

A 17TH CENTURY "L. C. C."

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THE seventeenth century in London, as well as in England, was an age of constitutional experiment and growth. While Parliament was engaged in a struggle against the centralising power of the sovereign, the capital was endeavouring to feel its way to a larger development than had yet been possible. But when the chance occurred of grasping a big instalment of added responsibility the authorities in London mistrusted either their own capacity or the sovereign's good intentions, and declined to accept the greater London of that day into their charge. The story of a royal attempt in 1636 to anticipate in some way the County Council of two and a half centuries later has not previously been pieced together, though allusions to it are to be found in many printed and manuscript sources. There has always been a tendency in London history, as in the wider story of the nation, to accept verdict of past historians, and perhaps because Strype and Maitland almost ignore the story, it has been in the main neglected by their successors.

Its importance was seen by Dr. Gardiner¹, but he was painting on a larger canvas; and it is clearly mentioned, though without much detail, in the Calendar of the City of London's Remembrancia.² It is curious that Sir Laurence Gomme, who seemed to see the genesis of the L.C.C. in

¹ *History of England, 1603-1649*, vol. VIII, p. 290.

² *Remembrancia*, p. 227.

Roman London, should only have alluded to the Incorporation of "divers places in the city and suburbs and three miles compass of the same" as a half measure, and should not have realized its true significance.¹

Here is as full a story of the Incorporation as has at present been discovered, pieced together from the Repertories, Journals and Remembrancia in the City Records, from the Privy Council Registers and the State Papers Domestic, the Patent Rolls and other contemporary manuscript and printed sources.

It is an instructive story and illustrates the fixed intention of the Stuart Sovereigns to govern as well as reign, and it also clearly indicates the far reaching power of the Privy Council under the early Stuarts, especially in those years when Parliament was not sitting. Almost all the essential incidents here narrated occur between the dismissal of Charles I's third parliament in 1629 and the meeting of the short Parliament in 1640.

The growth of London in the latter part of Elizabeth's reign was due in the main to the development of commerce and the formation of the trading companies. Elizabeth herself favoured the merchant classes, perhaps because she remembered that her great grandfather had been Mayor, but especially because she needed the money which only successful men of business could provide. Religious persecution drove many foreigners from France and the Low Countries to settle in London, and others came because London was fast taking the place of mercantile pre-eminence formerly held by Antwerp.

The actual limits of the city had been fixed by its walls many centuries before, though some extra-mural wards had been established. There had always been some room to spare and the dissolution of the monasteries delayed expansion by providing considerable areas for building in the extensive monastic lands. By the end of the sixteenth

¹ *London*, p. 221.

century all this was exhausted and the inevitable growth began. Many of the persons coming to live in or near London were of the poorer classes, and the attempts that were made by Elizabeth and her successors to check building within 3 miles of the city, led to overcrowding, both in the wards and in the suburbs, and to the erection in alleys and backyards and other constricted places more or less temporary wooden tenements which could, if occasion arose, be pulled down without much loss.

Some steps had to be taken to deal with London's inevitable growth, and a bald refusal to allow new houses was neither wise nor effective. The population increased and needed organisation and government. The Court was alarmed at the growth of London for four urgent reasons. Elizabeth and James were in danger from plots and these could more easily be hatched in the unregulated suburbs than in the wards of the City. Disturbances were of more frequent occurrence in the outskirts, while in the unhealthy and crowded purlieus on the banks of the Fleet and down the Thames towards Blackwall there was constant peril of plague. And lastly in the very places where it was most needed, there was little or no real government, no Lord Mayor and Aldermen, no Wards and City Companies, only the vague and somewhat intermittent control by Justices and Vestries.

The work done by a Justice of the Peace varied greatly from county to county and while some Justices were models of efficiency, many were doubtless corrupt and venal, as Shakespeare's plays reveal. There were also many whose efforts to promote law and order in their districts were disinterested and effective, and whether good or bad their power was considerable. The Vestry, with its annual meeting and its permanent or temporary officers—churchwardens, constables, surveyors of Highways and overseers of the poor—exercised a vague but far-reaching control over land and roads, destitution and vagrancy in each of the 9000 parishes of England.

But in expanding London some more effective control was needed, and the urgent problem was the question of the suburbs, which increased in spite of all regulations to the contrary. Both Elizabeth and the first two Stuarts with their vigilant Privy Council endeavoured to understand and solve the problem.

Another problem was produced by the changes in manufacturing and trading methods which came into being towards the end of the sixteenth century. The increase in trade tended to divide the Gilds into Producers and Purveyors, the latter of whom gained almost complete control. Many workers could not afford to become members of a gild or to rent houses, offices or workshops in the City. Both in London and in Paris the suburbs became at the end of the sixteenth century the main seat of domestic industries. Moreover the Elizabethan Trading Company in some cases took the place of the Gild and in other cases became its serious rival. The broadening of manufacturing and commerce also led to the splitting up of the Gilds into smaller groups and these successfully applied to the king for a charter. The leather workers, felt hat workers and apothecaries are only three examples of this disintegrating movement. Such was the migration of workers from the expensive and somewhat hidebound wards of the city to the cheaper and unregulated suburbs that some industries had almost entirely left London for its environs. In 1619 there were only 40 leather workers left in the City while in Lambeth Bermondsey and Southwark there were no fewer than 3000.

The King tended to support the upstart suburbs against the entrenched forces of the City, and he was inclined to favour craftsmen as against merchants, but at the same time he feared the too rapid growth of the suburbs.

In the City there was constant agitation against the workers in the suburbs, both foreigners and other non-freemen. The number of genuine foreigners had increased and French, Dutch and Spaniards were all making firm foothold

in the suburbs owing partly to Elizabeth's toleration and partly to James' partiality. Petitions and counter-petitions came from the City and the foreigners and the latter found in the famous Sir Noel de Carron, a much respected dweller in Lambeth, a notable champion.

The City complained that the foreigners were increasing too rapidly and were not selling where they were instructed to do so. Censuses of foreigners were demanded from time to time and all showed the same tendency of growth.

Some more settled government had been given to Westminster in 1585 by the efforts of Lord Burleigh. An Act of Parliament established a Court of 12 Burgesses and an equal number of assistants, and their efforts to promote order and virtuous behaviour in the royal city have recently been the subject of an interesting and amusing book by Mr. W. H. Manchée. But their work was entirely confined to the West End, and it did little to solve the larger question of the administration of the suburbs as a whole.

In 1613 an attempt was made to group the suburbs for a definite purpose into a fourfold division and as the idea was repeated on two subsequent occasions, it may be regarded as an interesting pioneer experiment.

An office was established of Surveyor of London, Westminster and the suburbs, and headquarters were to be provided at some central spot. The neighbourhood of St. Paul's, Blackfriars, and St. John's Hospital was suggested as suitable. There were to be four surveyors appointed and their duties were threefold—to discover lodges and inmates, which were sternly forbidden by the proclamation against building, to relieve deserving poor and to punish vagrants "within the cittye of Westminster, the suburbs of the Cittye of London and three miles Comparse everye waye round about the said cittye and liberties."

The whole district thus outlined was to be divided into four parts:—*South*: the south side of the Thames; *East*: that part bounded on the south by the Thames and on the

west by the "brook that leadeth from Moorgate to the Windmills"; *North*: that part "bounded on the east by the said brook and mills aforesaid," on the west "by the brook or watercourse coming from the same circumference on the west side of Parkridge Church to Clerkenwell and so to Bridewell Dock, conteyning all the suburbs, towns and villages and dwellings within the said precincts"; *West*: the part "bounded on the east by the brooke aforesaid, on the north and west by the said circumference, on the south by the Thames and conteyning the said cittye of Westminster, all the suburbs belonging to the said Cittyes of London and Westminster, and all the other towns, libties, villages and dwellings within the said precinctes."¹

This measure seems to have had little effect, as there are very frequent cases of building fresh houses and sub-dividing them and the problem of the suburbs increased from year to year. Foreigners were a continual source of annoyance to the citizens, and dwellers in the suburbs were almost as tiresome a problem.

In 1613 the Plasterers' Company complained to the Council Bricklayers in the suburbs who employed poor men not of the Plasterers Company and so infringed their charter.²

In 1616 there was an Order in Council touching aliens in London and it was discovered that there were 1343 in 121 trades.³ In successive years the Constables of various parishes made returns of aliens and there were lists sent in of houses pulled down because of transgressions of the Building Proclamation. An important statement was made in 1619 when an excuse was made for ineffective government in the Duchy of Lancaster's lands in the Strand and Westminster on the ground that the district was in several parishes and under several jurisdictions.⁴ The State Papers at this period are

¹ S. P. Dom. 31 Dec., 1613. James I, vol. LXXV, no. 54.

² *Cal. S.P. Dom.*, 1613, p. 218.

³ *Cal. S.P. Dom.*, 1613-1618, p. 398.

⁴ *Cal. S.P. Dom.*, 1619-23, p. 110.

full of complaints of the increase of foreigners, of the impossibility of keeping the streets clean in the neighbourhood of London and of the lack of discipline in the suburbs, especially those near to the Court.

The granting of charters to new companies was also a source of great annoyance to the City and also to the House of Commons (29 May, 1624). A very serious complaint was made in 1627 by Thomas Powell, High Constable of Westminster, that all the responsibility of administration in Westminster fell on the small tradesmen and shopkeepers who were least able to bear it and were not helped by the more well-to-do who made their real or supposed connection with the Court an excuse for shirking all civic duties.¹

The dissolving by Charles I of his third Parliament left many problems unsolved, and much of the work of administration fell into the hands of the indefatigable Privy Council, which seemed ready to undertake any task, however important or humble it might be. During these years the area covered by the Bills of Mortality was increased from time to time and in 1629 there were added Shoreditch, St. Giles and St. Martin's in the Fields, Clerkenwell, Bermondsey and Whitechapel as well as Westminster for purposes of plague returns. The Burgesses of Westminster seem to have been busy with petty matters of police routine and to have had no time for more far-reaching proposals. But the problems continued to cause anxiety and from 1629 till 1636, when a scheme for dealing with the suburbs was at length devised and at the same time the Bills of Mortality were still further extended, the problems were discussed by almost everyone, save Parliament, who might be thought to be interested therein.

The two parties chiefly interested in the problem were the King and Privy Council on the one hand and the City authorities on the other and for five years the matter was bandied about between them. The Repertories of the Court of Aldermen are full of the discussions and on 4

Privy Council Registers, 2/36, 21 December, 1627.

February, 1631-2, a committee was appointed to keep in touch with the situation. "It is thought fitt and so ordered by this Court that the Lord Mayor, the Recorder of Sir Martin Lumley, Kt., Howard Garoway, Esq., Robert Jurie, Kt., etc. or any four of them shall on Saturday next in the afternoon meet at his Lordship's house and take into their care and consideration all such things in question as concern this cittie and advise what is needful to be done therein for the good of the same." A very vague entry is this and one evidently intended to be non-committal, and to include loans and ship money as well as the suburbs.¹ In April 1632 two of the Committee were appointed to discuss City matters with the Bishop of London and there are half a dozen entries in the Repertories to a similar effect.² Six months later the Recorder and Aldermen were instructed to attend the Lord Treasurer "to consult and advise on divers weighty matters."³ and the result of all these discussions and negotiations was manifest when on 29 November, 1632, a petition from the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the City was presented to the King in Council.⁴

This very important document pointed out that "the freedom of London which is heretofore of very great esteem is grown to be of little worth, by reason of the extraordinary enlargement of the suburbs, where great numbers of traders and handicraftsmen do enjoy, without charge, equal benefit with the freemen and citizens of London."

Other matters of grievance were the increase of buildings which pestered the City on every side, the influx of beggars and loose persons, the forestalling of markets, the raising of prices, the destruction or contamination of water-pipes and the danger of plague. The suburbs were grown "far bigger than the Cittie" and "some timely reformation" was needed. A sub-committee was appointed by the Privy

¹ City Records, Guildhall. Repertories, 46 f. 101b.

² Rep. 46 ff. 169b, 189, 346b.

³ Rep. 46, f. 413b.

⁴ P.C. Registers 2-42. 29 Nov., 1632.

Council to meet the Commissioners for Building and the Recorder and report proceedings. The sub-committee of Aldermen continued to meet and discuss¹ all kinds of problems and from time to time was invited to attend the Lord Treasurer, and on 22 October, 1633, the Council asked the City to consider "whether they would accept of parte of the suburbs into their jurisdiction and liberty for better government."² The Lord Mayor and Aldermen were asked to consider what would be "for the good of the citty and the freedom thereof" and "advise what may be the convenience or inconveniences that shall or may arise unto this Citty in accepting or not accepting the suburbs as aforesaid." Though there does not seem to be any record of a definite refusal of this suggestion, it is clear from what follows that it was not accepted, though frequent meetings took place between the Aldermen's Committee and the Lord Treasurer and the Commissioners for Building.³

Another problem, it will be remembered, touched the rights and privileges of the companies and their abuse by dwellers in the suburbs. Two cases helped to focus attention on the problem. The Recorder and City Council were asked to examine concerning a custom that a freeman of one trade could not work at another. After discussion it was certified that he could not.⁴

A stranger "using the trade of a Blacksmith" was stopped and his windows shut up by the Court of Aldermen, although he had been many years a resident, and the Company of Blacksmiths complained of the interference.⁵

Prolonged discussion on the possible extension of the jurisdiction of one of the City Companies was ended in favour of refusal. It came about in this way. The gardeners of Fulham, Chelsea and Kensington applied in 1633 for mem-

¹ Rep. 47, ff. 136, 21, 35b, 137, 203, 210b.

² Rep. 47, f. 422.

³ Rep. 48, ff. 1, 56, 94.

⁴ Rep. 48, ff. 38b, 304b. (10 Dec., 1633, 24 April, 1634.)

⁵ Rep. 48, f. 431b.

bership of the Gardeners' Company, which had been incorporated by James I, to the great annoyance of the City.

After considering the matter for over a year the City Authorities decided that the applicants were only husbandmen and not gardeners and so refused to admit them.¹ All through these varied negotiations we seem to see the inability of the City to face the responsibility involved in the organization of a greater London, and destiny was even now preparing to offer for the second time such a measure of development as might have solved many of the City's difficulties for years to come and rendered her still stronger to face the attacks on her privileges which were to be made. Somewhere between 24 January 1633/4 and 28 April 1634 the Privy Council sent an important note to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen. They understood that the suburbs of London and Westminster were grown so vast that (1) foreigners could not be kept in good order, (2) the citizens complained that they had lost their privileges and (3) the streets had become a nuisance and a danger. What was needed was a policy of stringent rules and a definite promise from all persons of position in the state that they would not use their influence to get exemption from the restrictions against new buildings. They felt that it was the "policie of a well-disposed body to be under one command," a policy which they heartily endorsed, and they needed to secure good order "sure and uniform government in the city for trade and markets." They therefore proposed the establishment of a committee consisting of a Privy Council Sub-Committee, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, the Judges and His Majesty's learned Counsel, to consider whether "by the increase of the number of the wards in the suburbs" the new buildings might not be reduced "to the two Incorporations of London and Westminster,"² and "conformity be established in them both."

¹ Rep. 47, f. 138. Rep. 49, ff. 56, 206, 261.

² *Remembrancia*, VIII, 124.

These far-reaching proposals were the result of a series of meetings of the Committee of the Privy Council to deal with new buildings, appointed in November 1633. The draft suggestion was made by Mr. Secretary Coke and was confirmed by the king.¹

Here was the City's opportunity granted them for the second time. If it had been accepted the City authorities could have obtained control over most of the suburbs, because with their greater experience and more central position and the only bridge over the river they would no doubt have secured a far larger share than that which would have fallen to Westminster.

The regulations as to buildings, foreigners, and the freedom of the City might well have been in their hands and from time to time the bounds could have been extended. Instead of the chaotic condition of the suburbs in the 18th century there could have been a series of gradually increasing well-organised wards.

There does not seem to be any record extant of the actual refusal of the City to add fresh wards, but it seems clear from subsequent proceedings that the great refusal was made. There was a continuance of attempts to stop new buildings, but in St. Giles's in the Fields above 170 new houses had been erected in a few years.² Many new taverns had been opened in London and the committing of an offender against the building regulations to the Fleet prison and the fine of £1000 threatened to another were only two examples of the spasmodic efforts to secure law and order in the suburbs.³ Finding that the City did not wish to co-operate in the way he wished, Charles made it clear that he intended to proceed without them. On 19 August, 1635, he wrote to the Lord Mayor to say that he "purposed to advise of some such course for the regulating of Merchant Strangers, as should be agreeable to justice and the practice of former times." He

¹ *Cal. S.P. Dom.*, 1633-34, p. 285.

² *Remembrancia*, VII, f. 151, VIII, f. 16b.

³ *Cal. S.P. Dom.*, 1633-4, p. 424.

had therefore appointed Oliver St. John "to peruse the records of the City and other places therein and requiring that directions might be given that he might be shown such records and take copies of such as he should think necessary."¹

On 30 September, 1635, a letter was sent to the Lord Mayor by the Lords of the Council. They were daily "importuned by pitiful petitions from tradesmen and shopkeepers of London, Westminster, and part of the County of Middlesex that their labours and livelihood were taken from them by the multitude of strangers and foreigners exercising manual trades."² He was to send them a list of the wards with the number of strangers in each. By 20 December this census was forthcoming and it appeared that there were 2547 in the wards, of whom a third were in Bishopsgate, almost as many in Portsoken and Farringdon Within and Without taken together, and a considerable population in Bridge Without and Aldgate.³

The situation in Westminster, meantime, was not satisfactory and the Court of Burgesses was not proving equal to its task. Further powers were sought from the king on the petition of the Lord High Steward, the Earl of Pembroke, early in 1636. The petition stated⁴ "that whereas by reason of yo^r Matie's and yo^r most Royall Progenitors usual residence neere or in the said Cittie, and for that your Matie's Courts of Ordinarie Justice usually sit there, the concourse of people thither is verie great and various, whence also so many offences and disorders are also in ye same Cittie and ye precincts thereof comited. That for want of a larger Power of Jurisdicon and Government in the said Church or inhabitants or both, the same offences and disorders can neither bee so conveniently punished nor prevented as is meete."

¹ *Cal. S.P. Dom.*, 1634-5, p. 291, 47, 197, 198.

² *Rem.*, vii, 156.

³ *Rem.*, vii, 165.

⁴ Quoted by J. E. Smith, *Local Government in Westminster*, 1889.

"And whereas it is conceived that if the said inhabitants were incorporated and the perpetual succession of Magistrates with the power of punishing offenders and with like privilege as other yo^r Matie's townes Corporate within this yo^r Kingdom, and as the matter duly considered might require (the rights of the said Church being Allwaies preserved) that a greate good would redound to yo^r Matie's said Cittie whence they should also be much more enabled to serve you."

News of this petition evidently reached the City of London, for, on 10 March, 1635/6, we read in the Repertories of the Court of Aldermen "forasmuch as this Court is given to understand that a petition hath been prepared to his Majestie for the incorporating of the suburbs and privileged places in and about London, it is thought fitt and soe ordered by this Court that Mr. May Esq. the Cittie's Sollicitor shall forthwith attend the Recorder to move the Attorney Generall for the obteyning of a cobby of the petition or whatever else constituted the same, that consideration may thereupon be taken how far the said business may be hurtfull or inconvenient to the City of London."¹

The king was now ready for his decisive step and on 8 April, 1636, was issued a grant of Incorporation for the Tradesmen and Artificers of the suburbs. During the same year he issued Patents to the Brick and Tilemakers, Soap-makers and Planters of Madder in the City of Westminster,² in this policy following the example of his father, but this new Incorporation was to be of a far more reaching character. It was entitled "An Incorporation graunted to the Tradesmen and Artificers inhabiting as well within the Citties of London and Westminster exempt from the freedom thereof, as without the said City and within three myles of the same, who have served apprenticeship, by the name of Governor, Wardens, Assistants and Commonalty."

It gave rules for the election of officers and freemen, rules as to foreigners and apprentices and stated that "the Juris-

¹ Rep. 50, f. 20b.

² *Patent Rolls 12-13 Charles I.* See Index pp. 82, 84, 85.

diction and forms of Government already established in London, Westminster and Southwark the liberties of the Tower and elsewhere within the said places and the Liberties privileges and communities and other rights heretofore granted to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster or lawfully passed by them and their High Steward remain inviolate." There were to be one Governor, 4 Wardens and a chamberlain.¹

The watchful court of Aldermen were at once alive to the dangers to the City of London which this new Incorporation might involve. They met and on 26 April passed the following resolution:—"Forasmuch as the Recorder informed the Court that the Patent for the Incorporation of the privileged places within London and the suburbs of three miles compass is ready to pass the great seale and that in the opinion of the same may be very inconvenient and prejudicial to the Citty, it is thought fitt and soe ordered by this Court that a petition forthwith be exhibited unto his Majestie in the name of the Citty that the consideration of the patent may be referred to some committee and that the Citty by there counsel may be there to speake thereunto and that his Majestie will be pleased in the meantime to give order for staying of the sealing thereof."²

This complaint was sent in the name of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen to the Lords of the Council and the king gave it as his pleasure that the matter be referred to the Commissioners for trade and that the sealing of the Patent should be delayed.³

On 10 May the Committee of Aldermen was ordered to attend the Privy Council with regard to the Incorporation and their grateful colleagues voted £100 for their expenses.⁴

¹ S. P. Dom., Ch. i, vol. cccxviii, 8 Ap., 1636. See Docquets Vol. 16.

Cal. S. P. Dom., 1635-6, pp. 359-60.

² Rep. 50, f. 191b.

³ Rem., vii, f. 178.

⁴ Rep. 50, ff. 205b., 206. Journals 37, f. 291; 38 f., 213.

Their protests however were of no avail and on 2 June, 1616. Letters Patent were issued to the new Incorporation.

After discussing the rapid growth of population in the suburbs (*loca valde populosa tandem devenerunt*) and the risks of plague (*quando ea loca pestis contigit*) the lack of enough companies to which apprentices could be bound, and the difficulty of organising the foreigners in and about London, the letters patent go on to appoint Peter Heywood, a Westminster Justice as Governor, and Christopher Lewkenor and John Reding as Chamberlains of the new Incorporation, two instead of the one originally scheduled.¹

This new body was to be "*unum corpus incorporatum et politicum*" and was to have 4 wardens, 80 assistants and apparently unlimited commonalty. No alien who was not a denizen could become governor, warden or assistant. The Patent provided for the four-fold division which was so natural and which had been adopted in 1613 with the establishment of Surveyors for the suburbs. The four main points of the compass were again taken as landmarks, but the actual divisions were different. The Western Ward had as its warden Richard Denham and was to contain "the city of Westminster with its liberties, the Liberty of the Duchy of Lancaster, the parish of St. Gile's in the Fields, so much of St. Dunstan's in the West and St. Andrew's Holborn as are without the liberty of the City of London and all other places towards the west within 3 miles."

The southern Ward under Drugo Stapeley was to contain "the Borough of Southwark and all the other places situated on the south side of the river Thames within 3 miles of the city of London."

The Northern or Central Ward was to contain "the parishes and precincts of Blackfriars and St. Martins-le-grand and all the other places on the north side within 3 miles between the western ward and the parish of St. Botolph's Aldgate on the East.'

¹ Patent Roll, 2744. 20 pars., 12 C.I. 2 June, 1630.

The eastern Ward under Matthew Bankes as Warden was to comprise "all of St. Botolph's which is outside the City, the liberty of St. Katherine and all other places within 3 miles."

These bounds were in many respects coterminous with limits included within the Bills of Mortality, extended as they were in 1636. Lambeth, Rotherhithe, Stepney, Newington and Hackney were definitely added (according to the Parish Clerks' historian Christie, by the king's special order), but there does not seem to be any evidence for his statement. The areas were clearly not exactly the same, because the parish of Lambeth, 6 miles from north to south, would only half fall within the three mile radius.

The Incorporation was now an accomplished fact and the City of London had to accommodate itself to the situation as far as it could. Mr. Oliver Lloyd made some suggestions for mutual agreement between the two Corporations and a committee of Aldermen was appointed on 30 June, 1636, to consider the propositions made as to the "New Incorporation of adjacent places within five (*sic*) miles," and to certify "how they find the proposals."¹

Nothing further happened till the next year when on 24 February, 1636/7 a proclamation was issued from Westminster *re* the new Incorporation and on 1 March it reached the City.² After commenting on the numbers of aliens and non-apprenticed folk who had intruded into places and trades within 3 miles of the City, it complained that thereby the suburbs had become "noysome and contagious, wares are falsified and sophisferated, and the tradesmen and artificers . . . much impoverished and unable to maintain their families." The proclamation re-affirms several of the most important details of the Letters Patent and states clearly that in the suburbs it has "erected and established a settled government," and that in future no one is to set up in trade

¹ Rep. 50, f. 263.

² Journals 37, f. 291.

in the suburbs without 7 years apprenticeship. What was really a census of traders in the suburbs was demanded by instructions that "the churchwardens, constables and other officers of the several parishes and precinctes within the place aforesaid doe forthwith deliver unto the chamberlains of the said Corporation the names and surname of all the present inhabitants within their respective parishes and precinctes who now exercise any trade, mistery, craft, occupation or dealing by retaile there as also the place of their abode."

On 15 March 1636/7, there was further discussion with the Privy Council in consequence of the representation by the Aldermen of "divers complaints exhibited unto them by many persons who had served as apprentices and were freemen of the City of London that the new Corporation of the City of Westminster, the suburbs of London and the places adjacent did press the said apprentices and freemen to enter themselves on the Corporation, to take an oath and pay a fine wherein they humbly sought to be relieved."¹ The Lord of the Council disclaimed any intention of infringing on the rights of the City of London, and ordered the new Incorporation to "forbear to presse or compel" any apprentice of freeman of London till further notice. Four days later the Council met, His Majesty being present at the Board, and the two Chamberlains of the new Corporation being in attendance. It was decided that in spite of the previous note the Corporation of the suburbs should "proceed as by letters Patent of his Majesty they are warranted, in taking into the said Corporation as well freemen of London as others of his Majesties' subjects, denizens or aliens, using any occupation, art, mistery or trading by retaile, inhabiting within their precincts, saving only weavers, brickmakers and tylemakers." The precincts granted to the city by the charter of James I were to be left alone, the City Companies were still to take view and search of retailers'

¹ P. C. Registers 2-47, p. 242.

goods in the suburbs, and all inhabitants of the suburbs were to take up their freedom by next All Saints' Day.¹

In Garrard's letters to Strafford (then Wentworth) occurs a remarkable comment on the Incorporation of the Suburbs and the attitude adopted by the City. "Here are abundance of new projects on foot, upon sea coal, salt, malt, picking of iron, cutting of rivers, setting up a new Corporation in the Suburbs of London, much opposed by the Londoners, and many others. Where profit may come to the king, let them pass, but to enrich private men, they have never my wishes. Discontinuance of Parliaments brings up this kind of grain, which commonly is blasted when they come."²

At the end of the first year the officers of the new Incorporation presented their report. All kinds of difficulties had been put in their way and in spite of constant unremitting zeal, they had not raised as large a sum as had been expected. They had not been allowed to meddle with the inhabitants of Blackfriars, Whitefriars, St. Bartholomew's, Duke's Place, Coldharbour, St. Katherine's, and the Tower. Thousands pleaded poverty when summoned to take up their freedom, others were refractory and set a bad example, while most men of ability were "unwilling to meete promiscuously with multitudes in these infectious times."³ "All these obstacles to achieving good business (by god's mercy and the King's favour) will safely fall off, but before these ends be relieved the business will advance but slowly."

Christopher Lewkenor, who was more sympathetic to the royalist policy than his colleague, added a footnote, assuring the Council of his zeal, and hinting that the King's wisdom will be able to remove all these difficulties which he assumes to be largely imaginary. The plague of 1636 was undoubtedly a great hindrance to the enrolling of freemen, and in November the Council directed the Attorney General to

¹ P.C. Reg., 2-47, p. 254, and *Rem.*, vii, f. 191.

² *Strafford's Letters*, ii p. 55, 23 March, 1636-7.

³ S. P. Dom., ccclxiii, Ch. i, No. 88.

draft a new proclamation giving time till Xmas for those who "shall desire to be received thereunto, as well for the reason of the recent plague, by which divers who had a desire could not come to be enrolled, as for such other reasons as he shall find fitt."¹ It was further decided that brewers and weavers were to join the new Corporation, and that with a view to deciding about the privileged places the Recorder and Council of London were to meet the two Chamberlains of the New Corporation, and H.M's Attorney and Solicitor Generals, and "upon perusal of the charters and hearing the allegations on both sides shall settle the business between them if they can, or otherwise acquaint his Majesty and the Board of the true state of those places, how they doe stand in regarde of the two Corporations of London and of the suburbs."²

This phraseology makes it quite clear that the new Incorporation was something very different from the numerous fresh companies which the first two Stuarts, for the purposes of revenue, delighted to enfranchise. The two Corporations of London and of the suburbs are regarded by the Council as being on terms of comparative equality.

The proclamation, dated November, was not issued in the City till 22 November and is only then recorded in the City's Archives.³ On the same day the Council sent messages to the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex calling their attention to the "manifest refractoriness of sundry persons in presuming to build in contempt of proclamations. We in his Majestie's name command and require you to demolish all such houses as are mentioned in a schedule annexed."⁴ The schedule is not attached so we are unaware of the locality of the offending structures, but the fact that the instructions were sent to the Sheriffs and not to the Incor-

¹ *Rem.*, VIII, 200. P.C. Reg., 2-48, f. 34b.

² *Ibid.*

³ P.C. Reg., 2-48, f. 346. Journals, 38 f. 21b.

⁴ S.P. Dom., CCCLXXII, Ch. i, nos. 12 and 13.

poration of the Suburbs is perhaps significant as showing the limits of its jurisdiction.

What seems a useful suggestion was made on 21 November, 1637, by Captain Thomas Bardsey, a veteran who had served with distinction in the Navy "upon most expeditions. . . . since your Majesty's happy coming out of Spain." He proposed himself as Provost Marshal and pointed out though London possessed one, "the Subbarbes, which is much more frequented and pestered with vagabonds, rogues and other malefactors than the City, is destitute of such an officer, which hinders the reformation intended by your Majesty."

Captain Bardsey notes that the Suburbs had been incorporated because there had been a want of government there and he repeats the phrase "one bodie politque and corporate"

It is not quite clear whether Bardsey obtained the position asked for, but the evidence is against it because when in 1649 the Commonwealth Parliament appointed Provost-Marshals for Westminster and Southwark, they made no reference to any previous appointment.

The friction between the two Corporations continued and on 29 April, 1638, the Privy Council had to make complaint of obstructions to the smooth working of the new Incorporation.¹ They insisted that the privileges of the Corporation should be maintained and to facilitate matters called representatives of both corporations to meet.² A conference met on 3 June, 1638, to settle the vexed question of the privileged places and a Committee of Aldermen attended to put the City's view of the case. "Item, it is thought fitt and soe ordered by this Court that Mr. Recorder, Christopher Clitheroe, Edward Bromfield Esq. . . . shall on Sunday next in the afternoon bee present at the hearing of the cause of difference between the city and the new Incorporation before the the Lords of the most honourable Privy Council."³

¹ P.C., 2-49, f. 137.

² P.C., 2-49, f. 211, 251.

³ Rep., 52, f. 159.

This conference failed to settle the dispute and it recurs again in the following year. Meantime on 18 September, 1638, Charles sent instructions to Philip Thomas, one of the messengers of the Chamber to take into custody all those inhabitants living within 3 miles of London who ventured to "use any mistery, trade, handicraft, buying or selling by retail or any other course of getting a living within the lymitts of the Corporation aforesaid" without taking up their freedom in the approved manner. Offenders were to be kept "in safe custodie until they shall conform themselves," and were threatened with the King's severe displeasure and the pains and penalties to be inflicted by the Governor, Wardens and Assistants of the Corporation. At the same time the King charged "all maiores, sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, Bayliffes, Constables and other our officers and loving subjects to be aiding and assisting as they tender our service."¹

One of the "refractory persons" alluded to on various occasions who was threatened so severely in the instructions here given was a certain Thomas Williams and in December of the previous year (1637) an order was given to the Keeper of the Gatehouse in Westminster for his imprisonment and "his appearance at the next quarter sessions to answer charges of the corporation of artificers and tradesmen within three miles of the City of Westminster."²

It was not till June 1638 that a warrant was issued for his arrest and more than 2 years later, in November 1640, Williams petitioned the House of Commons and complained of "persecution and unjust imprisonment by the Feltmakers' and Haberdashers' Company of Westminster because he had set up shop there after 7 years apprenticeship in London, being free of the Clothworkers' Company in London and having paid a fine to be free of the Westminster Company also." It is difficult to say whether this long drawn out case

¹ S.P. Dom., cccxcviii, C i, ff. 100 and 105.

² *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, H. of Lords, iv, p. 29.

was typical, but if so it points to considerable ill feeling between those chiefly concerned.

The early years of the Incorporation show remarkable activity on the part of Peter Heywood, the governor, but part of this may simply be due to his position as Justice of the Peace in Westminster. He was busily employed in issuing and sending to the Privy Council certificates of oaths of allegiance, examining prisoners in the Gate House and consulting with Major Jones as to the wharves and piers on Thames side. One task that he undertook seems to spring from his duties as Governor of the New Incorporation, or at the least shows his readiness to deal with problems not confined to Westminster. He was alarmed because during plague periods divers persons "in the outparishes in St. Giles, Clerkenwell, Cripplegate, Shoreditch, Whitechapel and Stepney and St. Katherine's and other places have cellars full of rags which they buy and sell infected though they are." He had sent searchers to apprehend the rag-gatherers, but he feared that if the rags were transported or were made into paper it would spread the disease. He asked that the rags might be burnt or buried, preferably the latter, as he feared that the smoke would be "dangerous in infecting the air." Other duties that came his way were the organisation of the coal supply in Westminster and a petition to the Lord Keeper about the levy of ship-money.¹

In 1638 the attempt of Laud to force episcopacy on the Scottish Church brought about something of a national uprising in Scotland, and Charles was fain to secure money by granting an *inspeximus* charter to the citizens of London in October, 1638. By this charter the citizens had many privileges, which had been in doubt, finally confirmed and the vexed problem of apprentices was settled to their satisfaction. The City had been roused by the writs of ship money and the forfeiture of its Irish estates, only regained considerably later by a heavy payment. It would seem as if for the time

¹ The P.C. Registers for 1636-8 are full of his activities.

being many of the disputed points were now settled and it is a little strange that there is no reference to the incorporation of the Suburbs, unless we conclude that everything was for the moment amicably settled. There were still complaints as to the resort of strangers to London and the Suburbs and a return was demanded from the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City, the Justices of the Peace for Middlesex, Surrey and Westminster "in their several jurisdictions were adjacent to the City of London or suburbs and the City of Westminster."¹ This was on 13 March 1638-9 and only a week later there was a suit between the City and Suburbs concerning freemen and privileged places and this took the form of a collusory action in the King's Bench.²

It will be remembered that John Reding was one of the two Chamberlains of the New Incorporation, and in June, 1640 he sent a petition to the King complaining that his post was one of expense rather than of profit. The opposition which he had met had compelled him to spend £1700 out of his poor estate. There had been no profit for the past two years and he had incurred debt through employing a clerk. He had given up his own profession out of which he comfortably supported a family, and instead was heavily in debt.³ The petition was referred to the Lord Treasurer for his views and meantime another petition came from Reding asking that Lewkenor might be allowed to resign and thus leave Reding sole chamberlain. Lewkenor was accordingly appointed Counsel to the Incorporation, but Richard Barnard was made joint chamberlain with Reding, so the latter was no better off, and no doubt cherished feelings of resentment towards the King which he afterwards had an opportunity of showing.

The further history of this Incorporation, of whose early story the records are so full, is extremely difficult to discover. It might have been thought that the two Charters of 1638

¹ P.C. Reg., 2-50, f. 150.

² P.C. Reg., 2-50, f. 173.

³ S.P. Dom., cccxvi, Ch. i, see Book of Petitions, vol. cccxiii, pp. 189, 190.

would have drawn its teeth, but in 1640 Williams was still retained in the Westminster Gatehouse for breach of its regulations and additional officers were being appointed. It could hardly be expected that after four stormy years it should have developed as Charles had hoped, but the rivalry that existed between it and the City Corporation makes it clear that it was far more than a mere trading company or a guild of craftsmen. A body so comprehensive as to include all the artificers and traders in the Suburbs would, when fully organised, have been a very serious rival to the City of London, but the unrest that existed in England from the meeting of the Levy Parliament onwards made its position precarious and unstable.

On 21 July, 1641, after the Star Chamber had been dissolved there was a petition from "the Inhabitants of Westminster and the Suburbs of London in the County of Middlesex" pointing out that "various decrees and proclamations have in former reigns and in the present reign been made for the relief of the poor, the suppression of inmates and prevention of the growing of the infection of the plague, but since the dissolution of the Court of Star Chamber a question has arisen how far these orders are to be carried out.¹ Petitioners pray that the Justices and other officers may be directed to execute them as before or that other orders may be speedily made by the House to the same effect." Five months later, on 28 December, Charles did "Straitly charge and command all the inhabitants of his cities of London and Westminster and the Liberties thereof and also of the Suburbs and confines of the cities and places adjoining" to refrain from disorder.²

Times were difficult and revolt was in the air. In the course of a few months Civil War was to be an unpleasant factor in the lives of the King and his subjects. Whether the fourfold division of the Suburbs worked, and how long it remained in use it is difficult to say. So soon did the

¹ *Hist. MSS. Comm.* H. of Lords, 4th report, p. 90.

² P.C. Reg. 2-50, f. 401.

great infernecine struggle with its national appeal obscure all parochial matters. The two extracts given above make it clear that the Incorporation of the Suburbs exercised no judicial or administrative functions except so far as its officials were Justices of the Peace. But it is important to remember that the three complaints contained in the Petition were due to neglect of concerns which had led to the establishment of the office of surveyor in 1613 and indirectly perhaps to the establishment of the new Incorporation. Perhaps the breaking of the Star Chamber and the decay of the Council's power had its effect on the bodies which it had brought into existence. Perhaps the need for Parliament to keep on good terms with the City, from which its chief financial help was received, made it unwilling to favour a Corporation whose activities were so distasteful to the City of London. Whatever the cause, the fact remains that for the next 20 years the Corporation of the Suburbs seems to have been inactive if not actually defunct.

All through the Civil War and Commonwealth times the Suburbs are organised on entirely different lines and it is not till the Restoration that we hear of the Incorporation of the Suburbs again.

The four wards established in 1636 would have been a very useful division for purposes of assessments, but on 29 November, 1642, after Edgehill, when money was demanded to pay the Parliamentary troops, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen were made responsible for appointing assessors for the City, the Court of Burgesses for Westminster, and the Burgesses for Southwark, while for the Suburbs this significant arrangement was made. "For the Suburbs of London and Westminster, the respective Knights of the Shire, where the said Suburbs are, shall have hereby the like power to name assessors."¹

It is not certain from this omission that the Corporation was inoperative, but the sudden silence is instructive, and a

¹ *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, 1, pp. 38-41.

possible explanation of its inaction is the fact that the two Chamberlains took opposite sides in the great struggle. Christopher Lewkenor, who had been recorder of Chichester as well as Chamberlain of the New Incorporation, championed the King's cause in Manchester and eventually his property was sequestrated in 1651,¹ whereas John Reding figures as a prominent Parliamentarian, and on 17 February 1643-4 he was appointed a member of the Committee for raising volunteers to defend London, Westminster, the County of Middlesex and especially Uxbridge. Six months later he was dealing with the Suburban Militia in Middlesex. In June 1648 he is a trustee of a fund of £50,000 for relieving and reducing Ireland and in 1659 he is a Militia Commissioner for Middlesex. In none of these entries is there any reference to his connection with the Incorporation of the Suburbs.²

It is instructive to see the various ways in which the Suburbs are organised during the interregnum, and we may perhaps see in the lack of consistency here exhibited a foretaste and perhaps a contributory cause of the multiplicity of authorities, which even today is manifest in the London area. The chief phrases used to denote the suburbs are three: the area contained within the Lines of Communication, that covered by the Bills of Mortality, and the grouping of parishes into 12 classes for ecclesiastical purposes in 1648. The first of these refers of course to the forts and connecting trenches constructed in 1642-3 when the Royal Army threatened the City. The line was based partly on strategic grounds and partly on the extent to which population had developed outside the walls. It ran from Wapping, through Whitechapel, Shoreditch, Hoxton and Finsbury Fields to Islington, thence through Bloomsbury and St. Giles' to Hyde Park Corner, past the site of Buckingham Palace and Tothill Fields to the river, and from Lambeth through St. George's Fields to Rotherhithe. In February,

¹ *Acts and Ord.*, II, p. 524.

² *Ibid.*, I, pp. 383 passim.

1642-3 we find the phrase "the cities of London and Westminster, the Suburbs of the same and the Borough of Southwark,"¹ but in September of the same year occurs the expression "the hamblets of the Tower of London and the Liberties thereof, the City of Westminster and the Liberties thereof, and all the other parts and places of the Counties of Middlesex and Surrey within the forts or lines of communication, and parishes adjacent mentioned in the Weekly Bills of Mortality."² This phrase "within the Bills" occurs several times in the "Acts and ordinances of the Interregnum" sometimes associated with "the Lines of Communication" and sometimes separately. When in 1647 the Lines and Forts were "slighted and demolished"³ the name did not at once die and in 1651 it is still being used to indicate a well-defined area.

Sometimes the phrasing is more explicit and in 1647 we read of one Militia Committee to deal with "Southwark and the parts adjacent within the Lines of Communication on the south side of the Thames in the County of Surrey" and another for the "City of Westminster, the Savoy, Clement Danes, Giles-in-the-Fields, Andrews Holborn, Sepulchres, James Clerkenwell, Mary Islington and Giles Cripplegate in the County of Middlesex."⁴ This indicates an extension of Westminster's jurisdiction over an entirely new area, arranged parochially and cutting across previous divisions. Yet another limit was made in January 1647-8 when the Westminster Militia Committee was given control over "all the parishes, liberties and places together with Dunstons in the west, the liberties of the Roll's and Botolph's Aldersgate and so many of them as are in the County of Middlesex and within the Weekly Bills of Mortality and the late Lines of Communication except the Hamblets of the Tower."⁵

¹ *Acts and Ords.*, 1, 70.

³ *Ibid.*, 1, 1008.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1, 1063.

² *Ibid.*, 1, 322-7.

⁴ *Acts and Ords.*, 1, 1011.

The triumph of the Presbyterians led to the appointment of triers to test the suitability of candidates for the Ministry and these were divided into 12 classes.

The grouping of elders was on similar lines with a territorial division and grouping of parishes. The first 7 groups cover in the main the old city boundaries, while the 5 latter groups extend to the Suburbs. No. 8 dealt with Hackney and Leonard's Shoreditch and Mary or Soke (*sic.*) Newington. No. 9 includes besides Barking, Fenchurch and the Tower, the out parishes of Stepney, Wapping and Whitechapel. No. 10 covered George's Southwark, Lambeth, Mary Magdalene Bermondsey, Mary Overy, Newington Butts, Olaves, Rotherhithe, Thomas's Hospital and Thomas's Southwark. No. 11 included Clement Danes, Giles-in-the-Fields, Martins-in-the-Fields, Margaret's Westminster, Peter's Westminster and Knightsbishop. No. 12 covered Andrew's Holborn, Sepulchre's, Dunstan's-in-the-West, Bartholemew Greater and Lesser, James Clerkenwell and Mary Islington.

This grouping of parishes, all, as was the Puritan Custom, without the word Saint added, is reminiscent of the 4 Wards of 1636, and even more so of the Bills of Mortality and the Lines of Communications. But it is not the same as any and cuts across the various divisions in a fresh manner. An important additional order runs "all the several parishes and places within the Cities of London and Westminster and the parts adjacent, according as they are distinguished into 12 classes, shall be the extent and bound of the province of London."¹

All through these years the population of London was growing and extending, not perhaps as fast as in the more peaceful period of expansion before the civil war, but with sufficient rapidity to produce fresh problems. Limits that had sufficed in earlier years seemed inadequate now and when in 1656, Cromwell was persuaded to deal with the question of building in the suburbs the new regulations were

¹ *Acts and Ords.*, I, 1188.

ordered to apply to all land within 10 miles of London.¹ The Instrument of Government, under which Barebones Parliament was elected, gave another indication of the trend of growth, by ordering that the numbers of members for the Metropolitan area should be—London 6, Westminster 2, Southwark 2, the rest of Middlesex 4, and the rest of Surrey (excluding Guildford and Reigate) 6.

It will be remembered that Captain Bardsey had asked to be appointed Provost Marshal of the new Incorporation of the Suburbs so as to give them the same advantages which London possessed. On 25 May, 1649, Parliament appointed two Provost Marshals, one, Zachary Bishopp, "for the City of Westminster and within the late lines of communications," and the other Captain N. Munck of Southwark, "for all pleas on the other side of the water and within the late lines." The Marshals were given "power to put in execution and exercise all such Powers as the Provost Marshal of London . . . now hath and doth lawfully exercise."²

One other series of attempts to deal with some parts of the Suburbs must be mentioned and that is the efforts to incorporate Southwark and Westminster. For almost exactly a century the borough of Southwark had been in an anomalous position with regard to the City of London. From 1550 onwards its inhabitants had been "ruled by an Alderman not of their choosing and by a Common Council to which they sent no representatives."³

On 4 December, 1649, Southwark presented a petition to Parliament asking for Incorporation or Enfranchisement either within or without the City of London and pointing out that the inhabitants were frequently charged for purposes of taxation both in London and in Surrey whereas between the two jurisdictions the poor were often altogether neglected.⁴

¹ *Acts and Ords.*, ii, pp. 1223-1234.

² *Ibid.*,

³ R. R. Sharp, *London and the Kingdom*, II, p. 324.

⁴ *Journals*, 41, f. 17b. *Journal*, H. of C., VI, 329.

Parliament was not unsympathetic to judge by their action in entrusting the assessment of taxes in Southwark to the burgesses and 1 January, 1649-50 found the Common Council applying themselves to the new problem.¹ "At this Court was read a coppie of the petition of the Borough of Southwark and the adjacent parishes on the south side of the river Thames within the weekly Bills of Mortality lately presented to Parliament whereby is desired they may be incorporated or enfranchised and also severale proceedings of the Committee of Parliament to whom the said petition was presented, also a coppie of the desire of Southwark in promotion of the said petition." A Committee of the Common Council was appointed to consider the petition and draft a counter petition to Parliament in support of the City's rights and privileges in Southwark. At the end of January 1649-51 the counter petition was presented to Parliament and referred to the Committee for Corporations. This Committee heard both sides and the City's case was long and argumentative.²

They claimed that their rights were in danger and protested that any inconveniences complained of were not due to any action of the City, which had already attempted a reformation by demanding the removal from Southwark of the Marshalsea prison. The City was prepared to discuss any defects in the government of the Borough but protested against dismemberment. If Southwark were incorporated it would interfere with the City Companies which exercised jurisdiction over members living 2 or 3 miles away in the Suburbs. Evidently the City was entirely ignoring the Southern Ward established by the Privy Council in 1636. A conference was proposed³ but nothing seems to have come of it and Southwark failed to secure its incorporation.

On 17 July 1655 the inhabitants of the Borough sent another petition to Parliament and there was some dispute

¹ Journals 40, f. 262, 51, ff, 17b., 19b., *Journal H. of C.*, VI, 351.

² Journals, 41 ff, 22, 24.

³ *Ibid.*, 41, f. 27b.

about the appointment of a bailiff.¹ In Charles II's reign there were other troubles between the City of London and its unfortunate neighbour, but after a time the agitation died down and another century of silence ensued.²

In the Journals for 1650 there is also the record of a petition for Incorporation from Westminster, "At this Courte was read the coppie of the petition of the inhabitants of Southwark (*sic.*) Westminster to the Parliament, as also the draft of the Modelle annexed, whereby they desire to be incorporated according to the same."³ An order of Parliament dated 5 February, 1650, refers to the Committee for Corporations a petition "that such a government may be settled amongst them as may conduce to the well-governing and regulating the inhabitants of Westminster."⁴

On 2 April, 1650, it was arranged that "any objections to the Westminster Model were to be declared by the Committees of the Common Council to the Committee of Corporations."⁵

The matter hung about, as so many city matters seem to have done under the Commonwealth, and on 16 December, 1651, and again on 30 March, 1652, it was put down as urgent business, but on 8 June, 1652, there was a further petition of the inhabitants and an order was issued for "making forthwith a report on the model draft for the government of Westminster."⁶ However nothing further seems to have been done during the Commonwealth period and when Charles II returned there was an anomalous situation. The proposed incorporation of Southwark and Westminster was still unsettled and the new Incorporation of the Suburbs was in abeyance if not actually moribund. Charles was anxious to conciliate the City and listened sympathetically to a petition presented to him on 8 February 1660-1 with

¹ Journals, 41, ff. 19b., 22, 25, 27.

² *Ibid.*, 47, f. 29; 48 f. 241b.

³ *Ibid.*, 41, f. 20.

⁴ Journal, H. of C., vi p. 323.

⁵ Journals, 41 f. 23.

⁶ *Ibid.*, H. of C., vii, pp. 51, 112, 14c.

regard to the Suburbs.¹ The question of Incorporation was again in the air and the Citizens were anxious to insist on "reducing to the freedom of the said Citty, such persons living in or near the same as did by trade and traffique as merchants acquire unto themselves great estate and yet did wholly refuse or neglect the freedom of the said Citty." They begged the King to insert "a proviso to that purpose in the charter of the several Corporations of the said merchants." A month later the new Incorporation of the Suburbs, whose privileges ran counter to the City's demands as here expressed, came up apparently for the last time.

On 8 March 1660-1² the Court of Common Council was approached by petition from Sir Francis Mackworth and Sir John Talbot with reference to the Suburbs. These knights had asked the King for a grant of incorporation "for settling the government of the Suburbs." Sir Gilbert Mackworth presented a paper to the Common Council on his brother's behalf "desiring the approbation of this citty, without which they intended not to proceed further." The question was fully discussed, "the Court entering a serious debate of the said matter did declare (nem. con.) that they conceived the Incorporating of the Suburbs of London district from the citty to be destructive to the interests and trade of the citty and doe refer it to a committee for trade of the citty to draw up a petition with reasons to his Majesty against the Incorporating the suburbs distinct from the citty and what further they shall see fit to offer to his Majesty touching the settlement of the Suburbs under a government and to report their doings, and the said Committee to call to their assistance the citty's Counsel from time to time as they shall think fitt." There is no further notice in the City Records as to the fate of the petition, but it clearly was successful and the idea of incorporating the suburbs, whether distinct from the city or in connection with it would seem

¹ Journals, 41 x f. 247b.

² Journals, 41 x f. 257.

to have been dropped permanently and the whole problem left for two centuries and more to elapse.

The London of those days was not imaginative enough to envisage the notion of a greater London and it was left for the Metropolitan Board of Works, and later on for the L.C.C., to enlarge London's bounds and make provision for its adequate government. The idea of extending London's bounds still further, so as to include all the Suburban areas, readily occurs to the rulers of greater London today, and in spite of the failure of the recent Royal Commission to grant what was asked, there is more than a probability that in a few years we may see an extension developing on gradual lines. Already the policy of peaceful penetration by means of scheduled areas for building has begun.

The attitude displayed by the City Corporation in the 17th century left a large and constantly increasing area without satisfactory government and without any connection with the city, and was largely responsible for the chaotic condition of the suburbs under the Georges. By the exclusiveness of the Guilds and their inability to expand to meet changed conditions there grew up in the City what the Webbs call "an extensive class of non-freemen in whose offices the bulk of the financial business and foreign commerce was managed, but who had their dwellings outside its boundaries." Bankers and Merchants ignored the local government of their wards and neglected to qualify for representation in the Court of Aldermen or Common Council.

For this state of affairs the Great Refusal in the 17th century was largely responsible. Mistrust of the Royal aims may have been the chief reason for the city's refusal to accept or allow civic expansion in the reign of Charles I, but the refusal under Charles II has not the same excuse. A great opportunity was then lost, and the apathy of the city and the shortsighted selfishness of the Companies delayed the expansion of orderly central civic government for more than two centuries.
