

Northern Association, proposed by the Long Parliament to strengthen parliamentary forces in northern England.

The documents, while occasionally elucidating and even amusing, make for generally tedious reading. Nevertheless, the editorials competently address major themes and issues. The volume will be chiefly of interest to scholars of parliamentary history. For a wider audience, a cursory reading of the contents is sufficient to convey the sense of Parliament's growing importance in early modern England, a thesis quietly reflected in the book's cover—a mischievously altered reprint of an engraving from Robert Glover's *Nobilitas Politica et Civilis*. The original, which depicts Elizabeth I's recognition of the need for Parliament's consent in passing legislation, is reproduced with the substitution of James I on the throne.

Alan Marshall. *The Age of Faction: Court Politics, 1660-1702*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999. x + 234 pp. \$79.95. Review by MOLLY MCCLAIN, UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO.

Alan Marshall has produced a well-researched and entertaining survey of the later Stuart court. He writes with considerable authority on the politics and personalities in the reigns of Charles II, James II, William III, and Mary II. In Part I, the author provides a brief survey of recent historiographical controversies before turning to a description of the machinery of government. He describes the royal residences, the major household offices, the rituals of court life and the system of patronage which linked the king to his leading subjects. He also includes information on the much-neglected subject of "female politicians" such as Louise de Keroualle, duchess of Portsmouth, and others (49).

The later Stuart monarchs, like their continental contemporaries, often used visual means to display their power. For example, Charles II hired the Italian painter Antonio Verrio to create Baroque illusions on the ceilings and walls of his chambers at Windsor Castle and Whitehall Palace. In St. George's Hall, the

king appears enthroned in glory, overcoming rebellion and faction. In another room, he is disguised as Perseus rescuing Europe disguised as Andromeda. The author notes that “as patron of such arts Charles was able to indulge, in relative seclusion, the ideals of absolutism which such baroque paintings projected, even if he was unable to express them outside the palace walls” (66).

Other glimpses of court life show the duke of Monmouth losing money hand over fist at the horse races due to his addiction to horoscopes; Queen Catherine and her two ladies, “dressed as country girls, attending a fair only to be discovered by the crowds around them because of their strange accents”; and Charles II arranging to have a “Muscovit” sledge built to pull him round the canals of St. James’s Park. He was joined by Mary of Modena, the new duchess of York, who, “when not throwing snowballs at her somewhat austere husband that winter, was ‘pulled up and down the ponds in [her sledge] every day” (74).

It is not surprising to learn that court life changed considerably between 1660 and 1704. The drunken roistering which had taken place in the sexually-charged atmosphere of Charles II’s court nearly disappeared after 1685. James II instituted a programme of moral reformation “stemming from either the King’s strong self-righteous streak or his guilt complex (for he had indulged in sin as much as anyone in his brother’s reign)” (78). His daughter Mary continued to promote a moral atmosphere. Under William III, the court moved from Windsor Castle and Whitehall Palace to Hampton Court and Kensington, setting the trend for “the smaller and more homely English court of the eighteenth century” (21).

In Part II, Marshall provides a narrative of court politics, stressing the active role played by each of the later Stuart kings. Charles II, for example, is characterized as a “courtier king” with great tactical intelligence and a knack for secret intrigue (92). He managed to outmaneuver most of his ministers, avoiding the outbreak of renewed civil war and dying peacefully in his bed. James II, on the other hand, was a reformer by nature. He is characterized by sobriety, decorum, and hard work. Unlike his brother, he

was manipulated by his advisors, principally the earl of Sunderland who played a decisive role in wrecking the reign. Finally, William III comes across as a “natural autocrat” who dreaded the ceremonies of monarchy and adopted a business-like approach to government (156). He also “disliked and distrusted most of the English politicians he came across” (158). His reign would lead to the expansion of the powers of Parliament and the beginning of the great age of political party.

The historical documents reprinted at the end of the volume are well-chosen and highly descriptive. Here, Marshall provides a diagram of the arrangement of rooms in the monarch’s public and privy chambers. He reprints court satires written during the reign of Charles II; descriptions of the court by John Evelyn, Roger North, and Thomas, earl of Ailesbury, among others; reports by the Venetian ambassador; a selection from Thomas Shadwell’s comedy, *The Lancashire Witches* (1682); and the memoirs of Queen Mary II. These sources, along with a good bibliography, make this book an excellent choice for advanced undergraduates and graduate students.

The only problem with this book is its price. Only research libraries will be able to spend \$79.95 for this slim volume. Manchester University Press should be encouraged to bring this volume out in paperback. Its style, brevity, and wealth of examples make it an excellent teaching tool as well as an enjoyable read.

Gigliola Fragnito, ed. *Church, Censorship and Culture in Early Modern Italy*. Trans. Adrian Belton. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. x + 264 pp. + 4 illus. \$59.95. Review by ERMINIA ARDISSINO, UNIVERSITY OF TURIN.

Although devoted primarily to the vicissitudes of the promulgation of the *indices librorum prohibitorum*, which took place between the last sessions of the Council of Trent and the full implementation of the Clementine Index (1996), this collection of