

had made themselves conspicuous—"lucky draymen and shoemakers"—and on these members he bestowed the title of "Lords." It was the least happy of all his expedients, and the one most displeasing to all parties.

No sooner had the session opened, than the Commons began to attack the "Upper House." They not only refused to transact any business with them, but absolutely ignored their existence. Their contumacious conduct threw the Protector "into a rage and passion like unto madness." All his attempts at constitutional government had failed, and, it is not to be wondered at that he was weary of the task. "God knows," he said with some bitterness, "I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, and to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than to have undertaken such a government as this." He summoned the two Houses into his presence, and in a speech "mingled with sadness and irritation," dissolved Parliament. "The Lord," he exclaimed at parting, "be judge between you and me." But no other course was open to him. Had he not done so, anarchy and bloodshed must have followed. "Believe me," writes a contemporary, "that dissolution was of such necessity, that if their session had continued but a few days longer, all had been blood, both in the city, and in the country, on Charles Stuart's account." *For the remainder of his life Cromwell ruled without a Parliament.*

8. **Cromwell's Death and Character.** Cromwell was only fifty-nine when he died, but he was prematurely old. The strain of sixteen years' conflict in the field and in the council, the failure of his plans for establishing a permanent government, the plots against his life, and the constant fear of assassination, together with the knowledge that he was hated by his enemies and deserted by many of his old friends, preyed upon his mind and weakened his bodily strength. The death of his eldest and best-beloved daughter, Mrs. Claypole, whom he attended with unremitting care during her last illness, still further undermined his already shattered health. In the summer of 1658, he was seized with an attack of ague, and laid upon a bed of sickness, from which he never rose again. Two days before he died, a mighty storm of wind and rain swept over England, long remembered