

precisely means in this context. And the chapter on “Anglo-Scottish defence and Presbyterian fanfare, 1656–1658” does not explicitly explain why the terms “defence” and “fanfare” have been chosen for the chapter’s title. These are, however, minor quibbles over what is a sound and useful contribution to the historiography of the British civil wars.

Jonathan Fitzgibbons. *Cromwell’s House of Lords: Politics, Parliaments and Constitutional revolution, 1642–1660*. Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2018. viii + 274 pp. \$130.00. Review by TED VALLANCE, UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON.

Jonathan Fitzgibbons’ monograph, based on his 2010 doctoral thesis, tackles a subject largely ignored in the historiography of the Interregnum, the Cromwellian “Other House.” As Fitzgibbons acknowledges, this neglect may partially be explained by the institution’s very short lifespan (two Parliamentary sessions amounting collectively to no more than 14 weeks). Equally, the focus on the Second Protectoral Constitution has been directed primarily at the question of the offer of kingship, leading scholars to ignore the other developments from the Instrument of Government. This study, however, does considerably more than simply “fill a gap” in interregnum scholarship. Fitzgibbons argues persuasively that an analysis of the Cromwellian second chamber can provide a more detailed insight not only into Cromwell’s plans for settlement but also into the ultimate downfall of the Protectorate. Fitzgibbons contends that it was the intervention of the Army, rather than fundamental structural weaknesses in the second Protectoral constitution which led to the end of Richard Cromwell’s regime.

Fitzgibbons begins his study by exploring the place of the Lords in Parliamentary political thought of the 1640s, as outlined in the work of writers such as Henry Parker and William Prynne. He suggests that these texts display no significant hostility to the Lords as an institution and that, in general, these writers associated Parliamentary sovereignty with both the Lords and the Commons. Consequently, the abolition of the Lords in 1649 was fundamentally an act of political expediency, Fitzgibbons concludes, and not ideologically driven. The wider claim

successfully made here is that support for a second chamber was not necessarily indicative of a more conservative political position.

The following chapter then considers the genesis of the Cromwellian “Other House” in the drafting of the Humble Petition and Advice. Fitzgibbons suggests that Cromwell was aware of the provisions of the Humble Petition and may well have had a hand in developing them before the draft constitution was officially presented to him. He suggests that the formulation of the second Protectoral constitution was driven by a desire to check the legal as well as the legislative authority of the first Protectoral Parliament. The experience of the trial of the Quaker James Nayler for blasphemy had made the Protectorate’s unicameral constitution appear a threat to Cromwell’s cherished ideal of liberty of conscience. A nominated second house, it was hoped, might be able to restrain the persecutory impulses of some MPs.

The book then moves on to offer a detailed analysis of the composition of the first Cromwellian “Other House.” The prosopographical approach used by Fitzgibbons here is also adopted with respect to Richard Cromwell’s “Other House” in the fifth chapter of the book and supported by an appendix detailing the Parliamentary careers of all of the Cromwellian “Lords.” Leaving aside Fitzgibbons’ important arguments, his book will, therefore, be a valuable work of reference for anyone interested in the Parliamentary history of the Protectorate. Fitzgibbons’ exploration of the social status, political and religious outlook and familial connections of the “Other House” suggests that the Cromwellian “Other House” was more socially exclusive than post-Restoration satires of “Cobler Lords” suggested. However, the importance of the Lord Protector’s own networks to determining membership is also suggestive. Mark Noble’s eighteenth-century work of collective biography, *Memoirs of the Protectoral-House of Cromwell* (2 vols., Birmingham, 1784) might not then have been too far wide of the mark in presenting the Protectoral regime as a sort of dynastic agglomerate.

Fitzgibbons convincingly demonstrates the broader value of his study of the Cromwellian “Other House”: this is an important work which rightly questions historians’ assumptions about the innate conservatism of the Protectoral settlement. One of the many achievements of this book is to demonstrate that the Presbyterians

in the Cromwellian “Other House” ought to be taken seriously as something other than a reactionary force: the “new” Presbyterians’ support for the Humble Petition and Advice, he argues persuasively, was grounded on a positive view of a Cromwellian “monarchy” that would finally realize the kind of “Isle of Wight” kingship Parliamentary negotiators had sought to secure Charles I’s agreement to in 1648. Equally, he shows that the checks and balances of a bi-cameral legislature held considerable appeal for republicans, especially those like Sir Henry Vane influenced by the ideas of James Harrington. Finally, though not directly focused on the kingship debate, this book sheds important light on it, arguing that the offer of the Crown should be understood within the wider set of constitutional proposals that include the “Other House.”

Some of Fitzgibbons’ observations, however, do seem less persuasive. In an important article, Fitzgibbons has argued that it is likely that Oliver never named his son as successor but that Richard was effectively nominated by the Protectoral council to his father’s place.<sup>1</sup> Following this line of argument, Fitzgibbons suggests that Richard’s naming as first on a list of nominated Cromwellian Lords was not part of a wider attempt to prepare his son to succeed him, a trend identified by Peter Gaunt and Jason Peacey, but only a nod towards the hereditary principle, an important source of legitimacy in the debate that subsequently ensued over Richard’s succession.<sup>2</sup> While this line of argument fits with Fitzgibbons’ broader claim about the succession, it was not clear to this reviewer why these two possibilities were mutually exclusive.

In other places, Fitzgibbons also appears to over-estimate the importance of claims based on heredity, as around Richard’s succession where he claims that the Protectoral council effectively ignored the constitutional framework of the Humble Petition and Advice in defending the new Protector’s right. While it is true that many of the addresses issued to Richard on his succession could be seen to

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1 J. Fitzgibbons, “‘Not in any doubtfull dispute?’: Reassessing the Nomination of Richard Cromwell,” *Historical Research*, 83 (2010), 281–300.

2 P. Gaunt, “Cromwell, Richard,” *ODNB*; J. Peacey, “‘Fit for Public Services’: The Upbringing of Richard Cromwell,” in P. Little (ed.) *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2007), ch. 3.

nod to the hereditary principle in their fulsome praise of Richard's father, contemporaries noted that it was divine providence, rather than lineage, which the majority of these texts saw as conferring the Protectoral title.<sup>3</sup> The Council also acknowledged the hand of God in Richard's succession but in their proclamation of his title, they were also clear that he was the "*rightful*" successor under the terms of the Humble Petition and Advice.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, while Fitzgibbons' book makes a very good case for re-considering the importance of Presbyterians within the Cromwellian "Other House," it could be argued that the Parliamentary groupings he maps out are identified a little too neatly. Certainly, it would have strengthened Fitzgibbons' claims if a little more justification had been given earlier in the book for his division between "old" and "new" Presbyterians. (The critical distinction between the two groupings—their attitude to political changes since Pride's Purge—is not clearly outlined until page 180.)

Overall, though, Fitzgibbons successfully demonstrates that the "Other House" and the second Protectoral Constitution that it brought it into being, was capable of garnering far greater political support than has previously been recognized. Gathering support from a broad range of Cromwellian "civilians," Presbyterians and some Commonwealthmen, the possibility of a longer lasting Protectoral settlement was only scuppered finally by the intervention of the army, fearful that this alliance would see the end of its political influence. The downfall of the Protectorate stemmed not from a paucity of political imagination (a retreat towards the familiar, old ways of governing) but arguably from its excess—the fact that the idea of Cromwellian "Lords" could appeal to certain varieties of republican as well as to crypto-Royalists. The ostensibly narrow focus of Fitzgibbons' work is therefore deceptive—this is a monograph that deserves to be read by all scholars of the Interregnum and Restoration England.

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3 The compendium of these texts *A True Catalogue, or, an Account of the Several Places and Most Eminent Persons in the Three Nations, and Elsewhere, Where and by Whom Richard Cromwell was Proclaimed Lord Protector* (1659) noted the ubiquity of providential, Biblical allusions, 37–38.

4 John Prestwich, *Prestwich's Respublica, or a Display of the Honors, Ceremonies, Ensigns of the Common-Wealth under the Protectorship of Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1787), 204–6.