match was a success. In November Shaftesbury wrote to Molesworth, 'that I verily thought my self as happy a Man now as ever.'³ The new countess was devoted to her husband, whom she nursed during his last illness.⁴ She lived until Nov-

1. V. C. H. Herts., II, 183, 462.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 343v, Shaftesbury to Wheelock, 9 July 1709. (RAND, pp. 405-6)

3. P.R.O. 30/24/22/4, f. 353r, Shaftesbury to Molesworth, Reigate, 1 November 1709. (TOLAND, Letters, p. 42)

4. P.R.O. 30/24/21/222, Crell to Furly, Naples, 21 February 1713 (N.S.).

ember 1751 and is buried with her husband at Wimborne St. Giles. Their only child, Anthony, was born in Reigate on 9 February 1711.¹ Croyley and Halifax were his godfathers.²

Shaftesbury's political career was prone to sudden changes of fortune. His break with Harley in 1700-1 and the sudden death of William III in 1702 warned him that success could rapidly turn to failure in the political world. Harley's enforced resignation in 1708 and the gradual admission of Junto leaders and supporters to the Marlborough-Godolphin ministry offered hope and encouragement for the future and the opportunity of further political service. In 1710 Shaftesbury had to turn once more to the defensive. In December 1709 the Junto decided to impeach Henry Sacheverell for his provocative sermon in St. Paul's Cathedral. The failure to secure more than a derisory sentence at Sacheverell's trial in February and March 1710 resulted in an outburst of pro-Sacheverell hysteria throughout the country, the collapse of the Junto, and a sweeping victory for

1. P.R.O. 30/24/24/13, almanac, f. 21, 9 February 1711.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/24/13, f. 24, 9 March 1711; British Library, Addit. MSS, 7121, ff. 63-4, Shaftesbury to Halifax, Reigate, 23 February 1711. (RAND, pp. 428-9)

Harley's tories in the general election held that autumn.

Shaftesbury, with his record of published attacks on the high-flying tories, was particularly vulnerable to attack during the Sacheverell crisis. In fact the trial was a disaster for him. Two of his friends, Stanhope and King, were active members of the prosecuting team and Shaftesbury himself was strongly committed to supporting the doctor's impeachment. On 6 March, however, Sacheverell's defence counsel quoted several passages from the Letter concerning Enthusiasm amongst the publications given as evidence to refute the third article of impeachment, which claimed that Sacheverell was wrong to say that the Church of England was 'in danger'.¹ Not only was Shaftesbury subjected to the humiliation of having his work publicly proclaimed as seditious and heretical but he also can hardly have been pleased with the prosecution's method of dealing with the defence's argument. On 10 March Thomson gave the prosecution's view of Sacheverell's reply to the third article:

Your Lordships had a Collection of many
scandalous Books and Pamphlets, drawn from
Obscurity, to be republish'd to the World,
for the more effectual suppressing Blasphemy

1. Collections of Passages Referr'd to by Dr Henry Sacheverell in Answer to the Articles of His Impeachment..., London, 1710, pp. 23-4. The best modern account of the trial is by Geoffrey HOLMES, The Trial of Doctor Sacheverell, London, 1973.

and Prophaneness...I am sorry there are any of these prophane and impious pamphlets.¹

A contemporary pamphleteer was quick to make capital out of Shaftesbury's embarrassment:

And when the Children of Darkness appeared above-board, when not only such little Scriblers as T(inda)l, C(olli)ns, A(sgil)l, and T(olan)d; but even some whose Birth and Quality gave them a Hereditary Place in our Parliament, appeared in Print against the Christian Religion, in Defence of what they called Natural Liberty, and Free-Thinking, as if his Quality gave any Man a sufficient License to brave the Lord of Hosts; and all thise while the then Ministry sat unconcernedly by; if this gave the secret Enemies of our Constitution Opportunity to set things in a Flame, it is not to be wondered.²

This was the kind of publicity which Shaftesbury most feared, bringing himself and, by implication, his political allies, into disrepute. It strengthened his conviction that he was used unfairly by his opponents.

In June 1710 Cropley told Stanhope, by this time a prisoner of war in Spain, of Shaftesbury's concern about the Sacheverell affair:

...he has notwithstanding [poor health] read
all y^t ever has been writ on the Doctors cause
wth a very watchfull eye to take up ye cudgels

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1. The Tryal of Dr Henry Sacheverell before the House of Peers..., London, 1710, p. 302.
 2. Observations upon the State of the Nation in January 1712/3, London, 1713, p. 25.

had there been any attempts on you now yr
back is turn'd but my Lord says nothing have
they venturd on of y^t kind, so truly instead
of being thus of the defensive part he has
made an attack on them where I thinke you make
a pretty good figure as you see in y^e advice
to an Author, see page 181 & so on...¹

A month after Cropley wrote to Stanhope, Shaftesbury travelled
back to Dorset in an attempt to cope with the local problems caused
by public fervour in support of Sacheverell, who had undertaken a
triumphant progress round the country. Later in July he gave Cropley
his views on the approaching dissolution of parliament and the prospect
for Britain:

I am sorry to hear the intended Dissolution:
'Twill be dreadfull to Europe...I value not
what Parliament there is: We can have none
that will undo what the last has done and
pronounced in the cause of Liberty and the
Revolution. All that they can do is to strike
at some particular Men, whò if they are wise,
and bold, may defy their Enemys, and make a
quick Turn upon them. If they tamper and make
Terms, let them take their Fate for their pains.

Remember how Things stood at the time of
the occasional Conformity Bill [the 'tack' of
1704]; how were we then used by the great ones,

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1. Kent Archives Office, Stanhope MSS, U 1590 C9/31, no. 22,
Cropley to Stanhope, (Beachworth), 17 June 1710. The reference
in Cropley's letter is obscure. The final section of the Solilo-
2. quy, which would seem to be the passage cited, deals in general
terms with the unhappy outcome of religious disputes, with no
direct references to either Sacheverell or Stanhope. Contemp-
oraries, however, might have found clearer allusions. See
Characteristics, I, 231-3. Also Characteristics, II, 162-3
(Miscellany I, chapter two).

whose Heads are now in such Danger?...if Europe be lost, we must all sink together. But if that be saved by some good Providence, as it has been already in greater Dangers, then we shall swimm, but they sink who have acted timorously, and refus'd to put their whole Interest without Reserve on that Party which alone has the Power to save them.¹

The stern moral tone of the letter is typical of Shaftesbury's political outlook. It exemplifies a principled stand which was able to resist the temptation of an alliance with Harley in August, when the latter was anxious to win whig support for a non-party ministry which would rapidly conclude a peace with France.² Shaftesbury found such an attitude towards the French totally unacceptable, as he bluntly told Cropley, the channel for Harley's advances.³

One of the principal victims of the rapid political changes was Godolphin, dismissed at the beginning of August. At the end of a winter which nearly killed him, Shaftesbury wrote admiringly to the man who had appeared to him as a beacon of common sense and moderation amid the storm of factional strife:

In this Calamity my Lord, you will have only your single share. But you have certainly been

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, ff. 495-6, Shaftesbury to Cropley, St. Giles's, 24 July 1710. (RAND, pp. 425-6)
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, f. 502, Shaftesbury to Cropley, Reigate, 19 August 1710.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, f. 501.

above all Men bless'd in haveing allmost all
Mankind and even your Enemys conscious with
you of y^e Good you did, & y^e Benifitt the
World & common Cause receiv'd under your Min-
istry. If Envey coud have place where Honesty
& a publick Spirit prevails, your Lordp might
y^e soonest of all Men be envy'd by y^e generous
& good.¹

Shaftesbury also told Godolphin that he was being urged by friends to travel to Florence or Naples for the sake of his health.² Before he made the journey there was a major project to complete - the publication of the first edition of Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, etc....

The Characteristics was published by John Darby in the spring of 1711.³ The three volumes contained most of the treatises previously published by Shaftesbury, including a corrected version of the Inquiry. In addition, the third volume contained five sets of Miscellaneous Reflections, commenting on the earlier works and answering some of the criticisms to which they had been subjected. Miscellany III included an attack on Harley and Bolingbroke and political references occur quite frequently in these final treatises.⁴ Somers was given advance

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/21/188, Shaftesbury to Godolphin, Reigate, 29 January 1711. (RAND, pp. 426-7)
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, f. 501v, Shaftesbury to Dartmouth, 29 January 1711; f. 504r, Shaftesbury to Lord Howe, Reigate, 26 March 1711. (RAND, pp. 427-30)
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, Shaftesbury to Somers, Reigate, 30 March 1711; (RAND, p. 432). See also P.R.O. 30/24/24/13, f. 33, 3 June 1711.
 4. Characteristics, II, 260-2.

warning of their political content and their opposition to the tory establishment:

By this third volume of Chamber-Practice your lordship will find that if my good humour be quite spent, I have courage, however, left to attack and provoke a most malignant party with whom I might easily live on good terms to all the advantage imaginable. Their blessed fountains of virtue and religion were never perhaps thus searched before. The poisonous principles, indeed, which they dispense under a religious appearance have been often exposed, whilst their sovereignty in arts and sciences, their presidents in letters, their alma maters and academies, have been acknowledged and taken for granted. They who treated the poor Presbyterians as impolite, unformed, without rival literature or manners, will perhaps be somewhat moved to find themselves treated in the same way, not as corrupters merely of morals and public principles, but as the very reverse or antipodes to good breeding, scholarship, behaviour, sense, and manners. For should this grow credible, and take either with our growing youth or their grown parents, I hope endowed seminaries might chance to make a much worse figure, and the October Club prove less considerable than at present in that height to which a modern statesman (not of their own kind) has to his country's danger, and perhaps to his own plague hereafter, exalted in our senate.¹

Such a wide-ranging critique of the cultural, political, and moral consequences of factional tory rule is the main thrust of the Miscellaneous Reflections, although much of the impact of the essays depends on allusion rather than reasoned argument. That Shaftesbury

1. RAND, pp. 430-2, Shaftesbury to Somers, Reigate, 30 March 1711.

was unhappy about the tory Anglican monopoly of art, literature, and education, especially at the time of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts, is as evident as his strong political antipathy to the tories and his supporters. The intimate relationship between politics and ideas in his thought is thus given clear emphasis in the last of his works to be published in his lifetime.

While the Characteristics was emerging from the press, Shaftesbury was occupied with personal matters. His son was born at Reigate at the beginning of February 1711, by which time Shaftesbury had applied for a passport to go to Italy.¹ Negotiations also had to be conducted with the duke of Berwick, an illegitimate son of James II, who commanded French troops near the Italian border - Shaftesbury needed a safe conduct from Berwick if he was to pass safely into Italy.²

The necessary passports, British and French, for the Shaftesburys and eight companions had arrived by the end of June.³ In May Shaftesbury had written to Godolphin, expressing his desire to serve him in the future.⁴ The Shaftesburys, leaving their infant son in Crompton's

1. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, f. 501v, Shaftesbury to Dartmouth, Reigate, 29 January 1711. (RAND, pp. 427-8)

2. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, f. 508r, Shaftesbury to Lady Waldegrave, Reigate, 4 May 1711. (RAND, p. 433)

3. P.R.O. 30/24/20/190, 1 English and 3 French passports, April and June 1711.

4. P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, f. 513r, Shaftesbury to Godolphin, Reigate, 27 May 1711. (RAND, p. 435)

care, left Reigate for Dover on 29 June.¹ The party left Dover and arrived in Calais on 2/13 July at the beginning of the slow and painful journey through France and Italy to Naples, where it arrived on 15 November.² During the journey Shaftesbury kept in touch with friends in England, particularly Crompton and Micklethwayte, although most of his letters were concerned with practical and financial matters.³ It was not until he reached Naples and had time to recover from the journey that he was able to resume a way of life, which, although severely limited by his deteriorating condition, gave him the opportunity to write and reflect on the subjects which had always concerned him, and to meet new friends.

1. P.R.O 30/24/24/13, f. 33, 29 June 1711.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/24/13, ff. 36-8, for itinerary of the journey.

3. See some of the letters in P.R.O. 30/24/23/8. (RAND, pp. 435-41)

CHAPTER VIII

SHAFTESBURY IN ITALY

1711-1713

It is difficult to portray Shaftesbury's brief Neapolitan sojourn as anything other than an anticlimax.¹ Confined to his house on the Riviera di Chiaia, he was unable to take an active part in the social and intellectual life of the grossly overcrowded city to which he had escaped to save his life. The warm climate and fresh breezes of the Bay of Naples did afford him enough physical comfort to raise hopes of his surviving there for several years, but a relapse soon followed. The prevailing mood in the small Shaftesbury household was one of introspection, of being an outpost of English civilisation marooned in a strange city, which was the centre of Italian free-thought and yet bulged with members of religious orders. Communication with England was difficult (a problem later eased by the generosity of the viceroy, who opened diplomatic channels to Shaftes-

1. For a brief description of Shaftesbury in Italy see Benedetto CROCE, 'Shaftesbury in Italia', in Uomini e Cose della Vecchia Italia, I, Bari, 1943 (second edition), pp. 274-311. The article was first published in 1927.

bury²¹) and the news of home which did get through was often depressing: Harley's ascendancy and the peace with France offended Shaftesbury's political sensibilities; the preparation of the second edition of the Characteristics was not a simple job. Nor, with some exceptions, did local officials and litterati do more than courtesy required to make Shaftesbury feel at home. Naples was not Rotterdam.

When Shaftesbury's health allowed him to work there were outlets for him. Detailed preparation of the second edition of the Characteristics received the first priority, closely followed by work on the Second Characters, treatises on aesthetics intended as a companion volume to the Characteristics, examining the relationship between morality and art. To this end Shaftesbury found a good deal of stimulus in Italy, from the great number of paintings and statues he saw on his way to Naples and during his time there, to engravings of coins and medals - emblematic art became a subject of great interest to him. Nor did politics fade from the picture. The temptation to spend a large part of his time indulging in political speculation at a time of European crisis was acute and it required the self-discipline of which he was a fervent advocate to keep his attention on more imm-

1. London, Public Record Office, S.P. 93/3, f. 99r, Fleetwood to Dartmouth, Naples, 26 January 1712 (N.S.). P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 109r, Shaftesbury to Furly, Naples, 3 May 1712 (N.S.).

ediate concerns. Nevertheless the political implications of his aesthetic writing were continually pointed up and in his letters to Furlly and John Molesworth he was able to talk politics freely and at some length.

Naples was not unknown territory to Englishmen. Shaftesbury's friend, Gilbert Burnet, had visited it in 1685 and was favourably impressed:

The City of Naples, as it is the best situated, and in the best Climate, so it is one of the Noblest Cities of Europe; and if it is not above half as big as Paris or London, yet it hath much more Beauty than either of them. The Streets are large and broad, the Pavement is great and noble, the Stones being generally above a Foot square, and it is full of Palaces, and great Buildings. The Town is well supplied by daily Markets, so that Provisions are ever fresh, and in great Plenty; the Wine is the best of Europe, and both the Fish and Flesh is extream good. It is scarce ever cold in Winter, and there is a fresh Air comes both from the Sea and the Mountains in Summer.¹

Such plenty and prosperity was, thought Burnet, responsible for 'the Sloth and Laziness of this People.'² He was also interested to discover the healthy state of ideas in the city: 'It is true, there are Societies of Men at Naples of freer Thoughts than can be found in any

1. Gilbert BURNET, Travels through Switzerland, Italy, some parts of Germany etc., Dublin, 1725, p. 147.

2. Ibid., p. 140.

other Place of Italy.'¹

Fifteen years later Joseph Addison endorsed Burnet's comments on the beauty of the city and the 'idle indolent Humour' of its inhabitants.² He was also concerned about the large number of clergy there, the autocratic power of the local magnates, and the proliferation of lawyers needed to cope with the endless legal disputes and litigation.

By the time Shaftesbury arrived there in November 1711 the government of Naples had changed. The years of Spanish domination had ended in 1707, to be replaced by Austrian rule until the advent of the Bourbon kings in 1734. One result of this change was the reduction in the importance of the Inquisition, which had made concerted efforts to curb the growth of both the cartesian-platonic ideas of secular thinkers and religious heresy (the quietism of Molinos) at the end of the seventeenth century.³

The intellectual climate in Naples was not markedly suited to Shaftesbury's way of doing philosophy. There was a strong bias in favour of the exact scholarship which did not interest him. Phil-

1. Ibid., p. 143.

2. Joseph ADDISON, Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, &c. In the Years 1701, 1702, 1703, London, 1705, p. 212. Both Addison's and Burnet's books were in Shaftesbury's library; P.R.O. 30/24/23/10.

3. Stuart WOOLF, A History of Italy 1700-1860. The Social Constraints of Political Change, London, 1979, p. 77; The Autobiography of Giambattista Vico, edited by M. H. FRISCH and T. G. BERGIN, Ithaca, 1944, p. 33.

osophical speculation took second place to the legal and historical scholarship which was to make Naples the centre of the Italian enlightenment, with men like Vico, Giannone, and Genovesi building on the foundations laid by those who had fought against the harshness of religious orthodoxy at the end of the previous century.¹ The political inclination of such a scholarly approach was concentrated in the area of practical legal and economic reform rather than a discussion of political morality. Neapolitan scholars and philosophers did not have the political cutting-edge which Shaftesbury had come to expect from men of letters in northern Europe. Although Naples was now ruled by the Austrians, of whom Shaftesbury was an enthusiastic supporter, they seemed unable to make much headway against the feudal system operated by Neapolitan landowners and the Church. A good deal of land remained in Spanish hands and the problem of papal influence in Naples had still to be resolved.² Opportunities for radical political activity were therefore limited, even had the context of ideas been appropriate.

Shaftesbury's letters reflected his basic ambivalence towards Naples: on the one hand his only hope of survival, on the other a threatening city with a late-medieval atmosphere which disturbed a

1. WOOLF, op. cit., pp. 75-8.

2. Ibid., pp. 31, 46, 65.

man of his well-developed sensibilities. He was soon writing to Micklethwayte of 'this warm Suburb of the soft, healing, cherishing, enchanting Syren Parthenope.'¹ He favoured Wheelock with a more rhetorical description of 'the very seat of luxury and pleasure', claiming that Naples,

ever had as it has still the power of creating Dissoluteness in all that are not severely on their Guard but especially all Youth. The very Air inspires Indolence & Lazyness as the richness of living & Fruits of the soil do Luxury and a certain over-Degree of Health.²

Later, seven months before his death, he gave a more desperate account of his fears when forced to rely on local servants to attend him:

And now I am to come God knows into the Hands of Strangers, perfect Strangers & Forreigners perhaps Papists, & this in my sick State...³

By then the guard had dropped and Shaftesbury's cosmopolitan sympathies were pushed to the back of his mind.

Despite his declared intention to cut down on the amount of time he spent thinking and writing about the political state of Britain and Europe, Shaftesbury was unable to ignore the course of events leading up to the peace of Utrecht, which he regarded as a disaster

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/23/8, f. 62r, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples, 19 January 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 466.)
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/21/198, Shaftesbury to Wheelock, Naples, 23 February 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 471)
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/21/210, Shaftesbury to Wheelock, Naples, 12 July 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 499)

for Europe. The central part played by Harley in the peace negotiations interested him almost obsessively; he was both fascinated and repelled by the political skill of his old leader.

Shaftesbury's major political correspondent was the former envoy to the grand duke of Tuscany, John Molesworth. Molesworth, who lived in Florence, was the eldest son of Robert Molesworth, Shaftesbury's close political associate and friend. As well as holding political views which Shaftesbury took to be sound Molesworth had been associated with radical thinkers at the Tuscan court, particularly Alberto Radicati di Passerano.¹ Molesworth, a former friend of Swift, was to be involved in an Italian translation of Addison's Cato in 1715.² Unfortunately, Molesworth's intellectual interests are not discussed in Shaftesbury's letters to him, and few of Molesworth's replies have survived.

At first Shaftesbury held out hopes for a prolongation of the war against the French. Reacting to the news of the recall of Count Gallas, the imperial ambassador in London, for publicising

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1. Franco VENTURI, Utopia and Reform in the Enlightenment, Cambridge, 1971, p. 14.
 2. Mario ROSA, Dispotismo e libertà nel Settecento, Bari, 1964, p. 18.

the preliminaries of the peace negotiations with the French,¹ Shaftesbury was convinced that:

even this Parliament will be vigorous in
their Votes against France & chase away this
Specter of a ruinouse Peace.²

By the beginning of 1712 he had realised that the detailed negotiations which had taken place throughout 1711 were irreversible: the crucial issue now was to regulate the peace to the detriment of French interests. The battle-cry for Shaftesbury, as for all the whigs, was 'No peace without Spain.' He was thus delighted to hear that the government had been defeated in the Lords at the beginning of December 1711 on Nottingham's motion that Spanish territory should be kept out of the hands of the Bourbon family.³ He insisted to Molesworth that the vote was a manifestation of 'the true English spirit' fighting back, but recognised that peace of some kind was inevitable:

But since our next is like to be a Parliamentary
Peace I hope, by the still continued blessing
of Providence on our Army, and the constant firm-
ness and resolution of Parliament after Parliament

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1. For the Gallas affair see Edward GREGG, Queen Anne, London, 1980, p. 342.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/8, f. 39r, Shaftesbury to J. Molesworth, Naples, 15 December 1711 (N.S.). (RAND, pp. 452-3)
 3. GREGG, op. cit., p. 347.

to preserve the Spanish Monarchy intire to the House of Austria, We shall see in the End a peace worthy [of] such a Queen as ours who so far consults her people; and worthy of that great Name which may perhaps be given it of the first Parliamentary Treaty, and confederate Establishment of the Libertys of Europe, Let the Enemies of Liberty endeavour afterwards as artfully as they can to supplant that generouse Principle in particular Nations which Europe in generall and even the absolute Princes themselves are forc'd to recognize and joyfully embrace under the gloriouse Title of the Common Cause. Surely it can have no small influence upon men whether under Tyrannys or free governments to see this necessary Confession of the common Right of Mankind, and find that even the Great, who deny this Right to those who are under their Government are glad however to see such an Establishment and Constitution in Europe itself as may preserve them and their equals in a firm and establish'd free State.¹

By thus establishing in his imagination a new political context in which to interpret events - in this case the idea of a parliamentary peace establishing the correct balance of power in Europe - Shaftesbury was able to come to terms with political factors which he did not properly understand. The placing of a moral gloss on the actions of men who were not concerned with questions of morality set him at one remove from them. It preserved his assumptions and general outlook intact but was inimical to the accuracy of political observation. Shaftesbury's idealistic and rather naive views of the structure and

1. P.R.O. 30/24/23/8, ff. 55-6, Shaftesbury to J. Molesworth, Naples, 19 January 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 461)

motivations of political life put him at odds with many of the leading politicians of his day when he had dealings with them: they did not speak the same language. This was at least an inconvenience in England.- it was an insurmountable problem when he was languishing hundreds of miles away. As a politician manqué he felt the more compelled, however, to come to terms with political reality.

This air of unreality pervades many of his letters from Naples, whether they were concerned with his interest in Stanhope or his distaste at the manoeuvrings of Harley, by now earl of Oxford. By March 1712 he had even convinced himself that, despite the dismissal of Marlborough and Oxford's continued ascendancy, he was content with the state of affairs in Britain:

...For my own part I am so contented with the present Ballance of Power in our Nation, and with the Authority and Prerogative of the Crown, such as the Torys have reduc'd it, that I can say from the bottom of my Heart, I am as an Englishman the most truly monarchical in my Principle; having really in some measure, a Jealousy upon me of the Injury which may be done our Common-weal by the Diminution of our monarchical Power in some parts of our Constitution; which I am absolutely convinc'd is the freest we are able to bear.¹

He also considered himself to be 'grown wonderfully temperate and

1. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 98r, Shaftesbury to J. Molesworth, Naples, 29 March 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 481) This passage is cited by HOLMES, British Politics in the Age of Anne, p. 96.

cool in Politicks.'¹

By the summer of 1712, however, Shaftesbury's coolness had gone. The British desertion of her allies for commercial gain, the notorious 'restraining orders', and the overthrow of the policy of 'No peace without Spain' (despite furious opposition protests), all led Shaftesbury to confess to Furly in July, 'Never was I dejected till this Turn.'² In August he told Molesworth:

...but in reality my Amazement has been such at the progress of Affaires in Brittain, that I am allmost at an end of thinking: much less can I either speak or write of them. In reality Matters are now push'd so far, that an English-man, who is truly such, can hardly make a single Reflection which is fit to trust to paper.

Nevertheless, he went on to look towards the future:

I must still return however to that old Topick which I must again and again repeat; That if we are not overwhelm'd; if we sink not all at once (Foundation and all) even this Shame and Misery may prove our future Happiness and Safety. For well I know how soon a Court, whatever obligations of Gratitude they may lye under, are ready to abandon their best Friends in favour of a certain Party who can sing in their Ear that sweet Syren-Song, of Obedience without reserve, absolute Power, unlimited Monarchy &c. But here is a Scene now opening, a Part of Action carrying on, which how tragical it may prove no-one can well fore-see; But however it ends, the Partys who are concern'd for our Foundation, and have hitherto their successional Right acknowledg'd, will have a full and feeling Proof of those Men and of those

1. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 101v, Shaftesbury to Chetwynd, Naples, 5 April 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 483)

2. P.R.O. 30/24/21/211, Shaftesbury to Furly, Naples, 19 July 1712 (N.S.). See also GREGG, op. cit., pp. 356-8.

Principles which have brought Us into this Condition.¹

That Shaftesbury felt a keen sense of personal defeat over Oxford's unilateral dealings with the French cannot be doubted. He was explicit on this point in a letter he wrote to Furly:

For what greater [satisfaction] can I have in these Calamitys than to hear them [reports of public affairs] by a Friend with whom I have jointly spent my Life in labouring for the Publick and by personal Action, Advice, Study, Thought, and the Imployment of allmost all the Hours of my Life, endeavourd to serve that Country and common Cause which we now see sinking. If Providence does not wonderfully support the many noble Spirits which appear in Holland,² and the few which remain in our native Country.²

Nor was the dejection of defeat improved by Shaftesbury's obsession with the evil genius of Oxford, 'who has all Power in his Hands, and every Secret in his Breast.'³ Micklethwayte was told of Shaftesbury's feelings towards Oxford:

The Man who now rules all was for many years as great a Man in my Eyes as now with all his outward Greatness. And should his Turn come to fall he woud find that it was more natural and easy to me to express my Friendship for him (as I have done before) when he was abandoned and persecuted, than when he governed all without controll.⁴

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 134, Shaftesbury to J. Molesworth, Naples, 2 August 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, pp. 508-9)
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 136v, Shaftesbury to Furly, Naples, 9 August 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, pp. 510-1)
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 142v, Shaftesbury to J. Molesworth, Naples, 30 August 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 512)
 4. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 145r, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples, 30 August 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 515)

Yet Furly, a closer confidant, was the recipient of sterner thoughts, in a letter which he was entreated to burn once he had read it:

For as to Holland, and our Friends there, never have they had or can have a closer bitterer Enemy, as his Interest now stands, and as his Passions have wrought him up. Nor is there one good or sound Man of Note in England, to whom he is not now a direct Enemy: Nor can he ever be trusted should any Change happen in favour of that common Cause to the Destruction of which he has for these two last years employ'd his whole Credit and Power; whatever his former Merit entitled him to. His Art and Abilitys are great: But I entreat you Remember.¹

Oxford thus appears in Shaftesbury's demonology as a classic case of the able, indeed great, man 'corrupted' by the immorality of political life - a slave to the passions and a man beyond redemption. By overestimating Oxford's control of circumstances and building him up into an immutable force, Shaftesbury was able to shape political events to fit into his preconceived framework of political morality. Only violent change could alter such a desperate state of affairs: 'The Times are coming that we must either sink all together or a great change happen in the course of things.'² Shaftesbury died shortly before the treaty of Utrecht was finally signed but his last months were overshadowed by events which represented a complete re-

1. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 154r, Shaftesbury to Furly, Naples, 18 October 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, pp. 519-20)

2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 156v, Shaftesbury to J. Molesworth, Naples, 25 October 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 521)

versal of the measures and attitudes for which he had fought so strenuously in England.

Shaftesbury spent the greater part of his time in Naples engaged in 'virtuoso studies'. He was particularly concerned with two major projects: the emblematic illustration of the second edition of the Characteristics, which involved the study of painting, sculpture, and numismatics,¹ and the writing of several treatises on aesthetics, designed as a complementary volume to the Characteristics.² The two projects were not entirely distinct. Two of the treatises which Shaftesbury sketched out were concerned with the allegorical representation of virtue. The Notion of the Historical Draught or Tablature of the Judgment of Hercules, published anonymously in French in 1712, took the form of a philosopher's instructions to a painter about the appropriate representation of the popular story told in Xenophon's

1. This is discussed by Felix PAKNADEL, 'Shaftesbury's Illustrations of Characteristics', in Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XXXVII (1974), 290-312.
2. Finally published together as Second Characters, edited by Benjamin RAND, Cambridge, 1914.

Memorabilia of Hercules's choice between pleasure and duty.¹ The subject was a popular one for painters, including Poussin, of whom Shaftesbury thought very highly. ~~The instructions were written for~~ The instructions were written for the Neapolitan painter Paolo de Matteis, who produced a picture from Shaftesbury's specifications.² The Tablet of Cebes was also an allegorical work, expounding socratic principles such as the identity of virtue and knowledge.³

The other two treatises which have since been published in Second Characters were more general in scope. The Letter concerning Design, completed in March 1712 and addressed to Somers, was included in the 1714 edition of the Characteristics.⁴ The Letter is the main source for Shaftesbury's views on national taste. Kerry Downes has recently written a useful summary of its argument, drawing out Shaftesbury's artistic, and particularly, architectural preferences:

In attacking French taste and influence in the arts, Shaftesbury was clarifying the taste of Whig society; he clearly identified Wren not only with French influence but with a kind of artistic absolutism, and among the disasters resulting from Wren's supposed monopoly over

1. RAND, Second Characters, pp. 29-63.

2. Edgar WIND, 'Shaftesbury as a Patron of Art', in Journal of the Warburg Institute, II (1938-9), 185-8; Rudolf WITTKOWER, Art and Architecture in Italy 1600-1750, Harmondsworth, 1965 (second edition), p. 396n.

3. RAND, Second Characters, pp. 63-89.

4. Ibid., pp. 17-29.

nearly forty years he named St Paul's and Hampton Court, and clearly implied Blenheim and the newly proposed Fifty New Churches, which were still on the drawing board. He prophesied the acceptance of new standards of 'national taste', specifically anti-French, by the 'whole People' of a 'United Britain the principal Seat of Arts'...In place of a court style diffused pyramidally from the Crown itself, Shaftesbury proposed a national style promoted by those enlightened members of society in whom, in Lords or Commons or outside Parliament, the authority of the state was now vested. Theory followed the practice which had begun with the abrogation of royal splendour at Chatsworth. But Shaftesbury did not attempt to define or describe a national style, and his prescription was negative - un-French, unlike Wren, unlike Blenheim. Certainly there was nothing intrinsically or inevitably Whiggish in Inigo Jones's style or in a revival of it; the reverse ought to have been the case since he had been above all court architect to James I and Charles I. But he was undeniably British and had undeniably adapted Palladio's grave and regular latinity to British needs. Shaftesbury's negative prescription was adroitly and positively filled by Campbell's contribution [Vitruvius Britannicus, 1715-25], carefully filtered, of elements from Jones and from Palladio...¹

In the course of the Letter Shaftesbury expressed his view of the relationship between liberty and art:

Nothing is so improving, nothing so natural, so congenial to the liberal arts, as that reigning

1. Kerry DOWNES, Vanbrugh, London, 1977, pp. 77-8. See also Timothy P. CONNOR, A Study of Colen Campbell's Vitruvius Britannicus, (unpublished Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1979), pp. 26-7.

liberty and high spirit of a people, which in the habit of judging in the highest matters for themselves, makes them freely judge of other subjects, and enter thoroughly into the characters as well of men and manners, as of the products or works of men, in art and science. So much, my Lord, do we owe to the excellence of our national constitution, and legal monarchy; happily fitted for us, and which alone could hold together so mighty a people; all sharers...in the government of themselves; and meeting under one head in a vast metropolis; whose enormous growth, however censurable in other respects, is actually a cause that workmanship and arts of so many kinds arise to such perfection.¹

He claimed that music had begun to flourish in England after the accession of William III and supported the establishment of academies to maintain and teach national standards in artistic taste.² In particular he suggested that neo-Palladian architects should make their mark on London by designing a new royal palace and Houses of Parliament. The work on the Houses of Parliament had to be abandoned and that on the royal palace was never begun but in the Horse Guards and part of the Treasury, designed by William Kent, we catch a glimpse of Shaftesbury's vision of the new national taste in architecture.

Plastics or the Original Progress and Power of Designatory Art extends the discussion of the relationship between aesthetics and ethics, with particular reference to painting, which Shaftesbury

1. RAND, Second Characters, p. 23.

2. Ibid., pp. 20, 24.

regarded as imitative.¹ Painting, as an art form, is not important because it is beautiful in itself, but only to the extent to which it beautifies, 'so that the beautifying not the beautified is the really beautiful.'² The best way of detecting the qualities of painting is in historical painting, such as the Judgment of Hercules, which inspires noble conduct in the viewer, 'for the most lovely thing in the world is love of one's duty.'³ Social and political implications are again made explicit:

Concerning freedom see a moral explanation:
The same doctrine and explanation of liberty
and freedom in true moral philosophy as in
painting, viz. "That the truly austere, severe,
and self-severe, regular restraints, character
and regimen corresponds (not fights or thwarts)
with the free, the easy, the secure, the bold...".⁴

Plastics ends with an attack on Shaftesbury's philosophical
opponents.

Hence Hobbes, Locke, etc still the same man,
same genius at the bottom. — "Beauty is
nothing." — "Virtue is nothing." — So "per-
spective nothing." — Music nothing." — But
these are the greatest realities of things,
especially the beauty and order of affections.

These philosophers together with the anti-
virtuosi may be called by one common name, viz.
barbar...⁵

1. Ibid., pp. 89-179.

2. Ibid., p. xxiv.

3. Ibid., p. 175.

4. Ibid., p. 167.

5. Ibid., p. 178.

The emblematic work for the Characteristics reflected both Shaftesbury's interest in allegory and his conviction of the educational value of art. His introduction to Second Characters stressed the importance of his didactic purpose:

A rule, viz.: Nothing in the text but what shall be of easy, smooth, and polite reading, without seeming difficulty, or hard study; so that the better and gentler rank of painters and artists, the ladies, beaux, courtly gentlemen, and more refined sort of country and town wits, and notable talkers may comprehend, or be persuaded that they comprehend, what is there written in the text.¹

The emblems were directed to this end, seeking to reinforce and explain the text, rather than replace it.² The plan was complicated. In the first place there was the preliminary study of the scope of art and design, growing out of Shaftesbury's awareness of the implications of relating aesthetics to ethics. He soon settled down to this task and by February 1712 could tell Cropley that he was,

...now taken up and diverted by Antiquities, Medals and chiefly Drawings, and Pictures brought to me every day to see; My Acquaintance in these matters beginning now to enlarge; and my Discoveries proving more successfull.³

He was in close contact with Salvator Rosa, who worked at Shaftesbury's house.⁴ His thoughts, on Micklethwayte's prompting, quickly turned

1. Ibid., p. 8.

2. BRETT, op. cit., p. 122.

3. P.R.O. 30/24/23/8, f. 74r, Shaftesbury to Cropley, Naples, 16 February 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 468)

4. Ibid.

to the possibility of engaging a young artist to complete emblematic illustrations for the Characteristics according to the author's detailed instructions.¹ A friend in Rome, Dr. Fagan, was able to find a young protégé of William Kent, Henry Trench, who had arrived in Naples by the beginning of April.² Unfortunately, Shaftesbury was not altogether pleased with Trench's work and the burden of the project thus fell on Thomas Micklethwayte, who was preparing the second edition, and Samuel Gribelin, who engraved the plates for the work.³ Shaftesbury sent detailed instructions in his letters to Micklethwayte, who did his best to see them carried out. The results were subtle and complicated emblems reflecting the fundamental harmony of the world and the ways in which it could be corrupted.⁴ Detailed comment was provided by the plates, particularly those depicting the growth of religious intolerance and attacking the Roman Church. But however carefully prepared the emblems may have been, it is probable that

1. PAKNADEL, art. cit., pp. 292-3.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/8, ff. 63-4, Shaftesbury to Fagan, Naples, 23 January 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, pp. 466-8). 30/24/23/9, f. 103, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, 12 April 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 485)

3. PAKNADEL, art. cit., pp. 290, 294.

4. Ibid., pp. 297-311, for a discussion of the meaning of the emblems.

they were too complicated and difficult to decipher for most readers and they did not create much impact.¹ Emblematic art was quickly becoming unfashionable and the concept of using art to augment a written argument did not interest most people.

Yet Shaftesbury's intentions had not been esoteric. His motive was frankly to engage in political affairs by the oblique route of the moral potential of art. 'Whatever my Studdys or Amusements are, I indeavour still to turn them towards the Interests of Virtue & Liberty in general.'² He told Micklethwayte:

These [virtuoso-studies] are my Arms: And in this Writing-Practice lys my Ammunition and Artillery; whilst I hold my self in Breath and whet my Pen for my friends and Country's use, and for their Revenge, if I am urg'd, and call'd to it, by personal ill Treatment.³

His desire to see the Judgment of Hercules published in a French periodical had a similar motive:

The reason I wish this, is because I shoud from the Effect of this when it was read by people of Fashion, be able to judge whether or no it woud be worth my while to turn my Thoughts (as I am tempted) towards the further studdy of Design and plastick Art both after the antient and modern Foundations, being able (as I flatter my self) to instill by this means some further Thoughts of Virtue and Honesty and the Love of Liberty and Mankind, after a way wholly new, and unthought of; at least after a way very entertaining

1. Ibid., p. 312.

2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/8, f. 88v, Shaftesbury to Furly, Naples, 22 March 1712 (N.S.).

3. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 132r, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples, 2 August 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 506)

and pleasant to my-self, and with the only sort of application or Studdy which my weak Health and exceeding low State allow me: Nothing being more chearfull and reviving than this Amusement of Pictures, Medals, Drawings, and the Reading of this Sort, which by any other body's help I can enjoy.¹

Darby, Shaftesbury's bookseller, was also to be primed with appropriate information about the Second Characters:

...the same Author has allready finish'd two Tracts of a new Sett of Treatises, on Subjects, which tho' wholly different from the former Sett, will prove the greatest Support, reinforcement and illustration imaginable of what has preceded; and in a way new, Beautyfull, Virtuoso-like, fashionable, polite, beyond any Idea he can have of it; and that the Titles as well as the Substance of those old and these new will exactly correspond; tho' the Turn and Manner of the Pieces be so diversify'd.²

By skilful use of the available printing and engraving techniques, combined with shrewd marketing, Shaftesbury thus hoped to maximise the impact of his writing on polite society. He saw allegory and emblem as the channels through which sophisticated ideas might be made palatable to a wide range of readers without too much effort on their part. Direct political instruction was not precluded. The Fable of

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 130, Shaftesbury to Coste, Naples, 25 July 1712 (N.S.), (RAND, p. 503). The Judgment was eventually published in Le Clerc's Journal des Sçavans.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, ff. 128-9, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples, 19 July 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 501)

the Oaks, the Pines and the Pinasters, sent to Somers, was an allegorical story of party faction between the Oaks (whigs) and Pines (tories), who conspire to destroy the Pinasters (non-party ministers).¹ Similarly, the Fable of the Wise Puppy, a possible reflection on Harley, deals with the opportunity for combining patriotic action with personal gain. Both allegories were too volatile and personal to have any chance of immediate publication, but they suggest that Shaftesbury's thoughts were never far from political matters. Moreover, he considered his political experience to have a potential market. 'I could unfold a tale', he wrote to Micklethwayte, 'which would make some Ears in Brittain Tingle.'³

Shaftesbury had some justification for his opinion that his voice would be heard. Reaction to the first edition of the Characteristics was very favourable from those whose opinions he valued most. Stanhope read the book while a prisoner of war in Spain and wrote to Cropley:

I cease not to study Characteristicks, and find
my value & admiration for the Author increase
daily, nor do I believe any thing hath been writ

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1. The Fable is at P.R.O. 30/24/22/7, ff. 531-3. P.R.O. 30/24/23/8, ff. 81-3, Shaftesbury to Coste, Naples, 1 March 1712 (N.S.), (RAND, p. 476). Shaftesbury used Oaks and Pines as party labels in some of his letters to Cropley.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/30/24, ff. 78-9, and 30/24/22/7, f. 530.
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/23/8, ff. 89-92, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples, 22 March 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 477)

these many Ages so likely to be of use to mankind, by improving mens morals as well as their understandings. I can at least affirm of my self that I am the better man for the Study I have bestowed on them, and if I mistake not very much, they will occasion a New turn of thinking as well as writing, whereby our English Authors may become hereafter more instructive and delighting.¹

Just as heartening as the praise from Stanhope, whom Shaftesbury regarded as his 'great disciple',² was the news, via Coste, that the book was highly thought of in Hanover. The Electress Sophia spoke highly of Shaftesbury's work, particularly the Letter concerning Enthusiasm,³ and Leibniz's favourable remarks were communicated to Shaftesbury,⁴ who was anxious that Coste should produce a French translation of the book, to be dedicated to another appreciative reader, Prince Eugene.⁵

The popularity of the Characteristics in the right quarters gave Shaftesbury consolation during his last months. By the end of 1712 it had become obvious that he could not live for long and that his projected treatises would never be completed. To this period belong

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/21/204, Stanhope to Cropley, Naxena, 26 April 1712 (N.S.).
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, ff. 132-3, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples, 2 August 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 508)
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, ff. 160-1, Shaftesbury to Cropley, Naples, 22 November 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, pp. 525-6)
 4. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, ff. 129-31, Shaftesbury to Coste, Naples, 25 July 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, pp. 504-5). See above, chapter VII, p. 288 n.3.
 5. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, ff. 127-9, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples, 19 July 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 501)

his remarkable instructions to Paolo de Matteis to paint him as a dying philosopher; a distant, yet intimate, Socratic figure, handing on his legacy to his disciples.¹

Yet Shaftesbury was not entirely alone in the world. Although the available evidence is scanty it is sufficient to establish that he was in touch with a number of influential figures in the world of scholarship and letters in Naples. In June 1712 he sent a brief sketch of his occupations to Coste, who, he hoped, would visit him in Naples.

You will find me, if alive, entertaining my-self very busily with Drawings, sketches, Prints, Medals and Antiques; which as well as Pictures and other Virtuoso-implements are brought often to my Chamber and Bedside, and sometimes when able to be up and receive Company, I have a Virtuoso-Friend or Two, particularly Don Joseph Valleta's Family and Friends (so noted for their Learning and Collections) who are so kind as to visit me upon these unequal terms.²

Later in the same month he wrote to Micklethwayte of a visit he had received from 'the noble family of Valleta's and Doria's.'³

Both Valletta and Doria were well-established in Naples. Giuseppe

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1. J. C. SWETMAN, 'Shaftesbury's Last Commission', in Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XIX (1956), 110-6.
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 117, Shaftesbury to Coste, Naples, 5 June 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 494)
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 124v, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples 28 June 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 497)

Valletta (1648-1714) was coming to the end of a long and distinguished career. He has been described as 'the leading figure in the intellectual life of Naples in the last years of the Spanish domination' and was said to be the only Neapolitan of his day who could speak English.¹ Like Furly in Rotterdam he was a bibliophile and the centre of a salon of philosophically-minded lawyers and writers. He also won a reputation at the end of the seventeenth century as a protector of some of those attacked by the Inquisition for their heretical views.² Gilbert Burnet had visited Valletta and met his salon in 1685:

The Greek Learning begins to flourish there [Naples] and the new Philosophy is much studied; and there is an Assembly that is held in D. Joseph Valletta's Library, (where there is a vast Collection of well chosen Books) composed of Men that have right Taste of true Learning and good Sense: They are all ill looked on by the Clergy, and represented as a Set of Atheists, and as the Spawn of Pamponatius's School: But I found no such Thing among them; for I had the Honour to meet twice or thrice with a considerable Number of them, during the short Stay

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1. Robert SHACKLETON, 'Travel and Enlightenment: Naples as a Specimen', Essays on the Age of Enlightenment in Honor of Ira O. Wade, edited by Jean MACARY, Geneva, 1977, pp. 284-5.
 2. See the introduction to Giuseppe VALLETTA, Opera Filosofiche, edited by Michele RAK, Florence 1975; V. I. COMPARATO, Giuseppe Valletta - Un Intellettuale Napoletano della Fine del Seicento, Naples, 1970; Biagio de GIOVANNI, 'La Vita Intellettuale a Napoli fra la meta del '600 e la Ristaurazione del Regno', in Storia di Napoli, VI i, Naples, 1972, pp. 425-6.

that I made among them.¹

In 1699 Bernard de Montfaucon visited the library and later printed a list of the manuscripts kept there.² After Valletta's death in 1714 the library was maintained by his son and visited by distinguished foreigners.³ Richard Rawlinson, in the course of his visit, saw a presentation copy of the Characteristics, given to Valletta by Shaftesbury.⁴ The library was bought in 1726 by the Oratorians, the religious order the most tolerant of the new learning, in whose hands it remains.⁵

The context of Valletta's circle in the 1680s and 1690s was a growing interest among lawyers and historians in resisting the claims of papal suzerainty in the kingdom of Naples.⁶ The new historical

1. BURNET, Travels..., p. 143.

2. Bernard de MONTFAUCON, The Antiquities of Italy..., edited by John HENLEY, London, 1725, pp. 218-20.

3. SHACKLETON, art. cit., p. 285.

4. Franco VENTURI, Giannonia Britannica, Naples, 1954, p. 7.

5. The Autobiography of Giambattista Vico, p. 33.

6. WOOLF, op. cit., p. 77.

approach which they pioneered is exemplified by Giannone's Istoria civile del regno di Napoli of 1723. Philosophically the decades at the turn of the century saw the pre-eminence of Cartesianism together with a burgeoning interest in Platonism, which appealed more to younger scholars, such as Vico.¹ By the second decade of the eighteenth century Newtonian ideas were beginning to penetrate Italy and the work of Locke was being read.² Valletta also played his part in this international aspect of Italian intellectual life. He was a correspondent of Le Clerc and other French writers, thus enabling Italian works to become known in northern Europe as well as introducing French thought to Italy.³

A Neapolitan philosopher who was hostile to some of the new ideas gaining ground in Italy was Paolo Mattia Doria (1662-1746).⁴ Doria was a Cartesian and a patron of Vico, who dedicated the Ancient Wisdom

1. GIOVANNI, art. cit., pp. 412-3; Franco VENTURI, Illuministi Italiani, V, Milan and Naples, 1964, p. 200.

2. WOOLF, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

3. Gianfranco CANTELLI, Vico e Bayle: Premesse per un Confronto, Naples, 1971, p. 83; Mario SINA, Vico e Le Clerc. Tra Filosofia e Filologia, Naples, 1978, p. 12.

4. Giuseppe RICUPERATI, 'A proposito di Paolo Mattia Doria', Rivista Storica Italiana, XCI (1979), 261-285.

of the Italians (an attack on Descartes) to him in 1710.¹ Vico wrote of Doria in his autobiography:

At this time [1698] both Vico and Don Paolo Doria were frequent visitors in the house of Caravita, which was a rendezvous for men of letters; and Doria, as fine a philosopher as he was a gentleman, was the first with whom Vico could begin to discuss metaphysics. What Doria admired as sublime, great and new in Descartes, Vico remarked to be old and common knowledge among the Platonists. But in Doria's discourse he perceived a mind that often gave forth lightning - like flashes of Platonic divinity, so that thenceforth they remained linked in a noble and faithful friendship.²

Like Valletta and his circle, Doria was interested in the developing legal and historical scholarship in Naples. His Vita Civile (1710), a classification of government and society, probably influenced Montesquieu, who visited Naples in 1729. By then Doria was one of the leaders of Neapolitan intellectual life.³

It is not possible to discover the names of the 'friends' who visited Shaftesbury with Valletta and Doria. Vico was well-known to both men but there is no evidence that he met Shaftesbury.⁴ Vico and Shaftesbury certainly had ideas in common but these were not markedly

1. Autobiography of Giambattista Vico, pp. 38, 153.

2. Ibid., p. 138.

3. Robert SHACKLETON, Montesquieu. A Critical Biography, Oxford, 1961, p. 114.

4. For Vico and Valletta see Salvo MASTELLONE, Pensiero Politico e Vita Culturale a Napoli nella Seconda Metà del Seicento, Messina and Florence, 1965, p. 196.

original. Vico's Scienza nuova was not yet written; his most recent work, the Ancient Wisdom, proposed a return to classical authorities which Shaftesbury would have heartily endorsed, and they shared a dissatisfaction with Cartesianism. These ideas were common in European intellectual circles and Valletta's contact with French writers provides a plausible explanation of their appearance in Vico's work. Moreover, Vico was not a notable figure in Naples; although appointed professor of rhetoric in the university in 1694 it was a poorly paid post of little importance. He was not a man to attract attention by visiting a distinguished foreign luminary, however much they might have had in common. Attempts to link Vico and Shaftesbury as personal acquaintances should thus be suspended in the absence of documentary evidence.¹

In any case, Shaftesbury's contacts with Neapolitan intellectuals did not have the significance of his discussions with Bayle, Le Clerc, and Limborch in the United Provinces. It appears that the main concern of the Italians was to establish a reliable channel of communication with English writers and scientists.² Valletta wished to

1. For Vico and Shaftesbury see, for example, Autobiography of Giambattista Vico, pp. 81-2, criticised by René WELLEK, 'The Supposed Influence of Vico on England and Scotland in the Eighteenth Century', in Giambattista Vico: An International Symposium, edited by Giorgio TAGLIACOZZO, Baltimore, 1969, p. 216.

2. For Valletta and Shaftesbury see VALLETTA, op. cit., p. 60n; COMPARATO, op. cit., pp. 267-8; CROCE, op. cit., pp. 279-80.

renew his acquaintance with Burnet and correspond with Newton, both of whom were known to Shaftesbury. Such a public relations exercise was a slow business, as Shaftesbury told Micklethwayte:

I was much mortify'd the other Day, when the noble family of Valleta's and Doria's visited me again, that I could not by your means return them any Compliments either from the Bishop, S^r Isaac, or Others, in answer to their application and compliments through me. Tho I could get nothing (nor yet can) like either Thanks or Compliments by S^r John's means to the Vice-Roy here, yet I hoped by your means, and by my own Letters and applications, to have procurd some Compliments from our Learned in England, in return to these considerable Inhabitants of a Place where I am like to reside, and need so much protection and Countenance.¹

The Italians sent books to England - including works by Doria and possibly Vico.² The most tangible result of Shaftesbury's contact with Valletta and Doria was, however, the appearance in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of a communication from Valletta describing the eruption of Vesuvius in September 1712.³ The letter had been passed to the Society by Shaftesbury.

By the end of 1712 Shaftesbury's stay in the palazzo Mirelli on the riviera di Chiaia was drawing rapidly to a close. At the beginn-

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 124v, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples, 28 June 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 497)
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/8, ff. 89-92, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples, 22 March 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 479)
 3. Philosophical Transactions, 337 (1713), pp. 22-5; VALLETTA, op. cit., pp. 404-5; COMPARATO, op. cit., pp. 267-8.

ing of December John Fleetwood, the British consul, wrote to Dartmouth, the secretary of state:

After all our hopes y^t my Lord Shaftesbury might recover he relapsed the last week & was dangerously bad & continues so insomuch y^t it is judged impossible he should survive many dayes. Pray God fit us all for y^t great change.¹

Earlier Shaftesbury admitted that ''tis by mere Nursing that I live.'²

Towards the end of December Shaftesbury told Micklethwayte:

I have my Pen in my hand once again, tho have reason to say for the last time, expecting in a few days to be dismist by Nature, and releas'd from the Pains and Agonys I endure... Comfort S^r John all You can. You are a Man in these cases. S^r John is hardly so, through passionate concern for me. Let M^r Stanhope know my Love for him. You know it well, how long it has been such to deserve his acceptance of the Trust and Charge I leave him of my family and little-one. My other Offspring [Characteristics] is wholly your Trust and Charge.³

On 10 January Shaftesbury told Wheelock of his desperate condition and 'inexpressible' pain.⁴ He died on 15 February 1713. On 21 February Crell wrote to Wheelock telling him the news and paying tribute to

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1. P.R.O., S.P. 93/3, f. 103r, Fleetwood to Dartmouth, Naples, 6 December 1712 (N.S.).
 2. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 156v, Shaftesbury to J. Molesworth, Naples, 25 October 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 521)
 3. P.R.O. 30/24/23/9, f. 163v, Shaftesbury to Micklethwayte, Naples, 20 December 1712 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 527)
 4. P.R.O. 30/24/21/221, Shaftesbury to Wheelock, Naples, 10 January 1713 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 533)

Lady Shaftesbury's devoted nursing.¹ Fleetwood's announcement to Dartmouth was more terse:

I am sorry to give y^r Lord'p the disagreeable newes of the death of my Ld Shaftesbury; whom it pleased Almighty God to take to himself last wednesday morning at 10 a Clock. In the opening him he was found intirely decayed, his lungs ulcerated & stuck to his ribs a Polypus &c^a. His bowells were buried in the garden of his house & his heart & embalmed body will go by the Rebecca gally Capⁿ Martin bound hence to London: My Lady will see no body it being her deceased husbands ord^r but next saturday the 25th Inst^t designs for Rome & Liv^eorn^o by land, so to Marseilles & for England.²

The Rebecca called at Poole and returned Shaftesbury's body for burial at Wimborne St. Giles, where he is commemorated by a memorial in the parish church depicting 'Polite Literature mourning her most distinguished Votary'.³

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1. P.R.O. 30/24/21/223, Crell to Wheelock, Naples, 21 February 1713 (N.S.). (RAND, p. 535)
 2. P.R.O., S.P. 93/3, f. 107r, Fleetwood to Dartmouth, Naples, 21 February 1713 (N.S.). There is a brief list of observations on the preparation of Shaftesbury's body for embalming among the papers remaining in the muniment room at St. Giles's House. See also CROCE, op. cit., p. 311.
 3. Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Dorset, V (East Dorset), London, 1975, p. 93.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

There has been a consistent theme throughout this thesis: that Shaftesbury saw politics as continuous with philosophy and that he was regarded by contemporaries as much as a political figure as a philosopher. In other words, his ideas about the relationship between philosophy and politics reflected a widely-held assumption of his time. Theory and practice were both important to him. By stressing that man was a social being, whose conduct was to be determined in the context of the community or patria, Shaftesbury gave his moral and aesthetic philosophy strong political overtones.

The strong connection between politics and ideas in Shaftesbury's thought has been traced from his family background and early reading, through his decisive friendship with Locke and his parliamentary career, to his commentary on political events from his self-imposed exile in Naples. The political implications of his published work have been examined and the political nature of his interest in the Dutch stressed. The political concerns revealed by his letters and notebooks have been used to illustrate his conviction that the moral thought

which he espoused was concerned as much with communal living as with the destiny of the individual.

An examination of the political context in which Shaftesbury wrote is not sufficient in itself, however, to explain the precise relationship between his politics and ideas. This elusive relationship is difficult to trace in his unsystematic writing and it would be wrong to expect to find a coherent methodology underlying his political thought. But there are two aspects of Shaftesbury's thought which have been largely ignored or misunderstood by subsequent commentators. The two aspects are linked and it is possible to use them to reveal a pattern underlying his political and social thought.

The first consideration is whether it is appropriate to refer to Shaftesbury as a 'philosopher'. Throughout this thesis attention has been drawn to the fact that he disliked speculative metaphysics and the academic study of philosophy, preferring to deal with questions of moral conduct. He was not concerned to write an epistemological treatise but to provide guidelines for practical behaviour. He was in this respect a moralist, rather than a metaphysician.

Yet the label of 'moralist' or 'moral philosopher', frequently used by Shaftesbury scholars, is not an answer to the problem. There

is a strong argument for seeing him as a critic rather than as a philosopher - a critic of current trends in philosophy, politics, religion, literature, and the arts, who, in the course of his criticism, put forward original ideas about the structure of society, as well as giving fresh vigour to older ideas. Shaftesbury is a figure in the history of criticism rather than the history of philosophy: it is at this point that his literary and artistic significance comes into proper focus. There is a need to free him from the conventional strait-jacket of academic philosophy and establish him as a social critic, reacting against certain threats to the society he knew. That many of those threats came from contemporary philosophers and that Shaftesbury's ideas were taken up by later philosophers does not guarantee him a position in the philosophical tradition. Comparison should be invited with men like Swift and Bolingbroke rather than Hobbes and Locke.

It was as a critic educating and informing the literate public of his day that Shaftesbury primarily saw himself. His criticism of scholastic philosophy and university learning is coupled with his desire to reach as wide a readership as possible and provide them with a moral and aesthetic education which would increase civic virtue by the refinement of taste and feeling. In literary and artistic terms

this entailed a stress on the creativity of the artist rather than the perception of the reader or viewer.

By adopting this view of his task Shaftesbury freed himself from the need to be systematic and original: he was far more concerned about influence than originality. By writing for his contemporaries rather than later critics he laid himself open to the charge of being facile and partisan. This is one reason why much of his published work does not make easy reading - the accent is on scoring points instead of enunciating timeless truths.

Yet Shaftesbury's criticism was not entirely ad hominem, one man's view of Augustan England. There was a basic principle behind his thought which helps to explain both its political impact and philosophical significance. It is also the second aspect of Shaftesbury's thought to be considered.

Shaftesbury's criticism was based on a cluster of ideas which occupied his mind increasingly towards the end of his life: that of sensus communis.¹ He was convinced that enquiry into the capacity of the senses to provide knowledge could form the basis of a thorough

1. The following discussion owes much to Gadamer's study of sensus communis. See Hans-Georg GADAMER, Truth and Method, London, 1975, pp. 19-31.

critique of social behaviour which did justice to the individual's independence and potential as well as his place in the community. Occupation with the central position of the senses and 'feeling' was conceived both as an attack on the excesses of abstract philosophical speculation, which he saw in Hobbes and to a lesser extent in Locke, and as an assertion of the social and moral element which he considered should be present in philosophy. It also involved a re-assertion of classical ideas: Shaftesbury's pre-occupation with Socrates and the Stoics is significant in this respect. His concerns may be seen as part of a broad movement in Europe reacting against Cartesian metaphysics and the rigidity of religious orthodoxy. Giannone and Voltaire, for example, were part of the same movement, as were Hutcheson and the Scottish philosophers of common sense. What was in essence a reaction against modern philosophical trends did not really survive its assimilation into German thought in the second half of the eighteenth century: Goethe and Lessing were interested primarily in Shaftesbury's ideas about art, while Kant excluded the civic dimension of sensus communis from his moral philosophy. The appropriate political context was not available to German thinkers.

Shaftesbury published Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom

of Wit and Humour in 1709, by which time he had gained experience as an active politician to add to his stock of knowledge. Throughout the essay the natural inclination of the individual towards an ordered society which fulfils his 'affections' is stressed - there is a 'natural affection...towards government and order among mankind.'¹

Towards the end of Sensus Communis Shaftesbury declares:

And thus, after all, the most natural beauty
in the world is honesty and moral truth. For
all beauty is truth.²

Here the cultivation of correct taste and a proper attention to a well-developed moral sense leads inevitably to the attainment of truth and virtue, in the individual as well as in the community. It follows from this that political matters are highly significant: there are strong overtones of the polis in Shaftesbury's conception of society.

At the end of his life Shaftesbury was working on the artistic aspect of sensus communis in greater detail in Second Characters, which has not received sufficient attention as a piece of social and political criticism. By placing the idea of sensus communis at the centre of Shaftesbury's thought some coherence may be given to his disparate writings as well as an internal logic to his career. He was not

1. Characteristics, I, 72-3.

2. Ibid., I, 94.

simply a philosopher who, because of his social status and sense of duty, had perforce to indulge in a limited amount of political activity. Nor was he a politician who wrote philosophy in his spare time. He was a restless critic of his time and society whose life was a gradual discovery of the importance of feeling in moral action, and the subsequent exploration of the consequences of this discovery.

A fuller discussion of the impact of sensus communis in eighteenth century thought would distort the balance of this thesis, which has sought to provide answers to certain specific problems. It is sufficient to say that Shaftesbury, in perceiving its importance - and it has been suggested that the perception was neither immediate nor entirely apparent to him - was part of a wider concern among writers who sought to establish guidelines for moral behaviour on a broader basis than the restrictive tenets of modern philosophy and religious orthodoxy. The movement may be regarded as a precursor of the 'Counter-Enlightenment',¹ although it was not coherent enough to be given a specific label.

A fundamental characteristic of the movement was its stress on

1. Isaiah BERLIN, 'The Counter-Enlightenment', in Against the Current, London, 1979, pp. 1-24.

the continuity between philosophy and politics; and Shaftesbury's politics have been the major concern of this thesis. It has been argued throughout that they cannot be separated from his ideas and that he would have regarded any such distinction as unrealistic. Yet this is precisely what has happened during the years since his death. His politics have been seen as ephemeral and significant only as an item in his biography, while his ideas have been taken out of context and explored with a vigour which risks misinterpreting their function as social criticism.

The reason for such a misconception is that Shaftesbury's vision, sensus communis, is no longer available to us in the form in which he knew it: it is one of the many casualties of intellectual history. It lacked the strength and structure to survive the move towards a more rigorous and scientific understanding of knowledge. It relied too much on intuition at a time when the necessity of empirical verification was stressed. In many respects it was proved naive and unworkable, a relic of the days before industrial society; a quaint survival with interesting literary and artistic implications.

It is inevitable that only those ideas of a thinker should survive which appeal to subsequent generations, but to use only those ideas in a reconstruction of his life and thought is not really adequate. Shaftesbury's concern with politics and culture, or 'form', in its

broadest sense, which was based on his conception of sensus communis, needs to be appreciated in all its ramifications if justice is to be done to the complexity of his thought. His attempt to establish a 'counter-culture' within British society failed because very few people shared his political views or were as concerned as he was about the cultural aspects of political life. It has been the aim of this thesis to sketch a coherent picture of his political allegiances and the way in which these influenced his thought, as well as the way in which he related political action to pre-conceived ideas. Although Shaftesbury's interest in the relationship between politics and culture did not gain wide acceptance in his day, his thoughts on the matter are illustrative of a wider tendency among thinkers of the early Enlightenment to relate their philosophy to politics and culture. As an English representative of this European concern for 'Liberty and Letters' Shaftesbury shows himself to have been an original and interesting commentator on the political and philosophical aspirations of the intelligentsia of early eighteenth century England. That his legacy is now largely lost to us is as much a result of the vicissitudes of intellectual fashion as of the inherent weaknesses in his thought.

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P.R.O. 30/24/46A - notebooks and memoranda.

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II. CAMBRIDGE - CHURCHILL COLLEGE

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MS. Rawl. d 923.

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MSS. Marchand - Marchand Papers

- 2 - includes letters from Samuel Crellius.

- 4 - includes letters from Bayle to Shaftesbury.

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