1659, Sidney again took his seat, and was placed on the council of state. He showed himself in this office especi­ally anxious that the military power should be duly sub­ordinated to the civil. On 5th June he was appointed one of three commissioners to mediate for a peace between Denmark supported by Holland and Sweden. He was probably intended to watch the conduct of Montague, who was in command of the Baltic squadron. Of his character we have an interesting notice from Whitelocke, who refused to accompany him on the ground of his “over­ruling temper and height.” Upon the conclusion of the treaty he went to Stockholm as plenipotentiary; and in both capacities he behaved with resolution and address. When the restoration of Charles II. took place Sidney left Sweden, 28th June 1660, bringing with him from the king of Sweden a rich present in testimony of the estimation in which he was held. Sidney went first to Copenhagen, and then, being doubtful of his reception by the English court, settled at Hamburg. From there he wrote a celebrated letter vindicating his conduct, which will be found in the Somers *Tracts.* He shortly afterwards left Hamburg, and passed through Germany by way of Venice to Rome. His stay there, however, was embittered by misunderstandings with his father and consequent straits for money. Five shillings a day, he says, served him and two men very well for meat, drink, and firing. He devoted himself to the study of books, birds, and trees, and speaks of his natural delight in solitude being largely increased. In 1663 he left Italy, passed through Switzerland, where he visited Ludlow, and came to Brussels in September, where his portrait was painted by Van Egmondt; it is now at Penshurst. He had thoughts of joining the imperial service, and offered to transport from England a body of the old Commonwealth men; but this was refused by the English court. It is stated that the enmity against him was so great that now, as on other occasions, attempts were made to assassinate him. On the breaking out of the Dutch war Sidney, who was at The Hague, urged an invasion of England, and shortly afterwards went to Paris, where he offered to raise a rebellion in England on receipt of 100,000 crowns. Unable, however, to come to terms with the French Government, he once more went into retirement in 1666,—this time to the south of France. In August 1670 he was again in Paris, and Arlington proposed that he should receive a pension from Louis; Charles II. agreed, but insisted that Sidney should return to Languedoc. In illustration of his austere principles it is related that, Louis having taken a fancy to a horse belonging to him and insisting on possessing it, Sidney shot the animal, which, he said, “was born a free creature, had served a free man, and should not be mastered by a king of slaves.” His father was now very ill, and after much difficulty Sidney obtained leave to come to England in the autumn of 1677. Lord Leicester died in November; and legal business connected with other portions of the succession detained Sidney from returning to France as he had intended. He soon became involved in political in­trigue, joining, in general, the country party, and holding close communication with Barillon, the French ambassador. In the beginning of 1679 he stood for Guildford, and was warmly supported by William Penn, with whom he had long been intimate, and to whom he afforded assistance in drawing up the constitution of Pennsylvania. He was defeated by court influence, and his petition to the House, complaining of an undue return, never came to a decision. His *Letters to Henry Sarnie,* written at this period, are of great interest. He was in Paris, apparently only for a short while, in November 1679. Into the prosecution of the Popish Plot Sidney threw himself warmly, and was among those who looked to Monmouth, rather than to

Orange, to take the place of James in the succession, though he afterwards disclaimed all interest in such a question. He now stood for Bramber (Sussex), again with Penn’s support, and a double return was made. He is reported on 10th August 1679 as being elected for Amers- ham (Buckingham) with Sir Roger Hill. When parlia­ment met, however, in October 1680, his election was declared void. But now, under the idea that an alliance between Charles and Orange would be more hostile to English liberty than would the progress of the French arms, he acted with Barillon in influencing members of parliament in this sense, and is twice mentioned as receiv­ing the sum of 500 guineas from the ambassador. Of this there is no actual proof, and it is quite possible that Barillon entered sums in his accounts with Louis which he never paid away. In any case it is to be remembered that Sidney is not charged with receiving money for ad­vocating opinions which he did not enthusiastically hold.

Upon the dissolution of the last of Charles’s parliaments the king issued a justificatory declaration. This was at once answered by a paper entitled *A Just and Modest Vin­dication, &c.,* the first sketch of which is imputed to Sidney. It was then, too, that his most celebrated production, the *Discourses concerning Government,* was concluded, in which he upholds the doctrine of the mutual compact and traverses the High Tory positions from end to end. In especial he vindicates the propriety of resistance to kingly oppression or misrule, upholds the existence of an here­ditary nobility interested in their country’s good as the firmest barrier against such oppression, and maintains the authority of parliaments. In each point the English constitution, which he ardently admires, is, he says, suffer­ing: the prerogatives of the crown are disproportionately great; the peerage has been degraded by new creations; and parliaments are slighted.

For a long while Sidney kept himself aloof from the duke of Monmouth, to whom he was introduced by Lord Howard. After the death of Shaftesbury, however, in November 1682, he entered into the conferences held be­tween Monmouth, Russell, Essex, Hampden, and others. That treasonable talk went on seems certain, but it is probable that matters went no further. The watchfulness of the court was, however, aroused, and on the discovery of the Rye House Plot, Sidney, who had always been regarded in a vague way as dangerous, was arrested while at dinner on 26th June 1683. His papers were carried off, and he was sent at once to the Tower on a charge of high treason. For a considerable while no evidence could be found on which to establish a charge. Jeffreys, how­ever, was made lord chief-justice in September; a jury was packed; and, after consultations between the judge and the crown lawyers, Sidney was brought to listen to the indictment on 7th November. The trial, which began on 21st November, was conducted with a shameless absence of equity : Sidney was refused a copy of the indictment, in direct violation of law, and—more shameful still—he was refused the assistance of counsel. Hearsay evidence and the testimony of the perjured informer Lord Howard, whom Sidney had been instrumental in introducing to his friends, were first produced. This being insufficient, partial extracts from papers found in Sidney’s study, and supposed only to be in his handwriting, in which the lawfulness of resistance to oppression was upheld, were next relied on. He was indicted for “conspiring and compassing the death of the king.” Sidney conducted his case throughout with great skill; he pointed especially to the fact that Lord Howard, whose character he easily tore to shreds, was the only witness against him as to treason, whereas the law required two, that the treason was not accurately defined, that no proof had been given that the papers produced