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THE COMMITTEE OF SAFETY.

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I. Source Material

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The Committee of Safety, the first of a series of conciliar experiments of the Interregnum period, was established July 4, 1642. It is one of the several conciliar experiments of the seventeenth century in England, which offers an unexplored field. To be sure Gardiner and Firth have left little to be said in the narrative history of this period, but the history is far from complete as long as we lack scholarly treatments of such bodies, as this Committee of Safety and its successor the Committee of Both Kingdoms, as well as the later Derby House Committee of Safety and Cromwell's two Councils of State.

The Committee of Safety is of interest to the historian primarily for two reasons: first, because it was the executive body, which together with Parliament, piloted England through the first year and a half of the Civil War; secondly, it is of interest as an institution out of which the later councils were developed. It has furthermore a borrowed interest from the fact that several of the most prominent and able statesmen of the day were among its members.

An exhaustive or entirely satisfactory account of this Committee can never be obtained because of the fact that complete data are wanting. To begin with, the official records of the Committee, if they kept any, are lost, and the Journals of the Lords and Commons, in which the bulk of the facts as to its

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duties and powers are found, give little information as to its inner workings. The diaries, especially that of D'Ewe^{1.}s, taken together with the newspapers of this time will contribute not a little toward filling in the background of the picture.

Unfortunately they were not at the disposal of the writer. So far the Committee has received little more than a mere mention by secondary writers and in most cases is entirely omitted by them.

Despite the gaps, however, there are sufficient source materials from which to put together a description and account of this institution. Indeed it is possible to arrive at a number of definite conclusions. Its antecedents, establishment and personnel can be given with a fair degree of certainty. Likewise the time and place of meeting, the method of procedure and a good deal as to its powers and duties can be determined. A more intimate knowledge of the activities of the Committee will surely clear up many doubtful points as to its relationship with and dependence upon Parliament. More than this it can be shown that, although crude and informal, the Committee of Safety was more than an ordinary committee of Parliament and acted in a few cases at least in other than a purely military capacity. It is also of interest to see when and why it was superseded by the Committee of Both Kingdoms.

1. D'Ewe's Diary, which is only accessible to the frequenter of the Library of the British Museum, is the most detailed account of the doings of the House of Commons from day to day for this period, and in addition it is probably the most careful. Although D'Ewes was not a member of the Committee he would give much on the relationship between Parliament and the Committee.

The Committee of Safety was but the natural outgrowth of the increasing reliance of Parliament on committees in the uncertain and troublous times of 1641 and 1642. The powers and duties, formerly entrusted to a relatively large number of temporary and restricted committees, were gradually centralized in the hands of one or more formal bodies composed of the ablest and most representative men in the two Houses. One should not look upon this Committee as the deliberate creation on the part of Parliament of a novel organization; it was only natural that the Lords and Commons should choose a small group to fill the place made vacant by the King's withdrawal from Westminster. As a matter of fact it was the earlier experience of the Long Parliament with committee work that made possible an effective executive at this critical time.

In so far as the Committee of Safety was acting in an executive capacity it was without precedent. In its relation to the two Houses, in its method of procedure and in the powers entrusted to it, there is considerable tradition to be found in earlier committees. There are three classes of committees that demand ones attention in considering the antecedents of this executive Council; namely, the recess committees, the defense committees and the two close committees. The first group at least served the purpose of accustoming Parliament to delegating

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a large measure of its own powers to relatively small numbers of its own members. On the other hand the powers and purpose of the defense committees and the method of procedure in the secret committees make it necessary to consider them in tracing the establishment of the Committee of Safety.

Prior to the establishment of the Committee of Safety both Houses of Parliament had had considerable experience with defense committees. On the 8th of May, 1641 the Lords appointed a committee to consider the defense of the Kingdom, the state of the ports and the commanders of them. ^{1.} This was a large, ^{2.} but well organized group. Provision was made for the quorum and assistants, as well as for the ^{3.} time and place of meeting. The rumor that the French King was mustering troops on the coast to send to the aid of his sister was ^{4.} undoubtedly the reason for choosing this committee. It continued its activities for some time, but confined itself primarily to examining the condition of port towns and castles and providing for ^{5.} their defense.

During the summer of the same year and while the King was in Scotland the Commons named a committee for putting the Kingdom ^{6.} in a posture of defense. They did this because they had so little faith in their ruler and were afraid he was plotting to suppress them with a force from the North. Its powers were confined largely to drawing up heads for a

1. L. J. IV: 240
2. There were thirty-one original members and several later additions.
3. The fact that such detailed organization is found here is interesting in view of the fact that all this was wanting in the Committee of Safety.
4. Pym reported the rumor of the French invasion on the 5th of May.
5. This Committee was still meeting in October of 1641.
6. C. J. II: 257. Aug. 14, 1641.

conference with the Lords, concerning the fortifying and guarding of the Tower and ports and the choosing of commanders for the trained hands. ^{1.} Later however, it was empowered to examine into the defects of the navy. ^{2.} This Committee proposed among other things "that some authority shall be given some person, in the absence of the King, to put the Kingdom in a posture of defense; and to do all other things necessary for the defense of the Kingdom." ³ This was a relatively large group also, ⁴ but had little organization. Although for a short time it met frequently, it cannot be shown to have accomplished much. ^{5.}

The King's attempt to occupy Hull, together with the assemblage of the Lord Digby's cavaliers at Kingston and the rumor of plots to murder the popular Lords caused the Commons again to take measures for their protection. This time they named a small committee, which was to give suggestions for the defense of the country. ^{6.} Upon the proposal of this Committee it was agreed "that the knights and burgesses of the several counties shall, by 2 o'clock this afternoon, deliver to the Committee the names of such noble persons as they think fit to be appointed Lord Lieutenants of the several counties." ^{7.}

The next defense committee was a joint committee and was organized May 27, 1642 at the suggestion of the Commons. It consisted of twelve Lords ⁸ and twenty-four Commoners ⁹ and was empowered "to consider of all means for continuing and preserving the peace of

1. They seem to have had in mind to settle these matters by joint action of both Houses by means of the heads this committee was to draw up.
2. C. J. II: 257; 264.
3. C. J. II: 258.
4. They named twenty-three to serve on it.
5. The Journal mentions the orders for the Committee to meet but gives no report from it. C. J. II: 259; 260; 264.
6. C. J. II: 379 This had eight members at first but a large number were soon added (Ibid P. 383).
7. Ibid, p 381.
8. L. J. V: 85
9. C. J. II: 589.

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the Kingdom and the preventing of civil war." ^{1.} Later this body
became a standing committee ^{2.} and continued down to the time when the
Committee of Safety was chosen. As a matter of fact the new Committee
retained the old name for some time.

These early defense committees bears not a little resemblance
to the later executive Committee in so far as their powers for prov-
iding for the defense of Parliament and England are concerned. But,
on the other hand, they were much larger bodies, appointed as a
result of some immediate and impending danger, and for that reason
temporary and short-lived. They did little more than make investi-
gations and report their results or suggestions to the Houses.

Another group of committees which bear a resemblance to
this Executive is that comprised of various recess committees. In
the autumn of 1641 the Lords and Commons agreed to an adjournment which
should continue from the 9th of September to the 20th of October. ^{3.}
^{4.} A committee consisting of forty-seven commoners and sixteen lords was
left to transact such business as their instructions authorized. The
quorum as well as the time and place of meetings were determined ^{5.}
before Parliament rose. The House of Lords authorized their members
"to receive and open letters which shall (in time of the recess) come
from the committees of both Houses, out of Scotland, and return
answers according to instructions given to the Committees already; and
to have power to recall the said Committees in Scotland when they

1. Ibid. At first it was only empowered to consider some fit means for
the defense of the Kingdom. The powers were enlarged immediately
after Committees were appointed. Ibid p 619. June 11, 1642.
(C.J. II: 589)

2. C. J. II: 286

3. Ibid p. 288

4. L. J. IV: 395

5. A quorum of 3 was required by the House of Lords and one of 6 by the
Commons- to meet every Tuesday and Saturday and oftener if necessary.

shall think fit; and to assist about disbanding the army, and removing the magazines at Barwicke and Castile, and sending down monies to the army, if need be: and that these Lords committees are to make report of the same to this House at the next meeting."^{1.} But the House of Commons saw fit to give their Committee wider powers. They were empowered to go on in the proceedings against such delinquents as had been voted upon or complained against in the House; in case of tumults or riots they were authorized to arouse the sheriffs and Justices of the Peace to a sense of their duty and to report all failures in obedience to the House; likewise they were to provide for the King's revenue and consider his accounts.^{2.} Clarendon says of this Committee, after enumerating the major part of its duties: "And many other extravagant particulars,, which neither of the Houses had to do with, but which served to magnify the authority of that Committee and to draw respect and reverence to them from all sorts of men."^{3.}

Immediately after Charles' attempt to arrest the five members Parliament adjourned again. Feeling that it was no longer safe to continue its sessions at Westminster, the lower House appointed a committee of twenty-five to meet at the Guild Hall with the provision that any other members who came might have a voice in the proceedings.^{4.} The committees for Irish Affairs in both Houses were ordered to meet also;^{5.} but other than this the Lords had no representatives in the City. The Committee of the Commons was to

1. L. J. IV: 394.

2. C. J. II: 288

3. Clarendon p 125.

4. C. J. II: 369

5. L. J. IV: 503. Lords did not say their Committee must meet in the City but as a matter of fact it did meet there.

"consider and resolve of all things that may concern the good and safety of the city and Kingdom; and particularly, how our privileges may be vindicated and our persons secured: and to consider the affairs and relief of Ireland." ^{1.}

Less than two weeks later the Commons sent word to the House of Lords, that they were about to adjourn for a few days and had therefore empowered a committee to sit in the City at Grocers' Hall "to consider of the safety of the Kingdom and of maintaining the privileges of Parliament, and a large power to proceed in the affairs of Ireland." The same group which had met at Guild Hall during the previous recess was to constitute the new body and again all who came were to have voices. More than this they were "to have power to consider, resolve, declare, publish, act and put in execution, all things that may concern the good and safety of the King, the Kingdom, Parliament and the members thereof." ^{2.} This time the Lords appointed a committee to sit with that of the Lower House. ^{3.}

This joint committee in the City outlived the few days for which it was first appointed, and on February 2nd the Commons resolved, "that the Committee formerly appointed to meet at Grocers' Hall to meet at Merchant Taylors' Hall the next day with the same powers as formerly." ^{4.} It was again revived a month later at the same place. ^{5.} To both Buchard and Clarendon it

1. C. J. II: 368
2. C. J. II: 385
3. L. J. IV: 520
4. C. J. II: 410
5. Ibid, p 465

appeared that these committees at London greatly facilitated the work of Parliament. Whether or not they did this, they at least show the extensive use Parliament was making of committees and the confidence it had in such a method of procedure.

1.

The Close Committee of Seven probably bears the closest resemblance to the Committee of Safety. The personnel, the size of the Committee, the manner of procedure, as well as the matters dealt with illustrate the likenesses between the two. This joint committee was chosen May 5th 1641 for the purpose of examining into the secret practises to discontent the army. There was a rumor that some of the members of the upper House, as well as some at Court, were involved in a plot to bring the army down to overawe Parliament. Besides this there was the great fear that the French were coming to the aid of the Queen and that the Catholics were plotting against them.

2.

Holles, Pym, Hampden, Strode, Piennes,
Clotworthy and Stapleton were chosen from the lower House,^{3.} and the Earls of Bath, Essex, March and Warwick, Lords Wharton, Pagett, Kymbolton, Howard de Charlton, Howard de Esteriche and Viscount Saye and Sele from the upper House.^{4.}

The members from the Commons were to present evidence and persons to be examined by those of the Lords' Committee. Each member was sworn to secrecy and the procedure was the same as that in the Close Committee in the Strafford case.^{5.}

1. The Close Committee of Six enlarged by the addition of Stapylton to the Committee of Seven. It is spoken of as Close Committee of Seven in the Journals. C.J. II: 138, May 7, 1641. This committee is also spoken of as the secret committee. (Compare Old Parl, Hist. II: 818 with C. J. II: 171.)
2. Gardiner I: 356; Firth's House of Lords, p 88.
3. C. J. II: 135; 138. Gardiner is wrong when he says the names of this committee are not given in the Journals. (Vol. IX:358 Note 3) They named Committee appointed that day for preparing heads for a message (C. J. II: 135) Five of these from the Commons' Committee served on the Committee of Safety and six from those of the Lords' Committee. 5. L. J. IV: 235.
4. L. J. IV: 235

They confined themselves almost exclusively to investigating and thwarting plots. They examined two of the Queen's favorites, the Count de Rossette and Robert Phillipe;^{1.} they sent several of their number down to look into the conditions in the army.^{2.} Further than³ this they considered the advisability of disbanding the army and drew up propositions for giving power "to command and compel obedience for the necessary defense of the Kingdom."^{4.}

This description of these early committees will serve to show, to some extent at least, that the Committee of Safety was not so much a new and novel institution created to meet the peculiar conditions, as it was an old and tried plan of organization utilized to meet new needs. Parliament's extensive experience with and confidence in such committees facilitated its establishment. The differences between the first executive Council of the Interregnum and its antecedent committees are largely ones of size, duration and extent of powers.

On July 4, 1642 the suggestion for the Committee of Safety came from the House of Commons. It proposed that a committee of both Houses be appointed "to take into consideration whatever may concern the safety of the Kingdom, the defense of Parliament and the preservation of the peace of the Kingdom and opposing any force that may be raised against the Parliament."^{5.} The Lords readily agreed to this proposal and a committee of fifteen members, five from the upper House and ten from the lower House, was chosen.

1. C. J. II: 185. Gardiner says, "the secret committee was sitting daily to extract evidence of the army plot from the King's familiar attendants and even from the ladies of the Queen's bed chamber." (IX: 374).

2. C. J. II: 135 .

3. Ibid, p 184

4. Ibid, 140

5. L. J. V: 178

The ease and quickness with which this important Executive was established is at least worthy of notice. The Houses had no conference over the matter. None of the ordinary details connected with organizing Committees were acted upon, and each House chose its members independently of the other. The fact that the whole matter was decided upon the same day that it was suggested seems unusual. War was fast approaching and there was sore need of some sort of government to direct the activities of Parliament. And yet there was, no urgent need of its deciding the matter that day.^{2.} It may be that it hardly realized how powerful a Committee it was setting up. Its powers read little differently from those of the earlier defense committees. And the members of Parliament could hardly know that differences would not be quietly adjusted and that the need for such a body would not be for a short time.

This Committee is known under several names. The Journals speak of it as the 'Committee for the Safety and Defense of the Kingdom', the 'Committee of Defense of the Kingdom', or just the 'Committee of Safety.' By a few writers it is alluded to as the Committee of Public Safety,³ but this is unusual. It was most commonly spoken of as the 'Close Committee', especially by the Royalists.^{4.} It was so called because of the fact that its sessions were not open to any but its members. This was unusual and caused not a little comment on the part of the Royalists. As far as can

1. The Guild Hall Committee was agreed upon only after a conference. The earliest defense Committee had much more organization than this Committee. The quorum was determined upon; assistants were appointed, etc.
 2. Matters had been fast culminating to a crisis but there was no great danger at that time. The King had attempted to seize the fleet on the second, but was unsuccessful. This was probably only one of the many reasons for taking action just then. Gardiner, however, gives this as the cause. (XL 209) Van Ranke- says it was modeled after the Defense Committee the Common Council of London had appointed, but fails to give his authority for this statement. (Van Ranke- II: 359).
 3. Warburton I: 289; Forster, p 258.
 4. Journals do call it by this name in one or two instances-C. J III:7
- L. J. VI: 278. It was the King's favorite name for it.

be learned an oath of secrecy like that in the earlier 'Close Committee' and in the later Committee of Both Kingdoms was not required. The fact that outsiders were barred from attending the meetings probably made it amount to about the same thing. On September 8th, 1642 the Commons asked the Lords that the members of the Committee of Safety forbear attending the meeting of the Committee, as they had agreed to do in their own House. This was readily agreed to and from that time on the sessions of the Executive were 'closed'.^{1.}

This Committee which very soon became important and influential in carrying on the war and directing the affairs of the Kingdom in the absence of Charles I, was constituted without officers or even a chairman. More than this at first no regular time or place of meeting was agreed upon. All this was left to be regulated from time to time by the Committee itself or more often by Parliament.

As a matter of fact the Committee of Safety usually met in the Star Chamber and at all times at Westminster within easy communication with Parliament.^{2.} The time of its meeting was changed on several occasions to accommodate the session of Parliament and in accordance with the business. At the time when the Committee was created it had been solely entrusted with choosing its own time of meeting.^{3.} In less than two months the Commons voted that their Committee should meet at 8 O'clock every morning^{4.}

1. C. J. II: 758; L. J. V: 343.

2. It also met at Derby House and White Hall.

3. That the Committee usually met within calling distance of Parliament is known from the fact that instances are found in which the sergeant of the House of Commons was sent to summon its members to the meeting of the House. (C. J. II: 832; 848.)

4. "To meet when and where they please." (L. J. V: 178)

and attend the House at 10 O'clock.^{1.} It was soon enough found that this gave the Executive too little time to transact all its business, and on December 17, 1642 the Lords agreed to adjourn their House in the morning, that the Committee might meet then.^{2.} This was so unsatisfactory that it soon began holding its sessions in the afternoon and Parliament again resumed its morning meetings.^{3.} In the following November, however, it was determined to give over three days a week to the Committee.^{4.} In addition to these regular meetings special meetings were called whenever there was urgent need. From these details perhaps we get some idea at least as to the relative importance of the Executive and Parliament. A very large amount of business must have been turned over to the Committee when practically half the time was allowed for its meetings.

The Lords chose the Earls of Northumberland, Essex, Pembroke, and Holland and Viscount Saye & Sele to serve on their part of the Committee.^{5.} These men were greatly esteemed by the popular party because they had been in high favor with the King and were now equally conspicuous for their unpopularity at Court. They were looked upon as powerful accessions to the cause. Charles I had been reluctant to see them join the opposition and had attempted to win them back by conferring offices upon them. Holland had been made General of the Army; Saye, Master of the Court of Wards; and Essex, Lord Chamberlain.

1. C. J. II: 784

2. L. J. V: 497

3. Ibid p 661; C. J. III: 14

4. C. J. III: 309; L. J. VI: 304. In April of 1643 the Commons voted to adjourn every other day but the motion was lost. (C.J. III:48)

5. "The five lords formerly appointed to choose the officers for the House shall be this Committee:" (L. J. V: 178)

Earl of Northumberland, Percy Algernon, (1602-68) entered Parliament in 1624, was summoned to House of Lords in 1627 and succeeded his father five years later." He had an independent spirit and no superstitious veneration for royalty." He served on the Committee of Both Kingdoms. His zeal for peace caused him to be

Viscount Saye and Sele was the Puritan leader in the House of Lords and at all times acted in co-operation with the more radical members of the lower House. Probably the most important of these peers was Northumberland. He had been made a Knight of the Garter in 1635, had held the office of Lord High Admiral since 1638, and had been Lord General in the first war against the Scots. With the opening of the Long Parliament he gradually grew closer to the popular party and became so far converted to their cause that Charles revoked his Commission in June of 1642. With great zeal he launched into the Revolution but the movement soon became too radical to accord with his views and together with Holland and Pembroke he headed the peace party. Essex, who was the most popular peer at this time, became Lord General of the Parliamentary forces. He, too, entered heart and soul into the contest against the King. He, too, however, became gradually less ardent and more eager for accomodation and peace. Such were the men chosen from the Lords to manage the war and lead the government at Westminster.

For their part of the Committee, the Commons chose Holles, Sir Philip Stapleton, Marten, Sir John Meyrick, Nathaniel Fiennes, Hampden, Pierrepoint, Glyn, Pym and Sir William Waller.¹ They all belonged to the opposition and had served more or less on earlier committees. More than this they were all prominent in the House and for quite different reasons. Waller and Meyrick had gained a reputation because of their military exploits. Both were

suspected by the popular party.

Earl of Essex, Robert Devereux, (1591-1646) had had military training abroad and in England also. He worked with opposition from the beginning of the Long Parliament. Charles tried to win him over by making him a privy councillor in Feb. 1641 and other personal favors.

Earl of Pembroke, Philip Herbert, (1584-1650) had been influenced by personal pique and flattery to enlist on the side of the opposition, when the King had dismissed him from the office of Chamberlain in 1641. It is probable that he was carried farther by the opposition than he at first intended. Herbert was not a man of superior ability and served the opposition in a half heated manner during the time that he remained on their side.

professional soldiers, who had served with credit on the continent. Meyrick, moreover, enjoyed the friendship and patronage of Essex. Both served continuously in the Parliamentary army and for that reason rarely attended the Committee of Safety.² Likewise Holles and Stapleton took active parts in the military operations, but they had exerted and continued to exert a greater influence over affairs at Westminster than

Earl of Holland, Henry Rich, (1590-1649) held many posts of honor. He was Lord of the Bedchamber and was chosen General of the Horse in 1639. He was a typical courtier who had enrolled under the banner of Pym when he fell from grace at Court. He deserted to side of King in 1643.

Viscount Saye and Sele, William Fiennes, (1582-1662) was a puritan of the most pronounced cast and later became a leader of the Independent party. He was also a member of the Committee of Both Kingdoms. He played a prominent role in the field and in the councils of Parliament.

1. C. J. II: 651 (On previous page)

2. Sir John Meyrick (d. 1659) had served in Flanders, the United Provinces and Spain. He was elected to the Short Parliament on his return and reelected to the Long Parliament. At the outbreak of the war he took charge of the companies and later became adjutant general in Essex's Army and President of the Council of War. He remained with Essex to the end.

Sir William Waller (1597?-1668), devoted his early years to the study of the art of war and served in the armies of the German princes. He was elected to Long Parliament from Andover. At the outbreak of the war he became a colonel in Essex's army and served continuously in the field. Waller was a zealous puritan and later became an independent.

1. either Waller or Meyrick. Nathaniel Fiennes became a colonel in Essex's
2. army. Glyn was an eminent lawyer who figured more prominently a
3. little later. Pierrepoint remained at Westminster and soon became
4. associated with the leaders of the peace part. Henry Marten, one of
the most extreme members of the popular party found in the House of
Commons the chief theatre of his exploits, although he undertook to

1. Denzil Holles, (1599-1680), the younger brother of the Earl of Clare, was a man of "great courage and as great pride." He remained "faithful and firm to his side and never changed through the whole course of his life." (Burnet, "Our Own Times" I: 177) He was a member of the Parliament of 1624 and 1628, and from the beginning associated himself with the opponents of Buckingham. Wentworth, his brother-in-law and Eliot, his friend, influenced his political course. He was arrested in 1629, but escaped and remained away for seven or eight years. He served in the Parliament of April and November 1640. His sufferings and abilities gave him a leading place among the opposition. He raised a regiment of foot and served under Earl of Bedford. He was a presbyterian and member of the peace party.

Sir Philip Stapleton (1603-47) was a member of Long Parliament from Borough bridge. He was commander of Essex's life-guard at the opening of the war. He is generally coupled with Denzil Holles as a leader of the English Presbyterians. Likewise he was a bosom friend of Essex and as such "enjoyed considerable influence in the House of Commons, where he presented the opinion of Essex on peace and war."

2. Nathaniel Fiennes (1608-1619) was the second son of Lord Saye. Served in both Parliaments of 1640 and took an active part in opposition to the Church. Served as Colonel under Essex until he was obliged to evacuate Bristol in 1643. Then he was condemned to die but was pardoned and left England.

3. Sir John Glyn (1603-66) was elected to the Long Parliament from Westminster. He was appointed recorder of the City of London in May of 1643. He was a presbyterian views and occupied a middle place between Maynard and Holles (Sanford p. 412)

4. William Pierrepoint (1607?-1678) served in the Long Parliament from Great Wenlock. He was a wise counsellor and excellent speaker. Pierrepoint was sent to treat with Charles in Nov. of 1642 and again in Jan. 1643. He objected to taking the covenant and asked to go beyond the seas the 8th of November, 1643.

1.
raise a regiment of horse and served in the field for a short time.

By far the most distinguished men on the Committee of Safety
were Pym and Hampden. They would naturally have shared the leadership
had not the latter's zeal forced him to enter the ranks of the army as
soon as hostilities broke out. Hampden's influence was, however, still
felt in the Committee. Says Forster, "he was almost daily on the road

1. Henry Marten (1602-80) entered Parliament in 1640. He gave liberally to the Parliamentary cause and undertook to raise a regiment. He was entrusted with the government of Reading but evacuated it in haste when the King came to Oxford. He was imprisoned in Aug. of 1643 and expelled from the House. D'ewes describes him as one who used to snarl at everybody. Carlyle, however, characterizes him as "a right hard-headed, stout-hearted little man, full of sharp fire and cheerful light; sworn foe of Cant in all its figures; an indomitable little Roman if no better." (Cromwell's Letters and Speeches iii: 194)

2. John Hampden (1594-1643) entered Parliament in 1621. He was not a frequent speaker but was made a member of nearly every important Committee. He raised a regiment of foot and served under Essex until he was killed in June of 1643 at Chalgrove field.

3. John Pym (1584-1643) served on the last Parliament of James' and all of Charles'. After Eliot's death he was universally assigned to the leadership of the popular cause. Pym died December 8th, 1643. Clarendon says he had "the greatest influence in the House of any man and was the most popular man and the ablest to do hurt that had ever been in the English Parliament."

between the advanced posts of the army and London, and was frequently able to discharge, in the same day his double duties in the army and with Pym in the public Committee."¹

Pym, on the other hand, exerted all his energy and influence in Parliament, and was leader both in the House and in the Committee of Safety. His good judgment and exceptional popularity, combined with a perfect talent for arranging and conducting business, made him most competent to fill this place. With respect to his position at this time Forster remarks, "To Pym was entrusted the momentous duties of watching over and conducting the affairs of Parliament, and the executive while the majority of his friends were absent in the war." Later on in speaking of the Committee he says, "all its most arduous duties fell upon Pym and to their performance, with his old and unwearied energy, he entirely devoted what was left of his great and useful life." Pym is said to have spent daily from three o'clock in the morning till midnight in the service of the Commonwealth.² He was everywhere; now in the field consulting with Hampden, now in the tent of Essex strengthening his falling purpose; again at Westminster³ and then among the London citizens.

The membership of the Committee of Safety did not remain fixed but was irregularly increased from time to time. That these additions were made that the business entrusted to it might be transacted by a large and more representative group is not probable. It is more likely that it was done that the number might be kept up

1. Forster p 258. It was particularly advantageous to the members of the Committee that Hampden could thus join their discussions; for it enabled them to keep in close touch with the movements of Essex and his army.

2. Forster p 223

3. Ibid, p 223

to that required for a quorum and that certain policies might be carried out. As has been shown many of the Committeemen among the original members accepted commissions in the army. Likewise several of the later members went into the field. This reduced the number greatly, and more than this their were vacancies in the Lord's Committee caused by desertions to the King's camp. Some of the appointments from the upper House may be explained as concessions to keep members from going over to the King's side; and it is equally probable that the tendency in the House of Commons was to add men opposed to a peace policy.

The exact method by which new members were chosen is not known. Both Houses added to their committees and oftentimes without the consent of the other House.^{1.} Whether the Committee had the power of making nominations for candidates is another unsettled question. It is altogether probably that it exerted a considerable influence over this matter. Each member of the Committee of Safety at least would have had a vote on the matter and a chance to speak on the floor.

One attempt was made to reduce the membership of the Committee and this came from the House of Commons. On February 23, 1642 they voted to have the Committee of Safety reduced to its original number and to the same persons.^{2.} The Lords vetoed this measure, maintaining that the Committee either should be continued as it was, or if it was of no use, that it should be dissolved.³ This, had they consented to it, would have left the weightiest affairs of England in

1. The members added between July 18, 1642 and October of that same year were not voted upon by both Houses. The procedure was a mere matter of form, for neither House ever voted down a candidate from the other House. The wording of the orders in the Journals would tend to prove this also.

2. C. J. II: 976. The Commons passed the measure by a vote of fifty to thirty-nine.

3. L. J. V: 619 Godwin is in error when he says the committee was reduced to its original number (I: 20)

in the hands of a very small body indeed.

At the time the Committee of Safety was dissolved twenty-five lords in all had been called to serve on it. This seems like a very large number, especially when taken together with the fact that only thirty odd peers remained at Westminster.¹ It is not probable that they swelled the numbers in the Committee, however. Otherwise the Lords would

1. Masson estimated the number as 32 (II: 430-1) and Firth as rather more than thirty (p 115. House of Lords)

not have been obliged to demand that five act on some especially important occasion as they did in one or two instances. ^{1.}

Four days after the Committee was appointed the Lords North and Robartes ² were made members and not long afterwards Lord Wharton. North ³ remained in the House, but Robartes became a colonel under Essex. Lord Wharton, too, served for a short time in the army but soon returned to

1. The few signatures from the Committee show that the attendance from the upper House was very small. Sometimes they were represented by only one. Then, too, from the summer of 1643 on the average attendance in the House of Lords was only nine or ten.

2. Lord North was not a very active member and lived chiefly in the country among his books.

3. Lord Robartes was appointed Lord Lieutenant for Cornwall later became Colonel of a regiment. In December of 1642 he was named General of the Western Parts. (L. J. V: 475. C. J. II: 876). Served on the Committee of Both Kingdoms.

1
Westminster. When it came time for Essex and the other officers of the army to leave for camp the Lords added nine more to their branch of the Executive. 2. Of these only four were to remain at Westminster and the rest to follow the Lord General. Later the Earls of Warwick, Lincoln and Stanford and several others were added.

1. Lord Wharton was added to the Committee August 15, 1642. (L.J.V: 289) He supported the popular leaders in the House of Commons. He, as well as Robartes, served on the Committee of Both Kingdoms.

2. L. J. 5: 343. The Earl of Salisbury had followed the King to York and had signed the declaration June 15, 1642. In a very few days he returned to Westminster and was again admitted to Parliament. He took no part in the war.

Earl of Bolingbroke^{hook}, Oliver St. John, (1580-1646) was one of the leading opposition peers. (Firth p.115). He was made Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire in February of 1642-3.

Earl of Clare, John Holles, (1595-1666) "was very often of both parties and never advantaged either." He, too, followed the King to York and then returned. When the Peace propositions were rejected in August of 1643 he withdrew to Oxford.

Earl of Peterborough, Henry Mordaunt, served for a short time in the army and then in April 1643 deserted to the King's side.

Lord Grey of Wark (d 1674) timidly supported Parliament in the civil war. In Dec. of 1642 he was made Commander-in-chief of the Eastern Counties. He remained in the field until July when he was imprisoned for refusing to serve as a commissioner to Scotland.

Lord Howard of Escrich raised a troop of horse. Firth ranks him as one of the new recruits of the popular party.

Lord Willoughby of Parham was also looked upon as a new recruit of the party and had the forces in Lincolnshire.

Lord Neunham, who became Earl of Denbigh in April 1643 had raised a troop of Horse. He was given Lord Brooke's place after the death of the latter.

Lord Brooke was ardent in the popular cause. With the exception of Lord Saye and Sele there was no peer more resolutely opposed to Charles' arbitrary policy. He took an active part in war and was killed on the battle field in April of 1643.

Earl of Bedford became a member of the Committee in July 1642. He was general of the Horse^{and} went over to the King in the autumn of 1643. (L. J. V: 219).

Earl Manchester also served on this executive Committee but was in the field a large part of the time.

Earl of Warwick, Robert Rich, (1587-1658) was one of the most active champions of the Parliamentary cause, and served both on sea and land. (L. J. V: 406)

Earl of Exeter and Lord Bruce became members of the Committee in Nov. of 1642. Neither were prominent.

As a result of the many desertions in the fall of 1643 the Earls of Lincoln and Stamford were made members of the Committee (Sept. 22, 1643 L. J. VI: 229).

Earl of Kent, the last to be added, was not conspicuous and was probably honored with a place on the Executive because he had just succeeded his father. (L. J. VI: 342)

The Commons added only twelve in all to their part of this executive Council. Fewer of their members were employed in the Parliamentary army and none withdrew to Oxford; in consequence it was unnecessary for them to make as many appointments as the Lords had made.¹ Besides they seemed to wish to keep the membership small, a fact which was shown by their attempt to reduce it to the old number. Among the more prominent of the later members were Anthony Nicolls, Secretary of the House;² the younger Vane, who held the office of Treasurer of the Navy,³ Sir Gilbert Girard, Treasurer of the Army,⁴ the Elder Vane, who had been so high in Charles' favor;⁵ and St. John, the Solicitor General.⁶

The members of the Committee of Safety retained their seats in Parliament and sat on other committees. They were not only allowed to attend the sessions of Parliament but were expected to do so. The only difference between this committee and the other committees of the two Houses was one of importance and procedure, As has been explained the Executive did not hold open sessions. In some respects at least the Committee enjoyed privileges not unlike a modern cabinet. It could defend its policies on the floor of the House as well as vote on all measures. It could oppose with equal effectiveness any attempt to alter or diminish its own powers and privileges.

The matter of determining the quorum in this Council was another thing that was not acted upon until it came time for Essex

1. It was customary for the lower House to choose twice as many as the upper House did. There had been 25 on the Lord's Committee and 24 on the Commons when it gave way to the Committee of Both Kingdoms. Of course there were never that many at any one time.
2. Anthony Nicolls (1611-59) was the nephew of John Pym and acted for the most part with Denzil Holles and the presbyterian members. He took part in the Battle of Stamford in 1643. Nicolls was called to serve on the Committee July 16, 1642 (C. J. II: 675.)
3. Sir Harry Vane, the younger, became a member of the Committee just a month from the time he became Treasurer of the Navy, Sept. 8, 1642 (C. J. II: 758.) He was one of the more radical of the popular party and after the death of Pym shared with St. John the leadership in the House.

to enter the field. Then the Lords agreed that three should be
a sufficient number to issue warrants for military expenditures. ^{7.}
This did not settle the matter, however. The next day both Houses
took up the question and agreed that the number should be enlarged
to five. ⁸ This remained the rule throughout the existence of the
Committee, but on one or two occasions the Lords required five of
their members to transact business.

4. Sir Gilbert Gerard was appointed to the Committee two days after
he became Treasurer of the Army, Aug. 9, 1642 (C. J. II: 712)
5. Sir Harry Vane, had been comptroller of the King's household,
Treasurer of the same, a member of the Privy Council and was made
Secretary of State in 1640. The King dismissed him from this office
in 1641 and he immediately joined the opposition. Vane became a
member of the Committee September 13, 1642. (C.J. II: 764.)

6. St. John was not made a member of the Committee until July 20,
1643. (C. J. III: 175) Besides these Samuel Vassal, an alderman
and merchant of the City of London (Sept. 12, 1642 C.J. II: 763),
Mr. Grimston and Sir Thomas Barrington (Sept. 8, 1642 C.J. II; 758),
Sir. Jo. Evelyn (Oct. 28, 1642 C. J. II: 825), Sir Arthur Haslerig
and Sir Peter Wentworth (C.J. III: 301 Nov. 3, 1643) and Zouch Tate
(Dec. 12, 1643 C. J. III: 339) were added,

7. L. J. V: 340 (September 9, 1642.)

8. L. J. 5: 340

A survey of the powers given the Executive Council upon its establishment lead one to conclude that it could have proceeded to almost any lengths without exceeding its jurisdiction. The clause enabling them "to take into consideration whatever may concern the safety of the Kingdom, the defense of the Parliament, the preservation of the peace of the kingdom, and opposing any force which might be raised against the Parliament" was probably as much in the nature of a statement of the purpose for which the Committee was established as it was an enumeration of powers. The word 'consideration' must have had significance.

It is quite likely that it was intended that the final action on all matters that it discussed should be left to Parliament.

Whatever may have been the intention of the two Houses of Parliament or whatever may have been the significance of the wording, as a matter of fact Parliament began defining and enumerating the powers of this Committee almost immediately after it was established. There were some powers which it exercised, however, which were never expressly given to it. Some matters were entrusted permanently to the Committee; it exercised other only temporarily and at the will of Parliament and shared still others with the two Houses and the Lord General.

The Committee of Safety was given supreme control over the army and the direction of the war; and in this connection it exercised considerable influence over financial matters. Likewise it had a limited control over nominations and appointments. In the matter of legislation it had no other part than that of suggesting measures for the Parliament to take action upon. It was entrusted with extensive ^{ad} ministrative duties, also. More than this it issued warrants for searching houses,¹ seizing horses² and the like, administered oaths,³ and issued passes and licenses for various⁴ purposes.

In October of 1642 the Commons empowered their Safety Committee to prepare for an adjournment of their House. It was to decide what business should be transacted before the time; what powers and instructions would be necessary for it to have at such a time, as well as what committees should stand.⁵ The Lords adjourned on one occasion and left their Committee to open all letters directed to the Speaker, to send for persons and to consider anything for the safety of the kingdom.⁶

On the other hand the positive restrictions placed on the Committee of Safety were very few. On November 8, 1642 they were forbidden to discharge or release any more persons until the House of Commons had first been acquainted with the fact.⁷ The only other limitation of which the Journals give any evidence is one depriving them of the right to issue warrants for any one to go out of the

1. L. J. V:327 The Committee shared this power with Parliament and the Lord General.

2. C. J. II: 917. " " " " with the Lord General.

Likewise it issued warrants for conveying gunpowder and for seizing recusants' arms (C. J. II: 730.)

3. L. J. V: 392. This applies only to the Lord's Committee.

4. The Committee issued licenses to address the King (Old Parl.Hist. XII: 81); issued passes for persons going from one camp to another (Hist. Mss. Com. 5th Rep. p 63).

5. C. J. II: 703.

6. L. J. V: 269

7. C. J. II: 839.

kingdom who was not employed by them . On one or two occasions
Parliament recommitted persons released by the Committee, and
once stayed a vessel licensed by it to sail.

The military duties of the Committee were many and varied.
After the departure of Essex it was given control over the raising
and disposing of troops, as well as supplying them with all the

1. C. J. II: 965

2. C. J. II: 867; L. J. VI: 35

3. Whiteacres Diary ll verse. The books of the Committee were
examined on two occasions but seemingly merely to obtain some
needed information and not as a means of questioning the acts
of the group. (C. J. III:53; L. J. V: 515.)

4.

the necessities for carrying on a war and sustaining themselves.^{1.} Practically the whole matter of fortifying castles and putting the localities in a state of defense was placed in its hands. The counties and committees of war were ordered to obey the instructions sent to them by the Committee, as well as those sent by Parliament.^{2.} Persons seized in the army were sent up to Westminster to be examined either by the Executive or by one of the Houses of Parliament.^{3.} Likewise prisoners of war came under the control of this group in a majority of cases.^{4.} Furthermore the Committee carried on a continuous correspondence with the officers and committees in the army, and directed without limitation the movements of the armies. On one occasion Essex objected to carrying out the orders of the Executive and appealed to Parliament to excuse him from the same. The correspondence between the Lord General and the Committee was carefully examined and both Houses agreed that they approved of the counsel given by the Committee of Safety. More than this they instructed the General to comply with these orders.^{6.}

Upon several occasions the Committee of Safety was called upon to make investigation and to report the results to Parliament. In August of 1642 it reported the number of troops that had been raised and where they had been sent.⁷ At another time it made a report as to the state and condition of the

1. L. J. V: 346; C. J. II: 800; Ibid p 807.

2. L. J. V: 293; 480

3. L. J. V: 331

4. "No man shall make a motion for the release of any prisoner at Hull until the Committee of Safety know of it." (C.J. II: 678) Likewise it was left to the Committee to decide which prisoners in the Tower were to have restraint placed on them and which not.) (C. J. II: 764; L. J. V: 351.)

5. The Commons order their speaker to send all the letters he receives from Hull to the Committee. (C.J.II: 665), and ordered them to receive and answer all letter from Earl of Warwick and Rotham (Ibid p 678)

6. Old Parl. Hist. XII: 465; Hist. MSS Comm. 5th Rep. p 117; C.J III 346; L.J. VI: 346 7. C. J. II: 720.

Kingdom. ^{1.} Likewise it drew up reports as to the condition of the
army and its financial needs, ^{2.} as well as lists of prisoners. ^{3.}

Parliament permitted the Committee of Safety to exercise a considerable power over financial matters. Large sums of money were turned over to it for carrying on the war. As high as 100,000 £ was entrusted to it at one time. ^{4.} After the Lord General left

1. Ibid p 820

2. L. J. V: 710

3. Hist. M S S Comm. 5th Rep. p 80.

4. L. J. V: 194 7/9/1642- 500 £
Ibid; C. J. II: 663 7/9/1642 3000 £
C. J. II: 664 7/11/1642 200 £
Hist. M S S Comm. 5th rep. p 37 7/11/1642 10,000 £
L. J. V: 251 8/1/1642 100,000 £
Hist. M S S Comm. 5th rep. p 41 20,000 £
This is not a complete but rather an illustrative list.

Westminster all money payments for military purposes, whether for paying officers and soldiers or for supplies and ammunition, were made upon warrant from this Committee. ^{1.} Such writs usually had the further sanction of a formal order from Parliament. ^{2.}

On March 8, 1642-3 a committee of five, of which two were members of the Committee of Safety, was chosen to peruse all these

1. L. J. V: 846

Sept. 10, 1642

2. This statement is concluded from an investigation of a large number of orders issued by the two Houses.

warrants. Whether or not this was in the nature of a check on
the Committee is not explained.^{1.}

The nominating power of the Committee of Safety is more
difficult of solution. It is another one of those matters con-
cerning which there seems to have been no hard and fast ruling.
It is quite certain, however, that the committee did not exercise
exclusive control over the matter, but rather shared it with
both Parliament and the Lord General. Upon several occasions the
executive Council appointed commanders-in-chief,² Lord and Deputy-
lieutenants,³ Captains and their lieutenants⁴ and field officers,⁵
as well as officers of the tower and ordinance.⁶ In a particular⁷
instance they even chose an admiral and vice-admiral to command
ships which were to be sent to guard the coast of Ireland.^{8.}

The evidence of cases in which the committee exercised a
nominating power are fewer. This may be due to the fact that
the Journals of the Lords and Commons have failed to note all the
cases in which nominations were made by the Executive.⁹ When
Sir William Waller was made general of the army in the West it
was upon the nomination of the Committee.¹⁰ Likewise Walter
Strickland, the agent for Parliament to the Netherlands had been
nominated by it.¹¹ Moreover it was empowered to nominate chief
officers¹² and Committees for the City of London,¹³ on one or two
occasions. It is interesting to note that on October 20, 1642

~~the Lords and Commons agreed that Earl of Pembroke should be made~~

1. C.J. II: 994. There is no evidence that this committee which was
chosen by the Commons became very influential.
2. Old Parl. Hist. XI: 450; C. J. III: 52 -- 3. C.J. II: 724
4. Cal. St. P Don. 1641-3 p 395; C. J. II: 790; L.J.V: 381.
5. C. J. III: 172 6. C. J. II: 730 7. Ibid
8. Ibid p 733. The Committee probably made many more appointments
but these are the only ones of which we have any evidence.
9. The Journals are so condensed and abbreviated that many interest-
ing details are lost. 10. Sanford p 576 11. Goodwin I:207;
(C. J. for Aug. 20, 1642.)
12. C. J. II: 660
13. Ibid III: 152; Ibid II: 839.

Commander of the West. They then turned the matter over to the consideration of the Committee of Safety where it appears to have been lost.^{1.}

The Committee of Safety drafted some of the legislative acts passed at this time, but how many it is difficult to say without the diaries of the time. The Royalists, and more especially the King, complained bitterly against this practise on the ground that it was contrary to the rules of both Houses. The Committee was, by all means, in the best position to know what legislation of a military character was needed, and for this reason it seems but natural that it should have drafted acts of this nature. More than this there is no evidence that it interfered in any other legislative matters than these which concerned the army or the directing of the war. Among other things they presented to Parliament an ordinance, authorizing the raising of 2000 men for Hull;^{2.} an order for the county of Buck to retain 1000 B for horse and arms;³ a declaration for reparation to be made the people about Hull,⁴ an order for raising 10,000 men,⁵ as well as an ordinance for the Lord Lieutenants of the counties to raise forces in their various counties to oppose "those traiterous persons that raise forces against Parliament."^{6.}

In October of 1642, Sir Harry Vane, Senior, made a report to the House of Commons from the Committee of Safety. He declared that the main affairs of the Kingdom lay so heavy upon it that it

1. Hist. M S S Comm. 5th Rep. p 54; L. J. V: 410. Sanford says "it would seem that Essex nominated the officers. This is not true, however, for in the fall of 1643 he asked that Parliament allow him that exclusive privilege. (Gardiner I: 182).

2. C. J. II: 656

3. Ibid p 660

4. Ibid p 664

5. Sanford p 497

6. C. J. II: 710.

was not able to manage them alone and for that reason the Committee thought that four more committees should be appointed. He defined the purpose, as well as the size of each of these committees, and went so far as to suggest that all other Committees except those^{1.} of the Navy, Revenue and Ireland should be discontinued. The Commons adopted this report in its entirety the same day it was^{2.} proposed in that House.

At all times the Committee of Safety served as a channel of^{3.} communication between Parliament and the outside world. The Lords and Commons turned over to this small group the writing of⁴ replies to the King's messages and declarations of peace; the preparation of proclamations for the people as to the state of the⁵ Kingdom and their reasons for taking up arms, as well as all the communications by which they expressed their gratitude to faithful⁶ army officers and loyal counties. They always received the formal sanction of Parliament but were seldom altered or in any way modified.

Closely related to work of this kind came the consideration of petitions and correspondence received by Parliament. Neither House had at any time explicitly empowered the Committee of Safety to receive and act upon petitions; but they had as a matter of⁷ fact almost always referred these requests to it, sometimes with recommendations as to what course they should pursue, and fully as

1. Whitacre's Diary 4 verse.- (Oct. 28, 1642).
2. C. J. II: 825
3. To Hosmer, the biographer of Sir Henry Vane, this appears as its chief and almost only function. (p 200).
4. L. J. V: 234; Ibid p 301; C. J. II: 764; Ibid p 792.
5. C. J. II: 659; Ibid p 690; Old Parl. Hist. XI: 457;
6. These are found every where throughout the Journals for this period.
7. Not a few petitions were addressed directly to the Committee. See p 65 of the Hist. M S S Com. 5th Rep.

often without any such restrictions.^{1.} In like manner those communications of a military nature which came to the speakers were given over to the Committee opened or unopened,² as they saw fit. In the case of these, however, the Houses were more ready to make suggestions to their Committee and occasionally ordered what action was to be taken upon them.^{3.}

Aside from these activities the Committee conducted a large number of examinations and investigations.^{4.} It tried persons suspected of delinquency,⁵ prisoners sent up to Parliament by the committees of the various counties,⁶ as well as suspicious foreigners.⁷ Furthermore many were summoned before it to give information of rumored plots. Among the more conspicuous cases left to the Committee's consideration were those of Judge Mallitt⁸ and Earl of Portland. The latter was tried before the Committee of Safety and upon being found guilty of knowing the business of Portsmouth was imprisoned.⁹

Very little of the Committee's time was given over to the consideration of foreign affairs. Parliament had so far carried on the war without assistance from abroad and so had few dealings with foreign nations. Practically the only matters of this nature with which it concerned itself was the drawing up of declarations, and carrying on communications¹⁰ with Mr. Strickland, Parliament's agent in the United Provinces.^{11.}

1. These petitions were usually of a military nature and the Committee seldom reported the action they took on them to Parliament.
2. C. J. II: 665.
3. For example; we have an order from the Commons for July 25, 1643 as follows: "A letter from Dorchester of the 24th of July, and a letter from Sir Walth Erle, of the same date; desiring some supplies of monies, arms and ammunition was this day read: And it is ordered, that they be referred to the Committee of Safety of Kingdom; and that they do give order to comply with their desired in furnishing the arms and ammunition desired."
4. L. J. V: 194 empower the Committee of Safety "to send for what persons they think fit and to examine them."
5. C. J. II: 706; Ibid III: 161. (See notes next page)

In the consideration of the powers and activities of the Committee of Safety it will be interesting to note some of the criticisms made against it by both the Royalists and Parliamentarians. The former, especially, seem to have had a very exaggerated and magnified idea of its power and privileges. Charles I was repeatedly making attacks upon it. In August of 1642 Parliament

6. L. J. V: 331 (See Previous page)
7. C. J. II: 702 (" " ")
8. Ibid p 704 (" " ")
9. L. J. V: 270

Sophia Murray was summoned before the Committee of Safety and charged with having carried on a correspondence with Falkland. She refused to be examined at all saying, "I do not mean to give an account to such fellows as you are." (Gardiner I: 158, taken from D'ewes Diary Harl. M S S. 165 fol. 100-102) (See previous page)

10. They drew up a declaration for the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland (C. J. II: 683); one concerning an alliance with Scotland in the fall of 1642. (C. J. II: 832); and another for the Lords of the States General of the United Provinces. (C. J. II: 882) (See previous page)
11. L. J. VI: 376

issued a declaration for the raising of trained bands in the several counties of England "to lead against all traitors and their adherents."

The King made a reply to this and among other things said this: "if at least this declaration (which we rather see cause to hope it hath not) have so much as been seen in the Houses, and be not the single work of the same Omnipotent Committee, to which is devolved the whole power of the Parliament and which, as we understand, is trusted, (without acquainting the Houses) to break up any man's house, and take away the arms and money, intended to defend and feed him, (if they shall see cause to suspect that he meant to assist his sovereign with them) and may well be as fully and implicitly trusted to declare, as to act whatsoever they please. And though we doubt not but to their utmost they will continue that injury to us, and that violation of the subject's liberty, and of public right, to vex and imprison those who shall publish any of our answers to their declarations (and indeed whilst they affirm against all truth and command against all law, it concerns them to take care, that nothing be heard but what they say) yet our comfort is that our intentions and the duty of our subjects are so well and so generally known to our people, that we cannot fear (from whom soever it come and though no answer come out of it) that either what is there said, should be believed, or what is there commanded should be obeyed."^{1.}

1. Rushworth 3:767. Contrary to what the King says the Houses did publish declarations as shown by the Journals. Reply made Aug. 8, 1642.

It was but a short time before the King again attacked the Committee; this time in a "declaration to all his loving subjects." He complained that both Houses were resolved "into a Close Committee^{1.} of seventeen persons; who undertake and direct all the present outrages, and the managery of this rebellion against us in the absence^{2.} of four parts of five of both Houses and without the privity of those who stay there, which is not only contrary but destructive to Parliaments themselves."^{3.} Still another time he declares that the resolutions and directions "which concern the property and liberty of the subjects are transacted and concluded by a few persons (under the name of a close committee, consisting of the Earl of Manchester, the Lord Say, Mr. Pym, Mr. Hampden, Mr. Strode,⁴ Mr. Marten, and others, the whole number not exceeding seventeen persons) without reporting the same to the Houses, contrary to the express law and customs of Parliament."^{5.} Another not altogether uninteresting characterization of this Committee is found in a remonstrance of some royalists addressed to the Speaker of the House of Commons: "Ye have made a close committee as you call it, wherein a few members of your House only are privy to your counsels; and what those few conclude upon is summarily reputed to the House, and that taken upon trust, by an implicit faith of all the rest."^{6.}

Henry Marten, too, objected to the Committee, but for quite different and minor reasons. He, who was himself a member

1. His estimate of seventeen persons is incorrect. More were members but there were not that many left in London.
2. This statement is an exaggeration. Sanford has made a very careful estimate of those that deserted to the King's side. In the House of Lords he estimates that about 100 of the royalists withdrew during the first stages of the civil war. Then this number was still further increased during the disasters of 1643. The desertion in the House of Commons never reached 200 according to his figures. Sanford, p 498.
3. Rushworth VII: 8. Sept. 27, 1642.
4. The Journals do not give Strode as a member of Committee. He was so strongly opposed to the King that latter probably thought he must be a member. The King has mentioned the leaders of the

of this Committee, had drifted away from the section headed by Pym and Hampden and his relations with them were of rather an unfriendly nature. Besides this he thought too much business was turned over to it. On one occasion he said, "that a pint pot could not hold a bottle of liquor, nor they be capable of dispatching so much as was committed to them." ^{7.} Some of the

4. 'thorough' party. (See previous page)
5. Old Parl. Hist. 3: 135. June 20, 1643 (See previous Page)
6. Somer's Tracts IV: 523. There is no date but a statement in the Remonstrance fixes it in the summer of 1643; says Parliament has been in session for over two years and also mentions seeking Scotch aid. (See previous page.)
7. Sanford p 545. His statement is taken from Harl. M S S 164, p 1052 B.

proceedings of the Committee he objected to as suspicious and useless acts of courtesy: such, for instance, as granting a warrant for wine, beer, spices, wax, candles, and one hundred quarts of wheat, to be sent to New Castle, for the Queen's use." ^{1.}

A brief sketch of the military history will serve to show some of the difficulties with which the Committee had to contend in its direction of the war. More than that it will help to explain why Parliament accepted the assistance of the Scotch and established a new and stronger Executive. Although the very fact that Scotland had agreed to assist Parliament with her army would naturally have called for some kind of joint control over the war, it is not probable that the Committee of Safety would have been so easily superseded, if its personnel had not been seriously weakened by deaths and desertions.

In every period of the struggle the House of Lords was less firm in its resistance to monarchical encroachments than was the House of Commons. It was necessary to the success of the popular cause that Charles I should be opposed by both Houses of the legislature. For this reason the Commons were obliged to make many concessions to the Lords and to do many things which they knew were not for the best advantage in promoting their cause. The fact that most of the Commanders in the army were chosen from the upper House was probably for this very reason. ^{2.} It is certain that in the end the Lord's Commanders proved the weaker and the less willing

1. Sanford p 545. Taken from the same source p 926 A, B.

2. Fifteen Lords were appointed and nine Commoners.

to push their campaigns to a victorious conclusion. If the few Lords left at Westminster had been more in sympathy with the war Parliament or the Committee could have replaced these weaker officers by others from the Commons.

Conditions not unlike these had determined the choice of their Commander-in-chief, the Earl of Essex. At the outbreak of the war he was the most popular of the peers. In the choice of Essex not a little stress had been laid on the fact that he had served in the Netherlands and knew how to carry on a campaign. He was popular at camp and had a way of making himself acceptable to the commonest soldier in his army. Essex was not qualified, however, to direct the movements of all the Parliamentary forces and could never have proved a military genius.

The most serious objection to Essex as Lord General lay in the fact that, he did not strive in his campaigns for an unqualified success. He wished to see the King checked but not destroyed. As a result of this his conduct was marked by instability and uncertainty. Whitelocke points out that Essex might have brought the war to a decisive end twice in the first campaign,¹ if he had followed up the enemy and listened to the advice of men like Hampden.

With the opening of the campaign of 1643 it was only too certain to those most zealous in the popular cause that Essex and his friends had no intention of pushing the war to its extremity. As a

1. Whitelocke cites the Battle of Edgehill and Brenton as the two instances.

result their military proceedings had a double meaning; they seemed to fight for victory when in reality their goal was compromise. The leaders in Parliament realized that some adequate remedy should be applied and were only too well aware that the most effective means would be to supersede Essex and place in his stead a man in whom they could have confidence. Both rumor and public opinion had decided that Hampden should succeed Essex. His appointment might have improved the situation in the army but it would never have done with conditions as they were in the House of Lords. At this time it was necessary to make many concessions to the upper House to keep up so much as a show of their concurrence.

In June began the series of defeats for the Parliamentary forces and with them troubled and dark days for the Committee. First came the defeat at Atherton Moor and the treachery of Hotham. The latter was discovered, however, before anything very serious had resulted. When Essex had finally started his advance toward Oxford there came the skirmish on Chalgrove Field, when Hampden fell. In his death the Committee lost one of its ablest and most popular members, whereas Essex lost the one man who had persistently spurred him on to action. Two days after this encounter King Charles issued a proclamation, declaring that the assembly at Westminster was not a free Parliament and refusing to receive messages from them as such. ^{1.} Not long after this Nathaniel Fiennes, one of the original members of the Committee, surrendered

1. June 20, 1643.

Bristol to Prince Rupert. In consequence he was condemned to death by Parliament but was later pardoned by Essex and allowed to go abroad.

By July the condition in Essex' army had become bad. It had suffered much from sickness during the siege of Reading, but the siege had been of such short duration that it was not at all grave. The most serious difficulty lay in the fact that the spirits of the soldiers were weakened by continued inactivity. Godwin says, "it is probable, too, that the most effective members of the Committee of Safety did not feel cordially toward Essex: those expedients which might best have recruited his army and repaired its losses were not on their part given sufficient attention. In a word the gradually increasing alienation of the General from the cause in which he was engaged, and perhaps the perception of that alienation by his employers, had reduced the principal army of Parliament to a condition in which it was incapable of rendering any substantial service, or of opposing an effective check to the success of the enemy"^{1.} The Journals of the Lords and Commons for the summer and autumn of 1643 bear out this statement.^{2.} Parliament was obliged repeatedly to order the Committee to supply the needs of the Lord General's army.

On July 9th Essex, who had become discouraged with his want of success and conscious of the ill favor with which he was beginning to be regarded in Parliament, wrote a strange letter to

1. Godwin p 117.

2. During the summer and autumn we find such orders as this: "Ordered, that the Committee for Safety do take care to recruit my Lord General's army. (C. J. III: 288 Oct. 18, 1643.)"

the Lords. He first gave a detailed and possibly an exaggerated account of the condition of his army and then went on to express a desire that, "if it were thought fit to send his majesty to have peace, with the settling of religion, the laws and liberties of the subjects and bring to just trial all those chief delinquents that have brought all this mischief to both Kingdom."^{1.} The Lords decided that no petition should be sent the King, since he had declared them not to be a Parliament. The House of Commons likewise, took no action on the matter.

On the 2nd of August, however, the Lords appointed a Committee to consider propositions to be presented to the King.^{2.} A few days later the Committee's proposals were sent down to the House of Commons. There the proposition for taking them up immediately was carried by a vote of only two. After much debate it was finally agreed that they should be considered further and not immediately be rejected. This was carried by a vote of ninety-four to sixty-five.^{3.} The next day being Sunday the popular party sought the pulpits of London in order to arouse the citizens to oppose peace negotiations.^{4.} As a result of this Londoners presented a petition to Parliament on Monday morning. This was looked upon by the peace party in the House of Lords as a breach of privilege and the peers threatened to adjourn for a day. Meanwhile the House of Commons, by a majority of seven voted that the propositions for peace should not be taken into particular consideration.^{5.}

1.

2. L. J. VI: 163. Northumberland, Holland, Pembroke, Bedford, Salisbury and Saye served on this Committee.

3. C. J. III: 196

4. Gardiner I: 185. Taken from Yonges Diary add. M S S 18, 778 Fol. 11

5. C. J. III: 197

A few days before the Lords had drawn up their petition for peace, the Earl of Holland, with the sanction of the Earls of Clare, Bedford and Northumberland, had gone down to Essex to endeavor to persuade him to march his army nearer London, and to second their applications to the Commons by a demonstration of physical force. Pym learned of this and immediately took measures to defeat it. On the 3rd of August four Commons headed by ¹him were sent to persuade Essex from the cause, and they were successful. As a result of the discovery of this plot the Earls of Bedford, Holland and Clare, all members of the Committee stole away to the King's camp. The Earl of Northumberland retired to his seat at Petworth and on the 16th of the month Harry Marten was expelled from the House for some expressions he had made respecting the King and royal family. This marks the depression of both the extreme radical as well as the faint-hearted section and leaves the leadership to the popular party headed by Pym, St. John and the younger Vane. Unfortunately Pym was only spared them until December.

As has been shown the Committee of Safety had already been greatly weakened by desertions and deaths. The loss of Pym took away its last strong support. Had he lived the story of the Committee might possibly have been a longer one.

Some months before his death the situation became so serious that the Lords and Commons agreed to seek assistance from Scotland

1. C. J. III: 193

2. Ibid p 212.

It was these negotiations that offered the opportunity for a new and more powerful executive council. An alliance between the two countries would naturally have presupposed some joint military control, but strange to say the parliamentary leaders had formulated no policy. The instructions of the commissioners sent to treat with the Scots were such, however, that a joint Committee could be negotiated for.^{2.}

The proposal for a committee of the two nations came from the English and probably from Sir Harry Vane and his party. When the Scotch commissioners arrived in England Vane and St. John were active in putting their plans through. They named the twenty-one lords and commoners who were to serve on the new committee and in consultation with the Scotch representatives defined its powers. They experienced much difficulty in getting their bill through the Houses but were finally successful. On February 16, 1643 the Committee of Safety gave way to the Committee of Both Kingdoms. Thus the Committee of Safety gave way to a new Executive which though quite similar in personnel, was to prove a much more powerful body, as well as much less dependent on Parliament.^{3.}

1. Lord Grey, the Earl of Rutland, Sir Henry Vane, chosen to go to Edinburgh. The two members of the upper House failed to go, however.

2. Article XVI. You shall further consider with our brethren of Scotland what other articles or propositions may be fit to be added and included; whereby the assistance and union between the two may be made more beneficial and effectual and you shall certify all such propositions to the two Houses of Parliament.

3. All seven chosen from the Lords had served on the Committee of Safety and all but five out of the fourteen from the Commons.
(L. J. VI: 430.)