

N.H. Keeble. *The Restoration: England in the 1660s*. History of Early Modern England series. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002. xvi + 270 pp. \$34.95. Review by TY M. REESE, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA.

N.H. Keeble's *The Restoration* is another installment in the Early Modern England history series, edited by John Morrill, that seeks to provide a thorough understanding of England in this period. Keeble's work is a vital part of this series in that it deals with the collapse of the Protectorate, the restoration of the monarchy, and the continuation of the social and economic changes affecting English society. While the 1660s continued a general process of change for England, Keeble's work explores this decade through the actions and writings of England's political and literary elite. For the political developments, Keeble provides an excellent and detailed narrative of the Restoration and the first seven years of the reign of Charles II. This detailed focus upon the English elite during the 1660s, including the intrigues surrounding Anne Hyde, prepares the reader for Keeble's narrow focus of those individuals in a position to influence and shape high culture. While Keeble's work clearly illustrates the consequences of the Restoration upon this small but powerful group one would hope, within a general history series, for a broader treatment of English society. The New Model Army, and the radicalism it often represented, plays a minor role in Keeble's narrative of the events of 1658-1660 and only reappears when it is disbanded in 1661. The lower classes only receive a brief mention within the context of the 1662 Poor Relief Act, and England's developing middle class is seldom mentioned or examined. In relation to interpretation and historiography, Keeble, in his introduction, states that "the 1660s proved inconclusive; they brought back the King, but settled nothing" (3). This inconclusiveness is clearly seen throughout Keeble's work. Because the Restoration remained unfinished at 1669, Keeble decided to downplay conclusions and instead focus on "the construction of identities, in roles and role-playing, in culturally supportive or subversive myths, in perceptions, claims and counter-claims" (3). While a great variety of identities are being constructed in this period,

Keeble's work explains how the Restoration affected high culture's understandings of not only themselves but of England. Throughout the work, high culture dominates while popular culture is decidedly absent.

The first four chronological chapters explore the fall of the commonwealth, the restoration, consolidation and protection of the monarchy, and ends in 1667 with war and Clarendon's downfall. Chapter one provides a detailed narrative of the calm that followed Cromwell's death, as England anxiously waited to see what would happen, and then intricately explores the Restoration of Charles II. The chapter focuses upon the army, and its ability to intervene, the fear of both dictatorship and anarchy along with prominent figures such as John Lambert and George Monck. Chapter two involves a narrative of the years 1660 to 1661 including how the army, which once fought the king, allowed him to return, the contemporary attempt to explain and justify the Restoration and the dichotomy between celebration and uncertainty. The chapter ends with the disbanding of the army and the trial of the regicides. Chapter three explores the relationship between Charles and the Convention. This chapter is strong in its focus on the contemporary views of Charles and the Restoration along with the major acts designed to consolidate and protect the king. Keeble does a thorough job in explaining how the Convention worked to accomplish its three major goals of establishing security, eliminating threats, and rewarding supporters. The fourth chapter examines a broader time, the years 1661 to 1667, but continues the political narrative by focusing upon Clarendon and the Cavalier Parliament. In this period, compromise loses out to "reactionary partisanship" (85), bribery becomes an important part of parliamentary functioning, censorship increases, the 1662 Poor Relief Act works to reduce the mobility of the lower class, and the Dutch war causes the fall of Clarendon when he becomes a political scapegoat.

The first four narrative chapters are then followed by four thematic chapters. Chapter five explores the changes within the Church of England including the Act of Uniformity, the Clarendon Code,

and the Laudians. Anglican conformity is followed by nonconformity as chapter six begins with the “destroyed hopes”(132) of Milton and Bunyan, briefly examines nonconformist culture, and then shows how censorship became an important Restoration tool. Chapter seven, “The Temper of the Times,” explores the plague and the fire and illustrates, through Pepys and others, how these events intensified feelings of unease for some and divine judgment for others. The chapter then moves to Clarendon’s fall, the rise of the Cabal, and the influence of Louis XIV on Charles. The chapter ends with an exploration of court excesses, especially its immoral actions and sexual aggression. The final chapter examines constructions of gender as contemporaries developed ideas concerning the subservient place of women and their “much greater sexual appetite” (187). This uncontrollable female need justified the excesses of the court while placing the blame upon the female rather than male participants.

Keeble’s work constitutes a thorough exploration of high culture but as a history of England during the Restoration it falls far short. Keeble’s literary, rather than historical, background clearly comes through in the work and his utilization of journals, diaries, pamphlets, and newspapers engagingly add a contemporary voice to his history. At times, he relies too much on quotations from these sources and for readers unfamiliar with the contemporary literature the text can become quite cumbersome. For those readers looking to understand English society during the Restoration this is not the book for them but for those interested in high culture, court intrigues, and

the literary response to the Restoration, this work has much to offer.

Jason Peacey, ed. *The Regicides and the Execution of Charles I.* Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001. x + 294 pp. \$72.00. Review by MICHAEL ROGERS, NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY.

This excellent collection of eleven essays originated in a 1999 conference held at the Institute of Historical Research in London. Although the political and diplomatic context of the events of December 1648 and January 1649 are prominent, the authors examine so many other facets of the Regicide (religious, literary, legal, and iconographic among them) that scholars of literature and culture will also find much of interest. This is due in no small part to Jason Peacey's fine introduction, which notes that the subject remains "inexplicably understudied," especially considering the abundance of primary sources and the explosion of writing on the 1640s and 1650s. Peacey also provides a historiographical overview, summarizes each contributor's thesis, and identifies the book's main themes. In so doing, he reminds readers that the approaches and methodologies generally affecting seventeenth-century studies—revisionism, the problem of governing multiple kingdoms, and the civil wars as "wars of religion"—have relevance for a new understanding of the Regicide itself.

Perhaps the book's most important theme is the practical as well as ideological reasons to bring Charles to justice, to delay his trial, or to oppose entirely any legal proceedings against him. The longest chapter, John Adamson's "The Frightened Junto: Perceptions of Ireland, and the Last Attempts at Settlement with Charles I," is representative of four essays that explore motive. Adamson focuses on the "Denbigh mission," an Army proposal for a political settlement that the Earl of Denbigh conveyed to the king. Prior to Charles's rebuff of Denbigh in mid-December 1648 there was