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The idea of non-party government in England,
1702-1761, with some special reference

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I

Until recent years there has been a widely accepted theory that party government in the modern sense of the term, that is, government by a group of men all of the same political complexion, united upon certain fundamental principles, and backed by a majority in the House of Commons, was a practice which followed almost immediately upon the Revolution of 1688. As a result of this antedating, the tendency has been to gloss over the work and theories of those Englishmen who strove to evade the implications of government by party, and who advocated a system of government by capable and moderate men, regardless of party ties. It is the purpose of this thesis to show that although in the years following 1688 the constitution was undoubtedly drawing toward the stage where a Cabinet based upon party was to displace a government whose members were chosen solely by the King irrespective of party affiliations, this conclusion was by no means accepted or foreseen by the men who were actually administering the affairs of the nation during the reign of Anne, and that, although non-party government ceased to be practiced after Anne's death, the theory was nevertheless retained by some of the foremost minds of the time.

II

The brief period from 1706-1710 was the only time during the twelve years of Anne's reign in which England was governed