

## CHAPTER IV

1688-1783

THE Revolution of 1688 drove out the Stuarts and, by the settlement under which William and Mary came to the throne of England, Parliament gained immensely in power. Henceforward the holders of royal grants and the directors of chartered companies were not merely dependent upon royal favour; they had to reckon also with the House of Commons, which meant not less but, if possible, more corruption.<sup>1</sup> Further, as the excesses of the reign of Charles II had been due to reaction against Puritanism, so before the end of the seventeenth century reaction set in against these excesses.

In his diary, under date November 24, 1699, John Evelyn wrote, 'Such horrible robberies and murders were committed as had not been known in this nation. Atheism, profaneness, blasphemy, amongst all sorts, portended some judgment if not amended, on which a society was set on foot, who obliged themselves to endeavour the reforming of it in London and

<sup>1</sup> Reference should be made to Macaulay's pages on Parliamentary corruption as a system which he dated from 1690, and from the ascendancy of Danby, then Marquis of Caermarthen. Chap. xv of the *History*, in the 1855 edition, vol. iii, pp. 541-7.