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COMMENTARIES

ON THE

LIFE AND REIGN

OF

CHARLES THE FIRST,

KING OF ENGLAND.

BY ISAAC DISRAELI.

A NEW EDITION, REVISED BY THE AUTHOR,

AND EDITED

BY HIS SON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
OF THE SABBATICAL INSTITUTIONS	1

CHAPTER II.

OBSERVATION OF THE SABBATH UPON SUNDAYS	8
---	---

CHAPTER III.

THE CAUSE OF THE REVIVAL BY CHARLES THE FIRST OF "THE BOOK OF SPORTS" FOR RECREATION ON SUNDAYS	22
--	----

CHAPTER IV.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE SEAS	35
---------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

CAUSES OF THE INACTION OF THE ENGLISH FLEETS	47
--	----

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE COMMOTIONS OF SCOTLAND	61
---	----

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE CONSPIRACIES OF THE SCOTS AGAINST CHARLES THE FIRST	77
--	----

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF CHARLES THE FIRST IN THE FIRST INVASION OF THE SCOTS	90
---	----

2

CHAPTER IX.

	PAGE
CHARLES THE FIRST RESISTS THE SEDUCTIONS OF CARDINAL RICHELIEU	110

CHAPTER X.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF CARDINAL RICHELIEU ON THE FATE OF CHARLES THE FIRST	115
--	-----

CHAPTER XI.

HISTORY AND TRIAL OF THE EARL OF STRAFFORD	121
--	-----

CHAPTER XII.

THE ARTS OF INSURGENCY	151
----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEATH OF STRAFFORD	165
----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

ARMY PLOT.—HISTORY OF COLONEL GORING.—PYM'S MANAGEMENT OF THE PLOT.—DEFENCE OF LORD CLARENDON AND HUME .	197
---	-----

CHAPTER XV.

THE MARQUIS OF HAMILTON	215
-----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVI.

THE INCIDENT	242
------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LETTER OF THE SCOTS TO THE FRENCH KING.—A DESIGN OF THEIR SEPARATION FROM ENGLAND.—BURNET'S ANECDOTE OF LORD LOUDON EXAMINED	252
--	-----

CHAPTER XVIII.

	PAGE
THE SECRET MOTIVE OF CHARLES THE FIRST'S SECOND JOURNEY TO SCOTLAND.—THE FORGED LETTER OF LORD SAVILLE . .	265

CHAPTER XIX.

THE IRISH REBELLION	276
-------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XX.

THE COMMONS PERSIST IN NOT RELIEVING IRELAND	288
--	-----

CHAPTER XXI.

THE GRAND REMONSTRANCE	293
----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HISTORY OF LORD DIGBY	298
-------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FLIGHT FROM THE CAPITAL	315
---------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CIVIL WARS	338
--------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXV.

"WHO BEGAN THE WAR, THE KING OR THE PARLIAMENT?" .	351
--	-----

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FIRST BATTLE BETWEEN THE KING AND THE PARLIAMENT .	362
--	-----

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MILITARY LIFE OF CHARLES THE FIRST	376
--	-----

CHAPTER XXVIII.		PAGE
JUDGE JENKINS AND THE "LAW OF THE LAND"		395
CHAPTER XXIX.		
SECRET ANECDOTES OF THE YEARS 1644 AND 1645		406
CHAPTER XXX.		
THE TWO FRENCH RESIDENTS		424
CHAPTER XXXI.		
FLIGHT FROM OXFORD TO THE SCOTTISH CAMP		436
CHAPTER XXXII.		
THE KING IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CAMP		445
CHAPTER XXXIII.		
THE ARMY		456
CHAPTER XXXIV.		
THE KING'S PROGRESS WITH THE ARMY		474
CHAPTER XXXV.		
CROMWELL AND CHARLES THE FIRST AT HAMPTON COURT		486
CHAPTER XXXVI.		
OF THE LETTER SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN INTERCEPTED BY CROMWELL AND IRETON		504
CHAPTER XXXVII.		
THE SINGULAR NEGOTIATION OF BERKLEY AND ASHBURNHAM WITH THE GOVERNOR OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT		508

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

	PAGE
IMPRISONMENT AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT	517

CHAPTER XXXIX.

TREATY AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT	529
---------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XL.

HAMMOND	540
-------------------	-----

CHAPTER XLI.

HURST BLOCK-HOUSE AND WINDSOR CASTLE	545
--	-----

CHAPTER XLII.

THE TRIAL AND THE DECAPITATION	563
--	-----

CHAPTER XLIII.

CONCLUSION	575
----------------------	-----

APPENDIX	581
--------------------	-----



LIFE AND REIGN

OF

CHARLES THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE SABBATICAL INSTITUTIONS.

WE have now arrived at the investigation of one of the most curious, one of the most delicate, and one of the most misconceived points in the history of Charles the First—the custom of performing, at Court, plays and masques on Sundays, or, as the spirit of party afterwards emphatically designated them, on “Sabbaths.” Sunday was usually fixed on for these recreations as the festival day of the week—and the revival of the memorable declaration of James the First for promoting lawful sports on that day, such as bowling, wrestling, dancing, distinguished from bear-baiting, cock-fighting, &c., was not one of the least causes of the civil war among the populace.

The memory of Charles is still loaded by some persons, as well as by the Puritans of this day, with the popular obloquy of irreligion and profaneness in violating the Sabbath. Even his friends, startled by a profaneness, which certainly never entered into the mind of the monarch, eluded the torturing inquiry.

But it is our business to enter more particularly into the motives and conduct of Charles the First; to trace out the opinions of himself and his predecessors upon this misconceived subject; to ascertain, we should rather say, the notions and the practice of the whole Christian world with regard to it, since the establishment of the Christian faith.

of a Jewish Sabbath. It was a strange abandonment of all the avocations of life. They saw the fields of the Hebrews forsaken by the labourer; the ass unsaddled; the oar laid up in the boat; they marked a dead stillness pervading the habitation of the Israelite; the fires all extinguished; the accustomed meal unprepared; the man-servant and the maiden leave their work, and the trafficker, at least one day in the week, refusing the offered coin. The most scrupulous superstitions had long been superadded to the observance of the Mosaic institution, by the corrupting artifices of the rabbinical Pharisees. The female was not allowed to observe herself in a mirror, lest she might be tempted to pluck a hair; the Israelite might not even scrape off the dirt on his shoes, he must not lift a weight, or touch money, or ride, or bathe, or play on an instrument; the most trivial act of domestic life connected with labour or business, was a violation of the Sabbath. Even the distance of a Sabbath-walk was not to exceed that space which lies between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives; this was the distance between the Temple and the Tabernacle; it had been nicely measured, and the Hebrew in Rome on his Sabbath was still counting his steps on a Sabbath-day's journey. The Romans too might have heard that these Hebrews, when they had armies of their own, would halt in the midst of victory, on the eve of the Sabbath; and that on the Sabbath-day they ceased even to defend their walls from the incursions of an enemy. Had not the Romans profited by this custom in their last memorable triumph over Jerusalem?

But the interior delights of the habitation of the Hebrew were invisible to the Polytheist. He heard not the domestic greeting which cheerfully announced "the good Sabbath," nor the paternal benediction for the sons, and that of the masters for his pupils. He could not behold, in the twilight hour of the Sabbath, the female covering the fresh loaves, prepared for that sanctified day, with her whitest napkins, in perpetual remembrance of that miraculous food which had fallen from Heaven on every day, save the Sabbath. He could not behold the mistress of the house watching the sun set, and then lighting up the seven wicks of the lamp of the Sabbath, suspended during its consecration; a servile office performed by her own

hand in atonement of the great mother of mankind. For oil to fill the Sabbath-lamp the mendicant implored an alms, which was as religiously given as it was religiously used. But the more secret illumination of the law on the Sabbath eve, as the Rabbins expressed it, bestowed a supernumerary soul on every Israelite. The sanctity felt through the Jewish abode on that day, was an unfailing renewal of the religious emotions of this pious race. Thus, in the busy circle of life, was there one immoveable point, where the weary rested, and the wealthy enjoyed a heavenly repose; and it was not without some truth that Leo of Modena, a philosophical Hebrew, called this day "the Festival of the Sabbath."

It is beautiful to trace the expansion of an original and vast idea in the mind of a rare character, who seems born to govern the human race. Such an awful and severe genius was the legislator of the Hebrews! The Sabbatical institution he boldly extended to a seventh year, as well as he had appointed a seventh day. At that periodical return, the earth itself was suffered to lie fallow and at rest. In this "Sabbath of the land," the Hebrews were not permitted to plant, or to prune, to sow, or to reap; of the spontaneous growth, no proprietor at those seasons was allowed to gather more than sufficed for the bare maintenance of his household.* In this seventh year all debtors were to be released, a law which would naturally check the facility of increasing debts at the approach of the periodical release. But what was the design of this great legislator in the extraordinary ordinance of ceasing agricultural labours?

We may conjecture that in the infant state of cultivation he considered, that in the confined territory which the Israelites occupied, far inland, among woods, and mountains, and rocks, and without any commercial intercourse with surrounding nations, for they sought none, and none came to them, their incessant industry might exhaust their soil. This law seems to have originated in a local necessity, but the foresight which would have prevented the evil of famine, erred even in its wisdom; for though Israel had been promised that "the sixth year should bring forth fruit for three years," and Moses would

* Levit. xxv. 3, 7.

calculate on that surplus to supply the Sabbatical year, yet this refractory horde too often forfeited the Divine favour. This Ordinance impoverished the wealth of this agricultural people, and the Sabbatical year was usually followed by one of scarcity and distress. Thus it happened when Alexander, on a very singular occasion,* was desirous of conceding to the Hebrews some substantial mark of his royal favour, none seemed to them of more national importance than a dispensation to pay tribute in the seventh year.

A more obvious wisdom, and a more beautiful moral influence, appear in the still greater Sabbatical institution of every fifty years. Seven Sabbaths of years closed in their Jubilee, or the great year of release; a name and a ceremony still retained in the mimicry of Judaism by Papal Christianity, though it degenerates into a ludicrous and unmeaning parade. On the eventful day which hallowed a fiftieth year, at the blowing of the horn in the Synagogue, and the horn is still blown, though no longer heard in Judea, the poor man once more ceased to want, all pledges were returned, and all lands reverted to their original proprietors. On that day the slave was emancipated! The Lord had decreed, "The land shall not be sold, for the land is mine!"† By this Sabbatical institution of the Jubilee, no demoralised parent could entirely deprive his offspring of the inheritance of their ancestors; the curse of destitution no man could entail on his posterity. Equality of fortunes in the conditions of men, a political reverie in all other governments, seemed to have been realised in the small sacerdotal and agricultural Republic of Israel; and perhaps served as the model of that famous government which the Jesuits attempted to establish in Paraguay. The sublime legislator of the Hebrews, to prevent the oppressive accumulation of wealth in individuals, and the multiplication of debts without limit, and the perpetuity of slavery, decreed that nothing should be perpetual but the religious Republic itself! This greater Sabbatical institution was an expedient to check the disorders which flow from the monopoly of property. It produced a kind of community of goods among the people, and in some respects combined the

* The story is delightfully told by Josephus in his History, lib. xi., c. 8.

† Levit. xxv. 23.

theoretical politics of Plato and Socrates with the more practical systems of real property and personal possessions of Aristotle and Cicero. Too exquisitely benevolent for the selfishness, and the pride, and the indolence of man, the passions of mankind would revolt against this code of philanthropy, adapted to a smaller community; it was an Agrarian law without its violence, and an Ostracism without its malignity. While Israel possessed their Holy Land, all the Sabbatical institutions were religiously observed, till the destruction of the first Temple by the Assyrians. When the captive Jews, returning from Babylon, sought their father-land, they beheld their tribes confused together, and many of their brethren were wanderers in far-distant regions. The glory of their Temple had for ever passed away, the feelings of patriotism were cold in a desolated country,—the magic had dissolved—and the Seven Sabbaths of Years for ever vanished!

Such is the history of the Sabbatic institutions of Moses. The seventh day, consecrated to the universal repose of all nature, may be said to have entirely disappeared, except among this ancient people, who still preserve it with all its rigours. Even Mahomet, in perpetuating it among his Moslems, changed it to a weekly feast-day, and “the most excellent day on which the sun rises,” as it is described, is the sixth of the week. The Mohammedans esteem it a peculiar honour to Islam that Friday has been appointed for them, and that they alone enjoy the blessing of having first observed it.*

The observance of the Sabbath-day became a subject of controversy only among the religious of the Protestants of our country; a subject which requires our investigation.

* Sale's Preliminary Discourse to the Koran, 197. Lander recently, when in Africa, thus noticed this weekly festival: “Friday is the Mahommedan Sabbath, which is constantly kept as a holiday by the inhabitants for public recreation and festivities.”—ii. 114.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE OBSERVATION OF THE SABBATH UPON SUNDAYS.

THE superstitious discipline of the Jewish Sabbath, as practised by the tyrannical Pharisees, was one of those burthens of the old law which the new removed.

The Founder of the Christian Religion in the severe reprimands to his rabbinical persecutors, by his words and by his actions, testified that with the abrogation of the Mosaic ritual, the ceremonial performance of the Sabbath was dissolved. Jesus announced himself to be "Lord of the Sabbath," and declared that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath," doubtless alluding to its arbitrary superstitions. "This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day," said the haughty Pharisees of Jesus; and when Jesus was accused of a breach of the Sabbath, according to the pharisaical strictness, by healing a sick man on that day, Jesus replied, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I also work."* The Apostles comprehended the intention of their Lord, otherwise they would have preferred enduring the keenest hunger rather than have plucked the ears of corn in passing through a field on the Sabbath. This was the point of time, at which the ceremonial of the Sabbath was manifestly dissolved—or as Lightfoot, deep in Hebraic lore, that "Christian Rabbi" as Gibbon happily designates this prodigy of erudition, quaintly expressed it, this was "the shaking of the Sabbath."

Christianity was not established at once: this miracle was denied the world; and the children of the Gospel required the indulgence of tender converts, whose consciences, and customs and imaginations could not be weaned on the sudden from those Mosaic rites which for so many ages they held as imprescriptible. The habits of these innovators, known in ecclesiastical

* A strong light is thrown on this expression of Jesus, as well as on our present subject, by Justin Martyr in his eccentric dialogue with Trypho the Jew—"You see that the heavens are not idle, nor do they observe the Sabbaths. If before Abraham there was no need of circumcision, nor the Sabbaths, &c., so now in like manner there is no need of them since Jesus Christ." Sect. xxiii.

history as Judaising Christians, were still clinging to the ancient faith, while their convictions had embraced the new. These Jewish proselytes, who are described as "certain of the sect of Pharisees which *believe*,"* were indulged for the first half century, in Levitical ceremonies. To these Judaising Christians the antiquated Sabbath and even the rite of circumcision was still allowed. St. Paul attended Synagogues on the Sabbath, and joined in the ceremonial part, with a view to obtain proselytes, and this great assertor of the Christian Faith, who had inculcated "the circumcision made without hands," himself circumcised Timothy to humour the rooted prejudices of these wavering Jews.† There was a moment even when the Judaising Christians attempted to reconcile the Code of Moses with the Gospel of Christ. These held a conference with the Apostles, which, like all such conferences, produced "much disputing," till Peter rising up, and having announced his successful conversion of the Gentiles, protested against a return to their obsolete rites. The Apostle rested his salvation, not on a Ritual, but "on the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ." Proceeding as they now were, with such great success, the Apostle exclaimed, "Now therefore why tempt ye God to *put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we are able to bear*?" This open confession of the Apostle is remarkable. The rites, or rather the ceremonies of Judaism, had sunk into an inextricable mass of the minutest and most harassing superstitions. Religion looked like witchcraft—and the Pharisees, ostentatiously austere, with inquisitorial terror, had inflicted on their people the brutalising bondage of passive obedience. The attempt to renew these multiplied ceremonies was thwarting the spirit of the mighty Reformation of Judaism, and would have

* Acts xv. 5.

† The intolerant Knox was so greatly confounded at the compliance of St. Paul with the advice of St. James, in conforming with the Jewish customs, that he might not offend the converts of that nation—that Knox inveighs against what he calls "a worldly-wise council" of both the Apostles, and hardly doubts whether the command of the one and the obedience of the other proceeded from the Holy Ghost. Knox discovered that the Apostolical toleration was pointed against his own unrelenting conduct to those who, however inclined to the new Reformation, yet still looked on the mass with religious emotions. How true is it that men in parallel situations necessarily move on similar principles.—Knox, Hist. Ref. of Scotland, i. 143. (Ed. 1814.)

contracted the influence of that more beautiful system which initiated its votaries on far easier terms. A baptism of blood was changed to a baptism of water: mercy and not sacrifice was now the hope of man; the Revelation which had remained incomplete was now accomplished by "the Saviour who had abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light." The early proselytes to Christianity unquestionably would have been diminished in number, had they been compelled to return to the old Jewish bondage.

The leading object of St. Paul's reform was to do away "all the differences of days and times," such as "*Sabbaths*, new moons, circumcision, with distinctions of meat and drink." The whole code of Moses was repealed, the rites and ceremonies were declared to be but "a shadow of things to come,"* types of the new Revelation; Judaism was but an adumbration of Christianity.

In the East, Christians chiefly of Hebrew descent still lingered in their old customs; the Jewish Sabbath, and even the rite of circumcision were permitted as indifferent matters, that, as we are told, "the Mother Synagogue might be laid to sleep with the greater honour."† But in the West the Christian Church condemned as heretical the celebration of the Sabbath of the Hebrews; it was mingling the Jewish leaven with the bread of life. As the Eastern Christians had been indulged with Judaic ceremonies, so the Western, consisting chiefly of Pagan converts, were favoured with more exhilarating festivals, instituted on a mythological model, for the heathen proselytes experienced the same reluctance in abandoning their own ancient ceremonies as had the Hebrews.‡ Those opposite rites and ceremonies of the earliest proselytes to Christianity were imperceptibly introduced into the Church; they have been deemed its corruptions; and the famous letter on the "Conformity of Popery with Paganism" requires as large a supplement on the conformity of Popery with Judaism.

* Colossians, ii. 17.

† An expression from one of the Councils. Heylin's History of the Sabbath, part ii. 21.

‡ Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. ii. 141. Grotius, in his "Truth of Christianity," has noticed the toleration of Jewish rites by the primitive teachers of the Christian faith, book v. ch. 12.

When the Sabbath departed, no new one was substituted ; no apostolical precept enforces it ; no practice of the primitive Christians warrants it.

As the religious observance of the seventh day of the week declined, the first day gradually grew into some repute.*

Of customs, whose beginnings only glimmer in the obscurity of ages, it is hopeless to feel about for any palpable evidence. Paley has taken an enlightened view of this subject, aware as he was of the historical difficulties of affixing the Sabbatical character to our Sunday, or even the appellative by which it is honoured, as "The Lord's day." St. Paul and St. Luke only call it "the first day of the week," evidently from the acknowledgment that the Sabbath was the seventh and last day. At first it appears to have been fixed on as a day on which Christians assembled to unite in solemn prayer, perhaps as being in direct opposition to the Jewish seventh day. St. Paul distinguished the first day of the week, and opposed the observance of the Jewish Sabbath, and it was for this reason that those Judaizing Christians, the Ebionites, rejected his writings, accounting the Saint to be an apostate, as we are informed by Irenæus and Epiphanius.† The primitive Christians abhorred the observance of the Jewish Sabbath, which they held was only practised by the contemners of "the Lord's day." Justin Martyr tells Trypho the Jew, in the full spirit of the times, that "they would gladly endure the most horrible tortures that men and devils could devise to inflict on them, rather than keep *your Sabbath*, and observe *your solemn days*."

It is probable that Sunday, being considered as the day of the Redeemer's resurrection, was hence called "the Lord's day." The first account we find of this impressive term is in the Apocalypse, chap. i. v. 10, "I was in the spirit on *the Lord's day*." This was written so late as the ninety-fourth year of the Christian era. The Lord's day can only be presumed to designate Sunday. The term is frequent among the

* See Selden *de jure naturali et Gentium juxta disciplinam Hebræorum*, lib. iii. in the 13th and following chapter. Prideaux, "The Doctrine of the Sabbath, delivered in the Act at Oxon, 1622. 4°." Heylin's "Hist. of the Sabbath," part ii. 30—and also "Paley's Moral and Political Philosophy," ii. 94.

† Sunday no Sabbath. A sermon by John Pocklington, Doctor of Divinity, Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Lincoln, 1636, p. 10.

prophetical writers, as Cruden's Concordance will show at a single glance. "But," observed Paley, "we find no footsteps of any distinction of days, which could entitle any other to that appellation." So obscure is even the first introduction of the elevated designation which hallows that day.

The Jewish Sabbath and the Lord's day were long wrestling for the mastery; but while the first day in the week received the honours of the Sabbath, it bred some confusion among those whose faith lay in the seventh. The Judaising Christian, the mild Nazarene, and the fierce Ebionite, sabbathised both days; the Saturday as the day of Creation, when all nature began to live, and the Sunday as the day of the Resurrection, when man was blessed with such certain evidence of a future existence.

About the middle of the second century Justin Martyr noticed, that "upon the day called Sunday they met together to pray." He styles the first day of the week the day of the Sun, and assigns the reason for the selecting of that day for religious worship, that in it God began the work of creation, and Christ rose from the dead; this was evidently a confused mixture of the Jewish and the Christian creeds. It was these Sunday assemblies which induced the Pagans to imagine that the Christians were worshippers of the Sun, from whom that dedicated day was named. Tertullian, who lived much later than this Father, calls Sunday *Dies Solis*, and considered it as a festival-day dedicated to mirth and festivity, and not wholly to devotion. He sometimes calls it "the Eighth day," and sometimes *Dies Dominicus*, the Lord's day. After divine service every one returned to his occupations. The apostles had never enjoined their followers to refrain from labour. Paul, who was a tent maker, must be inferred, from a passage in the New Testament, to have worked at his tents on a Sunday.

During the three first centuries, the Lord's day was not considered as a Sabbath, nor was it held as such in the fourth. At this period, indeed, a remarkable circumstance occurred. Constantine, called the Great, whom Eusebius characterises by a single stroke, as "making a church of his palace," enacted laws for the equal observance of Sundays and Saturdays. But Sunday became a more favourite day, for his mingled army of Christians and Pagans would willingly address on the same

day, the one in their Church, the Saviour Jesus ; the other in the open field, Phœbus, the god of light. No cessation from the business of life had hitherto attended "the Lord's day." Constantine for the first time closed the courts of law, but the peasant and the artisan were seen at their work. After prayers, Sunday was held as a day of recreation, and on Wednesdays and Fridays they equally communicated together by the order of this Prince, half-Christian and half-Pagan.

In the fifth and sixth centuries, when Christianity began to triumph over those anomalous sects into which Paganism had split, "the Lord's day" rose in the same esteem as other festival days. Still, however, through these and six succeeding centuries, we discover some Judaising Christians. Gregory the Great, who adopted so many popular ceremonies into the Church, yet strenuously opposed those who refused to attend to their occupations on the Saturdays or the Sundays. In their Judaising strictness, they refrained even from their baths on Sundays, on which the Pontiff observed, "If bathing be sinful, why then wash the face on that day?"

Under the Gaulish and the Northern monarchs, the barbarous Christian became more and more Judaical in the strict observance of the Sabbath. The writers of these times abound with legends of miraculous punishments happening to the violators of the Sabbath, or Sundays. We seem suddenly to enter on a history of Israelites composed by doting Rabbins, rather than on the annals of Christianity, dictated by an Apostolical spirit. The Rabbinical genius, in its minute tyrannies, among their Sabbatical superstitions had forbidden their Jews even making so small a noise as that of rapping their knuckles on a table to still a child ; or tracing a letter even in sand, or cutting a cord, or breaking a stick. These pitiful superstitions appear to have been revived in the spurious Christianity of the middle ages, and were actually practised by those Puritans who emigrated to America. In 1028, Olaus, King of Norway, having one Sunday notched and whittled a stick, was reminded that he had trespassed on the Sabbath ; the pious King gathered the chips in the palm of his hand, and burnt them on it, that thus he might punish the member which had, as he supposed, offended the divine precept. A miller, for mending his mill on the Lord's

day, found his hand cleaving to the hatchet. Such superstitious legends prove that the grossest Judaism was a weed not easily to be extirpated from the soil.

For three hundred years after Christ, the most erudite researches have shown that the Christian was bound by no law to the strict Sabbatic observance of the Lord's day, nor was any sort of labour interdicted on Sundays. In a Council held at Paris in 829, it was determined that "Keeping of the Lord's day had no other ground but merely custom."* More than a thousand years after Christ elapsed before the Lord's day became distinguished from the usual festivals appointed by the Church. In 1244, in the Synod of Lyons it was included among the holidays.

At the Reformation, Calvin and Beza were anxious that the Sabbatical-Sunday, as a rest of Judaism, should be considered merely as an ecclesiastical day, originating in the appointment of the Church, but not of Divine institution. The Swiss Church in their Confession declare that one day is not more holy than another, nor do they think that a cessation from all labour is any way grateful to the Divinity. To show the world that the Church had authority to transfer the day, it was proposed to change the *seventh day to Thursday*; a change which certainly would have occurred in the Church of Geneva, had the Thursday voters not formed the minority. This proposition, by assuming that there was no distinction of days, was designed to mark their contempt of the Romanist's crowded Calendar. Calvin and Beza accused the Church of Rome of having imbued the minds of the people with Judaism by their frequent festivals and their saints' days.

At length we land at home. What had occurred on the Continent had been reflected here. The first account we find of any restraint from labour is in the reign of Edward the Third. The same argument then prevailed for establishing Sunday as a Hebrew Sabbath, and met with the same opposition; for markets were opened, public recreations allowed, and trades carried on, after the hours of prayer. At the Reformation, Tyndale remarkably expresses his sentiments to Sir Thomas

* Heylin, part ii. c. v. p. 143, who frequently profits by the learned inquiry of Prideaux.

More, "As for the Sabbath we be lords over the Sabbath and may yet change it into Monday, or into any other day, as we see need; or may make every tenth day holy-day only, if we see cause why."—"All days are Sabbath days!" said Bishop Hooper. Edward the Sixth, our infant Protestant, in the infancy of Protestantism, appointed Sundays among other holidays on which the people are to refrain from their business, yet when necessity shall require, the husbandman, the fisherman, the labourer may work in harvest, or ride or fish at free will. This was but a half-measure. Elizabeth unquestionably never considered Sunday as a Sabbath, for she enjoins labour on that, as well as on other festival-days, after their common prayer—her language is observable by its indicating that we still harboured some Judaising Christians. "And if for any scrupulosity or grudge of conscience some should *superstitiously abstain from working on those days*, they shall grievously offend." I find Elizabeth granting a licence to one John Seconton to use certain plays and games upon *nine several Sundays*.*

It was however in the reign of Elizabeth, during the unsettled state of the national religion, that a sect arose among those reformers of the reformed, the first Puritans, who were known by the name of *Sabbatarians*. These held the Decalogue as of perpetual obligation; and according to their new creed, if the Sabbath-day had been changed, which they doubted, the Judaic rigours of its strict observance were still to sanctify it. Labour and recreation, with those persons, equally profaned the silence and the repose of the Sabbath. John Knox, the great Reformer of Scotland, was the true father of this new doctrine in England, although Knox was the bosom friend of Calvin.

Calvin deemed the Sabbath to have been a Jewish ordinance, limited to that sacred people with their other ceremonial laws, and only typical of the spiritual repose of the advent of Christ, which abolished the grosser, rejected its rigours, and reproaches those whose Sabbatical superstitions were carnal and gross as the Jewish.† At Geneva a tradition exists, that when John

* See T. Hearne's Preface to Camden's Elizabeth.

† The passage is in the Institutes, lib. ii., c. viii., sect. 34. "Crassa, carnalique Sabbatismi Superstitione, Ter Judeos superant," or, as he has given it in his own translation of the Institute, "Ceux qui la suivent surmontent les Juifs en opinion

Knox visited Calvin on a Sunday, he found his austere coadjutor bowling on a green. At this day, and in that place, a Calvinist preacher after his Sunday sermon will take his seat at the card-table. Some of our early Puritans who had taken refuge in Holland, after ten years in vain pressing for the observance of the Sabbatic Sunday, resolved to leave the country where they had been kindly received and went "to the ends of the earth," among the wildernesses of America, to observe "the Lord's day" with the Jewish rigours.* When Laud was charged on his trial for the revival of the Book of Sports allowed on that day, he thought it prudent to deny that he had been the suggester; he however professed his judgment in its favour, alleging the practice of their own favourite church of Geneva.†

It may surprise us that two of the great friends of Calvin, closely connected with him, and with his system, should have espoused a very opposite doctrine. Knox in Scotland after Sunday having been 1554 years classed among the festival days, both in the Greek and the Latin churches, as the Anti-sabbatarians maintain, Knox no longer calling this day *the Lord's day*, but taking some Jew for its god-father, named it

charnelle du Sabbath." Calvin would observe Sunday as a fixed day for assembling for religious communion, but divested of all Judaism; not that there is any distinction between days, but the appointment of a particular one is convenient, that all may meet together. After divine service all are free, and he reprobates those who have imbued the poor populace with Judaic opinions, and deprived the working classes of their recreations.

* Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, fol. 5.

† Thomas Warton, in his first edition of "*Milton's Juvenile Poems*," observed, in a note on the Lady's speech in *Comus*, verse 177, that "It is owing to the Puritans ever since Cromwell's time that *Sunday* has been made in England a day of gravity and severity; and many a staunch observer of the rites of the Church of England little suspects that he is conforming to the *Calvinism* of an *English Sunday*." In Warton's second edition this note was wholly cancelled. It had probably given offence to heads unfurnished with their own natural history; thus are popular errors fostered. There was too an error, and one our critic and poet, not versed probably in Ecclesiastical history, might have easily fallen into, when he ascribed to Calvin the melancholy institution of Knox's Sabbath. Calvin himself was adverse to it. The Scottish Presbyterian who so eagerly embraced the horrible theology of Calvin, as if that were not sufficiently mortifying to man, dropped the only part which might soften the cares of human life, and added to the gloom of Calvinism the ascetism of the most rigorous Sabbath. Warton, having discovered himself surrounded by so many difficulties, and having unintentionally offended the false delicacy of some, in despair seems to have given up the note altogether, which, however, only required a very minute correction.

the Sabbath, and thus disguised its nature and custom.* Knox acquired many advocates in England. Whittingham, the Puritan Dean of Durham, who had resided at Geneva and had married the sister of Calvin, likewise differed with his brother, and on his return home appears to have had his mind imbued with a full portion of the spirit of his Scottish friend. This redoubtable Puritan evinced his zeal by defacing the antique monuments in Durham Cathedral, and converting the stone coffins of the Priors of Durham into horse-troughs. Whittingham was a rigid Sabbatarian, and these doctrines must have spread at London from a circumstance which Strype has recorded. At Paris-garden, where public amusements were performed on Sundays, a crowded scaffold gave way, and by this accident some were killed and many wounded. The Lord Mayor sent notice of it to Lord Burleigh as a judgment of Heaven for the violation of the Sabbath; and the Recorder chronicled the event in his Diary under the head of "a punishment of the violators of the Sabbath." This doctrine therefore must have been general in 1582.†

The nation was therefore prepared in 1595 to receive these Sabbatic doctrines in a systematic form by a Dr. Bound. The book excited a ferment among the people; the Archbishop called in the copies, and the Lord Chief Justice forbade the printing, as inculcating doctrines not acknowledged by the Church and the laws of the kingdom. The suppressed work, however, continued to circulate in manuscript, and, being prohibited, was the more eagerly read. When Whitgift was no more, an enlarged edition appeared in 1606. This book has hitherto eluded all my enquiries; yet it may be considered as the source of those conflicting opinions, which in the subsequent reigns of James and Charles, so long agitated the nation, respecting the mode in which Sunday should be observed, whether with the rigour of a Jewish Sabbath, or with the recreations of a Christian holiday?

* Pocklington's Sermon "Sunday no Sabbath," 1636.

† Strype's Annals, iii. 140. The Puritan Neal, who alludes to this transaction, profoundly observes that "the Court paid no regard to such remonstrances, and the Queen had her ends in encouraging the sports, pastimes, and revellings of the people on *Sundays* and holidays."—i. 262. 4to.

Dr. Bound's doctrine of the Sabbath reigned paramount for several years, and as our quaint Fuller expresses it, "not so much as the feather of a quill in print did wag against him;" and Heylin more elegantly confesses that "in very little time it grew the most bewitching error, the most popular deceit, that ever had been set on foot in the Church of England." The pious could not reasonably object to an act which at least bears the appearance of morality and religion, though it may stand unconnected with either; but a serpent was imagined to have folded itself under this "Rose of Sharon." The Puritans having failed in their open attacks to subvert the hierarchy, and even the monarchy, from the time of the Mar-prelate faction, it was now supposed to be striking more covertly, and that Dr. Bound's doctrine was an arrow drawn out of their quiver.* This Doctor was a root-and-branch Reformer, for he had thrown out a broad hint that all other holidays might be safely put down as Papistical institutions which arbitrarily had raised ordinary days to an equality with the Sabbath.

On Dr. Bound's Sabbath, scholars were forbid opening their books, lawyers to peruse briefs, justices to officiate, and even the throne itself was rebuked, for it enjoyed no privilege to be occupied on that day with temporal concerns or idle pleasures. The whole kingdom was thrown into this bondage of Jerusalem. Nor did this "bewitching error" end here. Some stood up for abrogating the Lord's day by a positive return to the perpetual Sabbath-day, the Judaic Saturday; while others, in their disturbed zeal, equally observed both days.

This novelty was too well adapted to seize on the imaginations of the unthinking multitude, who, naturally religious, are awed by the ascetic forms of religion; they imagine that they become more spiritual in the degree that they remove themselves from all corporeal humanity; as if mortals were born to be as if they had not been born, so dead to all the affections of their nature! In transferring the rigours of the Jewish Sab-

* Compare Collier's *Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain*, ii. 643, with Neal, the historian of the Puritans, i. 386, 4to edition. Collier indicates Dr. Bound's opinions in his Index, as "singularities touching the morality of the Sabbath." The learned Henry Wharton, in a marginal note on Laud's Diary, on the term "Sabbath," says, "For so these Puritans styled and accounted the Sunday."—214.

bath to the Lord's day, the contrast among the people was not only melancholy but even ridiculous! All the business and the recreations of life suddenly ceased; no cattle were led to the water, no provender was procured for the horse, no wine was to be sold, and if a "godly" servant could be prevailed on to prepare the Sunday dinner, she saved herself from the sin of washing the dishes. A Sabbatarian lady had all her days longed to bless her eyes with the sight of royalty; when Charles and Henrietta were on a progress, Heylin offered to procure her this favour; but the lady refused seeing a King and Queen on "a Sabbath-day." Dr. Bound had proscribed all feasts and wedding dinners, but he inserted a clause which does no honour to the integrity of his piety, for he absolves "Lords, knights, and gentlemen of quality."* To cast a bowl, to ring even church bells more than by a single toll, even to talk of news or business, were sins, and ranked with murder, and adultery, and even at a later period, a Sabbath-breaker became as an excommunicated man.

A gloomy and anti-social spirit was fast prevailing among the people in their "preciseness," as this new system was termed. Puritanic persons had deprived the populace of their accustomed festivals and pastimes on the Sunday afternoons after divine service; festivals and pastimes are the poor man's inheritance, his unbought enjoyments, the leisure of his servitude, the common solace of the ancient friendships of the village! At a period when the papal Christians still maintained some political influence, the Catholic priests were busily insinuating among the lower orders that the Protestant religion was nothing more than a sullen deprivation of innocent enjoyments, and we are told, that this argument was not unintelligible, and had sometimes succeeded in "turning the people's hearts." Scotland had already put down "Pasche" and "Yule" and other cheerful holidays as "superstitious times." James the First, in one of his progresses, found the people of Lancashire discontented, by the austerity of their puritanical Sundays; and on his return home the King issued his "declaration" for "liberty on the

* Fuller's Church History, book ix. 227. Dr. Bound's notions are accurately referred to by Fuller, whose impartial narrative and citations are a substitute for the original.

Lord's day." "With our own ears we have heard the general complaint of our people." His native good-humour and his deep policy combined to sympathise with the querulous multitude, and to ward off this popular shape of Puritanism. The Royal declaration is usually known as "the Book of Sports," but it was soon contemptuously nick-named "the Dancing Book." James had heretofore learned a lesson in Scotland, from these sour Sabbatarians; and when he cast his eyes over Christian Europe, that monarch could not discover any reason why in his kingdom alone the Sundays after church-time, should become a day of tribulation and self-denial—the people being prohibited from their pastimes of archery, leaping, May-games, and morris-dances, which encouraged the common people to a common amity, and inured the bodies of sedentary artificers by athletic exercises.

Scarcely was the memorable and unlucky "Book of Sports" thrown among the people, than in their inquiry after the nature of the Sabbath, they discovered, to their amazement, that every thing concerning the nature of a *Christian Sabbath* was uncertain and questionable. The Sabbatarian controversy then re-opened.

The difficulties of the investigation rose in proportion to the number of learned tractates which appeared, either in favour or against the strict observance of the ancient Sabbath. What day is the Seventh? It is any day after six days. Which is the beginning and the end of the Sabbath? Does it open at cock-crowing, or does it last from even to even? It was considered that neither the day, nor the hour were material; for Time having a circular motion, and its divisions being themselves but artificial, it was sufficient, if the due proportion of the Sabbath be completed. There were who asserted, that Sunday was a working-day, for that Saturday was the perpetual Sabbath; while, in this controversy, some disturbed at counting the first day for a seventh, persevered in hallowing both days as Sabbaths. It was on the occasion of a bill "for the better observance of the Sabbath called Sunday," we learn from a private letter of the day, that a Member of the House presuming to sneer at the Puritans, observed that if Saturday was *dies Sabbati*, it might be entitled a bill "for the observance of

Saturday commonly called Sunday.” Our unlucky wit had the good fortune to be only expelled the House, whose proneness to Judaism, at a later period, might have led them to renew the Mosaic lapidation.

The opinions of the Sabbatic-Sunday were so unsettled, that when Fuller wrote his Church history of Britain, that honest historian shrank from the Sabbatarian controversy, and has curiously arranged his history on this subject into three columns, of “Sabbatarians, of moderate men, and of Anti-Sabbatarians,” without interposing any opinions of his own.

James and Charles were alike condemned by the popular prejudice; and though the present was one of their least political errors, if truly it were an error, heavily was it visited on the last sovereign. The Parliament’s armies usually chose Sundays for their battles, that the profanation of that day might be expiated by a field-sacrifice, and that the Sabbath-breakers, the Royalists, might suffer a signal punishment! James the First would have started with horror at his “Book of Sports,” could he have presciently contemplated on the Archbishop and the Sovereign who persisted in its revival, being dragged to the block. By what invisible threads does fate suspend together the most remote events! It was not to be imagined that the consciences were to be disturbed, and the opinions distracted of the English people, because they had fallen into a peculiar practice when compared with their European neighbours. Even to a much later period, the prejudice against these monarchs had lost none of its bitterness, none of its unrelenting hatred, for the presumed impiety of sparing the people the melancholy indolence of a Puritanic Sunday. So late as in 1711, a writer in his strictures on the Lower House of Convocation’s representation on the growth of Infidelity, Heresy, and Profaneness, maintains that “this deluge of impiety and licentiousness must be traced to the wicked ‘Book of Sports’ of James and Charles. Charles the First renewed that war against Heaven which his father had impiously begun,” and he discovers no other cause in “the rebellion” but that of “the Sabbath-breakers!”*

But this became no dispute of a mere theological dogma;

* See a folio pamphlet entitled “The Representation examined, being Remarks on the State of Religion in England.”—1711.

"the Sabbath" was now a party-term taken up in opposition to the term "Sunday" to distinguish the Court from the popular party; and it seemed no longer to involve a case of Ecclesiastical judicature, when it raised up a banner under which was to be fought the terrible contest of civil and political power, and to which flocked the subverters of the government.*

CHAPTER III.

THE CAUSE OF THE REVIVAL BY CHARLES THE FIRST OF "THE BOOK OF SPORTS" FOR RECREATIONS ON SUNDAYS.

WE must consider the Puritanism that was spreading among all ranks as that counteraction which usually occurs in human affairs. The prevalent jealousy and dread of Papistry had forced scrupulous minds to become what was sometimes termed "precise." This new mode of opposing superstitions had, however, many of its own. Some good men, but far more fantastic and conceited persons, imagined that it was wise to be "righteous over much" rather than to revert to the Romish ceremonies, as "the dog returneth to his vomit;" yet these very persons were fast restoring the corruptions of rabbinical Judaism.

The Prelacy had been openly attacked; a more covert blow was now aimed, by affecting a Judaic strictness in the observance of "the Lord's day," which the Puritanic now began to style emphatically "The Sabbath."

* In a suppressed passage of Hume, of his first quarto edition, p. 151, he treats with some philosophical levity the change of the term *Sunday* to the *Sabbath*. "This is a difference about a few unmeaning syllables, but as the controversy betwixt the Church and the Puritans did not altogether regard theological dogmas, but involved a dispute concerning ecclesiastical as well as civil power and government, that controversy must be allowed, in some of its articles, to have been of much greater importance." Perhaps he erased this passage on maturer consideration, when he found that it is impossible to separate the theological part of the contest from the political; the theological being often the ostensible, but not always the real cause of the civil war.

The divinity of the Lord's day was new divinity at Court, says a contemporary historian,* and, it may be added, it was so throughout England. At Court, so far were they from practising any austerities on Sundays, that it was their custom, "Time sans memorie," not only to hold privy councils, but to reserve this very day for their more splendid amusements, the Masque—the Pastoral—and the Play. Even among the lowest orders, Sunday had long been held the most convenient festival day for the pastimes of the people; and more particularly for the celebration of those numerous Church, or parochial holidays, whose traces still linger among our northern counties, and were then held to commemorate the dedications of churches to their patron saint, or to consecrate the memory of some munificent founder. That many of these festivals of the people were the remains of old Pagan and Hebrew customs, was better known to a later age of inquiry than the age of Charles the First. They had, however, long been converted to Christian purposes. The profane erudition of the Puritans of that day was not very extensive, and their authorities were usually limited to the old and the new law, which they appear to have sadly confused between the literal and the typical meaning. They had, it is true, a due abhorrence of the Saints which crowded the Romish calendar, and grudged even to bestow on Paul and Peter their titular honour. They now attempted to abolish these parochial festivals, on the plea that they were profanations of "the Sabbath."

From time immemorial our rude and religious ancestors had preserved their country wakes, festivals held throughout the night, and which in fact, as their title imports, were the ancient vigils. To strew rushes on the floors, and to hang fresh garlands in the church, were offices pleasing to the maidens; the swains encountered each other in their athletic recreations of wrestling, cudgelling, and leaping, or melted the hearts of their mistresses, by their Morris-dances and their May-games; above all, they feasted liberally, the rich spared not their hospitality, all doors were opened, all comers welcomed; all looked forward to their wake-day, and old friendships were renewed, and little enmities were reconciled at a joyous wake. Some of these

* Hamon L'Estrange, Reign of Charles the First.

festivals were called Church-ales. The people, after divine service on Sundays, resorted to the churchyard, and after partaking in the same common enjoyments, and copious potations of a subscription ale brewed by all the strength and care of the district, they left some token of their honest piety for the service of their parish church, to cast a bell, or to repair a tower, and dropped their mite into the alms-box. There were Clerk-ales where the parishioners sent in their provisions to the Clerk's house, and came to feast with him. The Clerk was the vendor of his own brewings, his profit and his reputation were at stake, and by the zealous libations of his friends, a half-starved Clerk eked out his lean quarterage by these merry perquisites. There was also a Bid-ale, a feast of charity, where a man decayed in his fortunes gathered the generous bounties of his neighbours at this Sunday holiday. All these holy festivals and public spectacles, well provided with good fare and barmy ale, concluded with rural games in May, and a Yule-block at Christmas. These Wakes and Ales were long a singular mixture of piety, benevolence, and mirth. The delightful poet, the happy painter of our by-gone manners, and the faithful recorder of our once country-customs, has described the Wake in verse as exhilarating as these rural revels themselves. I will not forbear their transcription.

“Come Anthea ! let us two
 Go to feast as others do.
 Tarts and custards, creams and cakes
 Are the junketts still at WAKES,
 Unto which the tribes resort
 Where the business is the sport.
 Morris-dancers thou shalt see,
 Marian too in pageantric ;
 And a mimick, to devise
 Many grinning properties.
 Players there will be, and those
 Base in action as in clothes ;
 Yet with strutting they will please
 The incurious villages.
 Near the dying of the day
 There will be a cudgel play,
 When a coxcomb will be broke
 Ere a good word can be spoke.
 But the anger ends all here
 Drencht in ale, or drowned in beere.

Happy Rustics ! best content
 With the cheapest merriment,
 And possess no other fear
 Than to want the WAKE next year." *

That these village Saturnalia were not always associated with the innocent simplicity which the Devonshire poet fancied, could only be an inevitable consequence of the revelries of an English populace. Swains were too fortunate, and maidens too tender; the ales were too potent, and the wrestlers too pugnacious. Our own people may yet learn something from the decencies of the populace of the continent. It is still a remnant of our insular rudeness, that our rustics imagine that their boisterous freedom is never freedom till it is proclaimed by the Riot Act, and till the general carouse is concluded by manslaughter? The commemorations of these festivals were charged with such licentious acts; the charge seems to have been aggravated, and these disorders were but local and occasional.

It is certainly a singular circumstance, strangely discordant with the after-conduct of Charles the First, that in the first and in the third year of his reign, two statutes passed, the one entitled "An Act for punishing divers abuses committed on *the Lord's day called Sunday*;" and another for "the further reformation of sundry abuses committed on *the Lord's day commonly called Sunday*." No unlawful pastimes were to be allowed, carriers are not to travel, nor butchers sell their meat, &c., customs certainly which had heretofore been practised. It is also expressly said, that "the holy keeping of the Lord's day is a principal part of the true service of God, which is now profaned and neglected." In no part of these statutes can I find the term "Sabbath," otherwise this last sentence is a remarkable specification, perfectly accordant with the notions, and delivered in the style of the Puritans.

This would seem inexplicable, unless we conjecture that when Charles the First held his Parliaments, these statutes were contrived by that party. Heylin declares as much; he says that "the Commons had *gained* these acts."† As they did not go so far as to abolish these Ecclesiastical festivals, but only

* Herrick's Hesperides.

† Cyprianus Anglicus, p. 241.

professed their better regulation, at that moment no objection was started from the Government side. It is probable that the remarkable specification of "the holy keeping of the Lord's day," was designed by those who drew up these statutes, as a preliminary to the future introduction of the novel term "Sabbath." That term was not yet to be found in the laws of England.

It is curious to observe, that when James the First composed his advice to his son Prince Henry, touching on the present topic, he provides that "the Sabbathes be kept holie." This was his style in the land of John Knox. In his new dominions of England that term was entirely thrown aside. The Puritanic rigours of a Sunday were, however, gaining ground even in the reign of the father of Charles the First, and more particularly among the civic corporations, as the son lived to experience. The conduct of a Lord Mayor under James the First has been recorded as an example of his piety, and it may be added of his prudence. The King's carriages removing to Theobalds on a Sunday morning, raised a clatter in the time of divine service. The Lord Mayor commanded them to be stopped; the officers returning to his Majesty made vehement complaints. The King warmed and swore he thought there had been no more kings in England than himself, and dispatched a warrant to the Lord Mayor to let them pass. The Puritanic chief magistrate obeyed, observing, "While it was in my power I did my duty; but that being taken away by a higher power, it is my duty to obey." The shrewd sense of this Lord Mayor produced a compliment from the King.

The doctrine of the rigid Sabbath was rife when Laud was Bishop of London. A circumstance will show the character of these city Sabbatarians. Sir Nicholas Rainton, the Lord Mayor, prosecuted a poor old apple-woman for retailing her small stores on Sundays in Paul's Church-yard; Laud insisted that she should continue her harmless living on Sundays in the Church-yard, threatening, that should the Lord Mayor again interfere in his jurisdiction, he would complain of him to the King and council. Another Lord Mayor in 1629 issued his warrant against those "who profane the Sabbath day by buying and selling." Laud excepted against it, as intruding on his Episcopal

jurisdiction. These anecdotes are maliciously given by Prynne, who concludes, "Such was this profane Archbishop."*

The land seemed threatened with that renovated Judaism which, not many years after, triumphantly rabbinised the whole realm. Judaical opinions had been broached by one John Thraske,† who among other absurdities had insisted that the Levitical ritual, relative to meats, &c. was also of perpetual ordinance. Now one Theophilus Bradbourn dedicated a treatise to Charles the First, in which he demonstrated that the Jewish Sabbath was to be kept with the rigid observances of the Hebrews, being a perpetual and moral obligation for mankind, while Sunday was an ordinary working-day. These Judaising Christians, whose Bibles had disordered their heads, had their followers; and Heylin tells us that there was a tendency in the people to "downright Judaism."‡ All these theological reveries were fostered by the novel doctrines of the Sabbatarians. Bradbourn, however, when brought into the Court of High-Commission submitted to a conference, where he had the good fortune to discover that his arguments were untenable, and to conform himself to quiet and orthodoxy.

As profanations of "the Sabbath," the Puritanic party had often protested against the Ecclesiastical festivals which we have described. It was now attempted to sanction their opinions. At the request of several country magistrates, at an assize in Somersetshire, Lord Chief-Justice Richardson issued an order for the utter suppression of these popular festivals, and further ordered that all ministers should publish his order from their pulpits.

The Bishop of London, startled at this usurpation of the jurisdiction of the Church, and this abolishment of days of ecclesiastical appointment, complained to the King. The Chief-Justice summoned to the Council-board, argued as a sound lawyer; appealed to the recent statutes, and alleged many precedents of such assize-orders, for the suppression of these festivals from the reign of Elizabeth.§ Law was babble, when

* Canterbury's Doom, p. 132. † In 1618. Fuller's Church History, x. 76.

‡ Cyprianus Anglicus, 243.

§ Prynne, in his "Canterbury's Doom," has collected a number of these assize-orders, which sufficiently vindicate the proceedings of the judge.—152.

divinity was jealous. The Judge was severely reprimanded by the Bishop for having assumed a power over ministers, without the consent of the Bishop of the diocese; and commanded him to revoke that order at the next assizes, in the same public manner in which he had given it, as he would answer the contrary at his peril. On leaving the Council-board the indignant Judge, as much in rage as in dejection, shed tears, and when asked by Lord Dorset how he did? replied, "Very ill, my Lord, for I have been almost choked with a pair of lawn sleeves."*

Laud desired the Bishop of Bath and Wells to inquire concerning "the late noise in Somersetshire about wakes." The conduct of the Lord Chief-Justice, acting without the Bishop's consent in pretence of reformation, said Laud, had gone on a principle that "any thing that is abused may quite be taken away;" that disorders which might have broken out in those feasts instituted for good purposes ought to be prevented by the Justices of Peace themselves. Laud hints that "the Humourists were increasing much in those parts, and unite themselves in banding against the feasts, as his Majesty has been lately informed."

That the suppression of these rural festivals was considered as an affair of the anti-prelatic or Puritan party, appears by the reply of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Having dispatched his missives through all the deaneries of the diocese, the Bishop received the testimonials of his numerous clergy, from distant parts of the county, protesting against these suppressions; they were desirable for the people; the wealthy maintaining hospitality, and the poor being cheered by these feasts of religion and charity, where the differences between neighbours were often happily composed by this meeting of their common friends, and alleging other reasons for their continuance.† The dis-

* Heylin's *Cyprianus Anglicus*, 243. Prynne had already furnished the anecdote.

† The correspondence between Laud and Pierce, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, is interesting. The Bishop has described these "Country feasts." When Prynne ransacked the cabinet of Laud, he found these letters, and published them in his "*Canterbury's Doom*," signature V: they were indorsed by Laud "My Lord of Bath's certificates about wakes in Somersetshire." They reflect no discredit on either party; one earnestly inquired after the truth, and the other laboriously furnished the information. Prynne, according to his notions, notes on the Clergy, seventy-two in number, who signed the certificates which they sent from their

orders complained of had been greatly exaggerated, and worse occurred in fairs and markets, where a constable was sufficient to put them down.

After the reprimand of Laud at the Council-board, the Chief-Justice at the next assize, without acknowledging any error, revoked what he called "the good orders" which he had formerly issued. The country magistrates troubled at the revocation, prepared a petition. They were evidently of the Puritanic party, for the petition was sent up to London to be secretly submitted to "Master Prynne," that head of all "the Humourists!" Prynne was waiting the arrival in town of the Lord-Lieutenant of the County, to have it presented to the King; but early intelligence had been sent to Laud; and it was during this interval of twelve days, that Laud by a vigorous measure induced the King to revive his father's "Book of Sports" to be allowed on Sundays.

The ostensible object of these dissensions was not the real one. With some it was not so much the suppression of the Wakes as the establishing the Sabbatic-Sunday; there were others with whom it was not so much the establishing the Sabbatic-Sunday as the political opposition to the Government, of which this served as one of the most popular pretexts. So human affairs are strangely combined together! All religion seemed now to exist in the rigid observance of "the Sabbath:" the rising party rung this alarum, and the nation was artfully divided into Sabbatarians, and Sabbath-breakers.

Neal, the historian of the Puritans, at this point of his history, makes this reflection. "Here we observe the laity petitioning for the religious observation of the Lord's day, and the Bishop with his clergy pleading for the profanation of it." This was a conclusive argument for whoever had not entered into the history of the Sabbatic-Sunday in England. The people would have wondered to have learnt that Archbishop Laud accused *them* of superstition!

The motives which urged the revival of the royal declaration concerning lawful sports on Sundays, appear by some artless

different residences, that "they were the deboystest (the most debauched) and worst in the county." We perceive the bitterness which this party-affair was beginning to stir up.

memoranda which Laud never suspected would have seen the light. They are these: "A general and superstitious opinion conceived of that day—a book set out by Theophilus Bradbourn 'Judaism upon Christian Principles'—which had perverted many—a great distemper (disorder) in Somersetshire upon the forbidding of the wakes in the sourness of this opinion—an act of a Judge that rid that circuit—his Majesty troubled with petitions by some of that county—his royal father's example upon the like occasions in Lancashire."*

Laud could not as a prescient statesman foresee the result of approaching events—that the times had altered, Laud had yet hardly discovered—and that at a crisis, it is not always wise to be looking for a precedent, was a philosophy too comprehensive as yet to have been recognised. In the narrow limits of his political experience, he did not act without premeditation. He sought for an authority for the measure he adopted by referring Charles to his royal father's example on a similar occasion, and he was certain that the precedent would prevail; for Charles on many critical occasions seems rarely to have acted from his own suggestions. In the great struggle in which Laud was now engaged in the religious commonwealth with the rising power of Non-conformity, he probably contemplated on a deeper object. By commanding that the edict should be read by the parochial ministers, he was numbering the dutiful sons of the Church, and marking out her disaffected members. The "Declaration" would be a test of concealed Puritanism. It was a strong measure; but the zealous Laud, as his old master James the First had said, was at all times "tossing about" for strong measures, and it has been his ill-fortune to be judged of by their result.

On the issue of "the Declaration," a consternation spread among the clergy; Laud seems not to have been aware that the opinions of the clergy themselves had of late fluctuated between the prevalent sectarian notions and the former customs of the country, and indeed of all Christian Europe, except the land of John Knox. Some imagined that they saved the violation of their own consciences by deputing the clerk to promulgate the obnoxious act; one having read it, and afterwards the fourth commandment, told his parishioners that "they had now heard

* Prynne's *Canterbury's Doom*, numbered, p. 418.

the word of God and the injunction of man, and they were to obey which they pleased." If Laud by this test of Uniformity discovered the obedient subjects of the Church, he might have been alarmed at the considerable number of ministers ejected, or suspended by his authority, and against their will thrown into the ranks of the Non-conformists.

Many extraordinary works were now sent forth to enlighten the public mind on this obscure or misconceived topic of the Sabbatarian controversy. The most curious for their erudition were on the side of the court; indeed, the investigation could only be carried on by the most extensive researches; it was to ascertain the customs and practices of different ages since the foundation of Christianity. The inquirers, who deemed the Sabbath an abrogated institution, considered it was superstitious to observe the extinct Sabbath of the Hebrews, which distinguished the Jews from other nations. They assumed that in its own nature it was neither moral nor perpetual; Jesus "had nailed all the ceremonial law to the cross," and the old law, which had begun with Moses, had ceased with Christ. The moment the controversy turned on the sentiment or the opinion of the writer, it became fanciful and contradictory. The most absurd reasonings were alleged to extricate themselves from the perplexities in which they were involved. Those who appealed to the fourth commandment for perpetuating the Jewish Sabbath, yet had changed the hallowed seventh day into the first of the week; this was a perplexing objection. If the first day of the week, as the Lord's day, had been appointed by the Church as a festival day, by what authority was it to be regulated by the rigid observance of the Sabbath?

The short history of Dr. Pocklington, an eminent divine, is a part of that of the Sabbatarian controversy, and his fate may serve as its close.

Dr. Pocklington had published a sermon which had excited great attention, entitled "Sunday no Sabbath," in 1636. Here he had sharpened many keen passages against the prevailing Puritanism. Five years afterwards, in 1641, when Puritanism became parliamentary, he was selected as the first victim. He had articles exhibited against him, drawn from his own writings. There is "a petition to the Lords by J. H., of Cardington, in

the county of Bedford, Gent.” This puritan gentleman had also undertaken the office of controverting what he calls the Doctor’s “Jewish and popish superstitions and anti-christian doctrines.” It is curious, that both parties recriminate on one another their tendency to Judaism.

Pocklington having affirmed that the day which they nicknamed the Sabbath is either no day at all, or not the day which they mean, the Puritan replies to this; “*Sabbatum* signifies a day of sacred rest consecrated to God, whence all such days are in Scripture called *Sabbaths*, as well as the Seventh day. Therefore the Lord’s day may be so termed, without any danger of Judaism, as well as Easter is still called *Pasca*, and Whitsunday *Pentecost*, the Jewish words and institutions.” The ingenuity of the answer is superior to its logic. By changing its first position he eludes the question altogether. He does not prove Sunday to be the Sabbath, otherwise than as any other day may be, according to his assumption. The retention of the Israelitish terms and festivals in the Christian system was a remarkable circumstance; they were the remains of the early Judaising Christians.

At a committee of many lords in the painted chamber, the unfortunate Pocklington had to defend his theological opinions in the articles now brought forth in judgment against him. Our Puritan, of this trial both publisher and commentator, assures us that “The man was not able to make any reasonable defence, for his parts and learning had quite forsaken him, and he had nothing left in him but anger and passion to manage his cause, which provoked all good Christians to praise God, who had given his truth such a weak enemy, and error such a foolish patron.”

Pocklington, before this committee of peers, who were sitting to decide on nice and obscure points of historical theology, might have been both impatient and indignant. Their sentence deprived him not only of all his ecclesiastical livings, dignities, and preferments, but held him incapable hereafter of holding any place or dignity in the Church or in the Commonwealth. The last critic who was to take in hand his unlucky “Sunday no Sabbath” was to be the common executioner, and the last copy was to flutter in the flames. The Puritan “Gentleman”

who has sent down to us the discomfiture of the learned Doctor, has not noticed the discomfiture of the Committee of Peers, who were now doing the drudge-work of the Puritanic Commons. It is from another quarter I discover that when Dr. Pocklington was accused and censured, he was also to perform the penance of a Recantation. Persisting in his former opinion, he gave his Recantation a quaint and novel form. He said, "If *Canto* be to sing, *Recanto* is to sing again;"* that is, he would only repeat what he had first said. So that the man whose "parts and learning" had so suddenly deserted him, at the last recovered all their energy. It is said that the party designed to have further punished his contumacy; but as Pocklington died in the following year, his death has afforded Walker, in his sufferings of the Clergy, another victim, whom he describes as dying "in a manner heart-broken." But the honourable courage which marked the learned Doctor when before the Committee of the House of Lords, though they had cruelly deprived him of the means of existence, would hardly have forsaken him in so short a period.

When the strength and glory of England were placed in the hands of the Puritans, their extravagant conduct on many national objects was never more visible than on their Sabbatic regulations. It seemed as if religion chiefly consisted of the Sabbatarian rigours, and that a British senate had been transformed into a company of Hebrew Rabbins. In 1650 an act was passed for inflicting penalties for breach of the Sabbath, some of which included dancing and singing, or travelling in a boat, on horseback, or in a coach or sedan, except to church. This exception occurred on the remonstrance of one of the members of the House of Commons complaining that "in their zeal they had tied the Godly from going to Church by water or coach, for that he coming from Westminster to Somerset-house to sermon, had his boat and waterman seized for the penalty." The perverted feeling and the misconception of this race, in respect to the Sabbath, had appeared as early in the reign of Charles as in 1637, when many emigrated to New England.

* This curious anecdote may be found in "Lowth's Letter to Edward Stillingfleet," p. 56. 4to. 1687. Neal has acknowledged that Pocklington refused to recant.

In their code of laws, among the Sabbatic prohibitions under severe penalties are these, "No one shall run on the Sabbath-day, or walk in his garden, cook victuals, make beds, sweep house, cut hair or shave." "No woman shall kiss her child." These were the grossest Rabbinical superstitions.

At length having prohibited Sundays as days of recreation, and abolished all Saints' days, or festivals, the common people evidently murmured at the deprivation of their periodical holidays. The feelings of the people were more natural than their Parliament, even in the gloomy land of Puritanism. This must have been the occasion of a remarkable ordinance issued in 1647 concerning "days of recreation allowed unto scholars, apprentices, &c." The second Tuesday in every month was set apart for the holiday of these persons, when it was ordered, that "all windows of shops and warehouses shall be kept shut on the said day of recreation."

Our kingdom of the Godly must have been the scorn and ridicule of other nations, while they were regulating the police of an empire as if they were dwellers in the land of Canaan. What was the result of this spurious sanctity, this fantastic renovation of the Israelite's Sabbaths? When Sectarianism bred all monstrous shapes, and irreligion so easily assumed the garb of piety, after having observed the Lord's day with these Judaic rigours, a re-action took place among those who now rejected the observance altogether, pretending to that elevated holiness which kept all days as Lord's days. A popular preacher at the Temple, who was disposed to foster a cheerful spirit among the common people, yet desirous that the Lord's day should not pass undistinguished, declared that "those whose hands are ever working whilst their eyes are waking, through the whole week, need their recreations on the Lord's day," but that Sundays should be observed with strictness and an abstinence from all recreations, only by "persons of quality" who had the whole week for their amusements.

Such were the opinions and practices of the Sabbatic Sunday of the Government of Charles the First, and of the Puritans.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE SEAS.

IN every history of England, the reader may find what I shall now quote from Hume, that in 1636 "a formidable fleet of sixty sail, *the greatest that England had ever known*, was equipped under the Earl of Northumberland, who had orders to attack"—what, with the greatest fleet England had ever known?—"the herring busses of the Dutch which fished in what was called the British seas."

Sixty sail equipped to claim "the tenth herring!" and which when the affrighted fishermen, and the States of Holland at length agreed to compound for, by a duty or tribute for license to fish, amounted to thirty thousand pounds. This truly had been a wanton prodigality of the hard-wrung ship-money, for as a financial speculation the British Cabinet must have been convinced *primâ facie*, that they were securing a heavy loss to the Royal treasury.

In political transactions, it is a very rare absurdity, as runs the proverbial phrase, "to break an egg with an axe;" but what is not rare is, that the public are accustomed to decide on public events by their obvious pretext. The real motives, and the secret occasion which induced Charles the First to put forth these formidable preparations against these Dutch fishermen, were not comprehended by the writers who have calculated the profits of the herring-fishery to the Dutch, and envied their happier success in the art of curing them, and still less have they been understood by those depreciators of the unfortunate monarch, shortly to be noticed, who have cast a malignant obscurity over the magnanimity of Charles the First in a momentous trial of the character of a British monarch.

This trivial incident of the herring-fishery is connected with one of the most important subjects of our foreign relations, that of the English monarch's claim to the sovereignty of the sea—a claim then disputed, and often since resisted.

The dispute about the herring-fishery occurred in 1636, but, to take in the subject in all its true bearings, we must look for its beginning, two years preceding that event. Dates are often the most positive arguments in history.

It was in July, 1634, that from intercepted letters in Flanders, the Spanish Resident in London furnished very important information to Charles the First. In this correspondence of the Prince of Orange with the Dutch Ambassador in France, there was transmitted a copy of proposals by Cardinal Richelieu to the States. That enterprising minister had projected to combine the French armies with the fleet of Holland, in order to surprise Dunkirk and Gravelines, two ports which Spain retained in the Austrian Netherlands. The plan was to be effected with such secrecy as to be concealed from the English monarch, lest he should not consent to it, and to be so sudden that the Cabinet of Madrid should not have time to frame a league with that of Whitehall.

Charles, on this information, acknowledged without reserve, that these secret practices and confederacies of the French and the Hollander were dangerous to both Crowns—and that the Dutch had grown more insolent since they had become victorious. At this moment these new States were powerful at sea, they had recently taken an English merchant-ship, and had openly declared that they would confiscate any which traded with the subjects of Spain. Charles was therefore ready to join with Spain to frustrate their designs, but it was hinted that he was yet unprovided with the means of fitting out a great naval armament, and the danger, however imminent for Spain, did not press immediately on England. The Spanish Resident having, by this acknowledgment, felt his ground, now showed that he was furnished with ample powers both to supply monies and to conclude on articles.

Of this secret treaty we have three papers, as these passed through several variations, in their progressive stages. They offer a striking specimen of Charles's application to business. In each careful revision, the King with his own hand made several material interlineations, and he has distinctly endorsed these three papers as "Old—New—Newest."

The treaty was concluded in August, 1634, but the armament

was not to put to sea till the spring of the following year. In order not to arouse the vigilant observation of their neighbours, this great fleet was to be gradually increased—and at first only twenty sail were contemplated. It was agreed that the *pretext* of this arming should be to free the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland from the pirates of Barbary, and to protect the fishery. There was a secret article that his Majesty of Great Britain should give secret instructions to the commanders of his ships, that should they meet Spanish ships in an action with their enemies at open sea, the English should aid them, in case the Spaniards were overmatched, and, to use the words of the treaty, “taking some convenient pretext to justify it, that the Hollanders may not hold it for an act of hostility.”* Such is the mysticism of politics! This article must have strained on tenter-hooks the understandings of our most dexterous diplomatists, who, when called on to explain, were to convince the Hollanders that, while we were their assailants, we were, notwithstanding, at peace with them.

There was still a more remarkable article. In “the Old” paper, it was mentioned that “the English ships shall use their best means that the subjects of the King of Spain shall receive no wrong, and that *his Majesty’s sovereignty and dominion in these his seas*, shall be preserved from violence and insolencies on *both sides*.” The English, in fact, were conscious that their “Sovereignty of the Sea” was equally disputable with their old ally and their new rival. The Spaniards thus objected to the offensive phrase:—“It is certain Kings do enjoy their Sovereignty in whatever is their’s, and do not acquire it, where they have it not, *though they use the word*; but in treaties such terms are commonly avoided.” It is curious to observe, that, in this instance, treating on equal terms with his ally, Charles the First struck out the words “his Majesty’s sovereignty and dominion in these his seas shall be preserved,” and, with political courtesy, reduced the regal assumption to “his Majesty’s subjects shall be preserved.” Thus, while the Government was insisting on “the sovereignty of the sea,” from one part of the world, and was sending forth a vast armament “to scour the seas, and to sink, or to be sunk, if any strike not sail to the English Admiral in

* Clarendon Papers, i. 215.

the narrow seas,"* in the silence and wisdom of the Cabinet, such was the delicacy of the claim that it was waived in a treaty of alliance with a friendly power; a remarkable instance of the accommodating style of politics.

But claims of this nature, though they are suffered to lie in abeyance, are in fact never yielded. Three years afterwards, when the state-policy of the two Courts was again suffering a change, that on the complaint of the Hollanders, who refused to pay the English for a protection which the Spaniards did not regard, when the Ambassador of Spain would have replied to these complaints, "his Majesty," writes Secretary Windebank, "fairly and roundly answered the Ambassador that he will maintain his sovereignty of the seas, and defend those who acknowledge his sovereignty against any power or prince whatsoever."†

This, then, was the true cause of equipping one of the most formidable fleets which ever issued from our ports since the reign of Elizabeth, and that this was the great object of Charles the First is confirmed by a variety of very interesting circumstances.

The subject, indeed, at this moment so deeply engaged the thoughts of Charles the First, that, having learned that Selden had formerly composed a work to vindicate the maritime rights of the English monarchy, the King desired the author to revise it for publication, and so highly approved of the erudition and the authority of that illustrious antiquary, that the King commanded that three copies of the work should be perpetually preserved in the Council-chest, the Court of Admiralty, and the Court of Exchequer, to be valued as a record.

Such was the origin of the famous *Mare Clausum* (the Closed Sea) of Selden. The title is an evidence that Selden had in his mind the *Mare Liberum* (the Free Sea) of Grotius. But though it was an answer to the general principles of that other great heir of fame, the object of Grotius was entirely different. We are astonished to find that Whitelocke, a great lawyer and even a statesman, has fallen into the inconceivable error that Grotius published his treatise of the "*Mare Liberum*," on the affair of the herring-fishery, when in fact it was published nearly thirty

* Such were the instructions which the Lord General declared he had received, as appears by a letter from James Howel to the Earl of Strafford.

† Clarendon Papers, ii. 4 and 9.

years before, and for a very different purpose. Whitelocke probably only recollected the title of the treatise of Grotius; as a patriotic Briton, he would confidently appeal to the book in "the Council-chest," or at "the Admiralty." Our Memorialist has, however, sadly misled several modern writers, who, doubtless, either on his authority, or trusting to the contrasted titles of the two works, have committed the same anachronism, and thus repeating that the disputes on the herring-fishery had produced the treatise of Grotius, they have ventured to perpetuate a fact which had never occurred.

We may smile that the subject of the sovereignty of the sea should have so long formed an intricate discussion among jealous nations and philosophical jurists, since that knotty point has long been cut by the sword. An exclusive dominion mutable as the winds and the waves—a desert of waters where occupancy only could give possession, ceasing in the liquid road with the wake of the ship—was by some presumed to be but a chimerical empire. That which we cannot keep is not ours, and that which all men can possess without our consent, cannot be appropriated to any one. The power which only begins with our presence and ceases in our absence, can never be deemed sovereign. Others have asserted that we may remain masters of the sea even when we do not actually possess it. On the plea of maritime rights, the circumfluent waves constitute a part of their own shores, and maintain the security of a kingdom. "But whether the law of nations warrant any further pretensions may be questioned," observes Hume. The Duke of Somerset, the Protector, declared that Britain was surrounded on all sides by the ocean, as the securest rampart against her enemies; hence we may infer that an insular nation has its own policy, distinct from its neighbours.

Our maritime dominion was protested against by those whose national interests induced them to claim the universal freedom of the seas. When Holland was rising into an independent empire, she became indignant at the exclusive navigation of the Indies by the Spaniards and the Portuguese, and aspired to divide that world, which her old masters concealed as it were in darkness from Europe. Grotius, then the Attorney-general of Holland and Zeland, vindicated the liberty of the seas, and the

"*Mare Liberum*" appeared in 1609. The property of the sea he declared was a violation of the law of nature and of nations—the sea and the air, like the light of the sun, could not, as the earth, be appropriated, for their divisions were impossible. To contest the freedom of navigation was to destroy navigation itself, breaking a tie which should unite all nations, and throwing the universe into confusion. The treatise of Grotius was an appeal to the feelings of those nations whose superiority at sea remained doubtful. They are still employed in refuting Selden. A memoir in the French Institute, in the days of Napoleon, revived the controversy, and accorded the palm to the declamatory Hollander, resisting the colossal erudition of Great Britain's antiquary, whom Grotius, so honourably to himself, distinguishes as the glory of England.*

The *Mare Clausum* of Selden remains among the monuments of the human mind. Profound in disquisitions on the nature of dominion, and stored with the inexhaustible researches of all human learning, Selden explored for his principles his own mind, and for his precedents the history of nations. In his patriotism he gave England the sovereignty of the four seas, while his erudition furnished them with a less disputable possession than that ideal sovereignty in the work itself; where, in the many-coloured languages of his page, we discover the Hebrew of Solomon Jarchi and the Talmud, with the Arabic characters of the Koran.

The Dutch Ambassador Joachimi appears to have obtained an early copy of Selden's book, which was dispatched by a courier to the States-General. It was considered tantamount to a declaration of war, and Joachimi received secret orders instantly to return home on pretence of attending his wife's funeral, but really in order to confer on a point too delicate to confide to paper. Already the English fleet was at sea, and the affrighted Dutch busses were flying in all directions. Many distracted councils were now held, and the pride of the new Republic painfully contended with their prudence. It was

* The memoir which I read at the time is, I presume, that which the Biographie Universelle ascribes to Gerard de Rayneval, published in 1811, who we are told has invincibly refuted the arguments of Selden. One would imagine that the French Diplomat had sent forth a French marine greater than the fleets of England!

proposed to send out a Dutch fleet to escort their fishermen, which long after was done, and refuse the florin duty levied for every two barrels,—but it was considered that negotiation might be a wiser method than battle. They resolved on seizing a favourable opportunity which now presented itself—the birth of a Princess—to dispatch an Ambassador Extraordinary to the British Court with royal gifts, not only to congratulate the father, but to engage the monarch, if possible, to desist from his imaginary property over the seas.* On this occasion the States-General displayed a more refined manner than usual in flattering the elegant tastes of the English monarch, probably prompted by the suggestions of their resident Ambassador from his personal knowledge of Charles the First. Mr. Cornelius Beveren, the Lord of Stravelshock, came over to England, and entered Whitehall, not as a stern Republican, but as a discreet courtier, offering the amicable presents of his masters. Precious amber, transparent china vases, a chest of the finest linen, the unrivalled manufacture of Holland, and the mechanical wonder of a curious clock, which the King of Sweden had found in the cabinet of the Duke of Bavaria when he took Munich, and had sent to the Prince of Orange—were trivial elegancies, which Charles instantly consigned to the Queen. But several fine horses, and above all, four inappreciable pictures—not from their own native and depreciated school, but from the more classical easels of Italy—the master-pieces of Titian and Tintoret, were gifts no man more highly valued than the King. Whitelocke, who has noticed a part of this little anecdote, remarks, “It is supposed they did this to ingratiate the more with our King, in regard his fleet was so powerful at sea, and they saw him resolved to maintain his dominion there.”

James the First had proclaimed his right “to restrain foreigners from the fishery on his own coasts without his licence,” but a proclamation had never induced a foreigner to pay for a licence, yet as James always liked a book, he had read over and approved the manuscript of the *Mare Clausum*, but he lost the glory of its publication, for either his pacific measures, or some other cause, suffered the manuscript to lie neglected

* Gerard Van Loon, in his voluminous *Histoire Metallique des dix-sept Provinces Unies*, has furnished some details of this critical state of affairs.

many years in Selden's study. Charles declared the fishery to be "a right and royalty of inheritance incident to our Crown,"* and his fleet had more explicitly asserted the sovereignty of the sea. The States had remonstrated; but the English cannon pealed! The Lord of Stravelshock was therefore but partly successful in his solemn and courteous embassy, and if he could not get rid of the sovereignty of the seas, he, however, adjusted an annual contribution from the States of thirty thousand pounds for the liberty of the fishery. The naval dominion of England was established.

There was, however, no peace among the Jurisconsults, and Selden was not allowed to partake of the triumph of his royal master. Graswinkel, the pupil of Grotius, had displayed so much learning and such consummate ability in a manuscript treatise on these contested points, that he was pensioned for it by the States-General, and a new office was created for him under the title of Advocate-General of the Marine, but these honours were acquired on a very singular condition; that some of the Deputies of the State should carefully examine his work, and that *it should not be published!* So desirous was the Republic at that moment of terminating a discussion which had already occasioned the annihilation of their fishing fleet, and a tributary treaty. It was a subject, as a statesman among them, wiser than the Jurisconsults, observed, which the pen could never decide, but which the sword would.

It is, however, a curious circumstance in the history of the human mind, that though every judicious person was convinced of the inefficacy of a volume to maintain, or to abrogate, the sovereignty of the sea, still each nation looked with a fond eye on the book which cherished their own prejudices, and supported their own interests. Neither the doctrines of Selden, nor those of the suppressed Graswinkel, were neglected at an after-period by their respective nations. When the Commonwealth of England went to war with the States of Holland, Marchmont Needham published a translation of the "*Mare Clausum*," castrating the dignified dedication to Charles and substituting his own servile adulation of the Commonwealth. On this occa-

* Clarendon State Papers, ii. 9. The language of Charles used for the same purpose, but on a different occasion.

sion the States-General altered their former opinion respecting the publication of the manuscript of their Advocate-General of the Marine; Graswinkel was now sent forth to oppose Selden, as well as the fleet of Holland to encounter the fleet of England, —their fates were alike, for Selden answered, and our cannon was fatal to Van Tromp. It may seem strange that when two powerful nations have decided on war, they should look to philosophical theories, or the inky combats of closet-idlers, as auxiliaries in their cause; but practised statesmen know how susceptible are the imaginations of the people, who not always knowing what they fight for, sharpen their patriotism by intricate discussions, and carry on a war with great spirit, when it is the result of a system of thinking,—that is an assumption of arbitrary principles, equally passionate and temporary.

The conduct of Charles the First in vindicating the British power in the dominion of the British seas, by requiring the foreigner to strike his flag to the flag of England, avowing the sovereignty of the sea as his principle and maintaining the principle by the deed, is one of the most magnanimous acts of his reign, and one which must ever constitute the peculiar characteristic of an English monarch. In this great incident in our history from his first step to his last, we may justly commend his inviolable honour, and his unalterable decision; his inviolable honour, because the moderate, if not the scanty supply which Charles the First had drawn from ship-money had been sacredly set apart for its great national object: his unalterable decision, because the mind of Charles the First had been fully impressed both by the greatness and the necessity of this enterprise. The seas were swept by our friends as well as by our foes, and even the distant pirates of Barbary had dared repeatedly to descend on the Irish coast.

England may sometimes wisely relinquish a military position on the Continent, but when may she yield the royalty of her seas? When Venice dropped her nuptial ring into the Adriatic, who smiled not at the pageant hero, who slunk away from his ravished bride? but England is embraced by the ocean itself—or, as one of her admirals said in Charles the Second's reign, married to the sea. It is our triumphant navies which have extended a narrow insular dominion, till England has

risen the arbiter of her neighbours, and, as it were, become herself the neighbour of the most distant powers.

This great naval enterprise was therefore no wild scheme of ambition, no capricious act of power. It adjusted the political balance of Europe, while it was achieving the secret wish of the people who were murmuring at the ship-money. Besides the volume of Selden, which Charles the First held as the record of his title to his maritime dominions, the King had shown his earnestness to improve the state of his navy, and to display to the world a model of naval architecture, worthy of him who claimed the sovereignty of the seas. He called forth the genius of Phineas Pett, the great shipwright who had been patronised by his father, and particularly by his brother Prince Henry. Charles frequently visited the dock-yard at Woolwich. It was during one of these visits that the King in a private conference with Pett, himself projected the plan of this great ship of war, and Pett travelled to the north to obtain timbers of an extraordinary dimension, and manufactured materials expressly adapted to this marine citadel. In the great dock at Woolwich at length appeared "that miracle of ships," as Lilly calls it. It exceeded in its magnitude, its workmanship, and its magnificence, any ship which England had put to sea, or, as it is said, in the world. It became a popular object of curiosity, and not only their Majesties, but multitudes flocked to wonder at this floating castle. This ship of war was a favourite object with Charles the First, and the cost was more than royal, of which when reminded, he gave that noble but severe answer, which, though I have already noticed it, deserves here to be repeated. "While some nobles prodigally spent their patrimony in luxurious courses, nothing either to their credit, or their reputations, or beneficial to the kingdom, as King, he might be allowed to build that ship for his pleasure, which might be useful for the service of the kingdom."*

* This ship of war is minutely described in Strafford's Letters, ii. 116. It was of 1637 tons, which by an accidental coincidence was the very year in which it was finished. In respect to the name of the ship, some difficulties have occurred. It has been erroneously called "The Royal Sovereign," and in a passage in Strafford's Letters I find "My Lord of Northumberland had the happiness to light on the name which most pleased the King, 'The Sovereign.'" Even contemporaries differed about the name of this ship. Later writers call it "The Sovereign." The right

Two other remarkable memorials which the King has left his country, attest his own sense of the glory and the patriotic pride of his own claims. Charles the First struck several medals to commemorate the glorious event after the treaty with Holland, which may still be seen in the cabinets of the curious ; * and in St. James's park, there stood, and doubtless now stands, a cannon which was emphatically called "the gun ;" it was cast in the year 1638, bearing this inscription—

Carolus Edgæri sceptrum stabilivit Aquarum.

"The sceptre of Edgar established on the waters by Charles."

Such was the venerable antiquity of the regal claim. A cannon which bears an argument is royal logic, and would seem, in more than one respect, irrefragable. It is possibly a delicate allusion to the work of the great master of our antiquities, who had deduced our maritime dominion from the first Sovereign of England.†

The pirates of Sallee, who had revolted from the Emperor of Morocco, headed by a rebel who was called the Saint, by their descents and depredations on the Irish coasts, among other disgraceful evils had carried off into captivity numbers of our countrymen. These pirates were now extirpated. Charles was anxious to confer particular honours on Captain Rainsborough, the commander in this successful expedition, and when this "experienced and worthy seaman," as Secretary Coke describes him, declined the honour of knighthood which the King himself offered, Charles ordered that his naval hero should be presented

name is extremely important on the present subject, to show what was passing in the mind of Charles. And now it may be finally ascertained, for the builder himself, in his autobiography, has preserved the expressive appellative. The King himself commanded she should bear the name of "The Sovereign of the Seas." I recollect, in an evening lecture at the Royal Institution, Mr. Knowles, F.R.S., of the Navy Office, favouring us with an interesting view of our Naval architecture, and exhibiting a draught of "The Sovereign of the Seas," which ship for that period he considered a master-piece of the art. Of Phineas Pett, the great Naval architect, there are some memoirs in the *Archæologia*, xii. 217, and the MS. of his life is preserved at the British Museum.

* It is an extraordinary omission in Evelyn's rambling work on Medals, that he should not have noticed these testimonies of the triumph of Charles the First, and of England. Nor are they in Pinkerton's *Medallic History of England*. I have seen some in the collection of British Medals at the British Museum.

† *Mare Clausum*, lib. ii. cap. xii.

with a costly gold chain, and with a medal of not less value than three hundred pounds. This memorial of loyal service may perhaps still exist, should not very opposite family feelings have melted it down in the days of the Rump.

The Moorish Ambassador appeared mounted on horseback ; in his train four grooms led four Barbary horses, which showed their mettle in their paces, richly caparisoned, the saddles studded ; and the captives mostly clad in white who now had returned free men to England, passed through the city, where it was also known that the Ambassador was the bearer of a treaty of alliance and commerce. Even Strafford imagined that "this action of Sallee is so full of honour that it will bring great content to the subject, and help much towards the ready cheerful payment of the shipping monies."* But doubtless there were many, now that the expedition was successful, finding out reasons why it ought not to have succeeded. Ancient is the cry of what we moderns call the Opposition ! † The poet Waller may soothe the manes of Charles the First for the insults he is doomed to receive. Waller has composed a poem on the taking of Sallee. The poet, like most persons, was attracted by the novel spectacle of the Moor—the mettled palfreys—the Christian captives :—

Morocco sends the Chief among his Peers
Who in his bark proportioned presents bears,
To the renowned for piety and force
Poor captives manumised, and matchless horse.

Alluding to the lawless democracy of these pirates, a couplet more happily applies to our present purpose :—

Safely they might on other nations prey ;
Fools to provoke *the Sovereign of the sea !*

* Strafford's Letters, ii. 129—132.

† "The success of the measure arose entirely from an accidental event," observes Mr. Brodie ; "it is said that intestine commotions opportunely assisted the attack."

The plan was concerted with the Emperor of Morocco, who in the preceding year had sent over to England an envoy with a proposal that he should attack the place by land, while the English assailed it at sea. By what licence of style can a preconcerted measure be said to have terminated in "an accidental event ?"

CHAPTER V.

CAUSES OF THE INACTION OF THE ENGLISH FLEETS.

CHARLES THE FIRST was doomed to war with Fate ! The narrative of his glory must ever terminate with that of his misfortunes. This monarch had first set that noble example which his successors in government have scrupulously followed, whether a Cromwell, a Stuart, or a Guelph. The sovereignty of our seas will ever remain a part of our insular policy, yet Charles the First was himself to witness the reverse of all his hopes. The humiliated Sovereign of the Seas was to suffer a national insult even from those whom he had subjected.

It is worthy the curiosity of Englishmen to become acquainted with the complicated events by which this great naval design became utterly frustrated. It often happens in the history of Charles the First that his accusers have not developed the peculiarity of his position, while they have reproached his conduct. Even when their reproaches may not be unjust, truth has required a different statement than they have afforded us. The subject of the sovereignty of the sea is a remarkable instance of this.

We have shown the exertions which were required to equip the most formidable fleet which England had ever put to sea, and the scrupulous honour of Charles in employing the moderate revenue of the ship-money to this great national object. Yet, notwithstanding these efforts, in the course of three years we find this great fleet inactive ; our flag no longer honoured by the French, the Hollander, and the Spaniard, and, to reach the climax of national disgrace, the English Sovereign received the European affront of witnessing the neutrality of his ports violated by two nations, in defiance of his express command. It is only a mind most perverted in its political feelings which can imagine for an instant, that Charles was tamely insensible to this national outrage—he who had maintained with such elevation, not only this sovereignty of the sea, but at the same critical moment, as

we shall shortly show, was asserting the independence of his government against the foreigner. It is evident that causes which have not been explored by our historical writers, must have been secretly operating to have occasioned such a fatal reverse.

At this period two strong parties, equally balanced, divided the Cabinet. Lord Holland and Secretary Coke had adopted the French interest, in opposition to Lord Cottington and Secretary Windebank, who were warmly attached to the Spanish. A personage of no inferior importance in the naval history of this period must also be considered. This was the Lord High Admiral of England, Algernon, Earl of Northumberland.

An idea of the condition of our naval affairs we obtain by some letters of the Earl of Northumberland. In February, 1636-7, two querulous letters to Strafford represent the miserable state in which the business of the Admiralty was conducted, which was then in commission. Northumberland had been appointed Admiral of the summer fleet. "It is not declared who shall command the King's fleet. If that charge be committed to any other body, I shall not envy him that hath the honour of it; for I profess to your Lordship, to whom I shall ever speak freely, that, as it is now managed, it is not an employment fit for any person of honour."

A few days after we find, "the King hath this day told me privately that he is so well satisfied with my carriage in his service the last summer, that he intends again to employ me this year, which I should willingly have declined had I known handsomely how to avoid it. I perceive some others, of whom the King is not very confident, have been suitors for the employment; and if four pounds a-day whilst I am abroad be the only reward for my service, truly I would have wished it in another hand."

This is no heroic strain! However, we learn, two months afterwards, that the King in person, at a Committee of the Admiralty, called together the officers of the Navy, to answer the abuses alleged against them by the principal commanders, but little was said by them in their own defence. Some reform was agreed on, and, after admonition from the King on "hope of their amendment," he graciously dismissed them.

Again, "If the King have not more use of his fleet than is yet known, he may well save one half of the charge, and give me leave to stay at home."

Three months after, July, 1637, a letter dated on board the *Triumph* in the Downs, prolongs the same desponding tone. They were extremely idle, no directions for the disposing of the fleets. "When men go several ways and are led by private ends, they are not only long in coming to resolutions, but do often destroy public designs." He continues in a nobler strain than the former one of "four pounds a-day when on board." "To ride in this place at anchor a whole summer together without hope of action, to see daily disorders in the fleet, and not to have means to remedy them, and to be in an employment, where a man can neither do service to the State, gain honour to himself, nor do courtesies to his friends, is a condition that I think nobody will be ambitious of."*

How much may be abstracted from the amount of these querulous dispatches, or how far they may originate in a youthful nobleman who had not yet reached the point of his ambition, who shall say? One thing appears, that there was a strange unaccountable inaction in the fleet. However disorderly was the general conduct of the navy, and tedious and mysterious its inaction, a bright beam is suddenly thrown over the late darkened picture, in the mind of Northumberland, when in March 1638, "his Majesty conferred on him an honour beyond his expectation," by creating him the Lord High Admiral. This royal grace, Northumberland ascribes to a friendly conversation which Strafford had formerly had with him in Sion Gallery. We are now told that "the King taking into consideration the inconveniences of having his navy and sea-affairs governed in this conjuncture by a commission, is pleased to think me worthy to be trusted with that charge, and declared in Council that hereafter he purposed to make his son the Duke of York Admiral of England when he should be fit for the execution of the place." The Earl indicates the parties which then divided the Court. "Till all was resolved and concluded, very few but the Queen knew any thing of it; one presently retired to

* Strafford's Letters, ii. 51, 67, 71.

Kensington (Lord Holland?) and other pretenders are nothing well pleased to see this office thus disposed of."

But the navy was no longer sovereign! The Cabinet was involved in the same mystery, and the same indecision of measures left the navy of England idling in its harbours. Sometimes we hear that the summer fleet was in movement, dispersing here and there; or a squadron under the Prince Elector is gone, God knows whither! till it returned, after a cruise. The only real expedition was the squadron sent against Sallee. Meanwhile the French were increasing their naval force, were preying on our commerce, and returning apologies for our remonstrances, till Lord Leicester, our Ambassador at Paris, strongly urged more offensive measures on our side to balance our complaints—"Let us complain and redress on both sides, but while we are doing one and not the other, we shall get no relief here." Licenses for the fishery were now considered as superfluous by the Hollander. The British fleet might have exacted the tribute, but when the Dutch busses found twenty sail of their own stout men-of-war by their side, who was to be the tax-gatherer? One of our captains offered, but they fired a salute in the air, and afterwards pretended that they had asked for licenses. At length in 1639 the honour of the British flag was openly insulted.

Spain by a desperate and exhausting effort to preserve her expiring dominion in the Netherlands, unexpectedly sent forth an Armada, carrying an army of twenty-six thousand soldiers. This formidable expedition gave rise to the most extravagant rumours: it could, however, only have been designed to reinforce their army in Flanders and to encounter the fleets of France and Holland. As was their usual custom, they considered that the magnitude of their galleons would have rendered them irresistible against the lighter vessels of their enemies; but when they met with a Dutch fleet off the Downs, not a fourth in number, and the Hollanders, active in their movements, got the wind in their favour, these bulky sailers were found unmanageable. At the sound of the cannon, Van Tromp hastened to join his countrymen, and after a furious fight, when ships had been sunk on both sides, the shattered Spaniard retreated to the Downs, and anchored in that road of Dover

which in the diplomatic style is called "The King of England's Imperial Chamber," whose protection and security is to be kept inviolate from the inroads of hostile nations. At this moment the weaker Dutch respected it, but having been abundantly supplied at Calais with powder by their good friends of France, they anchored at a convenient distance.

The Spaniards showed no disposition to quit their retreat, secure in the protection of England, while the Hollanders were receiving hourly reinforcements. Each fleet was watching the other, while the ministers of the two nations were not less anxiously engaged in presenting their memorials at Whitehall: the Spaniard imploring the King to keep off the Dutch for two tides, and the Hollander protesting against any aid being afforded to the Spaniard.

The case was critical—and the agitation was extreme on all sides. Charles was only anxious to preserve the neutrality of his own harbours. Bound as the King was in one common amity with these powers, he sometimes exclaimed, "Would to Heaven that I were well rid of both!" The distress of the monarch was of a singular nature. If Charles drove out the Spaniard from his port, he hurried them to an unequal combat and inevitable destruction—if he assisted the weaker party, he was himself the violator of that sacred neutrality he claimed. Meanwhile Charles was about incurring the disgrace which he at length received, for if he commanded them both to quit the Downs and neither would obey, his honour was not less blemished than when they at length openly violated the neutrality of his port, and insulted the protection of the King in his chamber.

Another perplexity, originating in the suspicions of party, had no little influence on the King, who, as Warwick expresses it, was "harassed by his own subjects and the Admiral favouring the popular party." The most malicious rumours had been spread by the discontented party here, of the pretended design of this Spanish fleet. These rumours must have been very general, for the sage Whitelocke has chronicled them. "This armada was believed by many to have been designed for an invasion of England, and many discourses *pro* and *con* were vented about it." It was even said, as Nalson tells us, that Charles was in a secret confederacy with the Spaniard to establish

the Romish religion and arbitrary government, which terrified the common people out of their wits and their allegiance. When now we read the State Correspondence of the times, we are struck by the strong delusion of such factious inventions. The Spaniards who could not defend themselves from a Dutch fleet, were imagined to invade that kingdom in whose ports they were imploring a refuge. Nonsense, although a base metal, soon becomes a current coin, when the people stamp it with their passions.

At this critical hour, the Lord High Admiral seems not to have viewed as a statesman the peculiar political position into which his royal master was thrown. Northumberland, indeed, was by no means averse to immolate the Spaniard to the Hollander, who, he acknowledges, was hourly expected "to assault the Dons." We have seen what he, and the party to whom the Earl belonged, felt on this extraordinary occasion. The scheme he suggested to the King evinces little zeal, or deficient ability. While he seems aware of the indignity which Charles was likely to receive from the decision of both parties, he advises the King to command both fleets out of the Downs. The Earl writes, "his Majesty's designs are a little to be wondered at, that he should endanger the receiving an affront, and expose his ships to much hazard, rather than command both the Spaniard and the Holland fleets out of the Downs. He saith now, that at his return to London on Saturday next, he will appoint a time for them to depart out of this road." It was probably on this advice that the King dispatched the Earl of Arundel to the Spanish Admiral, to desire that he would retire on the first fair wind, while Vice-Admiral Sir John Pennington, who lay in the Downs with thirty-four men of war, informed the Dutch Admiral that he had orders to act in defence of either of the two parties who should be first attacked.*

But when the Spaniard was bid to be gone, as Northumberland suggested, did he go? He delayed his departure with new excuses day after day. If the wind were favourable, they wanted

* During the three weeks of this extraordinary conjunction of affairs, a treaty had been concluded between Charles and the Infant Cardinal at Brussels, that for the sum of £50,000*l.*, to be paid instantly, the English monarch would protect the Spanish fleet to its destination, till it was moored in some port in Spain.

powder—or masts from the King's stores, before they could stand out at sea, while the Hollander grew more insolent as they increased in number. They had now a hundred sail, besides fire-ships. When the Spaniards pleaded, as one excuse for their delay, their want of powder, that great naval hero Van Tromp sent them an offer to supply them with five hundred barrels, to be paid for at the usual rate, and if they wanted masts from Chatham, he would send his own frigates to tow them, if they would weigh and stand out to sea! Once, favoured by the darkness of the night, and, it was supposed, under an English pilot, the Spaniards succeeded in sending off to Dunkirk fifteen vessels with three thousand men, which raised a clamour both in France and Holland, as if Charles had violated his neutrality in this instance. On this occasion Van Tromp, who appears often to have expressed himself in language as original and fiery, as was his action in combat, said that “having his hands full of flies, it was impossible but some of them would escape through his fingers.” Secretary Windebank, who records this anecdote as a rhodomontade greater than any of the Spaniards, little knew then that the man who had delivered it could not use ideas too great to express the energy of his own deeds, and his lofty scorn of his enemy. Van Tromp was so popular with us, that several English gentlemen, no doubt of the discontented party at home, went abroad as volunteers. The Dutch Admiral told them that he imagined the Spaniards were waiting for the stormy weather, to get that by running which they despaired by fighting, and in that case, “if they keep lying so near the shore the King of England would have their guns, the country their wreck, and the devil their men.”

Such an extraordinary state of affairs could not last; the crisis was looked for at every hour. The Dutch asserted that a shot from a sentinel, possibly accidental, had been fired by the Spaniards at the barge of Van Tromp, and a dead body was sent to the English Admiral, as evidence that the neutrality of the King of England's harbour had been violated. The attack soon after commenced; few escaped of the Spanish fleet. It is said Van Tromp appointed a squadron to keep the English at a distance. The plea of the Dutch that they waited till their

patience was exhausted, and the reluctant apology of their ambassador, made for the sake of form, were mere pretexts, to conceal what had been resolved on by the States-General, for we now know that Van Tromp had orders not to attack the Spaniards till he had been joined by various squadrons, and then in case the English would not remain neuter, he had positive commands to fight both one and the other. This political revelation we draw from D'Estrades' correspondence with Cardinal Richelieu. The Cardinal had desired the Prince of Orange "to give orders to his admirals to engage the Spanish fleet in the Downs, notwithstanding the protection which the King of England seemed inclined to give them."

It has been a question how the English conducted themselves at that moment. Dr. Lingard says, "Pennington remained a quiet spectator." Was the Vice-Admiral kept off by the ships sent towards him? Our people seemed to have been more earnestly employed in seizing on the sinking Spaniards and saving their wrecks from the Hollanders. They, however, actually fired on the Dutch from their batteries and their ships, for Van Tromp, writing to the Comte de Charost, adds, "but as far as we can judge, the fire of the English was intended rather for a feint than from passion."*

Thus ingloriously for Charles terminated this singular incident, which the exulting negotiator of France describes as "the most illustrious action which could be thought of, that of defeating the fleet of Spain in an English port, though assisted by English ships." And the Infant Cardinal at Brussels told Sir Balthazar Gerbier that his Majesty of Great Britain, by this attempt of the Hollanders, had received a greater blow than the King of Spain. So lofty was the sense of Castilian honour! In the Council of the States-General, when some objected to attack the Spaniards in an English port, whence might ensue a rupture between England and Holland, it was insolently answered that the King durst not break with them, and if he durst, they feared him not, and rather than suffer the Spanish fleet to escape, they would attack it though it were placed upon his Majesty's beard! In their ancient style the States-General had formerly sued for the protection of England, under the humble designation of

* Griffet, xxi. 233.

“the poor distressed States,” but they had recently titled themselves “High and Mighty.”

What causes had thus fatally operated on our maritime affairs? How happened it that the great fleet of England, which had showed itself in triumph, was paralysed by inaction? This mighty navy, which had vindicated the sovereignty of the seas, in the short period of two years we find directed to no single point, ingloriously lying in its harbours. To know these causes, we must attempt to trace what was silently operating on the mind of Charles.

Early in 1637, I find Charles, in a confidential communication to Strafford, alluding to an approaching alteration in his foreign politics. The object is always the same eternal dream of the restoration of the Palatinate. Lord Arundel had returned from his inefficient embassy to Vienna. Charles was now convinced that all negotiations were useless. From Austria he got only civility, and from Spain promises, but from the Duke of Bavaria himself, who had taken possession of the Palatinate, the plain stern language of a soldier, who swore that what the sword had gained the sword should preserve. An English monarch who would acquire conquests on the Continent by the eloquence or the high rank of his ambassadors, without an army, is liable to incur the insults of even the petty military powers of Germany. The noble Arundel, who assumed a princely state in his embassy, was so little considered, that he thought proper to leave Vienna without taking leave, and an envoy of one of those petty princes scornfully observed, that “our English ambassadors were fit only to pick poultry.”

Our Cabinet, divided as it was into two opposite parties, was now more than ever convulsed by its fluctuating measures. A league was proposed with the Protestant Princes, the allies of France; these coalescing with Holland, Denmark, and Sweden, were to reinstate the sister and the nephew of Charles the First in the Palatinate. But Charles acknowledges to Strafford that he is quite incompetent to join his new allies with troops. “I have professed that all my warfare must be by sea, not by land.”

The King proceeds, “what likelihood there is that upon this I should fall foul with Spain you now may see as well as I, and

what great inconvenience this war may bring to me, now that my *sea-contribution is settled*, and that I am resolved *not to meddle with land armies*, I cannot imagine, except it be in Ireland, and there, too, I fear not much, since I find the country so well settled as it is by your diligent care. Yet I thought it necessary to give you this watch-word, both to have the more vigilant eye over the discontented party, as also to assure you that *I am as far from a Parliament as when you left me.*"

This confidential dispatch was sent in February, 1636-7. I do not know whether we are to read the last lines as a patriotic regret, or a confirmation of unalterable decision. Why were they written? They are not set down in passion. Strafford, as well as other ministers, we know was friendly to Parliament. Were they in reply to a suggestion of Strafford's to call a Parliament? I incline to think they were dictated by a sorrowful conviction according to his own notions, or from more recent knowledge, that Charles could discover no relenting animosity in the party who he concluded were his personal enemies. One point is here proved, that Parliaments at least were not utterly dismissed from the mind of Charles.

From this period we may trace the indecisive measures of Charles the First. He was not yet the open friend of his new allies, nor was he yet hostile to the ally whom he was quitting; for the treaties were sometimes retarded by the Cabinet of the Louvre, and the States-General or the Prince of Orange had conflicting interests with England. Spain was indeed alarmed at this awful conjunction, and her ambassador hastened to Charles with offers to restore the Lower Palatinate, and with a promise to procure the Upper, from the Duke of Bavaria, for a compensation in money. He further proposed that if England would join his master with twenty thousand men and her fleet, the Spaniards would take the field with as many Brabanters, and their combined army should place Languedoc and Normandy in the hands of the British monarch. This rhodomontade of the affrighted Don was an artifice intended to decompose the elements of this perilous combination. The projected league of the various parties had become the subject of public attention two months after the King had written to Strafford. A famous news-letter writer of the day thus describes the state of affairs:—

“Our new patriots and statesmen here cry out, ‘Let England, France, and the Low Countries join together, they will quickly bring the Spaniard on his belly.’ ’Tis true these truly conjoined would do much, but upon what terms doth England stand yet with either of them? Farther off with the Low Countries than we have been a long time, and for France things come on much slower than we expected.” This was a true statement of political affairs. Another season was suffered to elapse, which, however, was interrupted by the beginning of the troubles in Scotland in July and October, 1637. It was in November of that year that Cardinal Richelieu attempted to seduce Charles by his offers to aid the King against those of his subjects whom the Cardinal called “his rebels.”

But Charles’s attention was now roused to his own domestic affairs. Our fleet, however, still existed, and in 1638 the sovereignty of the sea was still present in the anxious minds of the English. A well-informed writer of the day observed, “The long treaties between the French and the Spanish are now near a conclusion; the Dutch will not be left out; then have at England for *the dominion of the seas*.”*

But rapid was the approaching change, and the state of affairs is strongly painted by the Lord High Admiral in January, 1638-9—“I assure your lordship we are altogether in as ill a posture to invade others as to defend ourselves—the discontents here at home do rather increase than lessen—the King’s coffers were never emptier than at this time, and to us that have the honour to be near about him, no way is yet known how he will find means either to maintain or begin a war without the help of his people.”†

One cause of the inactivity of the fleet may be traced to the change in the foreign policy of the Cabinet, which prevented any decisive measures from being adopted; and when at length it became necessary to chastise the indignities which England was daily incurring from the encroaching Gaul, the insolent Hollander, and the haughty Spaniard, the monarch, seeing his honour was compromised, was glad to accept the futile apologies of the foreign aggressors. He who in politics accepts apologies for wrongs, only acquiesces in the evidence of his weakness.

* Strafford’s Letters, ii. 181.

† Ibid. 267.

Harris on this exclaims, "A spirited prince would have had a satisfaction as public as the injury itself, and thereby have shown the world that he was worthy of the sovereignty of those seas which he claimed."

Thus Charles has sometimes incurred reproaches where he might rather move our sympathy. The inextricable dilemma into which Charles was now cast, by the course of events, never occurred to this writer of common-place declamation, and whose genius in all respects is mean as his style. The personal distresses of the King were fast gathering on him, but the historian who does not investigate cannot perceive them. The state of his affairs no longer admitted of an expostulation by his own navy; what was just and glorious in 1637 was no longer so in 1639. The mind of Charles was now too deeply engaged in military preparations against his own revolting subjects, while his Exchequer was so utterly exhausted that it became for him a direful necessity to look to the help of his people, to gather the reluctant alms of their loyalty, or to submit once more to the dubious results of those new masters of sovereignty—the Parliament!

The troubles in Scotland were pressing on the mind of the King, and to reduce that kingdom to obedience, Charles had resolved to raise an army of thirty thousand men. All foreign affairs became matters of secondary importance, a circumstance fatal to his character as a sovereign, and which the Cabinets of Europe soon discovered. The unpopularity of the ship-money continued a source of general discontent, although that tax was neither onerous nor useless. Even those who wished no ill to the King, allowed themselves the utmost freedom in protesting against the decree of the Judges which had legalised it. Waller, who addressed so many loyal poems to Charles, and who when the civil wars broke out, for his adherence to the King, only saved his life by the sacrifice of his fortune, delivered a very impressive speech against this obnoxious tax. Sir William Monson in his "Naval Tracts" has noticed the many factious and scandalous rumours which were invented at the time to persuade the people that all the naval preparations were only an artifice to draw money from the subject. Those who were fined and imprisoned for their contumacy looked for revenge in the

North ; and the cry against ship-money, cherished and inflamed by faction, was always greatest when the monarch was in his extreme distress.

A NOTE ON SHIP-MONEY AND ON THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE SEAS.

DR. LINGARD has done justice to Charles the First in the particular instance of the King's disposal of the Ship-money. "By this contrivance the King obtained a yearly supply of 218,500*l.*, and it should be observed that he carefully devoted it to the purposes for which it was demanded." (Lingard, x., 29.)

The careful direction of that tax, Hume has justly urged as a plea for Charles the First ; even the cold Presbyterian Harris nods his acquiescence. Sir Philip Warwick had stated a fact, "The King so sincerely employed the Ship-money that it was never mingled with that of his own Exchequer, but kept apart with their accounts, and yet adding considerably of his own treasures to it."

But other more popular history may show how the history of this period has often been written. Oldmixon, who has degraded history into ribaldry, and whose folio volume on the Stuarts at the day, and with a party, seems to have passed for authentic history, condemns the great enterprise of Charles as sheer folly. Sir Philip Warwick, a distinguished gentleman and actor in the events of his time, he criticises as "a writer below reflection ; his matter, his style, and integrity are all of a piece, and 'tis ridiculous to be serious about him." "The Critical Historian," as Oldmixon styles himself, therefore ridicules the notion that "The King kept all the Ship-money in a bag by itself." All the service done by the revenue from the Ship-money was "clearing the Channel of a few Turkish rovers, and the frightening our Protestant allies, the Hollanders." The great State-principle of the Sovereignty of the Sea—the tributary treaty—and the retreat of the combined fleets of France and Holland—are wholly dropped in this faithless narrative.

Mrs. Macaulay was somewhat sensible to the firm and intrepid conduct of the King ; but the meed of glory she awards is mildewed by a sneer ! Listen to her ! "Charles now seems to be in the meridian of what he termed glory ; he had fairly placed the yoke on the neck of his own subjects, and by the seizure of their purse had found means to humble the Hollanders, whose independent flourishing state had ever been an eyesore to the Stuarts."

With Smollet, all these transactions, the historian sagaciously discovers, were founded on mere *pretences* ! He ascribes the levying the Ship-

money "to a *pretence* of the nation's being in danger of a *league* concluded between France and the United Provinces," which we have shown, and still have to show, assuredly existed. And further, "that a *pretence* might not be wanting for levying the tax of Ship-money all over the kingdom, Charles published a proclamation forbidding all foreigners to fish on the coasts of Britain." Doubtless the historian and his readers were satisfied that in these "pretences" they had discovered the whole secret history of these public events!

At length we reach the illumination of Mr. Brodie's history, our own contemporary, who knows far better than any of his predecessors how the Ship-money was disposed of. "The English had not the consolation of thinking that the money extorted from them was destined to *any useful purpose*; luxury, hungry courtiers, and the Queen's French attendants consumed the greater part of this ill-acquired treasure, while a *portion of it* was applied towards overturning the liberties and religion of Scotland." (ii. 401.) Had we not known the *moderate supply* of the Ship-money, and the *heavy charges* of fitting out the most formidable fleet which England had ever put to sea, and farther, on the authority of Sir Philip Warwick—though this obvious fact required no authority—that the King was often compelled to supply its deficiencies from his own Exchequer, had we not known all this, we might have congratulated Mr. Brodie on the secret sources of his history of the disposal of the Ship-money. But Mr. Brodie is only mistaken in his arithmetic! Let Mr. Brodie deduct from the gross receipts of the Ship-money, so much for "luxury,"—so much for "hungry courtiers"—so much for "French attendants"—and place contra—"sixty ships of war"—and he will find that not an obolus will remain for "overturning the liberties and religion of Scotland." All this is serious truth—and every item which Mr. Brodie has here enumerated as having been furnished by Ship-money is chimerical. I cannot help adding one of Mr. Oldmixon's phrases when alluding to Clarendon, Warwick, and others—"You see what history they give us!"

Mr. Hallam will pardon the notice of an expression of his, somewhat inaccurate in regard to the subject. "There wanted not reasons in the Cabinet of Charles for placing the navy at times on a *respectable footing*." (i. 165.) Thus, all that I have written on the Sovereignty of the Sea; all that Selden has sent down to posterity in his immortal "*Mare Clausum*;" and that miracle of our fleet, "the Sovereign of the Seas"—the inscribed cannon—and those legacies of fame—the medals of Charles the First, with all the greatness of the noble emprise, is clouded over by "a respectable footing."

It is amusing to turn to the recent *Biographie Universelle*,* where we

* Biog. Univ. xli. 502.

may collect some instruction relative to the systematic perseverance of our Government from the days of Charles the First to those of George the Third, in maintaining the Sovereignty of the Sea.

Our Gallic contemporary tells us that "the principles which *Charles the First avowed*, were also those of Cromwell, and produced the Dutch war." Here I find an omission in his chronological view, which I shall supply. He has not told us that Charles the Second was once patriotic enough in 1675 to declare that he would risk his crown rather than his Sovereignty at Sea, and when a French squadron refused to strike to the British flag in the English Channel, the French Captain who had offered the insult was sent over to implore the pardon of the English monarch.* This writer proceeds with William the Third, who in a manifesto reproaches Louis the Fourteenth for having allowed his subjects to violate the rights of the sovereignty of the English crown in the Britannie seas—and George the Third in the last wars appears fully to have followed up the system of his predecessors. From these facts, which we are very far from denying, the result discovered by the French diplomat, is "that these facts sufficiently prove how these monarchs had not abandoned the doctrine of Selden!" Our critic henceforward will, I hope, do us islanders the justice to observe our consistency in attending to our own interests, and commend us for the fearlessness which has defended them—it has cost more Dutch than French blood.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE COMMOTIONS OF SCOTLAND.

THE insurrection of Scotland might have proved to Charles the First an extraordinary source of political instruction; but the limited policy of this monarch, the policy of the times, was preservative, not creative. It was to support what was established, and not to discover what was remedial.

In the government of the Church and the State his principle was immutable conformity; a principle which naturally repulsed strange innovations which to the King appeared secretly subverting the monarchy, while they offered no substitute for that Episcopacy which they would abolish, but another Prelacy of a meaner character, yet of a more audacious and turbulent genius.

The time was at hand when this fated monarch was about to

* Ralph's History of England, i. 284.

be hurried on through a dark labyrinth of factions and revolutions. It was to be a struggle to which the genius of the man was incompetent, uncongenial to his temper, and novel to his experience. The second Stuart was not one of those rare minds who create an epoch in the history of nations, and who, anticipating a distant posterity, discover a wisdom not of their own age. Charles the First could not, like Henry the Eighth, have passionately struck out a great revolution, or have terminated one with the cautious decision of Elizabeth; in the one case Charles would have looked in vain, for a precedent of Reformation, and in the other by some hastiness of conduct he would have been thrown into situations whence he could only have extricated himself by retraction or concession.

The commotions of Scotland are a prototype of the Civil War which afterwards broke out in England, and corresponded closely with all the great points of our greater struggle. From an early period the movements of the Covenanters were regulated by their confederates among the patriotic party in England. Our patriots in that secret alliance not only adopted the principles, but even the mode of proceedings of the Covenanters; in a word the English Revolution was modelled by the Scottish Insurrection. In the complicated question of the progress of our Revolution under Charles the First, this becomes an important position, which has not fixed the attention of our historians.

The Scots were our tutors in the artifices of popular democracy, and those mysteries of insurgency, which afterwards were systematised by ourselves. They were the contrivers of that terrific revolutionary engine—a mobocracy; and it was from them that we learnt how to organise a people in vast masses, so as to assemble or disperse them at will. Their petitions and remonstrances served as our models when, in a similar submissive style of loyalty, they kept drilling throughout the whole kingdom. This subtle party even practised the arts of political flattery; at the moment they were insolent in the success of their arms, they apologised for their invasion: and his Majesty's loyal subjects of Scotland were only rebellious in their acts. In the fall of the Hierarchy, through all its stages, the English Commons were but the servile imitators of the Scottish Covenanters. The leaders of faction, both at home

and in Scotland, were indeed but few; they had, however, engaged the whole people on their side by covering their own design, which was a subversion of the government, and making religion their ostensible and national object. Fanaticism has all the characteristics which faction delights in; undismayed by peril, and most triumphant when opposed, it hurries on without sense to discover its folly, and without remorse to avert its crimes. Private interests and personal jealousies were often disguised by the Scottish insurgents in the parties which they formed. In this vast and confused struggle the principles of constitutional liberty were sometimes developed and asserted; the first statute for triennial Parliaments originated in Scotland: and thus the independence of Parliaments was secured by the prevention of their disuse.* Both parties alike in England and in Scotland finally succeeded in objects more concealed; the national avarice of the Covenanters sold their Sovereign, and the remorseless republicanism of the other murdered him—and both the Presbyter and the Republican finally sank with their victim!

The King's conduct, from first to last, in the Scottish Revolution, was precisely similar to that which governed him in England. We discover in his first commands the same regal tone of authority; in his measures the same indecision; and at length in their result the same entire concessions, but all granted, however, to no purpose! Inflexible, or yielding, the fortune of the King was alike malignant. Baillie, the able Scotch Covenanter, who possessed a personal knowledge of the Court, and of the leaders of the parties when the last great scene was approaching, has thrown out an observation which, properly understood, conveys a great truth. "It has been the King's perpetual fault to grant his people's desires by bits, and so late he ever lost his thanks." We must remember, however, that "the people's desires," in the eyes of a partisan, always mean the system of that partisan. With Baillie "the people's

* Laing's Hist. of Scotland, iii. Rushworth, iv. 188, where we find the King's speech on passing the act for triennial Parliaments, Feb. 15, 1640. The speech in many respects is remarkable; the King observes "This is the greatest expression of *my trust in your affections to me*, that before you do any thing for me I do put such a confidence in you."

desires" meant the unbishoping of bishops, and a Covenanted King of England !

Had Charles the First proved to be such a creature of circumstance as to have subscribed himself a Covenanter, all Scotland, and half of England, might have been too strong for the ruling party in Parliament. The English Parliament were, indeed, early jealous of the King's intercourse with the Scots, and Charles in his mind seems to have had some latent design of winning over his countrymen to his side ; but when the Scots insisted that the royal hand should be set to their famous national covenant, whatever might be the policy of his negotiations, their real object became unattainable. Charles conceded often reluctantly. Forced to act against his will, he could not be always sincere ; but it is not less true, that his inflexibility sprang oftener from principle than from policy.

The history of the Scottish commotions is neither a digression, nor an episode, in the history of Charles the First, or in that of the causes of the revolutionary measures of his reign. The character of the monarch developed itself in its progress, as well as the arts and practices of the insurgents, till at length we discover how the Scottish insurrection terminated in the great revolution of England.

To comprehend the secret motives, and the dark intrigues which prevailed in the Scottish affairs, we must rapidly review the state of Scotland from the Reformation ; the descendants of the first actors in that busy era of reform and spoliation were still performing their hereditary parts, and the same principles were operating on their conduct.

The Reformation in Scotland had been mainly effected by those friars who were the popular preachers, in opposition to the regular clergy. These divine orators of the multitude at the same time instigated the people from their pulpits, and engaged in their cause those noble reformers who were first called "The Lords of the Congregation," by pandering to their passions of ambition or of avarice. These preachers were a rabid swarm of public disturbers engendered by the heat and fury of the times ; Knox himself acknowledges that they were blamed as "indiscreet persons ; yea, some called them railers, and worse.— Amongst others, peradventure, my rude plainness displeased, for

some complained that rashly I spoke of men's faults. But alas ! my conscience accuseth me that I spoke not so plainly as my duty was to have done ; for I ought to have said to the wicked man expressly by his name, 'Thou shalt die the death !' For I find Jeremiah the prophet to have done so to Pashur the high-priest, and to Zedekiah the king. And not only he, but Elijah, Elisha, Micah, Amos, Daniel, Christ Jesus himself, and after him his apostles, expressly to name the blood-thirsty tyrants and abominable idolaters." Here we have the full-length of a saint, armed with all the terrors, if not the daggers of his "Godliness"—and a nation was to be revolutionised by a horde of fanatics, who imagined themselves to be "more pure" than their brother Protestants ; or who, as Knox himself declares, were "appointed by God to be the salt of the earth." In the warmth of his simplicity, Knox reproaches himself with his mildness, which he ascribes "to the blind love that I did bear to this my wicked carcase."*

These fanatical preachers, aided by the nobles, were hurrying on the eventful revolution. The wealth and lands of the church lay before these parties, an enormous body and an easy prey ! The rapacious aristocracy, profiting by the disordered state of the government, became sole masters of the soil, sharing among themselves the rich spoiliations of abbeys, and monasteries, and cathedrals ; and what they had found no difficulty to grasp, their arm was potent to retain.

Andrew Melville brought from Geneva that model of ecclesiastical polity which Calvin had suited to his parochial republic. Knox was disposed at first to have bishops, under the novel title of Superintendents. By the revelations of these apostles of democracy the Scottish people, however, soon discovered that Episcopacy was "a great chip of the old block, Popery ;" and they were taught to exult, in the words of Knox, that in regard to "the primitive and apostolic church — no realm this day upon the face of the earth hath the like purity—for all others retain in their churches some footsteps of Anti-Christ and dregs of Popery."† And the mob of "the Kirk brake down the altars and the images ;" the lands of the

* The Admonition of John Knox to the true professors of the Gospel of England.

† Knox's History of the Reformation, in the opening of his fourth Book.

Ecclesiastics were reserved for the zeal of "the Lords of the Congregation."

Gratified at first by that reforming spirit which had ejected their ancient masters, "the godly ministers" possibly did not imagine that they themselves were not to partake of that temporal spoil they had so spiritually spread, or, as Knox plainly called it, "the rents of the Church." The fierce disciple of Calvin lived to discover this error; for he has himself told us that whenever he remonstrated with "the Lords of the Congregation," suggesting some reformation among themselves, such as more leniency in the slavery of their serfs, and more bountifulness for the maintenance of "the poore ministers," the grippers of abbeys and cathedrals mocked their own fiery apostle by treating these rebukes as nothing but "devout imaginations." Knox has libelled for posterity a certain Lord Erskine, "who had a very evil woman to his wife, and if the poor, the schools, and the ministry of the Church had their own, his kitchen would lack two parts and more of that which he unjustly possesseth."

The nobility were in truth exercising the most arbitrary power; the peasant was crushed by vassalage; and, during the minority of James, the unprincipled conduct of one ambitious, and one avaricious Regent, had wrested from the Crown its inalienable rights in regalities and tithes which Parliament had annexed to it; all which this usurping aristocracy had silently shared among themselves. It was observed that these lords exacted the tithes with a rigour and wantonness of oppression to which the people had never been exposed from the Catholic clergy.*

The Scottish nobles considered that it was their great interest to continue their patronage to the popular preachers; and, indeed, neither party could exist, with any security, independently of the other. While Presbytery flourished, it kept out the claims of the ancient owners of the church-lands, whose present possessors dreaded the horror of a returning Hierarchy; and the Mar-prelates themselves, although they had resigned to the nobility the spoils of the Church, because they were not suffered to be partakers, were not, however, insensible that they possessed no

* Even by the Confession of Mr. Brodie, *Hist. of the British Empire*, ii. 409. See Malcolm Laing's luminous statement, iii. 89—94.

inferior dominion in leading the understandings, and rousing at will the passions of a people, whose rudeness, just emerging from the blindest superstition, was so favourable to the wildest impulses of the fanatical spirit.

This democracy of priests assumed a power, absolute as that Papal supremacy which, while it formed the perpetual object of their clamorous invectives, they secretly aspired to transfer to themselves. These denunciators of Popery were themselves Popes to a man. It was the dangerous principle of this novel community that the Ecclesiastical was totally separated from, and independent of, the Civil power; and that these oracles of Heaven were not accountable for any treason which they preached before the tribunals of man, but only to an ecclesiastical judicature, where the most obnoxious were sure to receive only a gentle rebuke. Nor were these the only tenets which they held, inconsistent with good government; all which, though but a vulgar mimicry of the system which they had abrogated, the rude people looked on with indulgence, or rather with pleasure, as excesses of holy zeal.* We have shown, in the history of the Puritans, that there were among these political Rabbins some whose doctrines soared even much higher, and who secretly aimed at establishing no less than the supremacy of the ecclesiastical power over the civil magistrate.

These men of Parity, the Ministers of Scotland, continued to be a turbulent race, and particularly the junior apostles of sedition. These delighted the populace with their juvenile audacity; their stinging personalities were libels on the Court; and while they were ringing alarms of Popery, they were rebuking the Royal Council. James the First seems to have known their designs as well as their pride. His *naïve* description of these demagogues was thrown out in the warmth of his feelings at the famous conference at Hampton Court, where, assuming his rank as sovereign, James reiterated to the political rabble of "Jack and Tom, and Will and Dick," that "*Le Roy s'avisera.*"

This government the Scottish monarch had patiently endured through his minority, and his early reign—the sovereign power rested among the aristocracy; the people remained under the influence of their ministers; the monarchy itself was but a

* Burnet's Memoirs of the Hamiltons, 28.

shadow in this half-feudal and half-popular government. Hence James, at a later day, exclaimed "No Bishop! No King!" Episcopacy had been condemned, as contrary to the word of God, in 1580, and when James discovered some disposition to restore it, the party raised an army, and the King, to preserve peace, established Presbyterianism by law in 1592.

By one of those eruptions to which democracy is perpetually inclining, the genius of its followers betrayed itself. A minister had been prosecuted, and the privileges of their "discipline" they insisted had been violated. An armed multitude congregated, and these warlike apostles, impatient at the absence of their generals, for they had their elected commanders, had furiously leaped to their weapons with the fanatical cry of "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon! It shall be either theirs or ours!" This mob streamed along the streets, and surrounding the Sessions House, where the young King sat in council, had nearly forced the gates. A company of musketeers secretly introduced by the back stairs, protected the King and the Council in their escape to the palace of Holyrood. On the following day the King left Edinburgh. This headless multitude dispersed at the intreaty of the Provost, in the same confused way they had assembled.

This open violence gave a fatal blow to the audacity of these democratic assemblies; they were even deserted by their former patrons, the nobles, who cared not to espouse a quarrel which tended to strengthen a licentious predominance in the state.* James, on his side, again attempted to break down this overgrown power of the people by taking advantage of the odium the party had incurred.

This rebellion, as many considered it to be, was somewhat favourable to the revival of Episcopacy. When James ascended the throne of England, he found many of their own party, to curb the insolence of these pugnacious saints, ready to admit the establishment of Episcopacy, without, however, abolishing the Presbytery itself. Two opposing parties thus divided the country; the one maintaining the Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland, and the other advocating the Episcopal Church of England.

* Bishop Guthrie says, in his Scottish Gallic idiom, that "this meschant business" was called "the seventeenth of December," to mark their detestation of the day.

An uniformity in religion prompted James the First to require an uniformity in worship, that both the great Churches of his two nations might constitute an unity in their government. The Marquis of Hamilton, father to him who is soon to come forward on the scene, with greater prudence and greater dexterity, consequently procured the passing of the five articles of Perth: these turned on certain customs, or Rites of the Anglican Church, as innocent as may be, and the sole object of which was to produce an uniformity in the Church service. These acts of Parliament did not, however, pass without considerable opposition, and were accompanied by the protests of the Presbyters. James was still anxious to press on the Scots a Liturgy on the model of the Church of England; but Hamilton deemed it more prudent to secure what he had already obtained, by assuring the Scottish Parliament that "the King would not in his days press any more change, or alteration, without their consent."

In all this the pacific monarch had acted with cautious policy; he had exercised no severity, and had adopted a legal form in wrestling with the stubborn Kirk. James relinquished the future attempt at conformity, a favourite object with the statesmen of that age. Bishop Guthry, a warm votary for Episcopacy, seems surprised that the Bishops waived the royal motion, and proceeded no further in establishing the uniformity of their ecclesiastical discipline; but this Bishop was not so well acquainted as ourselves with the King's feelings on this occasion. James, convinced that he could not obtain all that was desirable, with prescient sagacity observed on Laud, who was urging him to a stricter union of the two Churches, by introducing the Anglican Liturgy and drawing up the Canons, that "he was a restless spirit who could not see when matters are well, but loves to toss and change, and to bring things to a pitch of reformation floating in his own brain, which may endanger the steadfastness of that which is in a good pass, God be praised! I speak not at random, for he hath made himself known to me." "When three years since," continued the King, "I had obtained of the Assembly of Perth to consent to five articles of order and decency in correspondence with this Church of England, I promised that I would try their obedience

no farther anent ecclesiastical affairs, nor put them out of their own way which custom has made pleasing unto them." A second project of Laud, was equally resisted by the prudential policy of James, who observed, "Laud knows not the stomach of that people, but I ken the story of my grandmother, the Queen Regent, that, after she was inveigled to break her promise made at Perth meeting, never saw good day, and being much beloved before, was despised by all the people."*

Charles renewed his father's scheme, and listened to Laud, urged on by his conscience—his policy—or his fate. To plant the Hierarchy in a land of Presbyters; to establish that monarchical institution among a fierce democracy; to exact conformity with the Anglican Church from the sullen sons of Calvin, proud of their opposition to England, not only from a religious but a national feeling, was now to be the perilous labour of Charles the First. The King does not appear to have been aware that he had to extirpate the nation, ere he could abrogate its Presbytery, and he proceeded unconscious of the conspiracies and disaffections around him.

On his first visit to Scotland, Charles had left no doubts of his adherence to Episcopacy. The Presbyters, baffled in their last hopes, propagated their discontents, backed by a jealous nobility, who looked on the Bishops either as encroachers on their aristocratic power in the State, or as possible reclaimers of their ancient patrimonies.

Charles, as he had done in England, to aggrandise the Bishops in dignity and power, conferred on them offices in the administration, which the nobility had considered as the apporportioned objects of their ambition. Those who had sought and missed preferment, saw themselves supplanted by a new race of intruders; and those who occupied the highest places cast an evil eye on the Churchmen who were designing their fall. The Lord of Lorn, afterwards the famous Argyle who became the head of the Covenanters, had largely partaken of honours and

* This remarkable conversation of James the First with the Lord Keeper Williams discovers that shrewdness and sagacity were often prevalent in his thoughtful hours. His prediction of Laud's own character is a very remarkable instance of political foresight. When solicited for his promotion—"Take him," said James, "since you will have him, but ye will surely repent it."—Hacket's Life of Archbishop Williams, 64.

emoluments; yet he was long a secret Covenanter, till at length he threw off the mask, either from displeasure at the King's refusal of the Chancellorship conferred on the Archbishop of St. Andrews, or from a knowledge that his wiles had been detected, and that it had been resolved by the Court, that the Earl of Antrim should be allowed his claims on some of Argyle's lands. At the bottom of this burst of patriotism, as is too usual, there lies no small share of private feeling.* The Earl of Traquair, though openly professing friendship for the Bishops, and conforming himself to the schemes of his royal master, was also their secret enemy. Traquair imagined that these ecclesiastics were colleaguings with Maxwell the Bishop of Ross, and that this person, the most able of the order, and the most ambitious, was grasping at the Treasurer's staff which the Earl held.

The Bishops, however, were divided among themselves; the body was composed of an old and new party, acting on contrary principles. The election of the Scottish Bishops had been wisely managed by James, who had appointed the Archbishop of St. Andrew's to convene the Bishops, and name three or four, from whom the King reserved to himself the power of nominating to the vacant see, and during his reign, according to Bishop Guthry, none but men well qualified were advanced. Charles had changed this system, and transferred to his own Court at London the seat of Scottish preferment. Bishops were now the children of court-favour, the creatures of patronage; and it is not surprising that, in the day of trial, several of these, when patronage was to be sought elsewhere, hurried to apostasy. Buckingham's recommendation made Lesley a Bishop of the Isles; Maxwell of the bed-chamber procured his relative the bishopric of Ross. Archbishop Laud made others, and the Earl of Sterling, Secretary of Scotland, had a mitre for his friend. These younger Bishops, not being indebted to their elder brethren for their preferment, kept themselves apart,

* Bishop Guthry, p. 12, assigns the one motive, but whether "ill-naturedly," as the Presbyter Woodrow would say, who shall determine? The other we positively discover in a letter of the Earl of Strafford, ii. 325. It had been resolved in council in England before Argyle declared for the Covenanters. It was probably not unknown to Argyle. Malcolm Laing inclines to this supposition. It is probable that both motives combined with an equal impulse.

more constant in their correspondence with Laud, than in concerting measures among themselves, their sole object being to keep up their interest at Court. More fiery, being young in office, than the elder Bishops, they were prompt at any enterprise suggested to them; and with the impolicy of heedless authority, were irritating the Presbyterian Ministry with a haughtiness which the elder Bishops had ever avoided. Laud at Court was easily misled by the ardent correspondence of the younger Bishops. The prudent Archbishop of St. Andrew's and the elder ecclesiastics persisted in their advice to suppress "the Buke," as the Scotch called the Liturgy, till a happier juncture; a counsel which probably would have been accepted had the Scotch Bishops been unanimous in their opinion; but the younger mitres were more stirring and more sanguine. When a corporate body differ so widely in their sentiments, it is only a great minister whose penetrating genius can discern the secret motives of the men; the statesman of routine will usually adopt the opinion suitable to his own design.

The great coming evil was chiefly accomplished, as it appears, by the malicious manœuvre of the Earl of Traquair, who, intent on the ruin of the Scottish Hierarchy, concurred with Laud and his party in promoting the most decisive measures; talking to them in their own language; blaming the phlegmatic Bishops as timorous creatures, whose sees required to be filled by more active spirits, and pledging "his life" to carry them through the business were he entrusted with its execution. Laud confided in his young Bishops; the young Bishops in the Earl of Traquair. The Earl was appointed; and finally the Earl himself actually signed the Covenant which abolished Episcopacy!

During the preparations for the approaching day, the public mind was heated by the most malicious reports respecting the Bishops. Tales flew about from all quarters against their worldly spirit.—It was said that they were heaping estates for their children; that they dealt in simoniacal practices; and that these remnants of Popery were furbishing up the old mass. These were the rumours of Presbyters; there were others from another class; the Bishops, it seems, were not only trampling on the Church, but they were domineering in the State.

An ecclesiastical spy, in gathering the secret intelligence

which occupies such men, seems to have opened one of the great sources of the enmity of the majority of the nobility who had now concluded on the removal of Bishops from the third order of the State. It appears that these ecclesiastics had obtained a singular predominance in Parliament; eight being Lords of the Articles, chose eight of the nobility known to be friendly to the Crown, and these sixteen the rest; so that all depended on them, and they upon the King.*

The same spirit had travelled from England, and was cordially embraced by the Scottish malcontents. The recent prosecutions in the Star-Chamber against Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton, and the Declaration of the Book of Sports, had at this unlucky moment kindled new flames of discord. There was an active Scotch party at London in close connection with the great one at Edinburgh; and their sagacious and active agent, on his return from England, in giving an account of his successful negotiations with the English Nonconformists, in politics as much as in Church discipline, assured his masters that "the English had the same design of reformation in their Church,"—he might have added in their State—"as soon as the work should begin here."†

At length approached the evil day. It had been deferred by the advice of the Earl of Traquair, on the plea that some preparatory methods might render the people more cheerful on this eventful occasion; this had also furnished the Opposition with full time to concert their measures. It was proclaimed from all the pulpits, that on Sunday the 23rd of July "the Service-Book" would be read in all the churches.

But surely it never was! though for that reading came in solemn procession the Chancellor, the Prelates, the Lords of the Sessions, the Provost, and the whole Council of the city. Scarcely had the Dean of Edinburgh opened "The Buke," than opened that memorable scene in which the confusion was so sudden, and so various, that all the accounts give different particulars.‡ The universal hubbub may be imagined, but the language of

* Sir David Dalrymple, 47, observes that this is very rational and intelligible, and yet it seems to have escaped the observation of eminent historians.

† Bishop Guthry, i. 3.

‡ The memorable scene has been more minutely related by Mr. Brodie in a collection of curious extracts from contemporary vouchers.

the individuals can only be conceived in its Doric *naïveté*, which best shows the sort of people here congregated. The popular axiom, that the voice of the people is the voice of God, was happily illustrated on the present occasion of this mobocracy, when they were afterwards compared to Balaam's ass; an animal in itself stupid and senseless, but whose mouth had been opened by the Lord.

A terrible yelling and clapping, intermingled with curses and groans, and when they could be heard, the sobbings of the soft-hearted gentlewomen as they sighed that "Baal was in the Church," and the broad nicknames of the insolent viragos, calling the Dean "One of the witches' breeding, and the De'il's gette (child)" shook the church, in vain designed to be raised into a cathedral!

Fearless awhile, the stout-hearted Dean, suddenly panie-struck, slipped through his surplice, leaving behind this white trophy of the future Covenanters. Then the Bishop showed himself in the pulpit; a portly personage, who might have urged a better excuse than the Dean for an "alacrity in sinking." The vocabulary of the mob, prompt as it is copious, instantly saluted the Anti-Christian wolf—"the beastly belly-god—the crafty fox!" The echo reverberated "a Pape! a Pape!" to be stoned—or "to get the thrapple out of him,"—that is, to cut his wind-pipe. Hardly escaped the Bishop with a tremulous life, conveyed away in the coach of the Earl of Roxburgh, himself suspected of raising this mobocracy; showers of stones were flung, and the Bishop narrowly escaped the martyrdom of St. Stephen.*

This revolutionary outrage originated with females. The High-Church, now presumed to be a cathedral, it was observed was crowded with women, chiefly of the lower orders; old wives and servant-lasses, otherwise "the godly females," were the indomitable champions of the Kirk. Of these an irascible crone—more heroine than she who damaged her Bible by thumping "the false thief," as she called the young man who unluckily responded "Amen" to "the Buke"—launched from her withered hand "the thunderbolt of her zeal," in the stool

* This tumult was called in Scotland "Stony Sunday," and Sir James Balfour has entitled his narrative "Stoniefield Day."

she sate on. Averted by some friendly hand, it flew whizzing by the Bishop's ear. This set the example of an universal rout. After a conflict, the insurgents were dislodged from the interior—the service was hurried over—amidst the rapping of the doors, the stones flying in at the windows, and the reverberating shouts of an infuriated multitude storming the High-Church.

It seems that this old wife, Janet Geddes, has secured her respectability in Scottish history; and she who the week before, as tells the scandalous chronicle, had sate upon the stool of repentance, is sainted by throwing one at the Bishop's head. Her name has been immortalised by Burns, and the glorious attitude of this testy crone, hurling her stool at the Bishop in the pulpit, is triumphantly perpetuated in a vignette of one of the volumes of the magician of the north. For the strength of the patriotism, we may forgive the grossness of the taste, which by a rhyme and a print thus gratifies the passions of the populace, which it demoralises, by confounding an act of insolence, done by a base hand, with a deed which merits the admiration of a people.

The story of a furious beldame beginning the fray, by casting her stool at the Bishop's head, who then retreated from the pulpit, Mr. Brodie seems to doubt, for he could only trace it to De Foe's memorial of the Scottish Church, and surmises that the tale originated in the woman who beat "the false thief" with her Bible. I have, however, discovered a manuscript document of the time—it is a warrant from Secretary Windbank to Rushworth riding post to Berwick, authorising him to procure horses on the road. On this warrant our great noter of the history of his times has set down various memoranda, as seems to have been his habit. The present is one.—"Md^m. I was born at Edenborough presently after the first disturbance by the woman throwing a stoole at the Bishop's head; a small thing to be the beginning of a war."*

This reflection of our great historical collector conveys to us no favourable idea of his political sagacity. It was, however, the prevalent notion of the times.

The truth, however, is, that this was no unpremeditated riot—it was a concerted measure—and the names of the plotters of

* Sloane MSS. 1519.

this memorable scene have been recorded with particulars which sufficiently authenticate the fact.

So early as in April, the famous Alexander Henderson, and another minister, schemed the whole, and having consulted Lord Balmerino, a zealous Scotch patriot, whose zeal had once put his head in peril, and Sir Thomas Hope, who was the King's advocate by office, but much more the Kirk's advocate in heart, the whole affair was arranged at a house in the Cowgate among a senate of matrons. To encourage these heroines and their associates to this valorous onset, they were assured that the men would afterwards take the business out of their hands.* Having organised this odd conspiracy, the plotters themselves left the city, and their interference escaped detection by their cunning absence. No one seemed to countenance this unexpected sedition, which was considered as a mere ebullition of the rabble—ceasing with the hour it passed away. It, however, excited surprise, that not even a single person of the lower orders was brought forward to undergo even a mockery of punishment; and such was the silent understanding of the parties, that when the Bishops were in personal danger, they knew to what popular nobleman to apply for protection, at whose presence they were conscious these raging waves of the people would ebb and subside. To us, who are better acquainted with the secret history of the times than contemporaries, this tumult assumes a higher importance than to those who witnessed it.

Some of these women had been tutored by persons of superior rank and intelligence. When one of these viragos, worthy to have flourished in the sanguinary streets of Paris or Lyons, expressed her ardent wish to cut the Bishop's wind-pipe, and was told that a much worse man might come in his stead, "No!" she exclaimed, "when Cardinal Beaton was sticked, we had never another Cardinal sin syne.†" Such an incident and such a reflection could not have sprung from the mind of the lowest of the rabble, particularly of those times.

That such a memorable scene of an universal movement of

* Guthry, 20.

† This curious fact is given by Mr. Brodie, from Sir James Balfour's "Stonie-field Day," ii. 455.

public opinion should have passed away as a transient ebullition of popular feeling may surprise us, who view in it the awful prelude to the great insurrection, when "the four tables," of nobility, of gentry, of ministers, and of burghers, were to convulse the whole Government with a democracy, and the shout of rebellion was to be echoed as a hundred thousand hands were to be lifted to Heaven to ratify "the Covenant." But when we consider the complicated intrigues which had been silently preparing, unmarked and unsuspected by the Scottish Bishops, we find how men in power are not the most lively observers, and often stand insulated and unconnected with the more active spirits of the times. One only among them saw at once the results; the Archbishop of St. Andrew's, Primate and Chancellor, wofully exclaimed, "The labour of thirty years is lost for ever in one day!" The Bishops reposed on the wisdom and the strength of the King's far distant Council, writing up to London for advice, and never advising themselves. They only discovered the true state of affairs at the moment of their consternation and their flight, when they were summoned to "the Tables," not to take their equal seats, but to hear their condemnation, and to learn their perpetual ejection from the State.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE CONSPIRACIES OF THE SCOTS AGAINST CHARLES THE FIRST.

HUME closes a luminous view of the discontents in Scotland by a philosophical observation on the King's inflexibility in this great revolution. "In his whole conduct of this affair there appeared no mark of the good sense with which he was endowed; a lively instance of that species of character so frequently to be met with, where there are found parts and judgment in every discourse and opinion; in many actions, indiscretion and imprudence. Men's views of things are the result of their understandings alone; their conduct is regulated by their understanding, their temper, and their passions."

The almost daily correspondence of Charles with the Marquis

of Hamilton, during the Scottish commotions, betrays no deficient energy of mind at this period ; indeed the reverse is true. These numerous letters are a striking evidence not only of the unwearied activity of the monarch, but of the prompt acuteness of the man. These are not official dispatches, under-signed by a secretary, where mechanical forms often cover a vacuity of thought ; but with the conciseness of a man of business, regardless of all ornament, Charles often expresses himself with great force, and with too much earnestness to indulge in an idle page.*

Doubtlessly the strangely concerted opposition which burst out at the reading of the Liturgy came unexpected to Charles, who seems never to have suspected the existence of that public opinion which so long had been creating in the Scottish metropolis, that it had reached even to the remoter provinces. Persuaded that he could accomplish that national conformity which his father had perhaps designed, but had avoided with prudence, in the establishment of Episcopacy in his native kingdom, and amidst delusions raised up by the interests and passions of so many, when Hamilton once imparted his fears and his doubts, Charles replied that his information led him to conclude that

* Since writing this, we have the opinion of one whose practised skill in the construction of artificial periods is too apparent in his criticism on the Letters of Charles the First. Mr. Godwin has recently thus described them : " They are written in royal style ; no attention is afforded by the writer to what are regarded as the artifices of composition. They have nothing in them of circumlocution or ceremony ; no colouring of the craft of authorship. The sceptered penman proceeds somewhat impatiently to his point ; he is blunt and brief : we see plainly that he thinks it would be some sacrifice of his dignity, if he were careful of auxiliaries and expletives, and used words other than were barely necessary to convey an unambiguous meaning." This criticism is the most unjust, and therefore the most erroneous, that ever a partisan adopted in order to depreciate what in itself is commendable. We have many hundreds of letters of Charles the First. The King was his own secretary, but it was not therefore incumbent on " the sceptered penman " to use a secretary's style. He was to command, not to discuss. Most of his letters were written on urgent and even immediate occasions—not always in the calm of his cabinet, but often in the hurry of a moveable camp—more frequently in vexation and trouble ; with the cares of Sovereignty weighing on the spirits, involved in the most complex intrigues, and at times distracted by opposite interests. Whatever may have been the extent of his capacity, it was always in a state of tension, and perhaps there are few men who could have written with the promptness of thought and the earnestness of feeling which mark the correspondence of Charles the First.

the Episcopalians did not constitute the inferior party in Scotland.

In the Scottish affairs Charles always proceeded unconscious of the conspiracies and disaffection around him; could he suspect the creatures of his favour, or the associates of his leisure? Many who were not with him, were known to be his friends, and more who had largely participated of his favours, he had a right to imagine were such. And indeed it is only by a due observation of this very circumstance of their personal regard for the King, that we can lift the veil which hangs over every part of the conduct of the mysterious ministers of Charles throughout the whole of the Scottish transactions. To this personal regard was often opposed their national feeling. In the degree that their loyalty executed their master's design, they felt that they were betraying their own cause; and when they sacrificed the royal interests for that cause, they were hurried into popular compliances which threatened even a greater danger.

The father and the son, from affection or from policy, had studied to reconcile their ancient and native kingdom, to the absence of their Court, by every royal indulgence. That the national pride of Scotia, too often wounded by the gibes and taunts of their Southern brethren, should not be further mortified by any sense of dependance on England, Charles had placed the whole conduct of affairs among two or three Scotchmen who attended at the Court for this purpose. There they held their councils, so that the affairs of Scotland were never brought before the Privy Council.* But the consequence of this tenderness for their privileges was, that Scotland and its affairs excited no curiosity in the English public; and while the Court and country were alive to any weekly news they received from Germany and Poland, no one ever inquired after any event which occurred in so considerable a portion of their own kingdom. The result of the system which the Stuart dynasty had adopted was unfortunate also in another point. The numerous Scottish residents at the English Court, on whom these monarchs doubtless relied for their zealous exertions with their countrymen, entirely lost their personal influence over their distant brothers,

* This fact is ascertained by Clarendon, i. 195.

nor were the honours lavished on these absentees valued by the Scottish people at large. These absentees, however, remained Scottish in their hearts, and found as little compunction in betraying the secrets of their master, as the nation afterwards experienced in selling him. Nor did the English people sympathise with their new friends, whom they looked on as intruders on their interests, and who perpetually were the burthen of a ballad, or the jest of a tale. Thirty years could not indeed allay the ancient prejudices of two nations, since even a century and a half have not extinguished them; so long can last the idiosyncrasy of manners, and so long it is ere popular malice becomes obsolete.

The presence-chamber, and the privy-chamber, and the bed-chamber, were crowded with Scotchmen, who formed a vast disproportion to the Englishmen at Court. Carte has given a list of officers of state all Scotch. The Marquis of Hamilton was Master of the Horse, and had filled the stables with Scots; the Earl of Morton was Captain of the Band of Pensioners; the Duke of Lennox was Warden of the Cinque Ports; the Earl of Ancram, Keeper of the Privy-purse; Sir William Balfour, Keeper of the Tower; Wemyss, Master-gunner of the Navy, and in the Civil War "Master-gunner of England," a considerable employment.* Numberless were the gentlemen ushers, the grooms, and the carvers, and the cup-bearers—who, creatures of the bounties of the father and the son, and prospering in the wealth of England, were betraying their sovereign in continued intelligence with their distant compatriots, and with malcontents nearer at hand.

There existed a Scottish faction at Court closely connected with the nobility, and with the commoners, Puritans or Patriots. The Earl of Haddington, brother-in-law to the Earl of Rothes, who was the first conspicuous leader of the Covenanters, and whom Haddington afterwards joined—remained at Whitehall. This lord was busily intriguing with some of our peers, such as the Earl of Holland, who was the visible head of the Puritans in

* Of this Scotchman a remarkable anecdote is recorded by Sir Richard Bulstrode. At Cropredy bridge, Wemyss, once a sworn servant of the King's, was taken prisoner, and being brought before Charles the First, the fawning and impudent Scot, in his broad tone, told the King, "In gude faith, my heart was always towards your Majesty!"

London, as his brother, the Earl of Warwick, afterwards the High Admiral of the Parliamentarians, was considered the chief of the Oppositionists in the country, and with Lords Say, Brook, and Wharton ; while Mr. Eleazer Borthwick, the able and statesmanlike agent of the Covenanters, and who passed twelve years in London, held daily communication with the good citizens of the Puritanic party, and with Hampden, Pym, and other patriots. The intercourse seems to have been mutual. There is a remarkable passage in the preface to Burnet's Memoir of the Hamiltons, where he tells us that "a gentleman of quality of the English nation, who was afterwards a great Parliament-man, went and lived some time in Scotland before the troubles broke out, and represented to the men that had then the greatest interest there, that the business of the ship-money and the habeas corpus, &c. had so irritated the English nation, that if they made sure work at home they needed fear nothing from England." Burnet, it is to be regretted, has not preserved the name of this "English gentleman of quality." This "great Parliament-man" appears to have been Hampden ; Echard mentions that he paid an annual visit to Scotland to concert measures with *his friends*. We find by Nalson that this celebrated person alluded to, whoever he was, and "other principal men of the faction," as Nalson calls them, "made frequent journeys into Scotland, and had many meetings and consultations how to carry on their combinations."* Wariston, in Cromwell's time, valued himself on these intrigues, which had confused the counsels and nullified the actions of the King, and ruined the Stuarts. The recent publication of Secretary Nicholas's letters to the King confirms these accounts of the

* Nalson, ii. 427. Dalrymple, 124, on this very point observes, on the confession of Wariston, that the Scots had kept up an intelligence with the English. "This is a very remarkable circumstance," he adds ; "it cannot be fully explained unless we were certain what persons of the English nation corresponded with the Scots and incited and encouraged their measures. He who can explain and illustrate this particular from original papers, will greatly serve the cause of truth." We are not so entirely deprived of this knowledge as Dalrymple supposed, but we still want more original papers, which in this age of unburying manuscripts may yet be discovered. I have sometimes fancied that Hampden and Pym must have left some manuscripts and correspondence ; but as no trace remains in the library at Hampden, it has been suggested that on the Restoration it was considered prudent to destroy any memorial of the past which might implicate their possessors. Pym must necessarily have received a number of State-papers.

private meetings of the Opposition to concert measures ; and in writing to the King, then at Edinburgh, he remarkably observes, that " they were of late very jocund and cheerful by some advertisements out of Scotland, from whose actions and successes they intend, as I hear, to take a pattern for their proceedings here."* In fact, the party were holding a little parliament of their own, with their own lords and their own commoners. At London, and in the country, they had their committees. Accounts have reached us of what passed at the seat of Lord Say, in Oxfordshire, where company, unobserved by the house, often assembled in a particular apartment, which they entered by a secret passage in which no servant was allowed to appear, but their discussions were often loud. The same secret assemblies were held at Mr. Knightley's, in Northamptonshire. In these and other places, the party had their council-chambers and leading speakers. In the metropolis some places have been particularised where they met to terminate their more important decisions ; Secretary Nicholas has noticed Lord Mandeville's house at Chelsea ; Echard one in Gray's-inn-lane ;† and Clarendon indicates a kind of fraternity where the members of this party seem to have lived and boarded as in a private family.‡ We are told that Pym rode through different counties, and others did the same, to procure elections of members, and for other purposes. We may at least admire their diligence, but we rather perceive its spirit when the Earl of Warwick wrote from York to his friends in Essex " that the game was well begun ;" and another leader, whose name has not come down to us, observed that " their party was then strong enough to pull the King's crown from his head, but the Gospel would not suffer them." It is lamentable to observe that patriots should be constrained to assume the characters of conspirators, and to leave the open and honourable path for dark and intricate plots ; the mind becomes degraded by the artifices it practises, and cunning and subtlety are substituted for those generous emotions and that nobler wisdom, which separate at a vast interval the true patriot from the intriguing partisan.

We know too little of the secret history of the parties who were so conspicuous in the Civil War. Such active spirits as Hampden

* Evelyn, ii. 28.

† Echard, 485.

‡ Clarendon, i. 319.

and Pym, though they lived in the age of diaries, appear to have left no memorial of themselves, or of their transactions. They were probably too deeply busied in the plans and schemes of the day. One great man among them, Lord Kimbolton, afterwards Viscount Mandeville, and, finally, the second Earl of Manchester, wrote memoirs relating to this very party with whom he had acted many years. Even this authentic source of secret history remains imperfect, and is only known by a few important extracts in Nalson's collection.* The simultaneous movements of these parties, the Scotch and the English, sometimes betrayed their secret connection. On the day the King received the Scottish petition, there was also presented another, signed by twelve English peers, for calling a Parliament, and the shrewd politicians of Edinburgh on this occasion surmised that Haddington and Borthwick had not laboured in vain, and that "the work would shortly begin in that kingdom."†

There is not wanting certain evidence that the King was surrounded by spies, prying into his movements, watching his unguarded hours, and chronicling his accidental expressions. Even in his sleep the King could not elude their scrutiny; his pockets were ransacked for letters to transmit copies to the Covenanters. This treachery was so well known, that Archbishop Laud, on delivering some important communications, requested the King not to trust the papers to his pocket.‡ We find Secretary Nicholas complaining that his own letters are seen by other eyes than the King's; and, on one occasion, that the secret orders which he received from the King were known before he could convey them to the Lord Keeper.§

This low degradation of eminent men betraying the secret councils of their royal master by such humiliating means, is not so rare a circumstance in secret history as one might imagine. The difficulty of procuring a private audience with James the First induced the Spanish ambassador to watch his opportunity

* Nalson acknowledges receiving from "Sir Francis North, now Lord Keeper of the great seal of England, a transcript of some memoirs of the late Earl of Manchester, the originals being written with the Earl's own hand," ii. 206. May not these memoirs be recovered?

† Bishop Guthry's Memoirs, 74. See the Petition in Nalson, ii. 437.

‡ L'Estrange, Charles I., 196.

§ Evelyn, 42. Correspondence.

of slipping into his Majesty's pocket those extraordinary charges against Buckingham, which alarmed the King, and probably would have ended in the ruin of the favourite. Anecdotes are related of the Jesuits, respecting their discoveries, picked out of the very foulest papers which a great personage used, and which when he had used he imagined that he had destroyed. A remarkable fact of this kind has not, as far as I know, been published; and as it relates to two illustrious personages, and the transaction is itself as ingenious as it appears authentic, the reader may be interested by its preservation.

De Witt, having taken the Prince of Orange (our William the Third) under his government and tuition, in order to be master of all his actions and motions, surrounded him by his own creatures. A *valet de chambre*, who had constantly attended the Prince from a child, was, at the Prince's earnest request, suffered to continue in his service. The Prince had then a constant and very secret correspondence with the English Court; and on the receipt of these letters, usually put them in his waistcoat pocket. One day De Witt in conversation with the Prince, warning him against intrigues dangerous to his highness, let fall expressions, from which the Prince inferred that the pensioner had seen some of his secret letters from England.

The Prince, however, with his usual caution, took no notice to any one of his embarrassment, but pondering on the circumstance, when he went to bed feigned sleep; and after due time, detected the faithful operations of his valet, who taking out the letters, copied them for the pensionary, and then carefully replaced the originals. The Prince still continued to conceal the discovery, but took care in his subsequent letters from England to receive such answers as he wished to have conveyed to De Witt. These by degrees changed the face of affairs, removed the pensioner's jealousies, and ever after kept him in a false security with regard to his pupil's transactions and correspondences. When the Prince had overcome all his difficulties, and was made Stadt-holder, he confounded his valet by revealing one secret of the English correspondence which he had not yet copied; and complimenting him on the great service he had so unintentionally done his master, by his dexterous secretaryship

of the waistcoat-pocket, he dismissed the traitor, not without the charity of a small pension.*

The Marquis of Hamilton was a person not less illustrious than the Pensionary De Witt, and he stands accused of practices not less insidious, actuated perhaps, too, by a less pardonable motive, the ruin of a rival, and that rival one as great as himself. The famous Earl of Montrose, whom we at first find among the Covenanters, himself acquainted the King with the real occasion of his having joined them. On his return from the Court of France, where he had been a Captain in the Scottish guards, Montrose intended to enter into the King's service, and was advised to make his way through the means of his countryman, the Marquis of Hamilton. Hamilton professed every good will, admiring that romantic gallantry which Cardinal de Retz has so forcibly and so classically described; but Hamilton cunningly insinuated, that the King was so wholly attached to the English, and so systematically slighted the Scotch, that were it not for his country, he himself would not longer submit to the indignities he endured. To the King, Hamilton, in noticing the return of Montrose, and his purpose to wait on his Majesty, insinuated that this Earl was so popular among the Scots by an ancient descent from the royal family, that if he were not nipped in the bud, he was one who might occasion much future trouble. When the Earl of Montrose was introduced to the King by Hamilton with great demonstration of affection, Charles, too recently tutored to forget his lesson, gave Montrose his hand formally to kiss, but ungraciously turned away in silence. The slighted and romantic hero, indignant at the coldness of that royalty which best suited his spirit, hastened to Scotland, and threw himself in anger and despair into the hands of the Covenanters.† But the heart of Montrose remained secretly attached to his sovereign—and at length he opened a correspondence with Charles. A letter of Montrose was taken out of the King's pocket, and the copy

* This anecdote was told by D'Allone, Secretary to Queen Mary, and long in the confidence of King William, to Lord —, "the great friend" of the Rev. Henry Etough, who communicated it in a letter to Dr. Birch.

† This story is told by Heylin in his little curious volume of "Observations on the History of King Charles, by Hamon L'Estrange," p. 205. It is confirmed from other quarters. The subsequent conduct of Hamilton is itself a confirmation.

transmitted to the Covenanters, which put an end to his influence with that party. The report was current, and the fact has been sanctioned by history, that the Marquis of Hamilton had done, or procured to be done, this "foul and midnight deed." Burnet, in whose folio Memoir of the Hamiltons we never discover a single ambiguous act, or one political tergiversation—has attempted to strike out even this blot from the scutcheon of his hero. He tells us that the letter to the King was inclosed by Montrose in one he addressed to Sir Richard Graham, who, opening the letter, carelessly dropped the inclosure, when Sir James Mercer, the bearer of these letters from Scotland, civilly stooping to take up the letter, silently marked the royal address, and hastened to the Scottish camp to tell the tale. This accident, resting on Sir James Mercer's testimony, may be true, but it would not account for the knowledge of the contents of the letter. For this purpose Burnet adds, on his own authority, for I find none given, that the council of war insisted that Montrose himself should furnish a copy of his own letter. If this were done, we may be sure it contained no treason. Montrose in his defence showed that others were corresponding with the Court, and when Lesley accused him of having corresponded with the enemy, the dauntless Montrose in his chivalric manner asked, "Who is he who durst reckon the King an enemy?" The affair at that moment had no result. Investigation would have implicated other leaders of the Covenanters. From other quarters, indeed, we learn that copies of letters addressed by Montrose to the King were transmitted to the Scotch by some bed-chamber men, who searched the King's pockets when he was asleep.* It is probable that the Marquis of Hamilton was not the only Scotchman who thus served his country's cause at the cost of his honour.

Whether it were love of country, or concealed ambition, or some motive less honourable, the insincerity of the Scotch about the person of Charles is very remarkable, from the nobleman to the domestic. The loyal Earl of Argyle advised Charles to keep his son, the Earl of Lorn (afterwards the famous Argyle), at Court, and not allow him to return to Scotland, predicting to the King, with an honest *naïveté*, that if Lorn once left him "he

* Bishop Guthrie, p. 75. This circumstance rests on other authorities.

would wind him a pin." Charles thanked the father for the counsel, but, as the son had been called up by his warrant, he considered that he ought not forcibly to retain him, for Charles added that it behoved him "to be a king of his word."* Charles, it appears, had conferred many substantial honours on Argyle—in places—in titles—and even in donations of money. As we advance in the investigation of the Scottish affairs, and particularly in a following chapter on the Hamiltons, we shall find an unparalleled scene of involved intrigues, of which many can never be elucidated. But hardly any surpasses the faithlessness of the son of Argyle, who, on more than one occasion, displayed an absolute recklessness of his honour and his word. It was in one of those ebullitions when the heart of the perfidious, from its fulness, utters what it would at another time conceal, and gains nothing by the avowal, that we discover his profound dissimulation. When at length the Earl openly joined the Covenanters, in his maiden speech he assured them that "from the beginning he had been theirs—and would have held to the cause as soon as any did, had it not been that he conceived that, by attaching himself to the King, and going along with his Council, he was more useful to them than had he from the first declared himself."†

Of the loose notions of Scottish gratitude, and of the solemn asseverations of its perpetuity, we have a remarkable instance in the great Scotch general, Lesley, who was created Earl of Leven, by the favour or the policy of Charles. At this unexpected honour the old soldier was so transported that once on his knees he swore "that he would not only never bear arms against the King, but would serve him without asking the cause." This was the inebriation of his loyalty, for in less than two years after, he led the Scotch army against the creator of his honours.

Charles offended his English subjects by conferring on a Scotchman, Sir William Balfour, the Lieutenancy of the Tower. The Parliamentary party were not certain that this hardy Scot was staunch to their cause, and once obtained his removal. They needed not to have been jealous of the passive obedience of the devoted Lieutenant-Governor of the Tower; for Sir William Balfour took an early part with the Parliament; zealously

* Bishop Guthry, 31.

† Bishop Guthry's Memoirs, 41.

rendered the captivity of Strafford inexorably severe, and resisted the most considerable bribe ever offered to a Governor, to connive at the escape of a State-prisoner. Having thus manifested himself to be worthy of the confidence of the party, he became one of their ablest commanders, when he had the satisfaction of encountering his royal master in arms.

Among the inferior Scots we find frequent notices of this personal ingratitude to the monarch. Even the menials of Whitehall defamed the Sovereign and the Court. Even the common feelings of humanity were alien to the hearts of Scotchmen; for they had all drawn from the breasts of their nurses the sour milk of Presbytery and democracy. "Little William Murray," as Charles affectionately called him, of the bed-chamber, had from his childhood enjoyed the particular confidence of Charles, and transacted his most delicate affairs. Yet on several occasions this mysterious man raised suspicions of his conduct. It is not only from Clarendon that we learn the faithlessness of this domestic companion and confidential agent of the manhood of the monarch; we draw it from an impartial witness in De Montreuil, the French Ambassador, who accompanied Charles in the last critical period of his life. At a moment when the unhappy monarch was meditating to emigrate, the plan was entirely left to the care of William Murray, who was ever flattering the King of its safety; yet, adds De Montreuil, Murray is very careful to hinder the King from employing those who certainly are as able as himself, and far more sincere. Murray persisted in reiterating his doubts that Ashburnham would deceive the King. The impartial Frenchman sarcastically concludes, "Thus I perceive that these honest persons, as zealous for their Prince, had two displeasures; the one, that their master is betrayed, and the other that it is not they who betray him." *

The Scottish Archbishop, Spotiswood, was so sensible of the infidelity of his countrymen, that he offered himself as a personal sacrifice, advising Charles to have a list prepared of all his counsellors, his household officers and domestic servants, and with his own pen expunge all the Scots, beginning with the Archbishop himself, which at least would prevent any complaint of partiality. The State secrets of the privy-councils of Charles were betrayed.

* Thurloe's State Papers, i. 85, 88, 92.

A Royal Commission for "the discovery of revealers of secrets in council" is surely an anomalous State paper. One such, however, we have from Charles, when the dissolution or continuance of Parliament was agitated in May, 1640, with the simple confession that "by what ways or means they were revealed and disclosed, is not yet manifested to us."*

In Scotland, the Scotch were even less to be trusted. The King's Advocate, Sir Thomas Hope, was much more the advocate of the Covenanters. This subtle lawyer had great command over Charles. Having undertaken the restitution of those Church lands of which the nobles had formerly defrauded the Crown, none doubted that by his delays and evasions he was acting in concert with the nobility.† Hamilton, when High Commissioner, complained that all the skill of the King's Advocate only perplexed his resolutions. The King's Advocate could not appear openly in the cause he had secretly espoused, but he failed not to supply the legal points on which Lord Balmerino and Henderson proceeded in their opposition. Most of the Lords of the Council, and Officers of State, were unquestionably Covenanters, though openly acting contrary to their principles.

The faithlessness of the Scots in their own country may not be difficult to account for—"The Cause," as it was emphatically called, was national; and the appearance of liberty was on their side—though often disgraced by the mutual intrigues of rivals, and above all by that religious fanaticism which enabled the crafty insurgents to kindle a war which can never terminate by a peace—a holy war!

It is more difficult to satisfy our curiosity on the infidelity of the Scots about the person of the King, and who were residents at the Court of Whitehall. Their ingratitude or their treachery could not originate in any contemptuous or unkind treatment of Charles, for we discover only his entire confidence and his confirmed partialities—and the best we can say in favour of these domestic treasons is, that the Scots at London were the same as the Scots at Edinburgh. Malcolm Laing, enlightened and acute, acknowledged that "seldom were the Scotch distinguished

* This singular commission is preserved in Nalson's collection, i. 344.

† Burnet's History of his own Time, i. 39. Guthry's Memoirs, 71—89.

for their loyalty.”* Did the feudal tyranny of their haughty aristocracy seem more tolerable than the rule of a sovereign? Was not the establishment of the Presbytery the true origin of the spirit of their modern democracy?

There remains a paradox in this history. The devotion of the following generations of Scotchmen to their Stuarts has been as romantic as that conduct which we have noticed was crafty and treacherous; it seems a problem in human nature and in Scottish history.

Thus surrounded by great and by minor conspiracies, and betrayed in his most secret councils—we shall hereafter see how the King himself became the secret object of the contests between the rival and involved intrigues of Scotchmen. The unfortunate King of England now proceeded on principles of State which appeared to him irrefragable—and for some time imagined that the show of his regal authority would put down the insurgency of a whole people.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF CHARLES THE FIRST IN THE FIRST INVASION OF THE SCOTS.

THE system of these commentaries is to pursue our inquiries, independent of the chronological arrangement of events, with which every history of England will furnish the reader. It therefore sometimes happens that we have not only to allude to incidents already noticed, but must necessarily anticipate others which have not yet been told. One art of discovering Truth in history is that of joining its dispersed, but connected facts; facts which were furnished at the time by those who were often unconscious of this secret relation. Thus the horizon of history expands, and a brighter gleam darts through that hazy atmosphere in which past events are necessarily enveloped.

We have shown how the Scottish intrigues were closely connected with those in England; we shall find that our own revolu-

* Laing, iii. 187.

tionary measures were entirely modelled on those of the Scots. This principle of discovery is of the utmost importance for the proper comprehension of the history of this period; and it is surprising, that none of the writers of our history have yet struck into this vein. In detecting the secret intercourse which existed between the parties at Edinburgh and at London, we shall obtain the most striking evidence of the true origin of many obscure and mysterious incidents in the reign of Charles the First; and in comparing the proceedings of the Commons in England with those of the Scottish leaders, we shall find that the same designs became their common object. When we come to develop the character of the Marquis of Hamilton we shall allude to those great events in the Scottish commotions in which he bore so conspicuous a part; at present we turn our attention to the King himself, from the beginning and through the progress of that great revolution, for such indeed it was, and the model which a party at home servilely copied. His motives and his perplexities may sometimes be ascertained; and some incidents which historians have erroneously denied, or have misconceived, and others which time only has revealed, become revelations of Truth. The personal character of Charles the First, accompanied by all his misfortunes and his errors, is of itself a study for the painter of man. The inextricable dilemmas, the delusive designs, the wavering hopes and fears in which this unhappy sovereign was inclosed as in a magical circle, may excite the sympathy of those who wish not to extenuate the errors of his policy, and yet who would not at the same time be ignorant of the passions of his age. The history of the man is not less interesting than the history of the monarch, and a tale of human nature is not less precious than a history of England.

The moment the solemn "Covenant" was taken, a term drawn from the inspiration of the Judaic history, and every true Scotchman became a good Israelite—the moment that "the Tables," as the Scots meanly called their assemblies of the four great classes of their people, or, as they are ably dignified in the *Mercurie François*, perhaps by Richelieu himself, "the four Chambers," constituted a national Convention, holding itself independent of the Royal Council, and assuming the office of

Sovereignty, the revolution became necessarily political. This moment had been anticipated by the Marquis of Hamilton in the preceding year. Addressing the King, he observed, "Probably this people have somewhat else in their thoughts than religion. But that must serve for a cloak to rebellion, wherein for a time they may prevail; but to make them miserable, and bring them again to a dutiful obedience, I am confident your Majesty will not find it a work of long time, nor of great difficulty, as they have foolishly fancied to themselves."*

In July, 1637, the Liturgy was first read at Edinburgh, and six months afterwards, in February, 1638, the Scots entered into their Covenant. We detect in the warm historian of the great Presbyterian revolution all the triumph and exultation of the militant saint. "*Our second and glorious Reformation* in 1638, when this Church was again settled upon her own base, and the rights she claimed from the time of the Reformation, were restored, so that she became 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.' It is hard to manage a full cup, and I *shall not take upon me to defend every step in that happy period.*"†

In January, 1639, orders were issued by the Covenanters for a general drilling throughout the kingdom. "Terrible as an army with banners," which appears only a metaphorical expression in the zealot, was in truth a simple historical fact. They divided and subdivided the kingdom. The Earl of Traquair writes from Edinburgh:—"The writers and advocates are the only men busy here, in this time of drilling; and of the writers I dare say the most of them spend more upon powder than they have gained these six months bygone with the pen."‡ They had secretly supplied themselves abroad by the purchase of ammunition and arms, and had engaged experienced officers and commanders, from their absent countrymen who had been trained to arms in the school of the great military genius of the age. A small sum, and busy agents from Richelieu, had served to kindle the flame of insurgency, but such was the national

* Lord Hardwicke's State Papers, ii. 118.

† Wodrow's Introduction to History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland, p. ii.

‡ The Earl of Traquair to the Marquis of Hamilton. Hardwicke State Papers, ii. 125.

poverty that it could never have maintained its army. The spirit of the people, long unused to war, was roused by those great leaders of democracy, the Presbyters in their pulpits, who pronounced the curse of Meros on those who came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The enthusiasm flew from rank to rank; all men pressed forward as volunteers. When the Marquis of Hamilton anchored before Leith, he witnessed the gentry labouring on a bastion, and ladies of the first condition busied in the trenches.

But if this enthusiasm had been caught by the people, the leaders of the Covenant, and their wary general, Alexander Lesley, were proceeding with a more human policy. Conscious of their feeble resources in case of a defeat, or, what would have proved as fatal, a prolonged campaign, they studied to avoid the appearance of an offensive war. They held out no menace, but they urged a plea; they had armed, not to invade England, but to defend themselves from an English invasion. When the King issued a proclamation that they should not approach nearer the royal camp than ten miles, it was dexterously obeyed. Such was the infant strength of the Rebellion! The Scots had taken the precaution to disperse by their pedlars in their packs "an Information to all good Christians," about "the true Religion" and "the Lord's own cause," which were made palatable to the English Puritans with sprinklings of Scriptural allusions, where the Sanballats "and such like" were pointed at, who opposed the building of the New Jerusalem by Ezra and Nehemiah.* Such was the style of those Scotch patriots, and such, not long afterwards, was to be that of the English. Letters had also been dispatched to some at Court vindicating their proceedings, solemnly protesting that they designed no harm to England, and expecting no hostility from them; letters not ill received among some eminent persons at Court.†

The Scots, in their first invasion, were long influenced by motives of delicacy from venturing to cross the Tweed. The insurgents contented themselves in exercising their tactics at home, possessing themselves of the forts of their own country.

* This State paper is preserved in Frankland, 739.

† Burnet's Memoirs of the Hamiltons, 116.

They only made war by acts of peace, and renewed their "humble desires" only by petitions, armed at once to strike or to sign.

An unpublished letter, which is in the State-paper office, from Edward Norgate, who followed the English army, exhibits the misery of the country, and the consequent confusion which prevailed in a disorderly army :—

"BARWICK, 29th May, 1639.

"The King made a halt at Alnwick, upon some alarm that was in the camp, whereof he received information from my Lord General, so that persons of great quality lay in their coaches, carts from the town being little and company great. So at Morpeth I staid, but the next day went on to Alnwick, whence the King was gone that morning to the army at Gaswick, five miles short of Barwick, for the alarm was false.

"The next morning passing through Belfort (nothing like the name either in strength or beauty, it being the most miserable beggarly sodden town, or town of sods, that ever was made in an afternoon of loam and sticks), there I stumbled upon Mr. Murray, one of the cup-bearers to his Majesty, who had taken up the very and only room in the only alehouse. Thither he kindly invited me, to a place as good as a death's head or memento for mortality, top and sides being all earth, and the beds no bigger than so many coffins. Indeed, it was for beauty and conveniency like a covered saw-pit. Our host was a moving uncleanly skeleton; I asked him who had condemned him thither. He said, *durum telum necessitas*: that he, with fourscore other gentlemen of quality (a horse troop), being billeted the night before at a little village three miles further, coming to the place after a long and weary march, found no other accommodation than a dark and rainy night; in all the town not one loaf of bread nor quart of beer, not a lock of hay nor peck of oats, and little shelter for horse or man; only a few hens they roasted and eat without bread, but not without water. Their horses had nothing. He told me I should find the army in little better condition, the first companies having stood in water up to the ancles by reason of the rain; that in forty-eight hours they had no bread, nor other lodging but on the wet ground, the camp being low near the sea-side, nor any shelter but the fair heavens. After dinner I

rode to the army, where I think there was not above seven thousand foot; the horse elsewhere dispersed into villages, about three thousand. Here I found the cause of the late want was for want of carriages to bring bread to the army, but now they were better accommodated, yet lay *sub dio*. The King was in his tent, about where some of the Lords had pitched theirs. I think none that loves him but must wish the army ten times doubled, and those ten fifteen times better accommodated; especially seeing this town as ill provided as the other, and the hourly reports of the Scots advancing ten thousand in one place and fifteen thousand in another to second their fellows. Yet are we told they come with a petition, but it seems they mean to dictate the reference to themselves, wherein I believe Sir Edward Powell will have little to do.

“To this town (Barwick) I came last night, when Sir John Borrowes and I could hardly get a loaf of bread to our supper; a black cake we got scarce edible. I went to Mr. Secretary’s (Sir John Coke) to beg one, and had it given me with much difficulty, Mr. May protesting that his master was glad to send to my Lord Governor for bread for him and his, the day before, and that he got but two half-penny loaves. This day our host fetching us some dinner, had it snatched from him by a soldier, who much complain. The people here say, that if some present and speedy order be not taken, they shall want bread for their families, the soldiers devouring what can be got, and the Scots, by whom it seems the town was formerly supplied with victual of all kinds, and that in a plentiful manner and cheap, having declared they fear extremely the want of provisions, the country in Northumberland side being very barren, but plentiful beyond the boundary towards Scotland.”*

Both the armies at length were encamped opposite to each other, and found themselves in an extraordinary situation. At the time, the causes of the unexpected results of this formidable appearance on both sides were not known, and were therefore misrepresented.

The royal army had been hastily formed by the King;

* The writer, Edward Norgate, was secretary to Windebank. Birch transcribed this letter from one in the State-paper office. Sloane MSS. 4176.

Charles relied on the imposing pomp of his splendid cavalry, the flower of the English nobility and gentry, and on the number of his troops, to awe the Scots into submission. Ludlow aptly describes this army as "raised rather out of compliment than affection;" and Clarendon, evidently with pain to himself, has confirmed this opinion. "The King summoned most of the nobility of the kingdom, without any consideration of their affections, how they stood disposed to that service, presuming that the glory of such a visible appearance of the whole nobility would at once terrify and reduce the Scots." Clarendon adds one of those profound reflections, which we rarely find but in this "Lord Chancellor of Human Nature," that "such kinds of uniting do often produce the greatest confusions; when more and greater men are called together than can be united in affections or interests in the necessary differences which arise from thence, they quickly come to know each other so well, as they rather break into several divisions than join any one public interest, and from hence have always arisen the most dangerous factions."* But a royal care, unknown to Clarendon, lay hidden in the King's breast. Charles was aware of the moral condition of his army. The Marquis of Hamilton had in the gallery at Whitehall confidentially revealed to the King the fatal secret, that the English nobility and general officers were far from being heartily engaged in this war. They were not to be trusted; the Scots at Court had succeeded in impressing on the minds of some that they were little interested in a *bellum Episcopale*; nor was it probably unknown to Charles, that the officers and privates in his army on their march had openly declared that they would not fight to maintain the pride and power of the Bishops.† Many also, who took no interest in the factions of the day, but consulted their own quiet and the King's happiness, vented their contempt on the poverty of Scotland; and as May tell us, the young courtiers were usually heard to wish Scotland under water, or that the old wall of Severus was re-edified. Others of graver thoughts, as Comines was then a favourite historian, pointed out the story of Charles the Duke of Burgundy's war with the Swiss, who, had he taken them all prisoners, could not have paid a ransom to the value of

* Clarendon, i. 206.

† Whitelocke's Memorials, 33.

the spurs and bridles in his camp. And a verse of Juvenal was frequent in their mouths :

Curandum in primis ne magna injuria fiat
Fortibus et miseris.*

It is certain that Charles was aware of the neutrality of some, and of the treachery of others of his commanders ; for when the infidelity of the Earl of Holland, at a subsequent day, was noticed to him, the King replied, "Had that army been in earnest, he would have chosen other commanders." It is evident, therefore, that the King depended entirely on "the glory of such a visible appearance." Charles, in fact, was leading only the phantom of an army. Charles betrayed his alarm at the distempered condition of his army when he was reduced to the extraordinary expedient of requiring a *Sacramentum militare*. This was a subscription to a solemn profession of loyalty and obedience, and at the same time disclaiming any correspondence with the insurgents. "The Scots," sarcastically observes Lord Clarendon, "took it to a man without grieving their conscience, or reforming their manners." But an open refusal came from a quarter whence, perhaps, it was not expected, however it might be suspected. Two English noblemen, afterwards well known in the Civil War, Lord Say and Sele and Lord Brooke, in the King's presence, sullenly refused their signatures. These lords ingeniously averred that it was against law to impose oaths not enjoined by law ; and further, being ignorant of the laws of Scotland, neither could they decide whether the Covenanters were rebels. The King, indignant at this studied insult, offered in the face of his whole army, and doubtless dreading that the example of these lords might prove infectious, immediately ordered them to be put under restraint. Charles desired that the Attorney and the Solicitor should be privately consulted, whether these lords could be proceeded against criminally, but the King found that "the cunning and jesuitical answers," as Secretary Windebank calls them, "only concealed their malignity and aversion to his Majesty's service." The sturdy refusal of these lords threatened alarming consequences at that critical moment—they, indeed, had only anticipated the unhappy day

* Sat. 8—121.

that was shortly to befall England; and their conduct had instantly operated, for those who had willingly subscribed this bond of loyalty now signed another paper, declaring the sense in which they had accepted it. This vain expedient of securing the fidelity of the faithless was thrown aside.

While the mind of the perplexed monarch was suspended between doubt and fear, amidst the disaffection and reluctant duty which prevailed in the royal camp, a far different scene broke forth among the joyous tents of a people, who once more beheld their native hills covered with a national army. There a veteran and unlettered soldier, aged and weather-beaten, deformed and diminutive in his person, but renowned for his skill in all military affairs, was recalled from foreign campaigns to the land of his fathers. His sagacity was prompt to master difficulties, and his enterprise was too prudent, ever to have failed in good fortune. But the military virtue now most to be valued—the knowledge of the human heart—was eminently his own. Lesley was a Scotchman who in foreign lands had never forgotten the native humours of his countrymen, and now marched with them as if he had long been their neighbour and their companion. In the plain simplicity of his language, he told the noble and the meanest gentleman, that “volunteers were not to be commanded like soldiers of fortune. Brothers they were all, and engaged in one cause.” He flattered to command. Even the haughty nobles, whose rivalries had been dreaded, loved the wisdom and authority of “the old little crooked soldier,” as Baillie naturally paints him—and his undisciplined levies acquired at least that great result of all discipline, a love of obedience. The gentleman was nothing the worse lying weeks together on the ground, or standing all night in arms in the storm, and the lusty peasantry raised their hearts as they mingled with the nobles of the land, and their own “Men of God.” Their eyes watched this “Captain of Israel.” Lesley had called on his country in the name of God, and the Scottish camp seemed the tabernacle of the Lord of Hosts. Crowded with spiritual pastors, these sent forth their heralds to all their Presbyteries, exhorting the absent, or reproaching the loiterer. As the army advanced, its numbers multiplied. Every company had a new banner waving before the tent-door of its

captain, blazoned by the Scottish arms, and inscribed "For Christ's Crown and Covenant." The reveil called them to solemn prayer at the dawn; the drum beat to a sermon under the roof of Heaven, which twice a-day convinced them of the righteousness of their cause; and as the sun went down in the still repose of evening, the melody of psalmody—the extemporaneous inspiration of some prophesying pietist, or exhortations from some folded page of the sacred volume, refreshed the spirits of these patriotic enthusiasts, who, in combating on earth, seemed to be possessing themselves of Heaven itself. "True," says Baillie, "there was swearing and cursing and brawling, whereat we grieved," but as the good Principal walked through their tents, he caught the contagious fervour of this singular union of insurrection and religion. "I found the favour of God shining upon me, and a sweet, meek, humble, yet strong and vehement spirit leading me all along." The valiant Saint was ready either to start to battle, or to chorus a psalm.

The assumed humility in the supplications of the Covenanters induced Charles to imagine that they were intimidated at the view of the English army. A second proclamation more authoritatively commanded their submission; but one day when a very inferior Scotch force put to a shameful flight the whole cavalry of Lord Holland, the determined spirit of the Scots was confirmed, as well as the suspicions and the dread of the King of the disposition of his own troops. The Marquis of Hamilton lay inactive at sea, and Lord Holland was a fugitive on land. At London the King was censured for not more vigorously quelling the Scotch revolt. Those indeed who were distant from the scene, and knew little or nothing of the state of both armies, wondered at the King losing this opportunity of chastising his rebels. Contemporaries rarely possess the secrets reserved for their posterity. The Covenanters were alike surprised at the inactivity of the English, which they ascribed to a refined policy designed to waste by delay their limited resources. They were acquainted at that moment neither with the indifference of the whole army, nor the disappointments of Charles in a foreign negotiation for Spanish troops, who, it was rumoured, had landed in England, and also in some expected

levies from Ireland. The Scots in this first excursion were awed, too, by the fear of rousing the jealousy of the English people. A secret intercourse indeed had already been opened with some English friends, but no party, however, had yet risen in strength openly to espouse their cause. We learn this from Baillie—"the hope of England's conjunction is but small, for all the good words we heard long ago from our friends." This is a pointed allusion to the earliest intercourse of the Covenanters with some of our own patriots. He proceeds—"all this time when the occasion was great to have kythed their affections both to us and their own liberties, there was nought among them but either a deep sleep or silence."* They knew they wanted not for friends at Court, nor among the citizens, who were not displeased to see the Scots in arms against the King, and who were not desirous of an English victory, supposing, says May, that "the sword which subdued the Scots must destroy their own liberties." But these friendships of the parties were yet callow, and not to be too roughly handled. So jealous was our Parliament at times of their invading friends, that when the Scottish army, after the pacification of Berwick, intended to march through this garrison town, a wooden bridge was ordered to be thrown over the Tweed at some distance from the town, that they might be separated from the townsmen. The day had not yet come, although it was fast approaching, when the English Parliamentarians were to vote their Scottish invaders "a friendly assistance," and that the Scots were to return their solemn thanks for the style of "brethren" given to them in the vote of the House.†

As the King from the first had never contemplated a war, and as the Scots did not know whether they might begin one, both armies were precisely at that point which would admit of a treaty. Lesley decided on a great movement. "He gave out obscurely his purpose to approach the English camp," says Baillie. The enthusiasm of the people had daily augmented his forces, but, destitute of the resources to support a defensive war, this sagacious general foresaw that his forces would have dispersed as rapidly as they had assembled, in the inactivity of a prolonged campaign; and that even his numerical strength

* Baillie, i. 183.

† Rushworth, iv. 152.

might be fatal in an impoverished land. The approach of Lesley excited an alarm in the royal camp. At this critical moment an ancient page of the King's was permitted to pass over to the Scottish camp on a visit to his friends. There he hinted that if they would please to supplicate the King, the happiness of peace might yet be obtained. This light motion was not neglected—an intercourse was granted, and the King's honour was thus saved. Some English historians have presumed that the Scots were the first who solicited the peace, but Baillie has preserved the name of the old page who doubtless was the messenger of the pacific overture.

Four Scotch Commissioners, among whom was the Earl of Rothes, a voluptuary, and Lord Loudon, an able intriguer and necessitous man, both long afterwards gained over by Charles—met in the tent of the Earl of Arundel, the English general, to confer on the adjustment of the minuter points in dispute. An extraordinary scene opened. Unexpectedly, at least to the Scottish Commissioners, the King himself entered—and taking his seat at the end of the table, the others then standing up, a remarkable conversation ensued. It was taken down at the time in notes, and sent by the Earl of Arundel to Laud.

This is a very dramatic narrative, and in some respects leads us to an intimate acquaintance with the manners of Charles the First. The propriety of the King's appearance at this conference may be doubtful; it would check the necessary freedom of discussion; but Charles on various critical occasions too easily flattered himself that he could compose all differences by his own presence; his sincerity might be greater than his prudence. On the present occasion the King seems not to have been more peremptory than a man who delivers himself without reserve, patient though dignified; and since we know that this meeting was not concerted, the spontaneous language of the King will show that his capacity was no ordinary one, and that his earnestness was not a mere form and show of obtruding royalty, designed more to gratify its own vanity than inspired by any deeper interest in the affairs of the people.

Dr. Lingard truly observes that "Charles for several days debated every point with an earnestness of argument and a tone of superiority which seems to have imposed on the hearers of

both nations." This penurious commendation hardly does justice to Charles. We have a warmer account from Baillie. "The King was very sober, meek and patient to hear all. The King missed Henderson"—(with whom Charles at a distant day was to hold a famous controversy on ecclesiastical polity)—"and Johnston"—(afterwards the hot Covenanter Wariston.) "The King was much delighted with Henderson's discourse, but not so with Johnston's. Much and most free communing there was of the highest matters of State. It is likely his Majesty's ears had never been tickled with such discourses, yet he was most patient of them all, and loving of clear reason. His Majesty was ever the longer the better loved of all that heard him, as one of the most just, reasonable, sweet persons they ever had seen." Of this remarkable conference which occurred on the first day, unknown to Clarendon and Hume, I shall select such passages as most enter into the character of Charles the First:—

THE KING.—My Lords, you cannot but wonder at my unexpected coming hither; which I would myself have spared, were it not to clear myself of that notorious slander laid upon me, that I shut my ears from the just complaints of my people in Scotland, which I never did, nor shall. But, on the other side, I shall expect from them, to do as subjects ought; and upon these terms I shall never be wanting to them.

ROTHES.—The Earl of Rothés answered but with a low voice, that his sentences could hardly at any distance be understood. The effect of his speech was a justification of all their actions.

THE KING.—My Lord, you go the wrong way in seeking to justify yourselves and actions; for though I am not come hither with any purpose to aggravate your offences, but to make the fairest construction of them that they may bear, and lay aside all differences, yet if you stand on your justification, I shall not command but where I am sure to be obeyed.

ROTHES.—Our coming is not to justify our actions, or to capitulate, but to submit ourselves to the censure (judgment) of your Majesty, if so be we have committed any thing contrary to the laws and customs of our country.

THE KING.—I never took upon me to give end to any differ-

ence, but where both parties first submitted themselves unto my censure (judgment), which if you will do, I shall do you justice to the utmost of my knowledge, without partiality.

ROTHES.—Our religion and conscience is now in question, which ought to receive another trial. Besides, neither have we power of ourselves to conclude any thing, but to represent it to our fellows.

THE KING.—If you have no power to submit it to my judgment, go on with your justification.

ROTHES.—This is it which we desired, that thereby the subjects of both kingdoms may come to the truth of our actions; for ye know not the reason of our actions, nor we of yours.

THE KING.—Sure I am, you are never able to justify all your actions; the best way, therefore, were to take my word, and to submit all to my judgment.

ROTHES.—We have reason to desire liberty for our public justification, seeing our cause hath received so much wrong, both in the foundation, relation, and the whole carriage of the business.

LOUDON.—Since your Majesty is pleased to dislike the way of justification, we therefore will desert it; for our purpose is no other but to enjoy the freedom of that religion which we know your Majesty and your kingdom do profess; and to prevent all alterations of that religion which we profess, which, finding ourselves likely to be deprived of, we have taken this course, wherein we have not behaved ourselves any otherwise than becometh loyal subjects. Our sole desires are, that what is point of religion may be judged by the practice of the church established in that kingdom.

THE KING.—Here his Majesty interrupted this long intended declaration, saying that he would not answer any proposition which they made, nor receive any, but in writing. They withdrew themselves to a side-table, and wrote a supplication—to ratify the acts of the assembly at Glasgow, that all ecclesiastical matters be determined by the Kirk, and that a peace be granted, and all incendiaries suffer punishment.

This supplication having been read, his Majesty said he could give no sudden answer to it; in fact, it included the great point of the abolishment of Episcopacy.

THE KING.—Here you have presented your desires, as much as to say, “Give us all we desire;” which, if no other than settling of your religion and laws established, I never had other intentions than to settle them. His Majesty withal told them that their propositions were a little too rude at the first. (Charles alluded to the ratifying the democratic acts of the Glasgow assembly.)

LOUDON.—We desire your Majesty that our grounds laid down may receive the most favourable construction.

THE KING.—I protest I have no intention to surprise you, but I withal desire you to consider how you stand too strictly upon your propositions. I intend not to alter any thing in your laws or religion which has been settled by sovereign authority. Neither will I at all encroach upon your laws by my prerogative; but the question will be at last, Who shall be the judge of the meaning of those laws? His Majesty then further told them that their pretences were fair, but their actions otherwise.

ROTHES.—We desire to be judged by the written word of the laws. (Here he proceeded in justifying the assembly at Glasgow.)

THE KING.—You cannot expect the ratification of that assembly, seeing the election of the members of it was not lawful, nor was there any free choice of them.

ROTHES.—There is no other way for settling differences in religion but by such an assembly of the Kirk.

THE KING.—That assembly was neither free nor lawful, and so, consequently, the proceedings could not be lawful. But when I say one thing, and you another, who shall judge?

The Earl of Rothes offered to bring the book of the assembly to the King, to prove its legality.—Lord Loudon explained the nature of the Presbyterian government by the book of discipline—the work of the earlier Puritans.

THE KING.—The book of discipline was never ratified by King or Parliament; but ever rejected by them. Besides this, there were never in any assembly so many lay elders as in this.

ROTHES.—In some assemblies there have been more lay elders than of the clergy. In this assembly every lay elder was so well instructed as that he could give judgment of any one point which should be called in question before them.

THE KING.—To affirm thus much in truth, seems very ridiculous; namely, that every illiterate person should be able to be a fit judge of faith and religion. This, indeed, is very convenient and agreeable to their disposition, for, by that means, they might choose their own religion.

The King, in closing the present conference, observed—"I have all this while discoursed with disadvantage, seeing what I say I am obliged to make good; but ye are men of honour too, and therefore whatever ye assent unto, if others refuse, ye are also obliged to make it good."

Lord Loudon once affirmed the power of the Glasgow assembly to punish any offences. Rothés, at a later conference, in plain terms affirmed the power of the assembly to be so great that, were he the King, it had authority to excommunicate him also.* Against this principle, perfectly papal, the note-writer observes that his Majesty excellently disputed, could reason have satisfied them. Charles here had certainly the strongest argument. It is curious to observe the advocates for popular freedom, eagerly contending for passive obedience; and a monarch, supposed to be a stickler for arbitrary government, exposing the absurdity and injustice of a dangerous despotism. So contradictory seems human nature, when man acts on his own temporary views or individual interests. We may regret that we have no notes of the conference of the fierce Republican, Wariston, with Charles, though at a distant day we have the King's sentiments on Republics in a conversation with Harrington, the author of the "*Oceana*," and which at the time impressed that singular Commonwealth's man with a high notion of the King's character.

The peculiarity of this state of warfare was terminated by a treaty as peculiar; a treaty consisting more of verbal explanations in vague conversations, than of written agreements, or articles afterwards ratified. The Scots desired to have their

* This was no oratorical flourish of the Earl of Rothés, but the avowed principle of the Presbytery. Our first English Puritans under Cartwright had maintained, not only that "the Church could inflict its censures on Royalty," but that it possessed a supremacy of power. Calvin's policy was to make the Church an independent power in the state, but this seems to have been but a first step; there are passages in his "*Institution*" which have an evident tendency to Cartwright's and Knox's system.

religion and liberty according to the laws of the kingdom—intending those that were in force before James's accession to the crown of England, and Charles, such as had been enacted since that time. Both sides must have perceived the ambiguity, but both were desirous of not coming to extremities. The Scots, with twelve thousand men, had not imagined that Charles could have raised an army of twenty thousand; but Charles was in no less perplexity than themselves, as he feared treachery among his own troops. The Scots wished delay in their negotiation, and the King hoped the day would come when he could explain the terms. The Scots would only swear to the true religion of 1580; Charles insisted that the true religion was in 1606, and was more manifest in the present year of 1638. The King would not acknowledge, and the Scots would not disclaim, the Glasgow assembly. This difficulty was obviated by the King consenting to call another assembly to decide on ecclesiastical affairs. From that tender subject, the removal of Episcopacy, Charles convulsively shrunk; while the Scottish Commissioners on their knees in vain implored that great boon, it was evaded on the plea that the King would not forestall the decision of the future assembly. Some harsh expressions in the King's declaration were softened, but when the Scots complained that it represented them as if they had struck at the monarchy, they were answered that so much was due to the royal honour, and that the King's reputation abroad required that his style should preserve the regal authority. Ambiguous sentences were explained in conference, and the Scots on their return to their camp set them down in writing, which in due time, says Baillie, "shall see the light in their own royal and noble phrase." "There were not two present," says Clarendon, "who did agree in the same relation of what was said and done, and which was worse, not in the same interpretation. An agreement was made, in which nobody meant what others believed he did."

Malcolm Laing has severely charged the King with dissimulation in this treaty;* but he does not lay the same charge on his own countrymen. When the treaty was signed, if treaty it can be called, an intercourse took place between all parties, and

* Laing's History of Scotland, iii. 171.

the result shortly appeared on both sides. The Scots cemented their secret friendships, and excited the sympathy of many new ones; and under the tents where they had signed the peace, they concerted future plans of more successful invasion; a clearer understanding between some of the English and themselves appeared to all the world on their second incursion. Nor was the King less active in his accessions; Montrose now first discovered himself to Charles; several of the Scottish lords were mollified by royal condescensions, and the ambiguous Hamilton had so adroitly insinuated himself into the favour of the Covenanters, that he had slid into their secrets, and with admirable fidelity betrayed them to the King.

It is evident that the pacification of Berwick was as little sincere on one side as on the other; and as is not uncommon, the parties with great truth reciprocally accuse each other. Equally impatient for peace, both dreaded the dubious issue of a battle, and both were alike unprovided with the means of maintaining their strength, even at the cost of a victory. The exhausted exchequer of Charles had levelled him to the poverty of the Scots. The determination to combat, rather than to retreat, was probably as strong on one side as the other. The language of the ingenuous Baillie is affecting,—though a Covenanter, he had a great reverence for Majesty. “Many secret motives there were on all hands that spurred on to this quick peace. What to have done when we came to Tweed-side we were very uncertain. The King would rather have hazarded his person than have raised his camp. Had he incurred any skaith (harm), or been disgraced with a shameful flight, our hearts had been broken for it; and likely all England behoved to have risen in revenge.” The Scots, it is evident, at that moment feared the English nation as much as the King.

This “quick peace” leaving unsettled the great contending points, and every condition ambiguous or indefinite, could only be one of those delusive treaties which serve to prepare the strongest party for war. It was a breathing space for two armies who could not separate without a determination to conquer; it was a pacification, but it was not a peace. A treaty in which more was explained verbally than was written could be but a patched-up peace, not made to hold long together.

The ink was scarce dry ere the treaty was broken. At Edinburgh they reproached their chiefs with apostasy; at London they lamented the disgrace incurred by an inglorious campaign.

At this moment we may be curious to discover the real feelings of Charles. They may be deemed romantic! Pleased probably with his partial interviews with Montrose and other Scottish lords, he fancied that the presence of Majesty had not lost its charm over the people. In the warmth of his emotions, Charles, often hasty in his resolves, proposed to accompany his Scottish subjects on their return to Edinburgh—to hold the Parliament in person. He imagined a popular triumph to awaken the affections of a whole people. Charles becomes a self-painter in writing to Wentworth from Berwick.

“As for my affairs here, I am far from thinking that at this time I shall get half of my will, though I mean, by the grace of God, to be in person both at Assembly and Parliament; for which I know many wise men blame me, and it may be you among the rest. And I confess not without many weighty and considerable arguments, which I have neither time to repeat or to confute—only this believe me, nothing but my presence at this time in that country can save it from irreparable confusion; yet I will not be so vain as absolutely to say that I can. Wherefore my conclusion is, that if I see a great probability, I go; otherwise not, but return to London, or take other counsels.”*

There is no dissimulation in this confidential communication. The sorrowful and perplexed state of a mind so variously agitated; the impulse that hurries him in his own person to pacify the troubles of a people, and above all the modest check which his own judgment imposes on his sanguine hopes, are the characteristics of the man—and when we pause on many similar effusions, we may at least wonder how it was possible for such a man ever to have been the absolute despot, which the injustice of party and historical calumnies so often set before us.

Charles did not pursue his romantic progress to fill Fergus’ chair in the palace of his ancestors. A fresh revolt had broken out in the streets of Edinburgh on the surrender of the Castle to the former royalist governor. “The devout wives,” as

* Strafford’s Letters, ii. 362.

Guthry calls them, who were not apt to go on these messages without being sent, again opened their campaign of Presbytery, by an onset upon the Royal Commissioner, the Earl of Traquair, with "their neaves" (fists). They broke my Lord Treasurer's white staff in pieces before his face ; a circumstance which more endeared him to the King, says Baillie, at the moment his credit was cracking. When the representative of Majesty appealed for the chastisement of the ringleaders, the magistracy solemnly voted the Treasurer a new staff!—thus estimating the indignity the Crown had suffered—at the damage of sixpence !

The King, still intent to open the Scottish Parliament in person, required fourteen of the Scottish leaders to attend him at Berwick. Rothes, Montrose, and Johnston came, but the rest with Argyle contrived to raise a mob at the moment of their pretended departure. At the water-gate they were stopped on the pretence that the King would detain them. The King repeated his summons, but he found himself distrusted. These Lords feared that Charles knew more of them than probably at this moment the King did.

The ministers of Charles were alarmed at these continued tumults ; Secretary Windebank could not think without horror of the King exposing himself to the mercy of a people weary of monarchical Government, " who know your Majesty's sacred person is the only impediment to the Republic, liberty, and confusion which they have designed themselves." Wentworth's caution had perhaps more weight. " So total a defection in that people is not to be trusted with your sacred person over early, if at all." The distrust of the Scottish Lords was indignantly felt, and Charles could no longer confide in them who had no confidence in him. The King returned home from the dream of the pacification of Berwick, melancholy and unsatisfied, convinced that he had carried no single point, while from Hamilton and Montrose he was but too well informed of the dark designs of his enemies. The triumphal march which he had once promised himself had only closed in an interview of two hostile armies ; but it had shown the world, at home and abroad, that the Scottish insurgents were a nation.

Charles seems to have vented his disappointment in the

graceless manner with which he disbanded his own army; he suddenly dismissed the gentry without any acknowledgment of their loyalty in leaving their homes at his call; nor did he scatter honours on those who had aspired to them. This impolitic conduct of the King was not forgotten when in the following year he had another army to collect—few cared to attend, and many abandoned him in the Civil War. If Charles be often accused of dissimulation, it must also be acknowledged that he too often acted from spontaneous feelings, hasty and undisguised.

CHAPTER IX.

CHARLES THE FIRST RESISTS THE SEDUCTIONS OF CARDINAL RICHELIEU.

THE vindication of the maritime rights of England formed the most glorious period in the reign of Charles the First. The King seems to have found himself more master of events, following only his own dispositions in asserting the independence of the British Crown and the security of his people. From 1630 to 1637 he probably anticipated none of those dark evils which lay brooding among his northern subjects and his dismissed Parliamentarians. Before the troubles broke out in Scotland, perhaps the most secret agents in the approaching revolution possessed as little foresight as Charles the First and his ministers.

It was at this period, in 1637, that another political event occurred of not inferior importance than the sovereignty of the sea; it was an event in which Charles the First maintained the independence of his Crown among foreign powers, guided by the true interests of England. Those State-interests, I presume, must ever be an unremitting watchfulness over the growth of her neighbour's influence, and the secret intrigues of their Cabinets; hence to keep down the stronger, and to strengthen the weaker, but above all things to preserve England from becoming a passive instrument of the dangerous projects of an ambitious rival, or a seductive enemy.

In the present case, Charles the First performed the duty of an English monarch, however fatally the event terminated for his own happiness.

Our popular historians, some of whom, it must be granted, were not supplied with the copious materials we now possess, and some of whom would certainly have wanted both the necessary diligence and candour, had they possessed them, have accused Charles the First of a blind and sometimes of a "Popish" inclination towards Spain. On this prejudiced principle, they have not hesitated to charge as "a mere pretence" the danger into which Charles considered the nation was thrown by a secret league between France and the United Provinces. Of the reality of this secret league we can no longer doubt. We find it was discovered to Charles by the Spanish resident in July, 1634. France, however, had been busily intriguing with the States-General two years earlier, in 1632.

It was, however, not before five years afterwards, in 1637, that the project matured by Cardinal Richelieu assumed a tangible shape, presenting itself openly to the English King. The gestation of a great political design is sometimes painfully slow, the birth is delayed by its secresy, and the pangs seem proportioned to its magnitude.

The plan of Richelieu, which we saw at work by the intercepted dispatches in 1634, and which was now settled in 1637, was, in concert with the Prince of Orange, to seize the maritime towns of the Spanish Netherlands, the last remains of the ancient dominion of Spain, from which important conquest resulted nothing short of the annihilation of the Spanish name and influence among the Flemings. But before this bold enterprise could be opened, and even before it could be well resolved by the Prince of Orange, the Cardinal deemed it necessary to secure the neutrality of England; and to ascertain the disposition of the Cabinet of Whitehall, the Cardinal dispatched the Count D'Estrades with very particular instructions.

Richelieu, aware that he stood not in the good graces of the Queen of England, whose mother, Mary of Medicis, he had abandoned to her destiny, commissioned the Count D'Estrades to offer Henrietta every possible proof of his devotion to her, and entreating immediately to be put to the test, he desired the

honour of being made acquainted with her wishes, that they might be instantly accomplished. Should the Count find the Queen favourable, he was to deliver the Cardinal's letter written by his own hand—but should Henrietta continue unfriendly to the Cardinal, D'Estrades in that case was to present the letter of her brother, the King of France.

D'Estrades, who on his arrival in England had to execute with the utmost promptitude, as we shall see, affairs of the most opposite nature, hastened without a day's loss to the Queen. He found Henrietta greatly indisposed against the Cardinal. The letter of his Eminence was therefore suppressed, but her brother's referred her to Count D'Estrades, who acquainted her with the object of his mission, requesting the Queen would use all her influence to persuade her royal husband to preserve a strict neutrality. Henrietta declared that "she never inter-meddled in affairs of this nature," but in compliance with her brother's wish she would mention the subject to the King her husband, appointing the ambassador, who pressed for time, to return at five o'clock.

When D'Estrades came, he found the Queen in ill-humour; she complained that he had been the occasion of her suffering a severe reprimand for having proposed to the King to remain neuter while the sea-ports of Flanders were to be attacked, but the King himself would expect the Count at six o'clock.

The Queen's reception was no favourable prognostic. The Ambassador was, however, graciously received by Charles. D'Estrades having opened his negotiation, laid great stress on the numerous advantages the King of England would derive from preserving a rigid neutrality. Masters of the sea, the English would have the whole commerce of Flanders at their disposal, and the supply of all the armies, both the Allied and the Spanish, which could only be carried on by English shipping. But his Eminence offered apparently a less resistible seduction; for the Cardinal not only assured Charles that he was most desirous of preserving an union of interests with the two Courts, but that his Eminence would pledge himself to persuade his royal master to aid and support Charles against any of his rebellious subjects.

Charles's reply to the French Ambassador was prompt and

decisive. "He wished for the friendship of his brother, but friendship there could be none if it were prejudicial to his honour, or injurious to the interest of his people. Should the ports of Flanders be attacked by France and Holland, the English fleet would be in the Downs ready for action, and with an army of fifteen thousand men." Charles thanked his Eminence for the offer of his aid, "but he required no other assistance to punish rebels, than his own regal authority and the laws of England!"

Such was the noble answer of Charles the First to the political seduction of Richelieu; such was the strength of character which at critical conjunctures he invariably displayed; and such was his fortune and his fate that the greater his personal distresses rose on him, the greater the energy which he seemed to derive from their excitement. On this incident even the sullen Presbyterian, Harris, felt a transient glow, exclaiming, "This answer was worthy a British monarch!" We must also recollect that this offer from the Cardinal was made in November, and that Charles had already in June been menaced by the rising troubles in Scotland. His own personal condition strangely contrasted with his magnanimity; to be plunged into a war with France while he was preparing a northern army to act against his own malcontents, required in the spirited monarch that fortitude and moral courage, which in truth never failed him in his "hour of need."

But Charles probably did not know that D'Estrades, who remained here but a few weeks, and then hastened to the Prince of Orange, had a double commission in coming to England. He was to offer the King of England the aid of France, or rather of Cardinal Richelieu, should Charles be disposed to act as his Eminence desired; but should Charles prove adverse to his scheme, the ambidextrous agent was to address himself secretly to the heads of the Scotch party. The fact is, that D'Estrades had not been five days in London, ere he had already opened a communication with two Scotchmen, and in his dispatches congratulates the Cardinal on "this favourable conjuncture for embarrassing the King of England's affairs." Such, then, was the great *coup d'état*. The neutrality of the King was to be bribed by the destruction of the rebellious Scots, or enforced by the necessity of devoting his whole powers to their suppression.

The reply of the Cardinal to D'Estrades is very remarkable. Sarcastically approving of the openness of the King and Queen of England in their conduct towards him, he owns "that France might have been embarrassed, had the royal couple had the address of concealing their sentiments—but now *the year should not close* before both should repent of their refusal of his proposals. It shall soon be known that I am not to be despised." He desired D'Estrades to assure the two Scotch deputies of his friendship and protection, and that in a few days he will dispatch one of his chaplains, the Abbé Chambres, who was their fellow-countryman, to hasten to Edinburgh and open a negotiation with their party. This wily statesman would have Scotchmen appear to govern Scotchmen. The Abbé Chambres, whom Whitelocke calls Chamberlain, and who had probably Gallicised his name, was accompanied by a confidential page of his Eminence, also a Scot, of the name of Hepburn—and probably serving, in the present instance, in the capacity of a spy on the other spy. To mortify the haughty Henrietta, and to inconvenience Charles, by rendering the English Court still more unpopular, the vindictive Cardinal, within a few months of the interview of D'Estrades with Henrietta, drove, by his persecutions, the exiled Mary of Medicis to her daughter. In vain had Charles repeatedly urged his foreign agents to prevent the Queen-mother directing her flight to England—there seemed to be no other resting-place for the royal fugitive. The fortunes of Richelieu had been the creation of this hapless princess; but he never forgave, as is usual with great politicians, the patroness, who was herself alarmed at the mighty being her own feeble hand had formed.

Mary of Medicis was the weakest of women, but she was a Queen of sorrows; the daughter of Tuscany, the wife of Henry the Fourth, the mother of Louis the Thirteenth and of the Queens of England and Spain, and the Duchess of Savoy. She it was whom, on her landing in England, Waller addressed—

"Great Queen of Europe! where thy offspring wears
All the chief crowns; whose Princes are thy heirs."

This eminent personage, the victim of political intrigue, was now, wherever she came, a wandering spectacle of melancholy,—the presence of the ill-starred woman was looked on as a prog-

nostic of public calamity. Here the sight of her person inflamed the popular prejudice against her daughter, and the season in which she arrived turning out wet and stormy, the common people called it "Queen-mother weather."

Charles the First thus incurred the vindictive artifices of Richelieu; and it is unquestionable that the royal fortunes were greatly influenced by the mysterious policy of this hardy and inventive statesman.

The Cardinal accomplished his prediction or malediction on Charles's head about the period assigned. We have found Richelieu instigating the Hollanders to violate the neutrality of the British ports, at the very moment Richelieu was holding a secret intercourse with the Scottish Covenanters, and, subsequently, with the English Parliamentarians. Thus, by an extraordinary combination in his Cabinet, the hand of Richelieu was directing the fate of Charles the First at once in his maritime sovereignty and his Scottish dominions.

It would seem that Charles the First had yet no notion that the disgrace of having incurred an insult in his own ports was the work of the Cardinal, nor did he probably imagine that the Papistical prelate could ever coalesce with the Calvinistical Presbyters, or that the Minister of an absolute monarchy could ever cordially blend with the Commonwealth-men of England in the abolition of monarchy itself.

The influence of Cardinal Richelieu over the fortunes of Charles the First is a subject not unworthy of our inquiry.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF CARDINAL RICHELIEU ON THE FATE OF CHARLES THE FIRST.

THE famous Cardinal-Duke de Richelieu was one of those great ministers on whom panegyrics and satires equally abound. It is hard to say of Richelieu, that in his passion for glory he would have sacrificed his own France to that of Europe, if by that fatal pledge Europe had prostrated herself to the Cardinal-Duke. In his political imagination he had contemplated on

vast designs, which the ordinary date of human life only had interrupted, for when Richelieu was no more, a youthful monarch and a minister trained in Richelieu's schools, astonished and alarmed the world by the sparks which had fallen from his forge.

The master-genius of Richelieu had wrestled with domestic factions, and trodden down rivals. His mightier despotism had annihilated the multiplied tyrannies of a haughty aristocracy, who had usurped an authority over the laws.

Richelieu must not be classed among those rare and patriotic statesmen, who are the fathers of their country. He first conquered his own people—crushed his own nobility—and concentrated in his sovereign the despotism he himself required. Louis XIII. was jealous even of the minister, in the absence of whose genius he would probably have ceased to reign; but though the Prince was weak, the majesty of the throne was greater than it had ever been. It was indeed an iron rule—state-prisons, scaffolds, and garrisoned towns deformed the fair face of “pleasant France.”

It is said to have been a state-maxim of this famed politician, who we must candidly remember lived in troubled times, that to keep the people in subjection it is necessary to depress them. An anecdote has come down to us, which in some respects describes the actual state of the French people during his formidable ministry. An Englishman was declaiming against the tyranny of this minister. “Don’t talk so loud,” said his friend, “lest some of his creatures there should hear you”—pointing to a crowd of beggars in their sabots. At his death there were public rejoicings in the more distant provinces, and the people by their fireworks, and their dances, proclaimed to the world that the death of the tyrannical ruler gives a holiday to the people. Yet when the Czar Peter the Great visited the magnificent tomb of Richelieu, contemplating the statue, he enthusiastically exclaimed, “Great man! wert thou living I would give thee half of my empire, wouldst thou teach me to govern the other.” Must we therefore consider that one of the arts of government may consist in making a nation great, at the cost of its happiness?

By the strength and unity of his government, Richelieu

made the nation tremble, while he secured its power. A general rumour prevailed, and it was the favourite topic of conversation, as I learn by a manuscript letter of the times, with "the brave Monsieurs in France," that "their King must be Emperor," and it appears that to have ventured to contradict them would have been at the hazard of a duel. So early had the national egotism anticipated its glorious infirmity!* Thus while France bowed under its severe master, with secret pride she looked on her ascendancy in the great family of European governments. A nation, like an individual, has often sacrificed its happiness to its splendour.

Richelieu conquered France—the greater conquest was in view. Force, remorseless force had mastered his native land; subtle intrigues were to awaken every other European kingdom. This great minister was now to strike out, amidst the most complicate obstacles and cabals, the elements of grandeur and prosperity, to create a political Cabinet, which was to survive its creator, and to hold Europe itself in an equilibrium, to be guided by the arm of France. His recruited armies were to encounter the Imperialist and the Spaniard, his miserable marine was one day to meet the fleets of England and Holland: and his silent genius was at the same time busied in Spain, till he struck out from its dominion an independent kingdom in Portugal; and in England, whose alliance with the French Huguenots, and whose invasion of Rhé were indelible on his implacable memory, till he subdued its independent monarch by a revolution which he lived to witness, and, we are told, long enough to regret; for De Brienne, his confidential secretary of state, acknowledges that matters went further than the Cardinal had designed, and than he desired.

The confession of Brienne was sincere. Père d'Orleans, who had access to the papers of the Marquis de la Ferté-Imbault, who was the French ambassador in England in 1642, informs us "that Richelieu began to be alarmed at the consequences of his own successful intrigues, which menaced the destruction of a monarch whom France was only desirous of embarrassing, to wean him from his inclination to unite with Spain. The French monarch offered to become a mediator between the

* Harl. MSS. From a letter of the times.

parties; after three or four journeys to Windsor, the French ambassador found that the offer of the French Cabinet was received with equal suspicion by the King and by the Parliament.”* Cardinal Mazarine, in his correspondence with Sabran, the French agent in England in 1644, whose papers I have examined, was earnestly desirous of pacifying the English troubles. This is confirmed, too, by a conversation of Mazarine with Lord Digby, in which the Cardinal told him that “France found too late their own error, that they had been well content to see the King’s great puissance weakened by his domestic troubles, which they wished only should keep him from being able to hurt his neighbours.”† Such has ever been the human policy of political Cabinets, who have sought for their own security by inflaming the intestine disorders of their neighbour; or, to obtain some temporary advantage, provoked a lasting evil. Richelieu, by the Covenanters of Scotland and the Parliamentarians of England, recruited his armies against Austria, and neutralised the ally Spain possessed in Charles. When the revolution burst forth, it was too late to undo the web of his own subtle work. How far, or if at all, the conduct of England towards the French Revolution in its early stage affords a parallel case, I know not. Accusations were raised by some of the French against Pitt. Pitt, like Richelieu, had his recollections, and our American Colonies might have been to Louis the Sixteenth what the Isle of Rhé and La Rochelle were to Charles the First.

The politics of Richelieu may be paralleled with the system of Napoleon. Richelieu was forming an invisible alliance with the disaffected of every government; thus his own genius presided in their councils, and all the members of his diplomacy served as the active agents of the revolutions of his age. We are struck by the parallel of Richelieu and Napoleon in their secret principles. Pliant, as well as unbending, the Prelate of the Papacy could confirm the edict of Nantes for his own Huguenots, granting toleration at the moment he meditated their extermination;‡ to check the House of Austria, the

* Père d’Orleans, *Révolutions d’Angleterre*, iii. 34.

† Clarendon’s *State Papers*, Suppt. iii. lix.

‡ It is a curious fact exhibiting the awkward dilemma into which great politicians sometimes thrust themselves, that at the moment the articles of peace with the

Romish Cardinal could confederate with the Protestant princes to maintain the Protestant cause; and the minister of an absolute monarchy was the faithful ally of the new Republicans of Holland.

The intrigues of this politic statesman could not pass untraced amidst the gathering troubles of Charles the First—the serpent, however wary, still leaves the trail of his crooked motions in the dust he passes over. The Irish insurgents were supplied with arms by the Cardinal; the agents of the Covenanters were at Paris, as well as the agents of the French at Edinburgh.

Besides the political influence of Cardinal Richelieu over the fortunes of Charles the First, I think there was a more latent one, the result of which was not less important in the affairs of the English monarch. Charles admired Richelieu, and many of the interior transactions which had occurred in France, the disorders composed, the difficulties overcome, often presented an image of the state of England. The disaffected princes appeared to Charles, greatly to resemble some of our Patriots; the remonstrances of the French Parliaments, though these are but courts of law, had sometimes approached the lofty tone of our Commons, and the strong republican party of the Huguenots could not well be separated in their conduct and their principles from our own Puritans. Charles had a mind too reflective, and too personally interested in these events, to pass over regardlessly the conduct and success of the great French minister. Charles the First, and Strafford, and possibly Laud, who has been idly compared with Richelieu, were close observers of the Cardinal-Duke; and Richelieu, unquestionably, of them. Ministers, like jealous traders, keep an observant eye on each other. Olivarez, the great Spanish minister, when some Frenchmen complained of the libels and satires on Richelieu profusely spread in Flanders, declared that as a Minister of State it was his own interest not to countenance such unworthy methods,

French Protestants were to be signed at the council-table, both the Cardinals Richelieu and de la Rochefoucault withdrew, that they might not appear publicly to sanction a truce with heretics—although this very peace was the favourite work of the great Cardinal himself. It may possibly be alleged that the departure of the Cardinals at signing this treaty with heretics might have been a mere form which grew out of their priestly character. *Le Clerc* unquestionably gives the anecdote in the spirit of a Protestant. It was certainly a dilemma.

but he had himself often told his master that his greatest misfortune was that the King of France possessed the most skilful minister who for a thousand years had appeared in Christendom; as for himself he would willingly submit to have whole libraries printed every day against himself, provided that the affairs of his master were as well conducted as those of France !

This secret sympathy, or this mutual influence among these great parties, was often indicated by circumstances accidentally preserved. That Charles the First had long admired the genius of Richelieu, appeared on the famous day of the Dupes, when news arrived of the dismissal and fall of the French minister. Henrietta rejoicing at the Cardinal's removal from power, which had been so long desired by the Queen-Mother, Charles the First checked the feminine petulance, expressing his highest admiration of the unrivalled capacity of the minister. "Your mother is wrong," he observed to the Queen; "the Cardinal has performed the greatest services for his master. Had I been the Cardinal I would have listened tranquilly to the accusations of the Queen your mother, and remembered those against Scipio before the Roman people, who, instead of replying, led them to the Capitol to return thanks to the gods, for having defeated the Carthaginians. The Cardinal might have told the King, within these two years Rochelle has been taken, more than thirty towns of the Huguenots have submitted, and their fortifications are demolished; Cazal has been twice succoured, Savoy and a great part of Piedmont are in your hands: these advantages which your arms have acquired by my cares, answer for my industry and my fidelity."*

That Strafford was attentive to the proceedings of the French minister, appears by his alleging the conduct of the Cardinal in appointing commissioners to enter the merchants' houses at Paris to examine their accounts and to cress every man according to his ability to furnish the King's army. And that Richelieu

* Griffet, *Hist. de Louis XIII.* ii. 77. From Richelieu's Journal. That Charles had expressed himself to this purpose we cannot well doubt; it would not otherwise have been entered into the Cardinal's Journal. But I suspect that the latter part, where the Cardinal enumerates such a variety of his own memorable acts, was added by himself as an illustration. Had Charles detailed such a series of events, it would show a more particular attention than was necessary; in speaking to the Queen he would merely have alluded to the general results of Richelieu's administration.

was well acquainted with English affairs is evident from the remarkable circumstance mentioned in our previous volume, of the minute and secret correspondence the French minister held with some courtiers at Whitehall. Had the political personages of the Court of England not been well known to Richelieu, he would not have thrown out that striking observation, when, hearing of the fate of Strafford, he remarked that "the English had been foolish enough to take off the ablest head among them."*

Charles the First, driven by his necessities and the perpetual opposition of his Parliaments, could hardly avoid admiring the energies, which for some time he seems to me to have fatally imitated. English lawyers, in their vague and florid style, had declared that no monarch was so absolute as an English sovereign, and "the right divine" of kings was not only upheld by kings themselves, but by the divines of Christian Europe. I have often thought that by the vain struggle and confusion of the principles of the absolute monarchy of France under Richelieu, with those of the constitutional forms of England, Charles the First fell a victim to strong measures in a weak Government.

CHAPTER XI.

HISTORY AND TRIAL OF THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

SIR THOMAS WENTWORTH, as we have already noticed, was an independent country-gentleman, who opened his political career by a patriotic opposition to the measures of Buckingham; he spoke seldom, but always with effect, and the ability which awed the minister taught him also the strength of its support. Severe scrutinisers into Wentworth's conduct have considered that there was a political coquetry in his patriotism, which rather sought to be won than cared to be obdurate.

Wentworth, however, endured with magnanimity the petty persecutions of the day. He suffered confinement as a loan-recusant, but when, having enlisted in the ranks of Opposition,

* Trial of Strafford, pp. 30, 592.

he suddenly hesitated in the march, when his opinions wavered, and he began to discuss rather than to act with those whose confidence he possessed, whose designs he comprehended, and whose artifices of faction were not unknown to him, in a word, when Wentworth gave signs of what in the modern political cant is called *ratting*, he incurred the hatred of the impetuous and the sorrows of the gentle. Noy had deserted the popular cause, but he had crept out like a groveling lawyer, calculating on the most advantageous client; but Strafford (for the Earl is best known in history by his title), great and independent, whatever might be his motive, was about to devote the most elevated efforts of his nature, and ascend into the highest sphere of action; his wisdom was to govern the royal councils, and his heroism to maintain the public safety.

Pym, in parting from Strafford, did not shed the generous tear which Fox is reported to have let fall for Burke. The enraged leader of Opposition vowed perpetual enmity, and, as if he had already contemplated, in the long perspective of his political vision, that axe which was so often to be raised, declared that "he would never quit him while Strafford kept a head on his shoulders." And when the fatal hour arrived, Pym, the Patriot, indulged his personal rancour, and flew with indecent haste to denounce Strafford as "the apostate who was the greatest enemy to the liberties of his country that any age had produced."

Charles at first urged his new minister to take his seat in the House. The presence of Strafford in Parliament inspired the King with confidence, but the Earl himself foresaw that it would irritate the Parliamentary party, and their secret allies the Scots; out of their sight he would less occupy their thoughts, and should they persecute the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, at that safe distance he would be found at the head of his army. The statesman observed, prescient of his fate, "If any difference should happen between your Majesty and the Parliament, it would disturb your Majesty's affairs, and in that case I should prefer suffering myself than them." But Charles professed that "as King of England he was able to protect his minister; whatever danger might happen, not a hair of his head should be touched." At that moment, Charles the First unquestionably deemed

himself possessing more independent power than by the sequel appeared. It is no rare case in political history, that when men are reduced to great weakness, they exist on the remembrance of the power they once possessed.

The magnanimous Strafford resigned the army, who were devoted to him, to attend in Parliament. Warned, indeed, by his friends at Whitehall, of some impending design, he came not unprepared with evidence to impeach some of "the Scotising-English" in both houses of Parliament, whose intrigues with the Covenanters had already brought an invading army into England. Strafford particularly intended to impeach Lord Say. But the party more vigilant than he, who yet had never failed in vigilance, hurried to strike the first blow.* This act, at least, would exhaust the talents, the temper, and the industry of their dreaded adversary. Buckingham had crushed his enemy, Bristol, by the great advantage of reducing his accuser first to defend himself.

Whenever a political storm happens, an observer often reflects the prognostics of the horizon. Some days before the meeting of Parliament, "Mr. Hyde" (as Clarendon then designates himself) noticed "a marvellous elated countenance in many of the members." The conversation of Pym startled the young politician. Now Pym avowed that "they must be of another temper—they must not only sweep the House clean below, but must pull down all the cobwebs which hung in the top and corners—and, to remove all grievances, they must pull up the causes of them by the roots." A radical reform hardly seems the coinage of our own days.

On the first day of the opening of Parliament, Pym, preluding with an awful solemnity, declared that he had a business of great weight to impart, and desired that the lobby should be cleared.

* There is no doubt that it depended but on the turn of a moment that the political game would have been reversed. I shall quote, as a proof, the most partial and uncandid of all our historical writers, Oldmixon, whose style debases even his perpetual misrepresentations. He makes the avowal. "Strafford had prepared matters for an impeachment against those Lords and gentlemen who had encouraged the Scots to march into England, but Mr. Pym was beforehand with him, and not many hours after he arrived in town, carried up to the House of Lords an accusation of high treason against Strafford," 157. This is a material fact, to which we shall again have occasion to allude. It is authenticated by Rushworth in his *Introduction to Strafford's Trial*, 2.

This unusual proceeding in the Commons reached the Lords, who dispatched a message to desire a meeting in the painted chamber to consult on the Scotch treaty. The messengers appear to have been sent on an errand of discovery respecting the impending debate. The House returned an answer by the same messengers, that they were in agitation of very weighty and important affairs, and they doubted whether they could give a meeting to the Lords as early as was desired.

The debate proceeded with closed doors. The key of the House was ordered to be laid on the table. Pym, whose education had been chiefly in the office of the Exchequer, accustomed to business, with nervous compressed sense, and acute argument, displayed an austere eloquence in his invective, different from the elevated appeals to their imagination with which the Ciceronian Eliot had formerly thundered in the Senate against the favourite Buckingham. Our orator had discovered the cause of the calamities which had fallen upon the nation in "the reign of a pious and virtuous King who loved his people." He opened the fountain whence flowed these waters of bitterness—the very person who had perverted the King's excellent judgment—he named! But surely the declared enemy of Strafford sunk from the dignity of the patriot into the malice of the libeller when a British Senate listened to the volatile rumours of a scandalous chronicle, and personal malignity touched on the lighter vanities of a great man, and even on his secret amours! The party orator aggrandised his victim into colossal power to alarm the true patriot—while he shrunk him into a diminutive object of familiar contempt to gratify the meaner spirits. But the plot was concerted—the parts were prepared—the actors followed each other. A knight who had posted from Ireland, delivered a confused tale of the tyrannical measures of the Lord-Lieutenant; another from Yorkshire alleged an arbitrary expression which had fallen from the Earl, that "they should find the little finger of the King's prerogative heavier than the loins of the law." At this, the flame burst around—passion, prejudice, and patriotism spoke but with one voice, and raised but one hand! An instant impeachment was moved and carried. Even "Mr. Hyde" did not oppose it, and when the immaculate Lord Falkland, who felt no personal

kindness for the Earl, and who agreed on the propriety of the measure, conceived, however, that they should pause till they had digested the articles against the accused, his lordship was silenced by an argument of Pym, that were the moment lost, a dissolution would follow. To those who were doubtful whether the charges could amount to high treason, Pym replied that the House of Commons were not judges, but simply accusers. It proved, however, in the result that they were to be both. But the principle itself, that they were not judges but merely accusers, seems to expose any individual to sequestration on the charge of any party who are bold enough to lay the imputation. Was not the impeachment of Hastings a persecution of many years?

Pym, that "ancient gentleman of great experience in parliamentary affairs and no less fidelity to his country," as "the Secretary of the Parliament" describes him; Pym, the declared enemy of Strafford, accompanied by his friends, hurried to the Lords, and abruptly "in the name of all the Commons of England accused Thomas Earl of Strafford, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, of high treason." The Lords, it appears, were startled by this unexpected intelligence, unexpected at least by most of them. The indecent haste which Pym betrayed on this occasion is said to have been occasioned by some knowledge that Strafford would have anticipated him in an impeachment, and we shall find hereafter that the subsequent attempted arrest of the five members of the Commons, which proved so fatal to Charles, was probably connected with the presumed conspiracy of which Strafford imagined that he possessed sufficient evidence.

The impeachment having been communicated to the Earl, who was at that moment with the King, he hastened to the House: finding the doors closed, he struck it impetuously, and inattentive to the remonstrance of Maxwell, the Usher of the Black Rod, Strafford passed on to his seat. At his entrance his eye glanced around with the accustomed haughty contraction of his brow—but his fate was before him! A clamour rose "which suited not the gravity of that supreme Court." The Earl was already a fallen minister! Called on to withdraw, Strafford in confusion retreated to the door, and there awaited their

summons to learn their decision. When recalled, he stood before them, but was commanded to the bar of the House to kneel as an accused man. The Earl protested against a general charge without the specification of a single act of treason. He was silenced, till he should clear himself of the charges laid on him, and was consigned to the custody of the Usher of the Black Rod.

The impeachment originally consisted of nine articles, but their eager diligence set to work in every obscure corner, and their encouraging invitation of grievances made to every mal-content, had accumulated twenty-eight charges, involving the conduct of the accused minister during the long interval of fourteen years.*

The trial of the Earl of Strafford presented a more imposing spectacle than had ever been exhibited to the nation. Never had a greater actor appeared on the stage of public justice. "The pompous circumstances and stately manner of the trial," as May describes them, were not here the only awful splendour; it was not merely the outward solemnity of judicial forms which affected the public imagination; the passions of every class of citizens, from the sovereign himself to the humblest of the people, were alike agitated in the cause of this great minister. The trial of the Earl of Strafford seemed no longer the trial of an individual—it was the trial of the sovereign's affections, and the sovereign's influence—it was the trial of the kindled spirits of three rival nations—it was the trial of a great man, whose

* After the charges had been delivered to the House of Lords, Strafford was conscious that they contained no act of treason. This appears by a letter which the Earl addressed to his lady on that occasion. This letter having fallen into the hands of a print-seller, he engraved a facsimile, and sold the original to some collector, and no doubt it still exists. I shall preserve it here, both as an historical document, and as a remarkable evidence of the sagacity and the feelings of the eminent personage :—

"SWEET HARTE,

"It is long since I writt unto you, for I am here in such a trouble, as gives me little or no respekt (respice). The charge is now cum in, and I am now able, I prayse God, to tell you, that I conceave ther is nothing capitall, and for the rest I knowe at the worste his Ma^y will pardon all, without hurting my fortune, and then we shall be happy by God's grace. Therefore comfort your self, for I trust thes cloudes will away, and that wee shall have faire weather afterwarδες. Farewell.

"Your lovinge husband,

"*Tower of London, 4th Feb. 1649.*

"STRAFFORDE."

very virtues were his defects, and whose defects were to be his crimes.

Westminster Hall was the scene. Scaffolds nearly reaching the roof were erected on either side, eleven stages high, divided by rails; in the upper ranks were the Commissioners of Scotland, and the Lords of Ireland, who were joined with the Commoners of England in their accusations. The Members of the Lower House sate uncovered; but that punctilio of etiquette had passed through a stiff debate and had been conceded with great difficulty. In the centre sate the Peers in their Parliament robes, and the Lord Keeper and the Judges in their scarlet robes were on the wooolsacks. At the upper end beyond the Peers, was a chair raised under a cloth of state for the King, and another for the Prince. The sovereign did not occupy this throne; for he was supposed not to be present, and reasons were alleged for this legal fiction. Two cabinets or galleries with trellis-work were on each side of the cloth of state. One the King, the Queen, and their Court occupied during the whole trial; the other was filled with the French nobility and other foreigners. At the foot of the State was a scaffold for ladies of quality; and at the lower end was a place with partitions and an apartment to retire to, for the convenience of the managers of the trial, to hold their consultations; opposite to them entered the witnesses; and between was a small desk where the prisoner stood or sate, the Lieutenant of the Tower beside him; at his back stood his four secretaries carrying papers and assisting him in writing and reading. Strafford, in the midst of noise and confusion, was compelled to draw up his answers instanter, and was allowed but short intervals.

“It was daily the most glorious assembly the isle could afford; yet the gravity was not such as I expected,” observes the grave and zealous Principal of the University of Glasgow. The coarseness of our national manners at this period was not concealed by their magnificence, and when compared with the conveniences, the decorum and the refinement*to which a more polished state of society has given rise, it has occasioned some misconceptions of the grossness of the court, and of the habits of Charles himself—even with the philosopher, and far more with those whose minds are but ill constituted to enter into

distant times and strange manners, with the feelings of a contemporary.

This awful solemnity, except at the moment the prosecution was proceeding, exhibited such a noisy and indecorous scene, that had it not been detailed by the faithful memorialist, we could not have suspected such degrading occurrences while turning over the copious folio which Rushworth has devoted to this famous trial. There was always a great clamour about the doors; but at those intervals when the illustrious prisoner was busied in preparing his answers, a distracting hubbub broke out; the lords were walking and chatting—the Commons, whose apology must rest on their multitude and their zeal, were more offensively loud. They ate “flesh and bread,” and “bottles of beer and wine were going thick from mouth to mouth.” The aristocracy of England were not yet delicate enough to procure drinking-cups; their indelicacy indeed was extraordinary, such as had never been witnessed within Westminster Hall, and would not have been pardoned in an assembly without. From eight in the morning till sometimes late in the night, they were not allowed to retire, and “the bottles were going thick.” Baillie, Covenanter as he was, had very elevated notions of ancestry as a Scot, and he treats contemptuously this senate of English Peers, for he says of the single Marquis we then had, the Marquis of Winchester, “England hath no more Marquises, and he but a late upstart, a creature of Queen Elizabeth! Hamilton goes here, but among the Earls, and that a late one; Dukes they have none in Parliament; York, Richmond, and Buckingham are but boys.”

When it was proposed that the axe should be carried before the prisoner, the King expressly forbade it, assigning a legal distinction.

The illustrious prisoner appeared in deep mourning, wearing his George. His dark countenance, with its heavy brows, retained the habitual commanding look, but the gracefulness of his gestures, and solemn thought, softened his stern dignity. There was a sickly hue in his countenance; for his complicated disorders were of a nature to be greatly increased by the anxiety and the labours of his mind; his body slightly bowed down, not by age, but by infirmity and care. This was so evident, that

he alluded to it in one of his pathetic appeals, when he drew the attention of the spectators to his person. "They had here, he said, this rag of mortality before them, worn out with numerous infirmities, which if they tore into shreds there was no great loss; only in the spilling of his, they would open a way to the blood of all the nobility in the land."

The physiognomy of Strafford may afford a triumph to the votaries of Lavater; we have all contemplated its masculine spirit in some admired portraits; even the prints retain the dauntless austerity, the deep solemn thought, and the lofty air of this great man—in his full and contracted brows, his ample forehead, his dark thick hair, worn short, which added one more stern characteristic to his countenance.* Although without a handsome feature, his person was not disagreeable—the dark physiognomy of Strafford, or as Whitelocke calls it, "the countenance manly black," did not prevent the Earl from being admired by the fair sex, especially at his trial. A woman's eye could detect some graces in his air, and the volatile Henrietta noticed that "he had the finest hands of any man in the world."† The grace of his action was in harmony with the

* A poet of the day, who had doubtless viewed the great deputy of Ireland at the bar, has poetically delineated his noble physiognomy :

————— On thy brow
Sate Terror mixt with Wisdom, and at once
Saturn and Hermes in thy countenance.

Shepherd's Epigrams, lib. iv. ep. 39. 1651.

† It could, however, hardly have been the personal attractions of Strafford which fascinated the women—it must have been their own sensibility in the high conception they had formed of his character, his awful magnanimity, and the superiority of his genius among all his accusers. The women were enchanted. The once courtly and refined May tells us, that "They were all of his side, whether moved by pity, proper to their sex, or by ambition of being thought able to judge of the parts of the prisoner," and with all the elegance of a poetical mind happily applies these verses :—

Non formosus erat, sed erat facundus Ulysses
Et tamen æquoreas torsit amore Deas.

Ulysses, though not beautiful, the love
Of Goddesses by eloquence could move.

And the rough covenanting Principal of the University of Glasgow, alluding to Strafford's eloquence, confesses that "With the more simple sort, especially the ladies, he gained daily much." May and Baillie, excellent judges of human nature,

eloquence which melted his auditors, and even disturbed the hearts of those who were watchful over their prey, and contemplated on the axe they had prepared for their victim.

A writer of that day, no admirer of Strafford, was so deeply agitated at the Earl's last powerful appeal to his peers, and to the public, that he acknowledges that Strafford was one of the most wonderful actors he had ever seen; he ascribes the affecting breaks in his speech, all the tenderness of his domestic emotions, and the confusions of his thoughts in the pause and forgetfulness of what he had to say—all this he ascribes to the arts and practices of an accomplished orator. Few orators, however, have drawn reluctant tears down the cheeks of their persecutors. When this "great actor" threw out these pathetic appeals to the domestic feelings of his auditors, they flowed from that sacred fountain of all true feelings, the heart of the man who uttered them—his lips trembled, and his eyes moistened with his own eloquence.

We may indeed ascribe to that discipline of the mind which Strafford had habitually practised, the promptness of his replies, his luminous statements, the force of his arguments, and that imperturbable calm amidst the distractions of the crowd and the malignity of lawyers, when his life at times seemed to be hanging on the thread he himself was to weave. This self-possession, those "gathered thoughts" and government of his mind, we may indeed consider as the practical results of his former studies.

Some modern statesmen may smile at the previous studies of this great minister. Certainly, the Earl of Strafford did not derive his greatness from the mere exercise of his power. Unremitting industry in his official duties was one of his characteristics, but he had once practised another sort of diligence, in disciplining his mind by severe studies. He had long accustomed himself, before perusing some eloquent writer in English, French, or Latin, to compose on the subject in his own manner, and then, by comparing his own production with the one which had suggested it, to fertilise his own barrenness, or to prune his

whose own bosoms were heated by political passions, seem to have forgot that these had not yet contaminated the softer bosoms open to more generous emotions than their own.

own luxuriations by the more perfect production of that writer who had composed more at leisure and for glory.

At this moment, the Archbishop, who lay in the Tower, was forgotten ! The result of every day's trial furnished the prevalent conversation, or controversy, in every company ; and the Court ladies were not less deeply engaged than their grave lords in taking notes, and arguing in the confusion of words, whether the fundamental laws of the kingdom had been subverted, or only diverted in their course, by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Another party would maintain that misdemeanours, though never so many, could not make one treason, unless one of them had been treason in its own nature ; and a third would assert, as Strafford did, that a hundred misdemeanours could not make one felony, nor a hundred felonies one treason, being a crime of a different kind. Others would ask, as Pym asked, what use were his Parliaments without Parliamentary freedom ? What praise was due to him for making good laws in Ireland, if he made his own will above all law ?

The trial of the Earl of Strafford is well known, by the folio volume of Rushworth. Among many heavy charges of severe measures and arbitrary rule,* many were drawn from hasty and unqualified language ; many expressions were asserted to have been misconceived ; some were reports of reports, and, as the honest Scotchman in his journal describes them, "chamber and

* The most arbitrary persecution was that of Lord Mountnorris, to whom evidently Strafford bore a strong personal dislike, though he had formerly indulged a close intercourse with him. Mountnorris from a very humble station rose to be a Viscount, but his manners were sordid, petulant, and troublesome. For these he suffered too heavily. It is not the object of this note to enter into any inquiry concerning this affair. It may be worth a word to defend our illustrious Hume from one of the unjust and hasty strictures of Mr. Brodie. Hume notices that Mountnorris was a man of *infamous* character. Mr. Brodie observes that Hume "gives no authority whatever, and that it is perfectly clear to me that he had no other than the character from Lord Clarendon, and the reader will be able to judge how far he has kept to it," iii. 69. It is indeed true that no such term as "infamous" is applied to Mountnorris by Clarendon. But Hume recollected that Mountnorris is also described by Strafford in a letter "as one extremely given to good fellowship, who sat up all night to play for large sums, very meanly pursuing his advantage upon young noblemen and gentlemen not so good gamesters as himself," i. 403. Mr. Brodie, who appears at times to have written in haste, has himself furnished this very passage in his following page. There is a comfort in Mr. Brodie's work, if carefully read ; it is, that many parts will be found to correct others.

table-discourse, flim-flams, and fearie-fairies." The remarkable language which, when it was first delivered to the House of Commons, had kindled their spirit, that "they should find the little finger of the King's prerogative heavier than the loins of the law," was asserted by the prisoner to have been inverted; Strafford declaring that the little finger of the law would be heavier than the loins of the prerogative—besides that the observation applied to a circumstance of itself innocent, while the witness had placed it to another which might seem criminal. Incidents long passed—conversations forgotten—and the equity, or the iniquity, of many of his acts of government called in question, were so many charges heaped on the head of this political victim. To all these he was compelled to find an immediate answer. Sometimes he implored leave to retire to recollect himself, but this was denied, and half an hour only was allowed in the open Court, amidst the incessant din of voices and the tumultuous movements of a crowd. As soon as his adversary had closed his charge, Strafford would turn his back to the Lords, and abstracting himself from the confusion around, assisted by his secretaries, read his notes, and wrote or dictated his observations. Composed of such hasty materials, Strafford delivered his eloquent defence. Baillie acknowledges that "he oft triumphed that they alleged crimes against him which they were not able to make good."

As the trial proceeded, the life of Strafford seemed in no peril from his accusers.* The great object of the Earl was to ward off the blow of treason; and that he succeeded in this respect is evident by the extraordinary and desperate conduct the enemies of Strafford afterwards adopted to obtain their purpose. There are eloquent passages in his defence, which perpetuate the sympathy which they excited in the hour of his agony. It is said that at some of our public schools parts of his speech have served for the practice of declamation.† He has described the cruelty

* It evidently was the public opinion that Strafford would clear himself from all the heavy charges. This we gather from an impartial witness, the illustrious Grotius, who gives this intelligence to his brother, in a letter dated March 30, 1641.

† It is to be regretted that we do not possess a corrected copy of this far-famed speech or oration. It appears differently in Whitelocke, Rushworth, and in the State Trials. Does a well-authenticated copy exist? A critical editor, blessed with the right feeling, might still supply a more genuine copy than any, by melting the

of retailing familiar conversations, accidental expressions, and idle rumours to criminate a man :—

“ If words spoken to friends in familiar discourse, spoken in one’s chamber, spoken at one’s table, spoken in one’s sick bed, spoken, perhaps, to gain better reason, to give himself more clear light and judgment, by reasoning ; if these things shall be brought against a man as treason, this, under favour, takes away the comfort of all human society ; by this means we shall be debarred from speaking, the principal joy and comfort of society, with wise and good men, to become wiser, and better our lives. If these things be strained to take away life and honour, and all that is desirable, it will be a silent world ; a city will become a hermitage, and sheep will be found amongst a crowd and press of people, and no man shall dare to impart his solitary thoughts or opinions to his friend and neighbour.”

Thus he who was accused of straining an inquisitorial power to silence the free thoughts of others, could pathetically plead for that liberty which he himself had denied ; and now a criminal at the bar, in his own person offered a terrible example of the remorseless cruelty of misinterpreting, misquoting, and misapplying the words of another, to torture them into treason.

When the business was proceeding unfavourably to the real purpose of the prosecutors, a considerable difference arose between the two Houses. The Committee of the Lower House, in order to render one of their charges more effectual than it turned out to be, were desirous of procuring additional evidence—while the Earl craved the same liberty for himself, having other testimonies in his favour. This, Glyn the lawyer loudly protested against, inferring from this request that “ the prisoner at the bar presumed to prescribe to the Commons.” The Lords deemed it reasonable. On this they shouted, “ Withdraw ! withdraw ! ” The Commons furiously rose, and standing up with their hats on, “ they cocked their beavers in the King’s sight.” The House broke up in tumult and dismay, without even adjourning the Court. Strafford slipped away in his barge,

present copies into one, taking from each the most felicitous expressions and the most forcible conceptions. We may be certain that such must be the most genuine, for the reporters of that day had neither the talent nor the disposition to improve the speeches they imperfectly took down.

glad to be gone lest he should be torn to pieces—the Lords withdrew—and the King went home in sadness and silence. In the afternoon the Commons violently resolved to bring in a bill of Attainder. This was on a Saturday ; Sunday was passed in terror by the town, who augured a final separation between the two Houses ; and it cannot be denied that the public feeling was a sort of political second-sight, whose melancholy vision was hastening the sad catastrophe on which they were meditating. Some of the Members of the Commons declared they would draw up a bill of Attainder against the Earl as well as every lord who adhered to his cause—they would not pause till they had obtained his execution. Monday was spent in a conference between both Houses, for this discussion had suspended the trial in Westminster-hall. On this occasion there were yet remaining some of the nobility, who addressed the Commons in the lofty spirit of the aristocracy. These, it is said, told the Members of the Lower House that “it was an unnatural motion for the head to be governed by the tail ; that rebellion was as hateful as treason ; that the same blood that ennobled their ancestors ran still in their veins, and therefore they would not be suppressed by a popular faction.”* Probably, for the last time, the Committee of the House of Commons seemed to give way to the Lords ; or rather in the present case were not hardy enough to maintain the glaring injustice of denying the prisoner the power of self-defence.

The evidence indeed had fallen far short of involving Strafford in a capital crime, as he himself had anticipated. It was also clear that the Lords would not join in pronouncing an illegal condemnation of death. The Commons dreaded that their great victim of state should escape from their grasp, whose immolation they had vowed to their Scottish friends, and by whose blood they proposed to open their meditated revolution.

It was then that an extraordinary incident, the subtle contrivance of Pym, practising on the dormant vengeance of the Vanes, took all parties by surprise. The Secretary of State,

* Thus Echard in his useful compilation. Though he usually does little more than transcribe from his originals, yet he never gives his authorities. I have not discovered whence he drew this lofty style of the aristocracy. Baillie is my authority for the picturesque passions of the Commons.

Sir Henry Vane, the father, had long been irreconcilably indisposed against the Earl. Among minor causes of personal dislike, Strafford in assuming the title of the Barony of Raby, the castle being the seat of the Vanes, had inflicted a wanton insult on the Secretary, who had not been without hopes himself of acquiring that cherished title.* There existed other irritations against Strafford, who had treated Vane with levity. But the caution and fears of a weak man had taught Sir Henry to suppress his indignation while Strafford was in power. Even after, Vane hesitated to be an informer, or an accuser against the great man, for the Secretary's views did not extend beyond the horizon of the Court. This personal antipathy, however, probably influenced the evidence he gave. Some advice of the Earl at a Cabinet-council for the transport of the Irish army, Sir Henry understood was designed for England, to reduce the country to obedience. No other Privy-Counsellor present confirmed this deposition. The subject of discussion was, whether to maintain an offensive or a defensive war, and related to Scotland, and not England; his ear, as he declared, had caught the relative *that* kingdom, referring to Scotland, for *this* kingdom, which would have referred to England. His first recollection was, however, so imperfect, that he declined to accuse Strafford with the charge in hand. At another time, on a second recollection, preluding with a formal declaration of his love of truth, he rather improved the meaning—but it required a third opportunity for Pym to extract from no unwilling witness what he desired. Strafford argued against this heavy charge, that Sir Henry Vane was an incompetent witness—that he could not remember the words but at the third time—that words might be like in sound and differ in sense—that no such project which he had supposed had ever been proposed, for which Strafford appealed to the whole Council—and finally the

* This assumption of a title which gave such offence to another person, is clearly stated by Heylin in his anonymous observations on Hamon L'Estrange's "Reign of King Charles," a small volume curious and scarce. "Sir Henry Vane had obtained of the King not long before the Manor of Raby in the Bishoprick of Durham, not without hope of being made Baron of that place. The Lord Lieutenant deriving his descent from the Nevils, Earls of Westmoreland, whose honorary seat that was, procured himself to be created Baron of Raby in those letters patent by which he was invested with the Earldom of Strafford," p. 228. Heylin.

Earl took a legal exception, that no one could be arraigned for the crime of treason on a single testimony, which the law required to be attested by two sufficient witnesses.

It was then Pym broached a dangerous legal paradox, that "several concurring circumstances make one witness as effectual as two." And, therefore, to give Sir Henry Vane's single evidence the competency of two witnesses, Pym opened a piece of secret history, that he might be enabled to produce as competent evidence a certain document, which bore on its face the ugly feature of violated confidence.

Sir Henry Vane the younger was of a bolder temper than his father; he had long been in close intercourse with Pym and the patriotic party. On the occasion of the son's marriage—so was the tale told to the Commons—the father being absent, sent the son the keys of his secret drawers at Whitehall to look for some title-deeds. The young patriot and the future mystic, indulged his statesman-like curiosity in ransacking all the state-secrets so carelessly confided by the Secretary, and in a red velvet cabinet he found, so he said, a paper of rough notes which his father had taken of a Cabinet Council. They were entitled "Notes taken at the Juncto," or as elsewhere marked, "No danger of a war with Scotland if offensive, not defensive."* These were in fact rough heads of notes of a debate in Council, consisting of frag-

* How are we to account for the difference between these notes, as they appear in the Earl of Manchester's Memoirs, in Nalson, ii. 208, and in Whitelocke's Memorials. It is more remarkable that such an extraordinary incident as the scene between the Vanes should not have been preserved by Rushworth, that assiduous collector. Did he consider the absurdity as well as cruelty of Pym's argument, as not honourable to his masters the Commons? Rushworth has also silently passed over the case of Lord Loftus, which we only know from Clarendon, and where certain private letters of Strafford to his lady, not designed for the eyes of a third person, were brought into Court. These are but a few of the castrations and voluntary omissions of the Clerk of the Commons.

I have had frequent occasions to detect the incorrect state of many of our historical documents, or State-papers as they are called, owing, I suppose, to the hasty carelessness of our early transcribers, who gave them rather in their own way than in the exact state in which they found them. I took great pains to copy from the autograph letter of Lord Carleton the paper found in Felton's hat, and which had been variously given to the world. His Lordship's letter was sent to the Queen, and yet he gave this paper, which he pretends to have transcribed, very incorrectly, as now appears by the identical paper itself, which I have examined in the autograph collections of Mr. Upcott, and which Dr. Lingard has recently published.

ments of sentences. It was doubted by some whether the Secretary ever did take notes at the board, the King having desired that all notes of Cabinet Councils should be destroyed, that opinions not adopted should never appear against their advisers. "This paper," as the Earl of Manchester notices in his memoirs, "either from his own curiosity, or his father's direction, he opens and reads, and *hastens to Pym* with great expressions of a troubled mind, not knowing what way to clear himself betwixt the discharge of his duty to the Commonwealth and his faithfulness to his father."* The younger Vane could not have applied to any one who with greater facility could ease his scruples. Pym takes a copy of the notes, and promising a tender care for the son's reputation and the father's security, the original is replaced in the velvet cabinet, and the father knows nothing of the late abstraction. To complete the imperfect and confused evidence of the elder Vane, Pym unexpectedly brings forward a transcript of these notes which concurred with the particular charge the Secretary had after his two former hesitations witnessed against Strafford. No originals could be produced, as they were declared by the father to have been destroyed in pursuance of the King's desire. At the same time the father considered that the copy which Pym had just delivered in, was "like those notes."† The point now pressed was that

* Such pieces of secret history are often told differently by the parties concerned ; there is great art in turning a tale. In the present instance, to infer that there was no premeditated plot, it is stated that Pym visited the younger Vane during a severe indisposition, when the paper of notes was produced ; that Pym insisted on taking a copy. It was some time afterwards, when the elder Vane's testimony was considered incomplete, that Pym then produced this copy as a substitute for the original. Mr. Brodie is my sole authority for this statement respecting "the severe indisposition" of the younger Vane, and his "reluctance" in suffering Pym to take a copy. (Brodie, iii. 91.) Even Oldmixon doubts not that "all this was theatrical, and the notes were taken to do Strafford a good turn some time or other, and the key was sent on purpose to have this paper found among others." And concludes, "it is no matter how we came by them," (166, 167.) It would have been scarce credible that history in our own times could have been composed in this manner, had not Oldmixon furnished his extraordinary specimen of party-writing, and his fierce vulgarity, through all the solemnity of a large folio.

† Sir Philip Warwick calls these notes, what probably the original was, "Sir Henry Vane's blotting and blundering paper." We see even by Sir Henry's third extorted testimony, that he only considered Pym's copy "like those notes," a most vague mode of authenticating it ! Mr. Brodie, here the advocate of a very weak cause, labours to colour the want of recollection in Vane by recriminating on "the

since Sir Henry Vane believed that the present was a true copy, his former written testimony, and his present evidence amounted to the validity of two witnesses, which are legally required to prove an act of treason. This extravagant position, that one person could become two witnesses, was not rejected by the Commons !

A remarkable scene now opened between the father and the son. The younger Vane rose apparently in great trouble, as if this discovery had for ever lost him his father's confidence, and with that air of earnest enthusiasm, which afterwards stamped such a singularity on all his proceedings, he cast himself on the compassion of the House to pardon this trespass on his natural parent, and to recollect that he had acted from his abundant zeal for their common cause. All this while the father sternly looking on his son, declared that he now too clearly saw the unhappy object who had been the source of his troubles in those pressing interrogatories to which he had been put to the torture. However, he did not deny that the copy was as good as the original. The House, thus taken by surprise, admiring this conflict of feeling between the father and the son, and more the conscience of the youthful patriot, "a very gracious youth," as the Scottish Covenanter designates him, they interfered to reconcile them. But long after, in public, they appeared to act separately and in opposition to each other. The old courtier, the Secretary, retained his office, lifting up his hands and his voice against the hardier proceedings of his son, who proved afterwards so remarkable a personage in the approaching revolution ; but we cannot doubt that he secretly hugged himself that the Vanes at last had struck their vindictive blow at the great man in whose presence he had not dared even to imagine those thoughts of revenge, which lay rankling in his soul, for contempt so long endured.

memories of the other witnesses of the Privy Council, which continued incurable to the last." How could the other members recollect what Vane had misconceived, namely, that the Irish army was designed to be transported to England, and not to Scotland. I do not deny that when the Irish army had conquered the Scottish, the patriots in England would have been endangered. Mr. Brodie also urges that "the previous want of recollection in Vane proves that he had no understanding with the prosecutors." It is very possible that Vane the father might have found himself entrapped by the infidelity of his son, and the subtilty of Pym.

We have every reason to believe with Clarendon that the whole scene had been preconcerted between the Vanes and Pym—and the political juggle was played off with all the delusion so grateful to those who look to be deceived. Vane the father, on various occasions, proved to be a faithless or an inept servant to Charles, and was at last expelled. He went over a proselyte to that party among whom his son was to act so conspicuous a part, but no change of party could elevate his spirit. His natural abjectness having crept into a bolder line of conduct, quite alien from his character, through the instigation of his aspiring son, the Secretary lived at last to be contemned by all men, and to endure that heaviest curse of bustling ineptitude and unprincipled selfishness—the contempt of his own child.

Strafford was still reserved before he withdrew from the bar to the block, to listen to the two speeches of Pym and St. John. These are both memorable. Baillie considered that “the King never heard a lecture of so free language against his idolised prerogative:” yet the speech of Pym, divested of its personal rancour, is not so democratic but that every constitutional Englishman at this moment would assent to many passages of its condensed and masculine eloquence. It is worthy of our observation that the orators of every party, when laying down the principles of the British Constitution, agree in substance, and even in words. The Earl of Strafford delivered himself in a style as constitutional as Pym. It is only in the application of the principles, or in that mental reservation which party advocates permit themselves, or in the different associations of ideas on general terms, that we discover the fallacy of principles and the ambiguity of words.

An interesting incident occurred which interrupted the speech of Pym, but which does not appear as the speech is printed in Rushworth. The close of Pym’s speech is a cruel personal invective; he labours from the depth of his imagination to aggravate the pretended crime of treason—he says, alluding to Strafford, his death “will not be a new way of blood; there are marks enough to trace this law to the very original of this kingdom, and if it hath not been put into execution, as he (Strafford) allegeth, these two hundred and forty years, it was not for want of law, but that, all that time hath not

bred a man bold enough to commit such crimes as these—he is the only man that in so long a time hath ventured upon such treason as this.”

It must have been, we may imagine, at this passage that the illustrious prisoner, raising his head, fixed his disdainful and indignant glance on the orator—and it convulsed the speaker’s whole frame. Pym betrayed a sudden confusion—his memory deserted him—his hands trembled over his papers—he could no longer find either ideas or notes*—and he abruptly closed his speech. “To humble the man, God let his memory fail him a little before the end,” observes Pym’s warm eulogist the Scottish Covenanter.

Strafford indeed often displayed all the silent expression of eloquent gesture. His glance quickly discovered what was passing in his mind; and his motions seemed often a comment on the living text.

Unquestionably Strafford had obtained the secret suffrages of the Lords by his forceful appeals to their better feelings, and by enlightening their political wisdom; and the party who were athirst for his blood, were more than once in despair. The great lawyers, such illustrious names as Selden, Holborn, and Bridgeman, had declared that there was no law of treason which could reach Strafford. The Commons basely degraded themselves in a debate by menacing those lawyers who dared to plead for that person whom they accused of high treason.† They actually prosecuted and sent to the Tower the Counsellor Jeffrey Palmer, some time afterwards, not for not urging his points with all possible force, but for the decency and respect with which he had treated “the wicked Earl,” as Pym called Strafford. Such

* It is maliciously observed by Nalson that the famous reply of Pym to the Earl’s defence was “not an extempore product of his parts and abilities.” Nalson too notices that Pym “fell into a great disorder and confusion, and pulled out a paper to refresh his memory, which occasioned one of the noblest auditors to smile.” It certainly does not detract from the merits of a speech to be delivered to the public that the speaker had premeditated it: it would be better that many were so. We may wish that Nalson had been more explicit on the cause of the confusion of ideas and the abrupt close of Pym’s speech.

† Clarendon, in noticing this fact, adds, “This matter was too gross to receive any public order, and so the debate ended—but it was no doubt their intention to let those gentlemen know how warily they incurred the anger of that terrible congregation.” i. 394.

are the passions of Parliament ! The revolutionary tribunal of France hardly offers an act of more injustice.

The dark and the sullen St. John, in opposition to his more eminent brothers, now came forward with his "Argument of Law," to satisfy the scruples of those members, for many had actually left them, who might oppose the fatal bill of attainder. In a speech of three hours, replete with the curious erudition of cases of treason, as if still doubtful whether the dusty volumes of a law-library might fail in convincing his auditors, our lawyer argued from the *Lex talionis*, and introduced his famous barbarous comparison—"He that would not have others to have a law, why should he have any himself? It's true we give law to hares and deer because they be beasts of chase, but it was never accounted either cruelty or foul play to knock foxes and wolves on the head, as they can be found, because these be beasts of prey." Such was the spirit that hunted down the fallen Minister ! Strafford silently betrayed his deep attention, and often, by the solemn elevation of his hands and eyes to Heaven, he appealed against the merciless State-Advocate. The indignant emotions of the great man were the only reply the Court could not refuse him, to the invective of this "Law-Argument," which lasted so long, that nothing more was heard on that day. These emotions were not the less dignified nor the less affecting ; the auditors of St. John were the spectators of Strafford ; his silent gestures had so deeply penetrated their hearts, that a contemporary historian regrets that the pathos of his action could not be preserved from oblivion, as well as that other eloquence whose immortality makes posterity the auditors of Strafford.

The Commons hurried the ferocious bill of attainder through their House, by a second reading in one day. On the third reading, Lord Digby forcibly opposed it, and some of the most illustrious names in our legal history protested against it. Lord Digby, the son of the Earl of Bristol—that extraordinary and accomplished man, who had all along proceeded with the popular party, and had wound himself into all the secrets of its leaders—on a sudden, and as Clarendon tells us, "before he was so much as suspected,"* left them, as Digby said, "at the final sentence unto death or life of a great Minister of State." He did not

* Clarendon Papers, iii. Suppt. liii.

hesitate to declare that he continued the same in his opinions that the Earl of Strafford was a most dangerous minister, insupportable to free subjects—his rare abilities had only aggravated his practices—Strafford was the grand Apostate of the Commonwealth, who must expect no pardon in this world till he be dispatched to the other—but, “as my conscience stands,” added Digby, “my hand must not be to that dispatch.”

Digby, when he consented to Strafford’s accusation, had been assured by Pym that the notes of Sir Henry Vane would prove his treason; but a transcript of disjointed fragments, of which even the original did not exist, containing only “the venomous parts of speech,” could be of no use but to bring men into danger. At first the Secretary positively denied the charge about the Irish army—pressed a second time, he seemed doubtful—yet he who upon oath would not remember, might well on the third time misremember, where the difference of a letter, *here* for *there*, and *that* for *this*, quite alters the case.

“God keep me from giving judgment of death on any man upon a law made *à posteriori*; let the mark be set on the door where the plague is, and then let him that would enter, die.

“Let every man lay his hand upon his heart, and sadly consider what we are going to do—with a breath either justice or murder—the danger being so great, and the cause so doubtful, that I see the best lawyers in diametrical opposition concerning it. Let every man wipe his heart as he does his eyes when he would judge of a nice and subtle subject.

“Away with personal animosities, away with all flatteries to the people, in being the sharper against him because he is odious to them; away with all fears lest, by the sparing of his blood, they may be incensed; away with all such considerations as that it is not fit for a Parliament that one accused by it of treason should escape with life.”

Digby is accused of volatility of character, but he surely delivered himself on this occasion with earnestness. As for the speaker and the speech, the one with difficulty escaped being sent to the Tower, and the other was honoured by being condemned to the flames. His old party was so enraged, that they would gladly have prepared a block for his head as determinedly as they had decided on one for Strafford. The House

expelled Digby. Those who had intimidated the lawyers who offered to plead for the prisoner, and at last would not reply to the legal argument of Lane, the Earl's Advocate, assigning this curt reason, that "it was below their dignity to contend with a private lawyer," in the same "public spirit" decided that none of their own Members should be allowed to differ from themselves! It must be confessed that those who were advocating the cause of public liberty, were violating all personal freedom; and, to say the least, were as partial to the practices of arbitrary government, and even to tyranny itself, as he whom they had condemned.

This memorable trial, which had opened on the 22nd of March, closed, as far as the evidence, on the 13th of April, but these charges not amounting to a capital conviction, it became necessary to urge their arguments on legal points, but on the 30th of April the trial was abruptly interrupted by the bill of Attainder.

One party asserts that the Commons suddenly declined the prosecution by *Trial* from a failure in the evidence, but the Parliamentarians insist that the votes of the Lords on two particular charges, that of billeting soldiers and another, had sufficiently convicted the Earl of treason without any need of their bill of Attainder. Thus, on their own showing, their illegal and anomalous violence was a gratuitous exercise of the worst tyranny. To obviate the odium of this conduct, an artful reason has been alleged. The Commons resolved to make the King as judge a party in it; and though the common way of process would have convicted Strafford capitally, as they assume, yet then the King would have been passive only in his punishment; but they had resolved that he should be a participator in the condemnation of death, in terror to all future evil counsellors.* Such is one of those insolent avowals of a party, when, to extricate themselves from being implicated in one heavy charge, they have the effrontery to assign another motive, which, though it gives a different turn to the circumstance, is not inferior to it in baseness. Were that true, which is denied, that the Commons could have convicted Strafford capitally, without having recourse to their bill of Attainder, their present

* Oldmixon, 169.

proceeding was only a personal persecution of their unfortunate monarch.

The truth is more manifest than the evidence of party-writers on either side. Long before this trial a formidable party in the Commons had decided on the public execution of the Minister. The Scots were implacable, for Strafford's decision respecting them was well known; and their army was now maintained by "the brotherly assistance" of the Scottised English, who were at once their masters and servants. So intimate was the mutual dependance! The immolation of their arch-adversary, the Minister of Charles, was a bond of blood which was to seal this dark and secret alliance.

That this public execution had been resolved on appears as early as the 2nd of April, long before the first part of this trial had closed. The famous Wariston confided to his Scottish correspondent, Lord Balmerino, the settled scheme. Wariston, the great head of the Covenanters, was deep in the secrets of his English friends. The whole passage is remarkable. "Strafford's business is but yet in the fifteenth article. The Lower House, if they see that the King gains many of the Upper House not to condemn him, will make a bill of *teinture*,* and condemnation formally in their own House, and send it up to their House as any other Act of Parliament, to be voiced (voted) formally." Twenty days afterwards, on the 22nd of April, he writes exultingly, "The Lower House has given up their bill (delivered)—grown in daily strength—*We have Strafford's life!* They are thinking on monies for us. Lord, encourage and direct them!"

During the progress of the trial, the Commons appear to have discovered that public opinion, when not under the guidance of party, and even that of their own supporters, was more divided than ever. A month had elapsed, and little had been gained by their "accumulative evidence" and their "constructive treason;" and now, since their proofs did not amount to legal evidence, they determined on a legislative power; at once decreeing Strafford guilty of treason, every one might eagerly

* Dalrymple's Memorials, 117. So Wariston spells *Attainder*; a plain proof that though he relished the thing, the Scotch lawyer was not acquainted with the word. Or is this the term in Scotch law?

vote for the execution of the attainted man, without requiring any further testimony than his own vote.

This doubtless hastened the bill of Attainder, which bears the indelible stamp of that perturbation with which it was framed. After it was brought to the Lords, it languished in the Upper House, for few of the Peers were disposed to consent to a verdict of death on the illustrious state-prisoner, who, though not blessed with many friends among his Peers, stood, however, strangely condemned for a capital crime of a novel and uncertain treason; the unheard-of treason of a post-facto law, so that that was made treason in the case of Strafford which could not have been treason at the time it was done; and whose conviction was considered so anomalous, even by the Commons themselves, that they had providently introduced a proviso that their act should not be held as a precedent in after-times.

This extraordinary clause has proved a sore point with the Anti-Straffordians. From the first it was considered by most persons who trusted to their common sense, that it must stand as a perpetual evidence of their injustice. It is obvious that the Commons never intended to have stigmatised their own bill—and it has, therefore, been attempted to explain away the monstrous absurdity of the declaration, that the Act of one Parliament should never be a precedent for another. I shall throw into a note a remarkable specimen of the length to which party-purposes may drive some who dishonour any which they join.*

* The present instance of literary depravity would be difficult to parallel unless we search for others in the same writer of history. Oldmixon gives as from Rushworth the following passage: "This Proviso hath occasioned the common discourse and opinion that the judgment against the Earl was enacted never to be drawn into precedent *in Parliament*, whereas *it expressly respects only judges in inferior courts.*" Rushworth by a marginal note marked the mysterious proviso, but he offered no explanation whatever. All that here appears in italics is an interpolation of Oldmixon, who, blending his own explanation with Rushworth's note, to a careless reader it becomes authenticated. Oldmixon took the notion from Wellwood, who affects to call the general opinion "a silly mistake, which has gained some credit in the world, but it relates only to Judges and inferior courts, who, notwithstanding the present act, shall not adjudge or interpret any treason in any other manner than they should have done before the making of this act." It is extraordinary that this explanation, which explains nothing, could be adopted by successive writers of the same political school. The state of the question remains unaltered: they, the Com-

Hitherto the King throughout the trial of Strafford had preserved a silence as deep as his sorrows. Every morning was Charles seen in the trellised cabinet reserved for him half an hour earlier than the Lords. There sat the pensive and dejected monarch often occupied in taking notes. Though constitutionally absent, the idea that his personal presence would animate his unfortunate minister, or at least testify to him the deep anxiety of his royal master, probably led to this unremitting attention. Charles and the Queen never returned to their palace, as Henrietta assured Madame de Motteville, without aching hearts, and often in tears.

At this crisis, Charles for the first time in this eventful cause was induced to appear openly in it. The King addressed the Parliament from the throne. He confided to them his secret and oppressed feelings. He implored them to spare his conscience in this awful trial. He had never intended to have spoken on this business, and *had they proceeded according to law,*

mons, declared that the act which themselves had done should not be considered as a precedent. Yet this mystifying explanation has been repeated by Mrs. Macaulay; but as if she were not quite satisfied with it, she draws from her alembic a more rectified spirit, asserting that "this decree of the Commons shows a very laudable attention to the preservation of public liberty." (ii. 454.) Mr. Brodie tells us that "it is an unusual clause in a bill *pro re nata*, that it should not be drawn into a precedent, as a proper restraint upon the ordinary courts, to which alone it is applicable." (ii. 130.) Mr. Brodie, no doubt, is a skilful lawyer, and may solve historical and moral enigmas technically; but to those who are apt, as Wellwood says, to fall into "a silly mistake," or as Oldmixon explicitly calls it, "this general error in the histories of disaffected authors," that is, authors who are not for striking off people's heads for a party-purpose—our difficulties remain as great as ever. We do not contemplate on two kinds of justice—the one for the nonce. Are there two kinds of justice as well as courts? Is that which is proclaimed to be treason in the Higher Court not allowed to be so in the Inferior?

Our last philosophical historian on this topic has more deeply penetrated into the designs of the actors in the present scene. Mr. Hallam has said nothing on Wellwood's explanation, but I believe he has assigned the real motive of this obscure and ridiculous proviso in the bill of Attainder. "It seems to have been introduced in order to quiet the apprehensions of some among the Peers who had gone great lengths with the Government, and were astonished to find that their obedience to the King could be turned into treason against him." (i. 566.)

The truth seems to be, that the Commons, determined to accomplish their great deed, in the heat of passion were entangled in difficulties—and got over them as well as they could. Historians who write in the calm of leisure, appear sometimes to forget that many important events have been transacted, not with the wisdom of Legislators, or the purity of Patriots, but with the heated haste of Partisans.

the law should have taken its course, but by adopting the way of attainder they had forced him to become a party in his quality of judge. They well knew that he had been present from the opening to the close of this great affair, and therefore he could not pretend ignorance of what had occurred. He assured them what no one could know so well as himself, that never had Strafford suggested bringing over an Irish army into England—nor to alter in the least any of the laws of England, much less to alter all law itself. “I must tell you this, that I think no body durst be ever so impudent to move me in it; for if they had, I should have put a mark upon them, and made them an example to all posterity.

“I desire to be rightly understood. I cannot condemn him of high treason, but I cannot say I can clear him of his misdemeanour.—I do think my lord of Strafford is not fit hereafter to serve me, or the commonwealth, in any place of trust, no not so much as to be a constable.

“Find a way to satisfy justice and your own fears, but do not press on my conscience. I have not so ill-deserved of the Parliament at this time that they should press me on this tender point. I leave it to you, my Lords, to find some such way as to bring me out of this great strait. Certainly he that thinks him guilty of high-treason, may condemn him of misdemeanour.”

Such was the speech Charles the First was induced to deliver either to relieve his long harassed feelings or deceived by the advice of others; but whether he was mistaken, or had been deceived, it is quite certain that he was in earnest. The apologists of Charles tell us that it was either a sinister project of the enemies of Strafford, Bristol and Saville, to hasten the catastrophe, which is not probable, for neither of these lords were present when it was voted, or the treacherous counsel of Lord Say, who the King was now weak enough to imagine had become his friend since his recent admission into place and power.* Strafford himself protested against the King's interposition, and at once saw through all the mischief.

* Clarendon, sarcastically alluding to Lord Say, observes, “Those who believed his will to be much worse than his understanding, had the uncharitableness to think that he intended to betray his master, and put the ruin of the Earl out of question.” Father Philips, the Queen's Confessor, who was likely to be informed, also alludes to Lord Say.

The Commons, who had already counted on their own triumph when they saw the King still doubtful to act, were in no temper to retrace their steps, but raising a more violent clamour insisted that the royal interference, during the progress of a bill in Parliament, forejudging their councils, had more openly violated their privilege than ever!

All historians have censured, or lamented, the ill-timed interposition of the King. In the humbled tone of supplication, we perceive only the language of the heart, and all those distracted emotions which were still more evident in those two fatal concessions, immediately to follow, when Charles, as if insensible by despair, with an utter carelessness of self-preservation, signed the commission for the execution of Strafford against "his conscience,"* and that famous bill which hurried in a few hours through the House, perpetuated the Parliament independent of the King. An act by which the sovereign virtually dethroned himself.

There was no political wisdom in the King's address from the throne; but whether he had delivered that speech, or remained mute in despair, the result had been the same. The trial of the Earl of Strafford, either from matter of fact, or matter of law, was only assuming the forms of justice to perform an unjust act. Ere his conviction was recorded, his doom had been sealed, for the execution had been pronounced before the arraignment.

The secret history of this momentous period more deeply interests us than almost any in our domestic annals; the trial of the King himself hardly exceeded it. The execution of Strafford was but the precursor of that mighty and yet distant event.

Here let us pause, to view the state of men's minds on the trial of Strafford, and the secret causes which were at work, hastening on his fate. Ireland had been ruled, and she called

* The remembrance of that act embittered his after days with the most melancholy contrition. In a letter among the Harleian MSS. 6988, fol. 106, to the Queen, Charles writes that "He had sinned against his conscience, for the truth is I was surprised with it instantly after I made that base sinful concession concerning the Earl of Strafford. I hope that God will accept of my hearty repentance." I quote this as I have shown that Henrietta could not herself have advised Charles to an act which he has noticed to her in this manner, and which evidently shows that the advice came from a different quarter.

that rule tyranny; Scotland would have been conquered, and she called it treason; England beheld a minister whom she dreaded, as the vast instrument of the regal prerogative. The fate of the great minister, whether he was to be snatched out of the hands of the merciless who stood athirst for his blood, or whether the state-victim was to bleed on the altar of the nation, involved so many principles of policy, so many duties of moral justice, and such sympathies of our common humanity, that it was not only the King and his minister and the leaders of Opposition who were at variance, the intense interest pervaded the recesses of domestic life, and the opposite views of individuals separated for ever in opinion and in act, the most ancient friendships. Anecdotes recorded of independent men reveal the feelings of the times. The members for Cornwall, neighbours and friends, acting usually in concert, are an instance. Sir Bevil Grenville begged his colleague, Sir Alexander Carew, not to have a hand in this ominous business of the death of the Earl of Strafford. Carew fiercely replied, "was I sure to be the next man that should suffer upon the same scaffold, and with the same axe, I would give my consent to the passing of the bill." The Earl of Essex complained that he was weary of arguments. After listening to Mr. Hyde, who would have saved the life of the minister but have deprived him of all political power, the Earl waived any farther discussion, and shaking his head, exclaimed, "stone-dead hath no fellow." We may believe that such honourable men were perfectly free on this occasion from all participation of mere party-purposes, and yet we see how opposite were their consciences. But this was an unhappy time for consciences, since they talked much of a public and a private one. There was a new doctrine, that the King is obliged to conform himself and his own understanding to the advice and conscience of his Parliaments; or as Warburton clearly discriminates this invasion of the sovereign's veto, "it was taking away the King's negative voice, and therefore this *public* conscience was as absurd an idea as it was a wicked one."

The King had pleaded for his "conscience," but in that day of political passion, and in that dark struggle of Prerogative and Privilege, even men of the purest principles dreaded the one, and feared to lose the other.

Could we enter into the Palace of Whitehall, observe its disturbed movements, and penetrate into the cabinet of the afflicted monarch, wavering in doubt and dismay; could we see the House of Lords resisting the popular clamour till they flew from their seats in terror; could we pass into the City and discover a sudden irritation in the public mind, acted on by artifices till then unpractised; could we join the party of Pym, under his secreting roof, where the Scottish Covenanters, Hampden among them, held their conclaves and ratified their indissoluble covenant—we should contemplate an unparalleled scene of the disturbed state of a whole nation.

In some respects we are not unfurnished with certain outlines of these intrigues and manœuvres on both sides; and by connecting so many distinct but simultaneous movements, we may form a tolerable conception of that secret history of this period which otherwise we do not possess.

It is remarkable that when the Earl of Strafford, at the beginning of his persecution, appeared among the people, this fallen Minister was looked on with awe, and was courteously saluted, both on his landing from the Tower and on his return.* As the trial proceeded, the public opinion was oftener in favour of this State-prisoner than against him; and, as we see by Grotius's letter and by many other authorities,† candid and honourable men had concluded that the Earl must stand acquitted of the high charges of acts of treason. It is evident that the people had not yet caught the contagious feelings of the ruling party. In a few short weeks we discover the populace pushed on by some unknown impulses, barbarously clamouring for Strafford's

* Some writers, and others, had reported that at first the crowd had betrayed their inveterate hatred of the Earl, and had declared that "if Strafford passed the stroke of justice, they would tear him to pieces." This is positively denied by Rushworth. "In this report, as in all others of this nature, more is thrust upon the vulgar than they did justly deserve at *this time*." (viii. 42.)

† Very many, were it necessary to produce them. I shall however quote the words of Baxter, a contemporary; they take a comprehensive view of an important topic. "Those that connived at these tumults were glad to see the people of their mind in the main, and thought it would do much to facilitate their work and hold the lower members to their cause; for though the House was unanimous enough in condemning ship-money and the Bishop's innovations, &c., *yet it was long doubtful which side would have the major vote in the matter of the Earl of Strafford's death.*"—Baxter's Narrative, fol. 19.

execution, and marching in open insurrection under the eye of the Sovereign. We cannot account for this extraordinary change, unless we suppose that very extraordinary means had been adopted to organise this *mobocracy*.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ARTS OF INSURGENCY.

LORD CLARENDON, in a curious narrative concerning that extraordinary genius, Lord Digby, would insinuate that his Lordship abandoned the party of Pym not only for "their desperate designs," as Clarendon stigmatises them, but from his indignation at the artifices of faction which they practised. On these his Lordship has taken this general view: "The uningenuity of their proceedings, and the foul arts they could give themselves leave to use, to compass any thing they proposed to do; their method was first to consider what was necessary to be done for some public end which might reasonably enough be wished for that public end, and then to make no scruple of doing any thing which might probably bring it to pass, let it be of what nature it would.* This charge is heavy, and Clarendon is an adversary; but justly has Dr. Lingard observed that "his assertion seems to be fully supported by the facts." The description of Clarendon may be considered as the secret principle of those arts of insurgency which we must ever regret were so ignobly practised by the lofty advocates of freedom. It is this which has sometimes clouded over with suspicion their integrity, and polluted their patriotism with artifices which we only afterwards discovered among the criminals of France. The political doctrine that the end sanctifies the means, is the casuistry of the worst part of mankind, and is a principle which, while it allows of every base and dishonourable act, will also include the barbarous crime of assassination.

The arts of insurgency practised by the popular party under Pym, were very various, and, by the skill of their practice, seem

* Clarendon's State Papers, iii., Suppt. liii.

to have been refined into a system. Their Scottish masters had taught more than one successful lesson to their imitative pupils. One of the most dexterous of these arts is that of marshalling a troubled multitude, and inflaming the passions of the people whom yet they control. Whenever the heats of the House seemed to abate, and patriotism loitered in the ardent course it had to run, to strike a new terror in the Government, and spread dismay among the members who had not embraced the designs of the prevalent party, the mob which had triumphed at Edinburgh seemed to have been transferred to the English metropolis. The system was adapted to a larger scale, suitable to the magnitude of the theatre where the political drama was now to be acted.

The PRESS no longer being under restraint, a people unaccustomed to its freedom would naturally riot in its licentiousness, and it swarmed with portentous pamphlets. Pamphlets and tracts are the production of political freedom and of an agitated people. They never are more abundant than in disturbed times, when men think what they list, and write what they think, and all seem ready to govern, and none to obey. Of the nations of Europe, our country long stood unrivalled for the rapid succession of these busy records of men's thoughts—these suggestions of their opposite interests and their eternal differences. Of these leaves of the hour and volumes of the week, the labours of the passions, the wisdom, or the folly of our countrymen, during the Revolution of Charles the First, in that single period of twenty years, from 1640 to 1660, about thirty thousand appear to have started up. We have been a nation of pamphleteers. The French, in their Revolution, which so often resembled our own in its principles and its devices, could not avoid the same impulse of instructing or corrupting their fellow-citizens; but the practice seemed to them so novel that a recent French biographer designates an early period in the French Revolution as that one when "the art of pamphlets had not yet reached perfection."* The collection of the French revolutionary pamphlets now stands by the side of the English tracts of the age of Charles the First; as abundant in number and as fierce in passion; rival monuments which exist together, for the astonishment and the instruction of

* Mirabeau, Biog. Universelle, xxiv. 96.

posterity, for whom they reveal so many suppressed secrets in the history of man.*

The pamphlets of this time were usually directed to prepare men's minds to the impending changes in the Church and State. Charles the First, by his constant notice of these ensnaring pamphlets, appears to have been most sensitive to these "poisoners of the minds of his weak subjects;—amazed by what eyes these things are seen, and by what ears they are heard." He answered the mightier pamphlets published by the Parliament itself. "We are contented to let ourself fall to any office that may undeceive our people, and to take more pains this way by our pen than ever king hath done." Charles was such an attentive observer of these pamphlets, that he once paid ten pounds only for the perusal of one, which could not otherwise be procured. The custom now began of printing the speeches of the leading members in the Commons, and sometimes by the order of the House. Some of the speakers avowedly printed their own speeches.† These fugitive leaves were every where dispersed and every where eagerly read. Baxter, in the curious folio of his autobiography, tells us they were "greedily bought up throughout the land, which greatly increased the people's apprehension of their danger."‡ I have seen some which doubtless recommended themselves by bearing the authentic stamp of the well-cut portrait in wood of the portly Pym, who then reigning with absolute power, bore the nick-name of "King Pym." But it seems that more were written than were published. Many Royalist tracts remain in their manuscript state, no one caring to print books out of fashion, or having the courage to brave the authority of the men in power; and Nalson complains that the speeches in favour of Episcopacy were so completely suppressed or discouraged, that when he made his collection, but a few years after, they were utterly lost, while those on the other side, by passing into so many hands, were easily procured.

The Pulpit was a State-engine of not inferior magnitude to

* Most of the thirty thousand English tracts were collected by the order of Charles the First, and became the gift of George the Third to our national library. The French collection has been a recent acquisition.

† "Five speeches by Sir Benjamin Rudyard, printed according to his own true copies, the former being absurdly false."

‡ Baxter's Narrative of his Life, fol. 18—1696.

the Press. The Presbyterian and the Puritan had not always complained unjustly of what they styled "Court-Divinity," inculcating, in the indissoluble alliance of devotion and politics, the strictest conformity and the most passive obedience. In truth, however, they themselves did not find these servile principles irreconcilable with their own. Our Non-conformists only aspired to change their direction; for they insisted on as strict conformity and as passive an obedience to themselves, in remodelling the mighty fabric of the Hierarchy and the Kingdom, by the petty Calvinistical republic of their own Presbytery.

In London a new scene opened. Here the Scotch divines, with rigid sanctified looks, talking in Scriptural phrases of every-day occurrences, and with gestures, as of men in ecstasy, disordered, but impressive, thundered their novel doctrines in St. Antholine's church, the first which was assigned in England for the Covenanters. The Puritans, who had long held themselves as their cousins in insurrection, but had lived in secrecy and seclusion, now acknowledged a closer affinity, and in their fraternal embrace gave precedence to their more active and triumphant elder. The patriotic party had often denounced the clergy for meddling in temporal affairs; but their own clergy, for such now the Presbyterian may be called, were in fact their chief agents in acting on the people. They sermonized like the venal "leading articles" of the present day, trumpeting forth the most desperate alarms, and vomiting the most violent menaces. These persons, like the retainers of our party-papers, we are told in one of the royal declarations, "were all the week attending the doors of both Houses to be employed in their errands;" and in their "lectures," or seven-hours' sermons, all the news of the week was divinely commented on from their pulpits. These their personal invectives, and their heated imagination, made palatable, bewitching "the corner creepers"—the secret malcontent—the straying loungee—and all that disaffected populace which hang loosely on society, and among whom the seditious will always obtain a majority. Their religion inflamed their politics. The convulsed bosoms of the crowd were electrified by the new saints; then was seen the mob without, clinging to the doors and windows, when excluded by the mob within, catching the barbarous accents of a provincial messenger of heaven.

"We pray, preach, and print against them what we are able most freely. Many a sore thrust got both men and women thronging into our sermons"—says Baillie. The voice of the Covenant no longer cried in the wilderness. "We hope a harvest of fruits are coming," exclaims our covenanting zealot. The extirpation, "root and branch," of the bishops, and the ominous spectacle of a headless Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, were to anticipate the planting of that "Rose of Sharon," and those "lilies of the valley," the sour intolerant Scotch Presbytery.

Arts of more subtle nature even than this combination of pamphlets, speeches, and preachings, were practised in those fugitive chimeras—rumours and reports. These shook with their hot and cold fits an aguish populace. The calumny which was either too vague to grapple with, or which took long to remove, always left something sticking behind it, which repeated till believed, has, I fear, sometimes become history for all parties. Assuredly there are historical calumnies! The lie which prospered through its morning was forgotten at eve only to be supplied by another. In distempered times, that which is not intelligible every one interprets for himself; and such bruited news by their very extravagance are rendered the more effective, for the ignorance of the people often exceeding their credulity, every one in imaginary dangers is prone to think the very worst that is possible. It was news that the Papists, with cavalry, burrowed under ground in Surrey, but were more openly gathering together in Lancashire; it was news that there was a plot to blow up the river with gunpowder in order to drown the City;* it was

* Mr. Brodie, almost ashamed of these artful rumours spread abroad by a party, says "they were cunningly exaggerated," and particularly censures Clarendon, as retailing "stories which appear to be pure fiction;" undoubtedly he would consider the present ludicrous one as such. I find it, however, confirmed by Fuller. He assures us that one of the most prevailing dangers among the Londoners was "a design laid for a mine of powder under the Thames to cause the river to drown the City." The people had a public thanksgiving on its discovery. The plot, in truth, was not so much at the bottom of the Thames, as at the bottom of their purses, which the Scots long drained. The tricks of this nature which were practised, were more numerous than we care to trouble the reader with. Could it be imagined that the House of Commons, I would rather say a party in it, sent forth an order to the Justices of Peace at Dorchester, "to make diligent search for a barrel of gunpowder which had been sent down for a barrel of soap," and "to send an account of the matter to the House." Even Mrs. Macaulay has confessed, that the Commons

news that the French and even the Danes were preparing for a descent, though the Covenanters had reason to be certain that the Cabinet of the Louvre were in no mood to lend their aid to that of Whitehall. A sanctified tailor sitting under a hedge, "mending the notes he had taken of some sermon," informs the Commons that he had listened to two soldier-like men, who were acquainting one another with a settled employment of some of their comrades, to dispatch several members of both Houses; the Commoners at the rate of forty shillings, and the Lords at ten pounds! This worthy's name has even been chronicled; and his notable discovery enters into English history, for on this occasion the Commons emitted several orders for the security of the Houses, as well as the Members. It was still worse when a midnight alarm shook the city that the King was coming down with horse and foot, and all the citizens started up in their warm night-caps and rushed to arms.

The people were cast into political delusions, and self-tormented by imaginary horrors. A ludicrous, but authentic, incident of the times is scarcely credible. So susceptible was this diseased state of the public mind, that Sir Walter Earle, one of the zealous but weakest adversaries of Strafford, and a creature of Pym's—rose to make a report of a design to blow up the House of Commons! The news acted as if the explosion had taken effect. In the pressure some alarmed listeners suddenly leaning forward, part of the flooring in the gallery gave way—at the cracking many hurried out—Sir John Wray, an honest Lincolnshire patriot, exclaiming that "he smelt gunpowder," and another leaving the House, saying "There was hot work, and a great fire within"—the simple words of the panic-struck knight, and the metaphorical orator, were too literally caught up by the persons in the lobby, who sent them to the people on the river. Before carriages were in general use, the river was a great thoroughfare; boats were used ere hackney-coaches were projected; a considerable portion of the busy populace were always on the Thames—these re-echoed the report to the City—the drums beat, the train-bands marched, "a world of people

affected many panics which they did not experience,—she will not, however, confess that the mobs of five and six thousand citizens in arms, was anything more than the "Vox Populi."

in arms" flew to Westminster, and this ridiculous incident* satisfactorily confirmed to the Commons their own absolute power over the people.

These rumours, indeed, as Clarendon describes them, "upon examination always vanished; but for the time, and they were always applied as useful articles of time, served to transport common minds with fears and apprehensions, and so induced them to comply in sense with those who ever like soonest to find remedies for those diseases which none but themselves could discover."

The source of these rumours must be traced to that *surveillance*, to use a French term for a French practice, under which the town seems to have been placed, and the patriot Pym must now figure in the degraded form of a *Lieutenant de Police*. Spies and informers were daily conveying to Pym the table-talk of taverns, and even of private society; by such secret intelligence, perpetually renewed, his sleepless vigilance preserved his ascendancy in the House of Commons. There he ruled so despotically, that the royalists at length nick-named the man they most dreaded, "King Pym." The art of raising these popular commotions, and the greater art of regulating them, depended on a double contrivance. The people were to terrify the Government, but they were themselves to be thrown into an occasional panic, for the affrighted are the most docile to be led.

But pamphlets, speeches, preachings and rumours, had not exhausted the invention of these agitators of the people; they were to be taught something more hideous, in the cry for

* I hesitated for some time to record this incredible incident, though I found it in Nalson, very exactly dated with the names of persons. The particulars I afterwards discovered amply confirmed by a contemporary and a Covenanter present in London.—Baillie, i. 296. It is equal to any of those retailed by Clarendon, which Mr. Brodie must have known, as well as myself, were not "cunningly exaggerated" and "pure fictions." In two or three months these "treasons" amounted to thirty-nine, according to the account of a venerable member of the House of Commons.—History of the English and Scotch Presbytery, Villa Franca, 1659.

Since writing this note, in examining "the Diurnal Occurrences," I find that so far from this gunpowder-plot being considered as too extravagant for the popular credulity, that five days afterwards "the Commons appointed a committee to search about the Parliament-house lest any plot should be in agitation against them." Either they had really frightened themselves, or they forgot to stow in the cellar some barrels of powder.

blood! One more deadly arrow lay in their quiver—it was their petitions!

The most humble petitions had always preceded the most decisive acts of the insubordination of the Covenanters. Here again we discover how closely Pym's party copied their model. The first striking evidence of the manœuvres of the Scottish party in the House of Commons, as far as appears publicly,—for what passed in private has been only partially detected—was a petition of the citizens to both Houses for justice to be executed on the Earl of Strafford. This petition was presented on the 23rd of April, immediately after Lord Digby had offended them by the reasons he alleged for his desertion of their cause. The Aldermen and Common-council, who afterwards were so alert on these occasions, here only make their chief lament on the decay of trade, and the difficulty with which country tradesmen pay their debts in London,—in consequence of the delay in sending Strafford to the block. This petition is said to have been subscribed by twenty thousand of good rank and quality.

Improving on the art of petitioning, in time we come to petitions of “the Apprentices,” and “those whose apprenticeship had lately expired.” In that day, when there existed no police in the City, and no regular military environed the Court, not the least formidable part of his Majesty's liege subjects were those “Operatives,” as they have since styled themselves,—the apprentices of London. An insurrection of “the London boys,” as the Spanish Ambassador called them, frequently alarmed Whitehall; nor were their number, at least, contemptible, for when they once offered to attend on the Parliament, they were said to amount “to ten thousand who offered their services with warlike weapons.”* It was a militia for insurgency, ready at all seasons, and might be depended on for any work of destruction, at the cheapest rate.†

* Nalson, ii. 831.

† We have the deposition and an information of some of these apprentices. When one of these had boastingly returned from Whitehall, and was asked the reason of his joining with the mob, he said that “They were sent for by some Parliament-men,”—that “his master was a constable, who gave him a sword and bid him go,” and that other apprentices had received the same directions from their masters. One Captain Ven, of the City, appears to have been their Marechal-de-

The number of the present subscribers from the City is so considerable; and as these shortly after sallied forth with daggers and bludgeons, the inference is obvious, that this train of explosion must have been long laid, else the combustible line could not have ignited at a touch.

Clarendon has related an extraordinary artifice in getting up these addresses. A petition was first prepared, modest in its form, and not unreasonable in its matter. Such a petition was certain of being well received at a public meeting, and a few hands instantly filled the paper. As numbers multiplied, many sheets were required to be tacked to the petition. The original petition was then cut off and supplied by a new one, framed more suitable to the design in hand, and the long list of names was annexed to the amended address. Persons saw their names appended to petitions they had never heard of, and when they complained, were engaged by threats or promises to sit still, and trust to those who, they were told, knew better than they which petition should have been preferred.

Such invidious practices sometimes betrayed themselves. A petition was presented to the House from Herefordshire, which referred to certain matters which had been debated on the preceding night, signed by many thousand hands. It is evident that this petition must have been one of those which were substituted for the original; and was presented in their hurry some days before it was intended that it should make its appearance.* These petitions thus were often the single work of a faction, in the name of the county, whose real subscriptions were put to that which they had never subscribed. Scenes of petitioners more ludicrous occurred when the porters, said to be many thousands in number, with great eloquence protested against "a malignant, blood-seeking, rebellious party, insulting the privileges of Parliament, which, if not punished, they should be forced to make good the saying, that necessity has no law." The climax of petitioning was, however, all the beggars, who

Camp, for one evening he issued his orders to apprentices to repair to Westminster with arms, for there was an uproar in the Parliament-house. "Mr. Lavender's man," who was at that moment "taking tobacco with a party," instantly threw his pipe away, to the surprise of the honest citizens, who had not been aware of the military genius of "Mr. Lavender's man."

* Husband's Collections, 537.

declared that by means of the Bishops and Popish Lords they knew not where to get bread—their religion and their lives were in danger; “but as they never doubted the House of Commons, and understood that all stuck in the Lords’ House, they wished to learn the names of those Peers who opposed the Commons.” A deputation of tradesmen’s wives, headed by Mrs. Stagg, a brewer’s wife, was as courteously received; Pym came to the door of the Commons, and at last with great political gallantry, told the “good women” that it had come “at a seasonable time,” requesting them now “to turn their petition into prayers, for the members of the House, who were ready to relieve their husbands and children.” A people are sometimes excited into follies, which, when they are once forgotten by themselves, their historian incurs the risk of being suspected of gross credulity. When the day arrived that the ruling faction of the Independents found the petitions of the people troublesome, although they allowed of all which suited their measures, according to Lord Hollis, they fined and committed the petitioners of whom they disapproved; and on a petition for peace, some horse were sent out to run over the people, and the Trained Bands fired among the petitioners.*

Minuter artifices were the usual practices of Pym, for to his adroit management the more subtle manœuvres must be traced. One was the impeachment of persons whose evidence, it was suspected, might favour Strafford, not one of whom were afterwards prosecuted. This remarkably appeared in the case of Sir George Radcliffe: no charge was afterwards brought forward; it was sufficient that the Earl lost the benefit of the aid of his confidential friend. On the same principle, the Irish Chancellor, the Chief-Justice, the Bishop of Derry, and others were alike impeached, which disqualified them as witnesses at Strafford’s trial, but the impeachments themselves were all dropped. When we recollect that on one occasion, when an Irish witness was so mean a personage that Pym, ashamed to bring him forward before the Committee, had him dressed up for the occasion in a satin suit, we may at least regret that such cunning was resorted to by him who, advocating the high cause of civil freedom, stamped on its face the ugly features of a conspiracy, and

* Hollis’ Memoirs, 179.

degraded acts, which should spring from a nobler source, to vulgar trickery. On these Irish impeachments Hume has truly observed, that "this step, which was an exact counterpart to the proceedings in England, served also the same purposes." We trace the same management in the Scottish affairs.

The ministers of Charles at Edinburgh were held out to public odium as "incendiaries;" this new art of calumny seems to have afforded a hint to the English party to apply political nicknames. An early invention of this kind, about this very time, was the term "Delinquents." The Commons, who were then usurping a power far more extensive than a Star-chamber tyranny, spread a general terror by this expedient. They declared any persons to be delinquents on the slightest petition, and as such they were to be prosecuted. Many were so stigmatised, of whom afterwards nothing more was heard, but the dreadful sentence was always suspended over their heads. They who would have opposed their more violent measures were silenced, and they who were thus branded knew that their fate depended on their acquiescence. In this novel tyranny no one could be brought forward as a witness in any case the Commons disliked to hear. On one occasion we find Sir Walter Earle, the creature of Pym, giving information of some dangerous words spoken by persons whom he did not name; on which the Speaker was directed to issue a warrant to apprehend such persons as Sir Walter shall nominate. The whole kingdom seemed at the mercy of Sir Walter Earle, or any other whisperer in the Speaker's ear. The Catholic Lords were so appalled, that Clarendon tells us they early withdrew themselves from the House of Peers, which was the drift of the powerful party. The reign of Pym was a reign of terror. Judges in open court were dragged from their bench, and hurried to prison, and a troop of horse struck a panic through the learned brotherhood of Westminster-Hall. "The barbarous curiosity of opening letters" was also revived. We hardly can forgive these rapid demolishers of Star-chambers and High Commission Courts for reviving them in a more fearful shape, and advocating the cause of civil freedom by the very means which annihilated it. To whom but to one great organising head can we ascribe such a systematic conduct, and such an unity of design? The

purity of the patriotism of Pym, however plausible its pretexts, and however able his talents, it must at least be confessed, was directed against Strafford with every appearance of personal malignity.

When the King addressed the Houses from the throne, supplicating for the life of Strafford, and pleading for his own conscience, the party, enraged at discovering that they had not yet, as they had imagined, sufficiently intimidated the Sovereign, now took the more certain means. The King's address was on Saturday. On Sunday the pulpiteers in the City were thundering with "the necessity of justice upon some great delinquents;" and on Monday morning a rabble of six thousand streamed forth from the City, armed and accoutred with all the hasty weapons they could snatch up;* these, thronging down to the Palace-yard, hideously clamoured for "justice and execution!" The King spoke to them from a balcony, and desired they would go home and mind their business. The life of the Sovereign was menaced under his own windows, and Charles the First was more degraded as a monarch at that moment, than when on the same spot a few years after he ascended the scaffold.

Whose hand behind the curtain played the strings which gave such regulated motions to these wooden actors of insurgency? This rabble of themselves might, as they did, find some sign-painter to hang by the heels certain rude figures to represent members who had voted against the bill of Attainder, but it required more intelligence and a deeper malignity to post up a correct list of fifty-nine Commoners, branding them with the odious title of "Straffordians, or betrayers of their country." This was indeed a violation of the privileges of the House, greater than any they complained of, and to a vindictive populace it was

* There is a curious instance of party-paragraphs in "the Diurnal Occurrences," May 3rd. We are there told of this very mob that they were "a great number of citizens, five thousand or thereabouts, being for the most part men of good fashion," who having stopped the Lords, &c., complained that "they were undone for the want of execution on Strafford; trading was so decayed thereby." The writer, in his notice that these citizens "for the most part were men of good fashion," and no doubt they wore their holiday array, which they had not put off since the preceding "Sabbath" Lectures, has entirely omitted the more material information, that they were all armed with rapiers, dags, and clubs.

writing their names in characters of blood. We shortly after find a petition of Sir John Strangeways, in behalf of himself and the fifty-nine members, declaring that though he had been absent at his house in Dorsetshire during the voting of the bill of Attainder, yet by having his name inserted in that black list his person had been rendered odious, and his life was in danger.*

All the while these commotions were going on, the Commons were proceeding uninterruptedly with their own designs. The King sent down a message for the prevention of these tumults, but the Commons could only see "the City petitioning." The King complained that no Court of Judicature had been left the power to punish tumults, for they suddenly seemed to have lost the skill to define "what tumults are!"† The Lords affrightened—we are told they were "fearful of having their brains knocked out"—were no longer free to act;—the Commons, however, were—and were silent—for they required tumults. Several members of the House of Commons resorted to clubs of apprentices, who being distributed into fraternities, vast bodies of all the crafts, shoemakers, tailors, porters, watermen, and others, were ever at hand "to petition," or do any other job, by the order of some unknown master. This exhibits a parallel scene to revolutionary France, when the hired mobs were ruling the city of Paris—afterwards the parallel may extend, when the meanest classes were legislators and executioners! The petitions were now echoing the resolutions of "Master Pym," and the organised rabble were put over to the care of an approved ringleader, the Puritan divine Cornelius Burgess, who called them out at his beck, or dispersed them by the motion of his hand. Exultingly pointing at his rabble-patriots, he would exclaim, "These be my band-dogs! I can set them on, and take them off again as I please."‡ When the Lords were slow and reluctant in passing the bill of Attainder, the mobs were let loose, and the terrified Peers immediately declared that they were drawing to a conclusion, and to manifest their passive

* Rushworth, iv. 279.

† A jury in Southwark, impanelled to examine one of these tumults, were superseded, and the Sheriff enjoined not to proceed, by an order of the House of Commons.—Husband's Collections, 251.

‡ This anecdote is well known, though I cannot recover the original authority. It is mentioned by Echard.

obedience, subscribed the famous "Protestation" of the Commons, which at first they had declined. At the same time they declared that they were so encompassed with multitudes of people, that it was the only hindrance to the dispatch of the bill.* The Commons ordered Dr. Burgess to read this "Protestation" to the people, and tell them they might return home. At the voice of this political Neptune, the waves of this rabble of rebellion rolled away.

When the cry against the bishops was to be given, we find Dr. Burgess still more active; a tumultuous mob even broke into Westminster Abbey, threatening to return in greater numbers to pull down not only Prelacy, but the Abbey itself. They clamoured to deface the monuments of the kings; the dilapidations of St. Denis had nearly occurred among our own sepulchres of royalty; those venerable and glorious remains of antiquity escaped, but by a moment, from becoming a heap of ruins. The Abbey endured a sort of siege for some hours. The Dean beat the populace off with stones thrown from the leads. We know what these Puritanic barbarians afterwards did, with all the cathedrals through the kingdom. At this moment the mob met by day, and even at night, summoned by the sound of a bell, or other signal, in the fields, or some other spot of assignation, in order to concert their measures, and to be directed by their conductors. At this Parisian scene of revolutionary terror, Pym said, "God forbid that the people should be disheartened from obtaining their just desires!" This violent scene was concerted at the alarm of Pym's party on the King's return from Scotland, when the warm loyalty of Sir Robert Gournay, the Lord Mayor, had received the King in great splendour at the Guildhall.

How timidly Truth shows herself to him who first ventures to lift her veil! In the days of honest Rapin it was little short of treason to breathe a suspicion on the cruel arts practised by the popular party. Our historian apologises for having discovered the truth! "I am very sensible some will take it ill that I positively affirm the tumults I am going to speak of were the effect of the practices of the party against the King, and that several pretend it was all owing to accident and the

* Rushworth, viii. 743.

discontents of the people.”* The same defence is still reiterated, but Truth is now not only bold but strong.

By such artifices as these, the industrious party of Pym and his colleagues not only struck a panic in the Court and among the Lords, but, what they did not consider of inferior consequence, they impressed on the public mind a strong sense of their own power. It was from this time that the people began to be more regardful of Parliament ; and as Baxter, an impartial contemporary, tells us, in the curious folio of his life, “sided with them not only for their cause and their own interest, but also supposing them the stronger side, which the vulgar are still apt to follow.”

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEATH OF STRAFFORD.

AT this crisis two important events hastened the catastrophe of Strafford's story—the army-plot and the sudden death of the Earl of Bedford.

The discovery of a plot in the army, who were, however, distant in the north, to march direct to Westminster to overawe the Parliament, whatever the plot was, now was opportunely revealed by Pym. Instantly he struck through all parties the terror he delighted in, and probably he was himself alarmed. The petitions of an army are a mutiny, and too well resembled his own—they were the commands of those who knew how to be obeyed. Were the army to form the mob, instead of the mob the army, even Pym had found a master.

The secret history of the army-plot, as it was called, is obscure in many parts, but sufficiently clear in others. Its detail, and its important results, shall be the subject of our following chapter. By the adroit management of Pym, whose vigorous conceptions could create mighty consequences from slight events, and on whose bold designs now revolved the fate of an empire, the army-plot gave rise to that famous “Protestation” of the Commons, which was ordered by themselves to be subscribed by the

* Rapin, xi. 293.

whole nation. The tumults still paraded Westminster, crying out for "justice" in the blood of Strafford.

At this critical moment, too, the unlooked-for death of the Earl of Bedford had broken off that new administration of the leaders of the Opposition which had nearly been formed. Lord Say had already dislodged Lord Cottington from the Mastership of the Wards; Bishop Juxon had resigned the Treasurer's staff; St. John was made Solicitor-General, the sullen enemy of his master; and Pym was prepared to be the Chancellor of the Exchequer, where formerly he had been one of the clerks. In full view of the places before them, the patriots, now the place-hunters, had bribed the King with a pledge to spare the life of Strafford, and to settle the royal revenues as amply as any which his predecessors had enjoyed. So compliant, so meek is Faction, when, in changing its position, it would wish to lose its name.

These halcyon politics were now removed for ever from the hapless monarch by the death of the Earl of Bedford, who, though he had been the opposer of Strafford, lamented the passions of his party, and, looking into futurity, predicted on his death-bed that their violence would bring greater mischief on the kingdom than it had ever sustained by the long intermissions of the Parliaments. The Earl of Bedford, though a wise and moderate man, would not, however, desert his party, as Strafford had done, and devote himself to the Court; it is therefore uncertain, as Warburton acutely observes, whether this proceeded from a point of honour to his party, or a point of duty to his country. Unhappy times! when the wise and the moderate are constrained to act with those whose principles they would willingly disavow!

The death of the Minister of Charles had been irrevocably decided on by the prevalent party in the Commons. Whitelocke was certainly well informed of the state of the politics of his day; he ascribes the more than violent proceedings of some of "the great men" to a most humiliating cause. As the change of ministers, which had been accepted by the King, had only partially occurred, being interrupted by the death of the Earl of Bedford, and as Charles afterwards felt no inclination to receive Hampden, Pym, and others, though he had received full as evil counsellors in Lord Say and St. John his Solicitor-General, those who were left out were "baffled, and became the

more incensed and violent against the Earl, joining with the Scotch Commissioners, who were implacable against him.”* Could we have imagined that our patriots had been thus actuated by personal malignity, and that their ruthless ambition could only be appeased by the blood of a great man? It is too sad an apology for the rancour of their persecution to allege that supreme of human motives—self-preservation—conscious, as they were, that Strafford must fall, or that they must perish. Were the Minister suffered to live, there could be no safety for them; for it was known, at least to themselves, that Strafford could attach acts of treason to some of their leaders, less dubious than any of those “constructive or accumulative treasons” by which they had now succeeded in attainting him; nor could they trust the life of their victim in the hands of the King, who from his throne had so humbly supplicated for it. And, however Charles the First had pledged the dismissal of his ill-fated servant, no degradation of the man could lessen the wisdom of the statesman; and, perhaps, they dreaded more than ever the influence of councils, whose sagacity had been schooled by recent experience, and whose haughty impetuosity had been tempered by adversity. All that can be alleged to palliate the guilt of Strafford’s execution by this party is, that he perished from expediency and not by justice. This at once separates politics from morality, a violation too often practised by the Achitophels of all parties.

The bill of Attainder even in the Commons did not pass without the opposition of nearly a fourth part of the House; and with the Lords, Strafford was condemned only by the majority of seven votes. Of eighty Peers who had constantly attended, only forty-five had the courage to assemble when the bill passed, so intimidated was the noble Aristocracy amidst the yellings of a menacing Mobocracy. The Bishops had been deprived of their votes, the old canon being urged, which prohibited them from deciding *in causâ sanguinis*; a piece of ecclesiastical mockery which never spared the life of a victim from the grasp of the ecclesiastical talons.† It is evident that a full and free House

* Whitelocke’s Memorials, 40.

† The Inquisition condemned their living victims to the flames—on the plea that by this means they shed no blood! Bishop Williams prepared a speech to assert

would have saved the head of Strafford at that moment; but what excesses of the party the rejection of their bill would have led to, in that terrifying hour of commotion, was a question they dared not ask themselves.

The bill of Attainder passed the Lords on a Saturday, the 8th of May, with its memorable accompaniment of a bill for not dissolving the Parliament without their own consent; hence called "the perpetual Parliament." Both Houses immediately waited on the King to move his assent. Monday was fixed on to receive his Majesty's resolution.

That hour was more than painful when the Peers retiring from their audience abandoned the sovereign to himself! The agony of Charles was more poignant than perhaps he ever experienced on any other occasion. His conscience—his policy—his affections—were opposed to the tyrannical necessity of dragging a great minister to the scaffold which the hands of his enemies had prepared. Through this awful Sunday the King struggled with himself: he might still listen to the cries of the populace scattered under the windows at Whitehall, in the Palace-yard, and in Westminster Hall. And five days only had elapsed since his barge was waiting at the Privy stairs to carry him to the House of Lords, when the tumult raged, and it was considered that his life was insecure had he left the palace. At times his natural magnanimity, the promise "on the word of a king," which he had within the last fortnight renewed to Strafford, that "he should not suffer in life, honour, or fortune,"* seemed to prevail over his great facility of yielding up his own judgment to that of others. His Privy Council, sitting in the midst of a general commotion, urged an entire submission to the will of the Parliament to preserve himself and his posterity; it was a principle of State that the safety of the kingdom was to be preferred before the life of an innocent man. They laid some stress on the generous letter of Strafford himself, which had absolved the King from all his scruples, and released him from the inviolability of his promise. This trivial counsel,

the rights of the Bishops to vote on cases of life and death, replete with the most curious erudition. It has been preserved by his faithful biographer Hacket. (ii. 152.)

* The letter Charles the First addressed to Scotland, by its peculiar orthography, evidently by his own hand, is in Strafford's Letters, ii. 416.

which showed that their argument did not exceed their courage, would have satisfied a colder heart and a meaner understanding than those of Charles, and eagerly would it have been embraced by the terror of a trembling despot, or the selfishness of the weak prince who flies from all the cares of royalty—but it could not enter into the restless emotions of Charles the First. When the King consulted the Bishops, they referred him to the Judges to satisfy him of the legality; but in this extremity, the solemn bench was deserted by the lofty magistracy of Justice. They had already withdrawn their first opinions, and had given way to the popular cry; terror had laid down a new commentary fitted to the novel doctrines of constructive or accumulative treasons, where no one particular act being treasonable, yet collectively the whole amounted to treason. They delivered their opinions with a vague unanimity; and the King complained that such dubious answers and critical distinctions served to confuse his thoughts without allaying his scruples. The Judges finally advised the King to confer with the Bishops, to tranquillise that compunction and remorse, where no law cases could afford even the authority of a poor precedent; and which a juggle of words, the offuscating jargon of sophistical lawyers, could never appease.

On this occasion again appears in the scene that subtle politician Bishop Williams. This eminent man had been recently liberated by his peers from the petty persecutions of Laud, after having been more than three years immured in the Tower. Williams had slid once more into the royal favour; and not long after, was inaugurated into the See of York. It is said that his political foresight had predicted his own restoration to the royal councils; but Williams, in this second sight, hardly contemplated among its phantoms the shade of his rival, Laud, fixed in the prison-chamber where he himself had been barred.

The capacity of this learned man was equal to his time-serving spirit. He had prodigally wasted a genius of the first order in political life, in complicate intrigues, and expedients of the day, with a versatility of principles betraying that subtle wisdom of the serpent, which is scarcely compatible with the harmlessness of the dove. This politic and refining statesman,

with a Machiavelian casuistry, now distinguished betwixt a PRIVATE and a PUBLIC conscience. He told Charles that the public conscience of a king must dispense with his private conscience as a man. The conscience of a king to preserve his kingdom was greater than that of a master or a friend for the preservation of a servant or a friend. The question was not whether he should serve Strafford, but whether he should perish with him—and therefore the corollary of this logic of politics being deduced, the astute Archbishop, between his greater and his lesser consciences, counselled even for conscience'-sake to act against conscience.*

The conduct of the prelates in this torturing hour has been sharply arraigned by those who are inveterately hostile to the order of Episcopacy, and it has even been lamented by Lord Clarendon. The misery of these learned men must have equalled the conviction of their impotence. A remedy was asked for the remediless. They sadly knew their weakness. Already they were degraded in the eyes of their country—they were about to be rejected from the rights of free men, to give an equal vote with their fellow-citizens; nor could they be insensible, while their chief lay in the dungeons of the Tower, and the screams of a

* Clarendon indignantly brands the argument as “unprelatical and ignominious. Such was this Bishop’s prodigious boldness and impiety!” The argument is odious to our moral sense. As Clarendon appears to have had a rooted dislike to Bishop Williams, and as the great adversary of Laud is rather a favourite with the Republican party, pains have been taken to palliate what offends in its morality, and to explain what is enlightened in its policy. Mrs. Macaulay at once calls it “a sensible state of the question,”—she resolves the condemnation to death of Strafford by Charles into “a point of honour with the King, and not of conscience. A king of England is never to interpose his private opinion against the Legislature. Laws of honour are only laudable among a licentious banditti.” We may perceive that Mrs. Macaulay wrote at the era of that new morality of which we afterwards witnessed such marvellous results. I will abandon to her all “the Laws of Honour,” for what they are worth; but not the King’s *veto*. How far the King of England is bound to submit his private opinion to that of the Legislature, on a point on which the oracles of law differ among themselves, is a nice and delicate question.

Mr. Brodie insists that Clarendon, while he so strongly condemns Williams here, has done it unjustly, since the other Bishops acquiesced. But it does not appear that they acquiesced in the principles of the casuistical Bishop, as the reader will shortly find in a note or two farther. The argument is so perfectly characteristic of the subtilising manner of this extraordinary personage, that Clarendon cannot be accused of purposely rendering the sophistry more odious than it is—he has certainly stated it with a malicious perspicacity.

maddened populace were echoing "No Bishops!" that heads more able to contrive mischief than their own, and hands more skilful in the arts of destruction, were fast undermining the foundations of their own Hierarchy. In that day of dereliction and terror, could the Bishops be more exempt from the common infirmities of our nature than were all the Right Honourable Privy Councillors? These already had bowed with "hat in hand giving them good words" to the insolent citizens, as these Lords going to their House tremblingly passed through their sullen lines, promising, provided they would be quiet, the blood of Strafford! Or were the Bishops to be less terrified than those oracles of the law, who in the sanctuary of justice, sitting at the tribunal of life and death, had revoked their decrees, and vacillated, till they echoed the cry of the populace around them?

Two Prelates, at least, of the five consulted by Charles, should not participate in the odium, if it be an odium, cast on their brothers. The learned Usher, indeed, as all the bishops did, referred the King to the opinions of the Judges, who by their office and their oath were to expound the law; but Usher still referred to the monarch himself the more delicate and more difficult conclusion, whether, after all that had passed during the trial, he considered that Strafford was a guilty man. Archbishop Usher was not less perplexed than he who in his perplexity had consulted the resolver of his doubts—but there are sufficient testimonies to show that Usher never persuaded Charles, as has been said, to consent to the execution of the state victim.* Juxon, the good Bishop of London, exhorted the King to do nothing against his conscience, but more particularly reprobated the extraordinary piece of political casuistry of Bishop Williams. On the second meeting in the evening, Juxon seems to have stood in silence; a silence not unintelligible to the feelings of the desponding monarch.†

* The circumstance of Usher's attendance on the Earl, in his last minutes, is a strong confirmation of the nature of his advice to the King; but the authorities which are stated in the *Biog. Brit.*, p. 4075, are conclusive.

† I have spared no pains to combine my researches relative to Juxon, because his conduct has been strangely misrepresented. Oldmixon reproaches Juxon for "having acted cunningly and said nothing at all;" and ridicules Echard for telling us what I have written above. Saunderson is referred to for the authority that "on the last meeting" (for there were two on that Sunday, a circumstance not

Thus the day was wearing away in debates and council, and the King still remained irresolute and miserable. In the evening Charles called for a second meeting of the Bishops. His councillors had offered no council to which his heart could assent. Every one seemed to suppress his own thoughts by appealing to others for that fatal decision, which by being made together in a body, seemed to save the individual from its responsibility or its injustice.*

Charles stood as it were alone in the universe, about to do an act which the universe itself would wonder at, or would condemn. It was a tale which his elevated spirit felt was to be reserved for posterity, and which posterity alone could decide on. At this moment, it would seem, the Queen came in dismay, supplicating for her children in tears and grief, and with her sad voice importuning the King to avert the momentous danger, urged on as she was by the councils of all around them.† Clarendon has feelingly observed, that "the part which the King had to act was not only harder than any Prince, but than any private gentleman had been exposed to." It is said that

noticed by our writer) "the Bishop of London spoke not a syllable." Mr. Brodie quotes Nalson, who says that Juxon dissuaded his master from passing the Bill, "but other authorities," adds Mr. Brodie, "do not support the statement." (iii. 181.)

We may accord these opposite accounts of his speech and of his silence; and it is rather a curious instance of what sometimes happens in historical researches, that contradictory facts may both at the same time be equally true.

That Juxon spoke what I have said is amply confirmed by Sir Edward Walker, who had it direct from the King. At the evening meeting he was silent, having already spoken and having nothing more to say.

The passage from Sir Edward Walker the reader may like to see. Having ascribed the opinion that the King had a double capacity, of a public and a private man, &c. to Usher, who he understood had made that distinction, "the King replied, 'No, I assure you it was not he!' whence I infer it was either York or Durham, for at the same time the King fully justified the Bishop of London for his stout opinion against it." (360.) This, with the recollection that there were two meetings in one day, prove that all the accounts, however they differ, are correct.

* Whether from a loyalist, or a parliamentary partisan, as a warning or a derision, a paper was this night fixed on the gates at Whitehall, announcing that on the morrow there would be acted in the House of Peers a famous Tragy-Comedy, called "A King and no King."—Observations on L'Estrange, 244.

† It is probably true that the Queen might, late in the day, have joined in the intreaty of so many others for the death of Strafford, as a means of appeasing the popular cry. Many writers have repeated the fact; but how greatly they have erred in assigning to her certain motives, is shown in our inquiry of Henrietta's influence over Charles the First.

no man doubted that the King, without any scruple of conscience, might have granted the Earl his pardon, had not other reasons of state hindered him.* In truth, Charles was no longer himself free.

Importunity and necessity were the two evil geniuses which stood by the side of Charles, till he could no longer wrestle with them. After the second interview in the evening with the bishops, still wavering, the King seems to have delayed the last act till the morning.† With one pen full of ink, we are told, he hastily signed the Commission granted to three noblemen for passing the two fateful Bills, which had been extorted from him. It was imagined that they offered some miserable comfort to the desponding monarch when they told him, that as his will had not consented to the deed, so neither by the medium of this Commission had his own hand signed the warrant for death. But even this heartless subterfuge was denied for his consolation when Archbishop Usher, after the Commission was signed, bursting into tears, lamented the fatal signature, praying that the King might not suffer from a wounded conscience!

Charles, who had more than once left the trial of Strafford, which he had constantly attended, with tears in his eyes, in signing the Commission bitterly wept, exclaiming that "Lord Strafford was more happy than he!" The various and contending feelings in his breast Charles himself showed when he charged Archbishop Usher, on the next morning, to assure Strafford, that "If the King's own life only were hazarded by saving his, he would never have consented to his death."‡

But the disturbed state of his mind, and the utter recklessness of his own existence, Charles surely betrayed when he allowed that bill to pass, which had been violently carried in the course of a single day through the two Houses, and by which the Parliament deprived the King of that last remaining authority of the Sovereign—the power of dissolving them.

* This is said in Abp. Usher's Life, by Parr.

† Hamond L'Estrange, 258. On this contemporary authority, I have fixed on the morning of Tuesday, but it may have been late in the preceding night, as Echard gives it.

‡ From the notes of Archbishop Usher, found in his almanack, containing the heads or memorandums of what the King desired him to communicate to Strafford.—Strafford's Letters, ii. 418.

This Bill was of far greater importance to himself than the Earl of Strafford's life; it was virtually signing his own dethronement, as in conclusion it proved to be his own execution. So completely overpowered was Charles the First by the fate of Strafford, that he cared no longer for his own.

To the last moment it was doubtful whether Charles would consent to issue the Commission. Whitelocke gives us a report that the King was at length brought to it by a promise before he had signed, that the life of Strafford should be spared. If the King had been practised on by some such artifice, we are not furnished with the knowledge. In the manuscript letter to the Queen, which I have quoted, written at a distant day, Charles says himself, that "He was surprised with it, instantly after he made that base sinful concession." Did the mystifying casuistry of the double royal consciences of Bishop Williams prove so unanswerable at the moment, as to have silenced the compunctions which Charles never ceased to feel all the rest of his days? "That he should ever have been brought to it," observes Whitelocke, "was admired by most of his subjects as well as by foreigners." The world indeed wondered, and none more than the great master of plots and counter-plots, Pym himself. After all his industrious ingenuity, his fertility of invention, the arduous conduct of that awful trial; after all the terror he had spread through the country, all the artifices he had practised in an insurrectionary metropolis; all the breathless labours his Epicurean habits had endured*—still the demagogue doubted of his own success, and to the last dreaded to be foiled by the magnanimity of Charles. When Pym first learned that the Commission was signed, he lifted his hands in ecstasy,

* We know so little of the private characters and habits of our early patriots, that we despair ever of forming a more intimate acquaintance with these great and able men. Hacket has characterised Pym, in his curious though often pedantic manner, *Homo ex argilla, et luto factus Epicureo*, as Tully said of Piso, that is in Christian English "a painted sepulchre, a belly-god." (ii. 149.) His translation is a comment. It is evident that the last image does not refer to merely philosophical doctrines, but to the more vulgar Epicurean habits. The wooden cut, which authenticates his speeches, to which I have before alluded, conveys to us the appearance of a votary to Bacchus and Ceres. Since the publication of these volumes, the portrait of Pym has been presented to us in Lord Nugent's "Memorials." All accounts agree that his anxious labours exhausted him and produced his death.

exclaiming, "Has he given us the head of Strafford! then he will refuse us nothing!"

On Monday, Maxwell, the Gentleman Usher to the Lords, hurried to acquaint the Commons with the good news of the royal assent by commission to the two bills, bearing also a message from the Lords that they were waiting for the Speaker and the House of Commons to join them. So transported was this officer by the amazing intelligence, that he precipitated himself at once into the House, without the usual form of first demanding entrance, and he appeared without that insignia of office, his black rod. Exceptions were made at this unofficial and abrupt violation of the dignity of the House, but as most of the members soon shared in the wild joy of the informal and hasty Usher, he was favoured by escaping from a committal.

But the struggle in the royal breast had not passed away with the agony of the horrible concession. Still Charles ruminated in the solitude of his own conscience, and still he seemed to be hanging on some frail hope that yet one more attempt remained, at least, to save shedding the blood of the condemned victim.

On the following morning, Tuesday, the King addressed a letter, written with his own hand, to the Lords, and which was delivered with unusual solemnity by the hand of the Prince of Wales. As solemnly and as mournfully was it received. Twice it was read amidst the deepest silence. "After serious and SAD consideration," says Rushworth, twelve Peers were deputed as messengers to the King, humbly to signify that his intentions could not be advised by them, without danger to himself, his Queen, and his children. So dreaded was the alarm at that moment of the popular fury, by the Lords as well as the King, that even Charles had only proposed to spare the blood of Strafford, as the King himself now observed to the Lords, by an If—"If it may be done without discontenting my people"—more he cared not to say, and was retiring, when the Lords observed that they were suitors for his royal favour to the innocent children of Strafford. This last mark of attention bestowed on the unhappy man, touched the sorrowful monarch, who seemed grateful. The Lords then offered to return into his own hands the letter which he himself had written; this Charles waived, observing, "My Lords, what I have written to you, I shall be content if it be

registered by you in your House. In it you may see my mind ; I hope you will use it to my honour."

The pathetic letter of Charles the First, written on this trying occasion, betrays his deep emotions with the simplicity of nature. It implores, as the humblest suitor might implore, to have the liberty of extending the royal prerogative of mercy ; mercy which the King as much required for himself, from the hands of Parliament, as the victim on whom he wished to bestow it. In the history of his life it deserves to be perpetuated for posterity. Charles evidently designed it to stand on the Records of the House of Lords, if not in the form of a protest, at least as a perpetual testimony that however they had obtained a forced acquiescence, he had not otherwise consented to the execution of Strafford :—

" My Lords,

" I did yesterday satisfy the justice of the kingdom by passing the Bill of Attainder against the Earl of Strafford. But mercy being as inherent and inseparable to a king as justice, I desire in some measure to show that likewise, by suffering that unfortunate man to fulfil the natural course of his life in close imprisonment ; yet so, that if ever he make the least offer to escape, or offer directly or indirectly to meddle in any sort of public business, especially with me, either by message or letter, it shall cost him his life, without farther process. This, if it may be done without the discontentment of my people, will be an unspeakable contentment to me.

" To which end, as, in the first place, I by this letter do earnestly desire your approbation, and, to endear it the more, have chosen him to carry it, who is of all your House most dear unto me, so I desire that, by conference, you will endeavour to give the House of Commons contentment likewise, assuring you that the exercise of mercy is no more pleasing to me, than to see both Houses of Parliament consent, for my sake, that I should moderate the severity of the law in so important a case.

" I will not say that your complying with me in this my intended mercy, shall make me more willing, but certainly it will make me more cheerful in granting your just grievances. But if no less than his life will satisfy my people, I must say

Fiat Justitia. Thus, again recommending the consideration of my intentions to you, I rest,

“Your unalterable and affectionate friend,

“CHARLES R.”

“If he must die, it were charity to reprieve him till Saturday.”

At this day, removed from the prejudices and the passions of the cotemporaries of Charles the First, will the unadorned simplicity of this letter be passed over without emotion? Not a sentence but is impressed with the deep feeling which dictated it. The unusual form of the letter, as well as the infant messenger who presented it, gave it the air of a domestic, rather than a royal communication, and betrayed all the tenderness of a sorrowing friend seeking for an equal affection.

Yet at the time, this letter was censured with severity by the ultra-royalists. In their eyes royalty was degraded by becoming a suppliant to the people by the mediation of the Peers. For what purpose should the King write to annul, or to alter that sentence which he had himself just passed, and which they had gained with so much danger and many artifices? Could he rationally expect that they would undo what he himself had failed in the courage not to have done? Could the King expect aught but a second repulse? And to have sent on this forlorn hope the young Prince, was it to accustom the heir of the Crown from his very childhood to the denials of his subjects? And to desire the respite of two or three days for the condemned prisoner, was begging for a power and authority with which he had not parted by conceding the act of attainder. Even the form of the letter was objected to; it was not kingly. A court-missive to the Peers bears the King's signature at its head, and is never subscribed with the equality of private friendship. Such were some of the discourses of the day. Unhappy monarchs! who so often, when they act in conformity to State-interests, are condemned as heartless men; and when they descend from the throne are scorned at for the strong sympathies inspired by the devotion and despondency of friendship.

The pitiable postscript of this letter, “*cette froide prière*,” as the vivacious M. Guizot exclaims, is remarkable, as it has been said that this graceless addition was the suggestion of the Queen,

for a very sinister design. Burnet relates an anecdote which he had from Lord Hollis himself, whose sister Strafford had married. The King sent for Hollis to consult on means to save his relative's life. Hollis observed that the King might legally reprieve this condemned prisoner, but this he would not advise. Hollis drew up a petition for Strafford for a short respite to settle his affairs, and a speech for the King, who was to come down to the House holding the petition in his hand. Hollis had persuaded many, by a sort of political logic, of the expediency of saving Strafford's life, who, as he assured them, in that case, reverting to his former principles, would become wholly theirs. His preservation thus would be more serviceable than if made an example on such new and doubtful points. In the mean while it had been intimated to the Queen that Hollis had engaged Strafford to accuse her; of what we are not told. On this the Queen not only hindered the King from going to the House, changing the speech into a message writ with the King's own hand and carried by the Prince of Wales, which Hollis observed would "perhaps have done as well, the King being apt to spoil things by an unacceptable manner." "But to the wonder of the whole world," continues Burnet, "the Queen prevailed with him to add that mean postscript, 'If he must die, it were charity to reprieve him till Saturday,' which was a very unhandsome giving up of the whole message. When it was communicated to both Houses, the whole Court-party was plainly against it; and so he fell truly by the Queen's means."

This was one of those anecdotes which are sometimes cited as historical; and even Mr. Hallam has recently repeated it. Burnet, long after he had heard it in the looseness of conversation, records the reminiscence in his lively manner. Let us take the story as we find it. The secret anecdote concerning the postscript Hollis could hardly have known but from another. Had the Queen dreaded every hour an accuser in this state-prisoner, and for what crime we are never told, she would not have been urgent to impede the course of law, even for a day. She would not have exerted her fascinating influence to add the postscript, but rather to have suppressed the letter. What Hollis related of himself may be deemed correct; what he told after another can only be suppositious. The mystery in which

some have involved this humble postscript, and Burnet's malicious intention, were designed to cast a fresh odium on an unpopular Queen. Henrietta, after all, never suggested this postscript, which has attracted so much criticism. The King, in his audience with the Lords, assigned the simple and natural motive. Charles said, "my other intention proceeding out of charity for a few days' respite was upon *certain information*, that his estate was so distracted that it necessarily required some few days for settlement."* And this fact is even confirmed by Hollis himself, who, in his proposed petition, which had been submitted to the King, urged this very motive as its plea; the real suggester of this humble intreaty was Strafford himself, merely for a domestic purpose, as we find in Laud's Diary.†

The extraordinary letter which Strafford addressed to the King to free him from his promise of saving his life, and to relieve the agony of his conscience in consenting to his death, accords not with that surprise and disappointment which he showed on learning his fate. It is said that the Earl on hearing of his fate, suddenly rising from his seat, and looking up to Heaven, exclaimed, "Put not your trust in Princes nor in the sons of men, for in them there is no salvation." There is a mystery in this conduct now perhaps too late to clear away; and more than one reason has been assigned. Carte has even questioned the authenticity of the printed letter. To have reproached Charles with the sentence of death which Strafford knew was inevitable, is so utterly inconsistent with the magnanimity which had dictated the noble letter, that we must believe we know the story too imperfectly to comprehend it.

I do not like to leave the reader without preserving some particulars, which exhibit the magnanimity of this great minister.

The death of Strafford was as dignified as his life. Unsubdued by the stroke of fortune, he was yet overcome by the tenderness of domestic life—his friends and his family occupied his last thoughts.

On the night before the execution, the Earl sent for the Lieutenant of the Tower, to ask whether it were possible for him to speak with the Archbishop now in the Tower. "Master

* Rushworth, iv. 266.

† Laud's History of his Troubles, 177.

Lieutenant," said Strafford, "you shall hear what passes betwixt us ; it is not a time either for him to plot heresy, or me to plot treason." This seems to have been said with playful irony. The Lieutenant desired his Lordship would petition Parliament for that favour. "No," replied Strafford, "I have gotten my dispatch from them, and will trouble them no more ; I am now petitioning a higher court, where neither partiality can be expected, nor error feared." A sharp and indignant reprimand of them—he deigned not to be querulous. Strafford then requested Archbishop Usher to desire Laud "to be at his window, when I shall go abroad to-morrow, for a last farewell."

Not seeing Laud, he begged to approach nearer to his apartment, but the old man was now hastening to the window of his cell. Thus met the two great ministers of Charles, and the scene was ominous of the fate of their master ! The aged Laud lifted up his feeble hands to bestow the blessing he could not speak, fainting in the arms of his attendant. Laud who could not suffer the sight of his great friend led to the scaffold, yet himself soon mounted that scaffold with no disturbance of mind. When Laud was reproached by the Puritans for that womanly softness, he said that when he should come to his own execution they would see that he was more sensible of the death of the great Earl than of his own.

The Lieutenant desired Strafford to take coach for fear the people should rush in upon him and tear him to pieces. The Scotch Balfour imagined that he was at Edinburgh. Strafford firmly replied, "No ! Master Lieutenant, I dare look death in the face and the people too." He pleasantly added, "Have you a care that I do not escape—I care not how I die, whether by the stroke of the executioner, or the madness of the people, if that may give them better content ; it is all one to me !" Not less than a hundred thousand persons, for many had arrived from all parts, were viewed in a long perspective on Tower-hill. They witnessed his death in silence, offering neither insults nor reproaches. Whether many sympathised with the fate of the great statesman may be doubtful, certainly many rejoiced at it. It was not the criminality of the man, which the populace might have misconceived, but could never have comprehended, which probably touched them, but it was a Minister of State submitted

to a criminal's fate ; it was the first public execution of the kind which the populace had ever beheld. At first their awe chastised their joy—but the secret satisfaction betrayed itself when the head of Strafford fell from the block. Most who returned home waving their hats, shouted through the towns they passed, "His head is off! His head is off!" and bonfires blazed, or windows were broken, for all did not join in the popular acclamations. Some departed in silence and musing, and as Monsieur Guizot has happily expressed it, full of doubts and uneasiness as to the justice of that wish which they came from witnessing accomplished.

Strafford, in walking from the Tower, took off his hat frequently, saluting the people. His firm step and lofty air are described by a contemporary account to have been like that of a general marching in a triumph, rather than to a scaffold.* This self-possession in the grace of his motions, and the ease of his language to the last moment of life on the scaffold, evinced the undaunted spirit of the man. The pang of bidding a last farewell to some friends on the scaffold softened his accustomed severity ; but when Strafford beheld his brother, Sir George Wentworth, weeping excessively, "Brother," said the Earl, with a vivacious cheerfulness, "what do you see in me to cause these tears? Does any indecent fear betray in me guilt,—or my innocent boldness, Atheism? Think that you are now accompanying me the third time to my marriage-bed. That block must be my pillow,—and here shall I rest from all my labours. No thoughts of envy, no dreams of treason, nor jealousies nor cares for the King, the State, or myself, shall interrupt this easy sleep."† While undressing himself and winding his hair under the cap, looking on the block, he said, "I do as cheerfully put off my doublet at this time, as ever I did when I went to bed." This sentiment may to some appear

* Echard repeated this simile, as he did some others in his compilation, on which Oldmixon, not at all aware that they are not the property of the laborious compiler, attacks them with ferocious criticism. "Mr. Echard's similes are extremely natural : nothing in the world is so like a triumph as to have one's head cut off." The Archdeacon had stolen another on Laud's fainting in taking leave of Strafford, "as if his soul would have forced its way to have joined the Earl's in its passage to eternity." Oldmixon exclaims, "He plays with eternity as flies do with the flame."

† Nalson, ii. 195.

unnatural; but if we reflect what of late he had undergone, and what, had he lived, he could not escape from, Death offered a relief to such a man which life could no longer afford.

There are some remarkable passages in his speech. Strafford doubtless had meditated in his imprisonment on the fate of other illustrious men—and some, too, Ministers of State, who like him had been cast forth as a sacrifice to the people, and not always more criminal than himself. To these he seems to have alluded. “Although it be my ill-hap to be misconstrued, I am not the first man that hath suffered in this kind; it is a common portion that befalls men in this life. Righteous judgments shall be hereafter. Here we are subject to error, and misjudging one another. I was so far from being against Parliaments, that I did always think Parliaments in England to be the happy constitution of the kingdom, and the best means to make the King and his people happy.” Strafford, kneeling down, made a solemn protestation—“I am now in the very door, going out, and my next step must be from time to eternity, either of peace or pain—I solemnly call God to witness I am not guilty, so far as I can understand, of the great crime laid to my charge, nor ever had the least inclination to injure the King, the State, the Laws, or the Religion of this kingdom.” This solemn acknowledgment, this address to the God whom he feared, at the moment of death, seems intolerable to some; yet there may be much more truth in the confession than they choose to allow, or with their prejudices are capable to conceive. Strafford, in the legacy of his words to the people, paid a tribute to the Constitution :*—that “he was ignorant of the nature of

* Mr. Brodie informs us that certain draughts of speeches of the Earl are not genuine. Certainly those are not which are full of contrition for his past conduct. Mr. Brodie perceived that they were at variance with that which Rushworth took from his lips on the scaffold,—“though charity,” continues Mr. Brodie, “would induce all who are acquainted with his correspondence, &c., to wish that it had been otherwise, or at all events that that portion at least of the speech actually delivered on the scaffold, in which he declares himself to have been always a friend to Parliaments were not authentic, for it is deplorable to believe that his last moments were polluted with an untruth.” Brodie, *Brit. Empire*, iii. 124.

Who is polluted with an untruth? Those passages which Mr. Brodie might point out as inimical to Parliaments, the Earl would probably have defended as being only hostile, not to Parliaments, for which he was an advocate, but to Eliot, to Pym to Prynne, to Hampden, to Vane and their friends, whom he marked out as a faction.

that Constitution," as Mrs. Macaulay asserts, was no ignorance peculiar to Strafford.

With the prescience of a statesman, Strafford professed his apprehension of future evils, recommending to every man to lay his hand on his heart, and seriously consider whether the beginning of the people's happiness should be written in letters of blood? "I fear," he added, "they are in a wrong way!" Strafford foresaw the approaching ruin of the Church, and solemnly forbade his son, from a religious motive, ever to purchase Church-lands. It was Strafford's notion that the revenues of the Church would be seized on by the nobility and the gentry. He was not far from the truth in the result; but he could not yet have imagined that a baser class of adventurers were to become lords over lords, and masters over gentlemen.

He passed half an hour at prayers. In rising to approach the block he gave his last reminiscences to his family—naming them endearingly to his brother. He concluded, "Now I have nigh done; one stroke will make my wife husbandless, my dear children fatherless, my poor servants masterless, and separate me from my dear brother, and all my friends; but let God be to you and them all in all." He took his solemn leave of the noblemen and others about him, offering his hand.

There was a copy of the heads of notes for his speech written by his own hand, and found on the scaffold; among them were these—"Submit to what is voted justice, but my intentions innocent from subverting, &c.; acquit the King constrained—strange way to write the beginning of Reformation and settlement of a Kingdom in blood."

When Archbishop Usher gave an account to the King of the calm majesty of Strafford's death, adding that he had seen many die, but never so white a soul return to its Maker, Charles, turning aside, could not forbear those emotions of tenderness, of grief, and of remorse, which his tears could not efface, and which haunted his memory, and embittered his last hour.

In the whole compass of English history, no incident offers more critical difficulties in its narrative, than the trial of Strafford, and no character seems more tender to touch on than that of this able minister. Even among his own contemporaries the

opinions of men were strongly opposed, and more particularly on the mortal sentence. The passions of those days being involved in the principles of a free constitution, have been transferred to our own, and Strafford remains still a name which kindles the vindictive spirit of those who view nothing but undeviating despotism on one side, and nothing but the holiest devotion of patriotism on the other. One of the most acute investigators of legal evidence, in his elaborate review of the present subject, after the keenest scrutiny, to bring Strafford within the letter of the law, has ingenuously confessed that these legal points may be still open to every sort of legal objection. In truth, those writers who have denounced this minister, hardly pretend that he was amenable to any existing law; it was for this reason that the baffled Commons desisted from the trial of a man, whose presumed and undefinable crime of an intention to subvert the fundamental laws of the realm had yet never entered into the code of our jurisprudence. Yet the philosophical historian to whom we have referred, has not hesitated to pronounce that "he died justly before God and man;" but Mr. Hallam adds—so strong is his love of truth, and so firm is his attachment to party—"In condemning the bill of attainder we cannot look upon it as a crime." Such was the hard fate of Strafford! He was tried for a supposititious crime, and stands condemned by a paradox! This is in the nature of things where party is prevalent and justice is violated.

Were it possible to discover a philosopher so ignorant and so innocent of traditional prejudices and vulgar opinions as first to have learnt the tale of Strafford only by his trial, he would hardly hesitate to acquit the illustrious prisoner; but surely he would be confirmed in his sentiments or his suspicions when he had further meditated on the voluminous discussions of those who advocate the justice of the bill of attainder. He might wonder at that anxiety and that perplexity which they betray by their legal subtleties; he would find himself involved in the most abstruse arguments, as if the crimes of Strafford were rather of a metaphysical nature than overt acts of treason which even some dormant law might be imagined to reach; he might smile at the preliminary questions they have sometimes been compelled to resort to before they venture to deduce their inferences;

he might be startled at the monstrous ingenuity of the incomprehensible charges of constructive or accumulative treason, and at the solution of that enigma which explains that, however there was no established law for Strafford's condemnation to death, yet was he justly condemned by the Legislature, though he would have been unjustly condemned by an ordinary Court of Law.* And, finally, after all the tedious sophistry of lawyers, he might be surprised that these writers have usually wound up their vindication of the anomalous proceedings and the violation of public justice, by pleas of necessity, and apologies to palliate, what they had found to be so troublesome to explain † Yet, let us not forget the illustrious names at the bar who opposed the heartless St. John, and the inveterate advocates, Glynn and Maynard—the bar at least was honourably divided.

We escape from the intricate and tenebrous labyrinth of the lawyers, emerging from their cloudy arguments to the open day-light of human nature. We will consider Strafford as the minister of Charles the First. We may not flatter ourselves that we can penetrate into the secret recesses of his comprehensive mind, but it is the privilege of the passionless historian, with a wider scope of information than contemporaries possess, to form juster views of the man. We have to offer neither invectives nor apologies.

The poet May, who still retained some courtly reminiscences, even in his character as the historian and the Secretary of the Parliament, struck by the genius of the great Minister, compared Strafford with the Roman Curio of his own Lucan :—

*Haud alium tanta civem tulit indole Roma,
Aut cui plus leges deberent recta sequenti.
Perdita tunc Urbi nocuerunt secula, postquam*

* Brodie, iii. 99.

† Brodie, iii. 104. Here is a notable instance. After having occupied several pages in controverting the enlightened opinion of a great statesman himself, Charles Fox, on the Commons' "departure in the case of Strafford from the sacred principles of justice," Mr. Brodie closes thus, "There seemed every reason to conclude that the fate of the Empire depended in a great measure upon his ; a view which even brings the matter within Mr. Fox's idea in regard to self-defence." The ingenuity, if not the ingenuousness, is here admirable ; as if not quite confident of all his previous legal distinctions, this historical controversialist, in his last distress of argument, offers to rest his cause by accepting the very opinion which he had been all along contending with !

Ambitus, et luxus, et opum metuenda facultas,
 Transverso mentem dubiam torrente tulerunt,
 Momentumque fuit mutatus Curio rerum.

In all our pregnant mother's tribes before,
 A son of nobler hope she never bore ;
 A soul more bright, more great, she never knew,
 While to thy country's interest thou wert true.
 But thy bad fate o'erruled thy native worth,
 And in an age abandon'd brought thee forth ;
 When Vice in triumph through the city pass'd,
 And dreadful wrath and power laid all things waste.
 The sweeping stream thy better purpose cross'd,
 And in the headlong torrent wert thou lost.
 Much to the ruin of the State was done
 When Curio by "Ambition's bribe" was won ;
 Curio, the hope of Rome, and her most worthy Son. }

Rowe.

A modern historian, to whom every respect is due for his discernment and impartiality on the general subjects of our history, has pronounced of Strafford that "he was the most active and formidable enemy to the liberties of the people. He laboured—his own letters prove it—to exalt the power of the throne on the ruin of those rights of which he once had been the most strenuous advocate."* Such a popular opinion well merits that closer scrutiny which gratifies the love of truth.

Was it then ambition, reckless of its means, which so wholly contaminated this great spirit, as basely to work in enslaving his fellow-countrymen to the tyranny of a despot? Was an earldom weighed against a baronetcy? Few statesmen, it is suspected, reject the seduction of political ambition, even in the private station occupied by independent Strafford: but it may yet be a question whether Strafford ever considered that his Sovereign was this absolute tyrant? Even May confesses that "he understood the right way, and the liberty of his country as well as any man; for which in former Parliaments he stood up stiffly, and seemed an excellent patriot." At his trial, Strafford declared that his opinions had suffered no change, whatever they might deem or misconceive of his conduct. Alluding to the Commons, he said, "I am the same man in opinion that I was when I was one of them." And some days after, with deeper emotions, "I

* Dr. Lingard, x. 136.

confess I am charged with treason by the honourable House of Commons, and that it is my greatest grief; for if it were not an arrow sent out of that quiver, it would not be so heavy as it is; but, as it comes from them, it pierces my heart, though not with guilt, yet with grief, that in my grey hairs I should be misunderstood by the companions of my youth with whom I have formerly spent so much time."

Let us take Strafford at a moment less guarded than when he stood at the bar of his peers, an impeached minister—let us seek him in the secret confession of his privacy, and in the day of his glory. Strafford flattered himself that he had triumphed over his great adversary Pym, and that party:—

"Now I can say the King is as absolute here (Ireland) as any prince in the whole world can be; and may be still, if it be not spoiled on that side (the Commons.) For so long as his Majesty shall have here a deputy of faith and understanding, and that he be preserved in credit, and independent upon any but the King himself, let it be laid as a ground, it is the deputy's fault if the King be denied any reasonable claim."

We may assume this as the secret principle of Strafford's political conduct. He considered that the King was to be invested with "absolute power," but he explains the ambiguous phrase, and he restricts this mighty power by any "reasonable claims." Arbitrary power, therefore, when unreasonable, would be illegal. Strafford had a peculiar expression to describe the right of the King, amidst his difficulties to raise supplies. It was to be done "*candide et caste*"—this appears by the evidence of Lord Cottington and others on the trial. In a curious paper addressed to the King on the subject of "war with Austria," he employs the same expression; he impresses on the King to exercise "the power only for public and necessary uses; to spare the people as much and often as it is possible; this being the only means to preserve, as may be said, *the chastity* of these levies."* In another place, alluding to the ship-money, he says, "I am satisfied that monies raised for setting forth a fleet, was *chastely* bestowed that way." It is evident that by the *chastity* of levies of money, he meant an entire application to the necessary purposes for which they were proposed. Had Strafford had none

* Strafford's Letters, ii. 62.

but arbitrary notions in his head, he had never troubled himself with such nice distinctions. But the obnoxious phrase of "absolute power" would be construed by a Commonwealth man odiously, passing over the fact that Strafford in his style, however high, seems always to have subdued its worst construction. Had Charles been the Nero, which has been so artfully impressed on us, would Strafford have laboured to render the tyrant, as he did the King, absolute?

Strafford, like most men of that day, could not have entertained those correct notions of a popular constitution, which required such a length of time after his own age for their establishment. The principles of our political freedom were in his day fluctuating, depending on precedents, and always involved in controversy. He himself has more than once lamented this cruel uncertainty, and earnestly prayed for the time when "the prerogative and the liberty of the subject should be determined." So doubtful and obscure were then the conflicting sentiments even in the capacious mind of this great statesman! Candour requires that we should credit what his intimate friend Sir George Radcliffe assures us; we have no reason to suppose that he has ascribed suppositious sentiments to his great friend. He asserts that Strafford "disliked the abuse of regal authority, but it appeared to him most hard and difficult to keep the interests of the King and the people from encroaching one upon another," that "Experience had taught him that there was less danger to increase the regal power than that the people should gain advantage over the King; the one may turn to the prejudice of some particular sufferer, the other draws on the ruin of the whole."

This opinion betrays more the dread of a democracy than an assent to the passive obedience of arbitrary power. On the scaffold Strafford himself declared that "he had the ill-hap to be misconstrued, for that he had ever considered that the Parliament of England were the happiest constitution that any kingdom lived under." Strafford, so late as in 1639, advised Charles to call a Parliament; and Whitelocke observes, that "Strafford had the honour of the people's good opinion for promoting this resolution." In the style of his correspondence with the King, we observe the most complete personal devo-

tion ; but we must recollect that he had to engage the affections of a distant master, and that confident of his own ability as a minister, which the result of his Irish administration had shown, in the improvement of the revenue, and the quieting of that unhappy kingdom, he was desirous to inspire the King by the confidence he himself possessed. However ambitious of office, with his noble spirit and his statesman-like views, and his independence of fortune, he would not tamely stand by as the obsequious deputy of a capricious tyrant. The phrase "The King of absolute power," however odious in the popular sense, would not be so in constitutional usage ; it may imply only the obedience due to the sovereign ; a King of England, the English lawyers have said, is the most absolute Prince in Europe, for the executive branch of the Constitution is itself absolute power.

Abstract propositions in the science of politics mislead, because opposite parties in adopting identical terms affix different associations of ideas. It is the timely, shall we say the fortunate, application of such propositions, either in favour of the liberty of the subject, or the maintenance of the sovereign's power, which alone preserves the variable unity of our Constitution. The sovereign sometimes requires protection from the people, as well as the people from the King. Even Pym in his speech against Strafford observed, "If the prerogative of the King overwhelm the liberty of the people, it will be turned into tyranny ; if liberty undermine the prerogative, it will grow into anarchy."* To such an abstract proposition we may believe that Strafford would have willingly subscribed—yet the conduct of the patriot Pym and the minister Strafford was in diametrical opposition—the one in agreeing with the identical proposition would have had "the prerogative of the King" more strongly impressed on his mind as being "undermined ;" the other "the liberty of the subject" as being "overwhelmed." And should we further allow, for the sake of argument, that neither were stimulated by personal hostility, or acted from party motives, the one would have been alarmed at anarchy, while the other would have abhorred tyranny. Each, perhaps, by false ideas was governing the public mind—and the un-

* Rushworth, viii. 662.

happy nation, in that critical period of the Constitution, was doomed to feel the successive evils of that tyranny, and that anarchy, of which their leaders had formed such unsettled notions.

Mr. Brodie has said, that "it cannot be disputed that the generous tear which has been shed for Strafford might well have been spared." And as Mr. Brodie provokingly found in the sage and temperate Whitelocke a glowing eulogy on the magnanimous Strafford, he at once hastily suspects that the text has been interpolated. This noble character of Strafford, which Hume has transcribed into his text, however, is genuine.*

At this day, when the sentence of Strafford becomes but "a problem in political ethics," and as an *Æsopian* fable with its instructive moral, truth should be dearer to us than the memories of Strafford and of Pym—or the orgasm of a female demagogue in Mrs. Macaulay, the cavils of a Scotch advocate in Mr. Brodie, or even the liberal views of a philosophic historian in Mr. Hallam. It is good to be jealous in the maintenance of freedom, but in the silence of seclusion, not less dear to the good and the wise is the sanctity of truth!

Strafford suffered execution by the decision of the Judges whose judicial opinion may still raise a blush in their successors on the bench: it was a huddled opinion extorted from their personal fears, where particularising no act, they condemned a man on the generality.† A philosophical lawyer of our own times, who himself would have voted for the death of Strafford, is compelled to offer an apology for this judicial opinion, observing that the two articles—one of which was quartering

* Brodie, iii. 94. This writer refers to the *first* edition of Whitelocke's Memorials, (1622), edited by the Earl of Anglesey, who took great liberties with the text and made important castrations. The *second* edition of 1732, published by subscription, was printed entire from the original manuscript. This valuable edition appears without a new preface, or the name of an Editor, which, after frequent inquiries, I could never learn. The entire passage which raised Mr. Brodie's suspicions so unjustly, appears *ad verbum* in the genuine edition.

† Sir George Radcliffe has stated the fact concerning the Judges with remarkable simplicity. "The Judges were asked upon what grounds they had delivered their opinion to the Lords; to which they would give no answer, but that as the case was put to them it was treason." One of the articles voted was for having quartered a serjeant and four soldiers on a person, for refusing to obey his orders as Deputy of Ireland, and this was deemed "levying war against the King!"—*Strafford's Letters*, ii. 432.

troops on the people of Ireland, which, however, "had been enforced so seldom, that it could not be brought within the act of treason," and another article in which the Peers had voted him guilty, but "not on the whole matter"—may be said, to use the words of this able writer, "at least to approach very nearly to a substantive treason, within the statute of Edward the Third."* So difficult it was to determine the character of the crime—and so unconsciously might it have been committed, at a period when, as Mr. Hallam observes, "the rules of evidence were very imperfectly recognised, or continually transgressed."

Mr. Hallam rejoices at the condemnation of Strafford, but he acknowledges that "He should rather found his conviction of Strafford's systematic hostility to our fundamental laws, on his correspondence since brought to light, as well as his general conduct in administration, than on any overt acts proved on his impeachment."† What now becomes of the justice of the Peers, and the Judges? since to have rendered justifiable the death-condemnation of this minister, on clear and positive evidence, we are told that it required that his Judges, to save their consciences, ought to have lived one hundred and fifty years later than they did; that is, to the time of the publication of Strafford's private correspondence.

In regard to this private correspondence, and some unconstitutional language held in Council, no one has yet thought necessary to ascertain what might be the true meaning this minister attached to these ambiguous expressions; no one yet has placed himself in the situation of the minister to comprehend his motives, or to penetrate into his design.

What meant Strafford by recurring to "extraordinary ways" should the Parliament refuse supplies? What when he told the King that "having tried the affections of his people, and being refused, he was absolved from all rule of government?" Why did he exult that he had conferred on the King in Ireland "absolute power?"

This high style may on its face admit of the most odious construction. But it is harmless, if "the extraordinary ways" was no grievance, but the suggestion of some "chaste" system of

* Hallam, i. 568.

† Ibid, 567.

finance. "An absolved King" is a phrase which seems in separating the executive power from the legislative, to make the monarch independent of the laws; the phrase was thrown out in the heat and collision of opinions amidst a Privy Council, and with a view of the peculiar circumstances into which the King was then cast. It might mean as much as his enemies could wish, or as little as his advocate might choose. "Absolute power" does not necessarily include "arbitrary power;" absolute power may be only an efficient power for a defined object, and on this principle every English monarch becomes a most absolute sovereign in his executive capacity; arbitrary power, depending only on the caprice of the individual, is indefinite and unlimited. Who can ascertain the extent of Strafford's devotion to the King? Would he have crouched as the vile creature of a brutal despot? Would he, whatever might be his ambition, have sacrificed the nation to the arbitrary rule of a capricious sovereign? Would he have stood by the side of Charles the First had he believed the King that tyrant, which is still the hollow echo of partisans? This is the question which should be resolved.

The style of the minister, indeed, is often an evidence of his resolution to support the King against that superior force under which Charles the First had of late succumbed. Strafford, confident in his own powers, could fearlessly have grappled with what he fatally deemed a chimerical faction.

If we look into some parts of Strafford's conduct, we may be convinced that at least he was sensible of the value of the Constitution; he solemnly swore this, as he laid his head on the block. He had felt as a Briton, and had been ranked among our Patriots. But at times to Strafford the power of the Commons seemed more evident than their authority. We know that Charles the First in his early manhood, after the ungenerous treatment he had received from his first Parliament, and repeated trials to gain their favour, abhorred, or perhaps dreaded the very name; and since that long-passed day he had gained nothing by concessions but a sense of his own weakness. But his minister was not hostile to Parliaments; it was by his persuasion that they were assembled; and he iterated his prayers that the King and his Parliament should meet in mutual con-

fidence.* This fact of itself would be sufficient to discover the limits the minister seems in his mind to have set to his devotion to the King; this is not denied by his enemies, but they have neutralised its merit; one, by maliciously assuring us he only meant dependant Parliaments,† another by maintaining that he merely prudentially referred to Parliaments at times, in order to save himself from the very fate he met with.‡ Strafford was perhaps a superior minister who anticipated a happier era when the monarch might find in his Parliament a source of strength, and the Parliament in the Sovereign a source of honour.

It was at one of those awful and opposite crises which approximate to revolution, that the minister Strafford stood forth, the champion of his sovereign. Strafford had ruled that land of Ire—as Fuller quaintly but expressively calls that unhappy country, long conquered by its neighbour, and ever in war with its own children—with firmness and wisdom. The acts for which he was impeached chiefly relate to his Irish administration; but we know that that government has always been irregular from obvious causes, and too often compelled to resort to martial law. Mrs. Macaulay replying to those who asserted that the sentence by which Strafford fell was not according to statute law, plausibly insisted that “circumstances may arise of so peculiar and urgent a nature as to render it necessary for the legislative power to exceed the strict letter of the law.”§ Abstract positions like these are equally strong on either side; Strafford might have defended his own troubled administration in Ireland by adopting the very argument which was pointed for his destruction. Strafford himself was so unconscious of criminality, in the government of Ireland, that he appealed to it as the evidence

* I shall transcribe a passage on the Irish Parliament, which will at least convey some notion of Strafford's opinion of all the Parliaments in Charles' reign.

“The Parliament is ended here; the King, I trust, well satisfied in the service done him, and if I be not much mistaken, his subjects infinitely satisfied in particular regards towards them, which indeed is the happy effects of Parliaments. And yet *this is the only ripe Parliament that hath been gathered in my time, all the rest have been a green fruit broken from the bough*, which, as you know, are never so kindly or pleasant. Happy it were if we might see the like in England: every thing in its season—this time it becomes us to pray for, and when God sends it, to make the right use of it.”—Strafford's Letters, i. 420.

† Macaulay, ii. 461.

‡ Brodie, iii. 82.

§ Macaulay, ii. 463.

of his able administration ; nor was this entirely denied by his adversaries. Never was this minister taken more by surprise than when Pym, having opened his introduction to the trial, a sealed paper was produced which appeared to be sent from the Irish Parliament, purporting that the Commons there had voted the Earl guilty of high-treason. Strafford was startled ; at once he saw through the long scene which was opening on him—exclaiming that “There was a conspiracy against him to take his life !” * Pym and his Committee remonstrated with the Lords that he who stood impeached of treason had dared to accuse the Parliament of a conspiracy against him. The Earl was compelled on his knees to retract his words. Strafford, however, here betrayed no deficient sagacity. It was indeed one of the preliminaries of a conspiracy, by getting up an impeachment among the Commons at Dublin to prepare the minds, and prejudice the passions of the Parliament at London.

The situation of the minister was surrounded by the most thorny difficulties ; he felt them, and he pleaded for them. “Do not, my Lords,” cried the oppressed statesman when before the tribunal of the nation—“do not put greater difficulties upon the Ministers of State than that with cheerfulness they may serve the King and the State, for, if you will examine them by every grain, or every little weight, it will be so heavy that the public affairs of the kingdom will be left waste, and no man will meddle with them that hath wisdom and honour and fortune to lose.”

A strong administration is not a popular one, and it has never been difficult to render the commanding genius of a great minister odious to the people. In the case of Strafford, unparalleled artifices were directed to this single purpose. “The brutish multitude,” as Sir Philip Warwick indignantly calls them, at the decapitation of Strafford, exulted that “his head was off !” They had been persuaded that that was the cure for all their grievances ; but the great statesman of France, when he heard of the event, which in some measure he had himself promoted, sarcastically remarked that “the English nation were so foolish that they would not let the wisest head among them stand on its own shoulders.” The people and the minister seem to be placed in an opposite position to each other, whenever the safety of the

* Whitelocke's Memorials, 40.

State demands a severe administration ; such a hapless minister is converting into enemies at least one portion of that kingdom whose stability costs him so many vigils, and whose very prosperity may gather strength to rise up against him. Some of the greatest ministers, who have guided the fortunes of Europe, would not have proved to be less criminal than Strafford, had they encountered judges and enemies as terrible. As Richelieu in France, Pombal in Portugal, and Pitt in England. Nothing is less difficult than to make a minister, who has been long in office, a criminal, if his enemies are his accusers. But in comparing Strafford with other great ministers, his situation had this peculiarity : the party opposed to the minister had an army in their pay ; the reverse has been more usual.

If ever a great minister could have saved a sinking State, the mind of Strafford was competent to that awful labour ; but his lofty spirit was to be mortified by his own personal defects, and to succumb beneath the rising genius of the age, which was developing its mighty limbs in the darkness of intrigue and revolution. His imperturbable courage would have wrestled with the daring aspirations and tumultuous force of popular ambition ; but the crisis of a kingdom had come, and he could not give stability to what was passing away, nor have dispersed what was soon to overwhelm ; nor could he repair the incapacity, the supineness, and the treachery of so many others. Imperious, vindictive, confident in his own energy, and, above all, devoted to the sovereign—yet could his implacable enemies only triumph by counting up the infirmities of fourteen years !

Whatever has been alleged in diminution of the odium which the leaders of the Patriotic party incur for the condemnation of death passed on this minister, it must remain a perpetual example of the passions of Parliament. If we consult the journals of the House of Commons, we may find how even a noble cause may terminate in an ignoble effect, whenever the end is made to sanctify the means, and the wisdom to disguise the error. At those moments and at such a crisis, justice may be forced down by the ardour of numbers, and truth may vanish amidst the illusions of the passions. It was quite evident that the party of Pym had meditated on a Government of terror, and to cement the popular cause by the blood of their governors. Laud was

immured, and this greater victim lay in their hands—they had triumphed, and the public cause which they had adopted had consecrated that triumph. Had the Parliamentary leaders, with ordinary humanity and higher wisdom, shown themselves to have been honourable in their means, and dignified in their end, they would have been the great moral masters of the nation—and of Europe. They could have degraded the unhappy minister, despoiled him of his power and his honours, reduced him, as Charles offered, “to be not fit to serve even the office of a constable,” and exiled him from his fatherland; but they practised the meanest artifices, and closed by that astonishing act of injustice, when, to condemn the minister, his prosecutors submitted to become themselves criminal. He whom they despaired to make guilty, they at once convicted.

But it is the result of evil measures which ought to teach us to dread them. Evil measures, when they are suffered to become popular, create “a taste for evil;” then it is that the wicked rejoice, and the iniquitous are never satiated with triumphs. The undisguised dereliction of legal justice in the case of Strafford, was but a prelude to the many which were to follow. An English Marat of that day, as an apology for the present and for future “legal murders,” tells us their secret. “There is,” says this barbarous politician, “a *necessitated policy* that my Lord of Strafford and some others should be given up, as a just sacrifice to appease the people.”* The French Revolution is abundant in facts which confirm “the necessitated policy” of the demagogues.

The most illustrious of foreigners, on these odious proscriptions of individuals, which open such a wide field for intrigues and personal hatreds, has noticed our bill of Attainder. He classes it with those laws of Athens and of Rome, by which an individual was condemned by the suffrages of thousands of the people. The various ostracisms which have been practised by some States, seem more akin to it; but the people, who could not tolerate eminent virtue or eminent genius, only betrayed their own weakness, yet were not the less unjust and cruel—but these ostracisms were bloodless! Cicero would have such laws abolished, for this admirable reason, because the force of law

* A pamphlet of the day, entitled “The Earl of Strafford characterised.” 1641.

consists in being made for the whole community. When Montesquieu delivered his own opinion, he was awed by the great reputation of the English nation; he conceived our Constitution perfect, and us as men without passions. The foreigner has done us more honour than in the example of Strafford we have merited. He concludes his chapter thus: "I must own, notwithstanding, that the practice of the free'st nation that ever existed, induces me to think that there are cases in which we must cast a veil over liberty, as formerly they concealed the statues of the gods." The brilliant Montesquieu, as if he were composing his *Temple de Gnide* instead of *L'Esprit des Loix*, gives the fancies of a poet for the severe truths of a legislator. Beccaria is not of the opinion of Montesquieu.

The tragical history of the Earl of Strafford is among those crimes in our history, which are only chastised by the philosophical historian. The passions of contemporaries and the prejudices of posterity are marshalled against the magnanimous minister, immolated to the mysterious purposes of a powerful party, who remorselessly pleaded, to cover their shame, in the style of Caiaphas, "It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people." Strafford perished for a crime which no law recognised, and which Pym himself, when confounded by the indignant glance of the noble prisoner at the bar, rendered inexplicable, by calling it "Treason far beyond the power of words!" Strafford might have left the bar of his peers as a guilty man—as it was, he left it only as a persecuted one. The ferocious triumph could only be satiated by an inglorious homicide!

CHAPTER XIV.

ARMY PLOT—HISTORY OF COLONEL GORING—PYM'S MANAGEMENT OF THE PLOT—DEFENCE OF LORD CLARENDON AND HUME.

THE Army-plot, as it is called, spread a consternation through the kingdom, and is still more remarkable for its immense consequences, not only as it hastened the catastrophe of Strafford's execution, but as, at no distant day, it instigated Parlia-

ment, from their jealous fears of the military, to demand the militia ; an usurpation which fell little short of dethroning the King, and which terminated in the civil war. So important an incident has given rise to opposite opinions and statements between the great parties who now divide our English history: the aim of one is to substantiate the reality of the plot, and criminate the King; the other deny it altogether, and insist that it was a mere artifice of faction.

The history of this plot is involved in great obscurity,—it changed its face more than once—and a contradictory tale has been shaped by opposite parties, suiting it to their own purpose. To unravel the perplexed skein of these intrigues—to analyse the contending elements of this confused compound—has been the labour of some of our contemporaries, and still remains to exercise our curiosity and our candour.

All parties have agreed that the origin of this Army-plot was a rising jealousy of the Scottish army. The arrears of the English army had remained undischarged, and in other respects they had of late suffered a studied neglect.* An English military force, in truth, was no longer required by Englishmen who had adopted a foreign policy, had invited invaders, and for the benefits already conferred, chorused that cheering burthen to their street-ballads, which the honest Covenanter Baillie exultingly gives—"the binding word ever," as he calls it, was,

‘Gramercy, good Scot!’

The English officers had witnessed convoys of monies pass by their quarters to their northern brethren. Officers unpaid would mutually communicate their dissatisfaction, and there was no difficulty in agreeing that the Parliament, and not the King, neglected them. Many of these officers were members of the House and young men; Wilmot, then commissary, had boldly

* Mrs. Macaulay, the perpetual advocate for the Parliament, pleads for her party: "The English army, without attending to circumstances, or comprehending the difficulties the Commons lay under, showed symptoms of great displeasure." (ii. 446.) It is lamentable for the cause of truth, that these political advocates, whenever reduced to frame apologies, never for once look to "the difficulties" which the unfortunate monarch "lay under." But what were "these difficulties of the Commons?" They had involved themselves in a dark labyrinth of intrigues, and they were compelled to sacrifice even themselves to the idol which their own hands had made.

told the Speaker, when passing a vote of money, on the urgent demands of the Scots, that if the Scots could get money by sending up a piece of paper, he did not see why the English should not use the same easy messenger. Hence seems to have originated, in those petitioning days, the first idea of a military petition. It is evident that the strong partialities of the ruling party in the Commons were wholly bent towards the "dear brethren," whom they would consider as an army far deeper engaged in their interests than their own English, among whom doubtless were many friends of the King. A petition was drawn up by Percy, the brother of the Earl of Northumberland, subscribed by Wilmot, Ashburnham, O'Neal, and a few others—the professed object was to settle the King's revenue, which would include their own; without infringing on the liberties of the subject, or on the sacredness of the laws. This paper was shown in a secret conference with some of the confidential servants of the royal party. The present subscribers were desirous of procuring the King's approval by some testimony which might serve to engage others. More than one draught of the petition was made, ere Charles put his initials C. R., to one, as a mark that he had perused and approved of it.

Percy addressed a letter to his brother, which some have thought was concocted to exculpate himself and the King towards the Parliament,* by criminating some of his associates. Percy tells us that on his first interview with the King he discovered that others had been treating before him; and, as he asserts, on principles contrary to those originally proposed, "inclining a way more high and sharp, not having limits either of honour or law." Already the Army-plot was assuming an altered countenance.

Colonel Goring, afterwards Lord Goring, who became distinguished during the Civil War by his active intrigues, was now by the King's earnest desire admitted of the party, as also was Jermyn, the favourite of the Queen. Goring proposed the most

* The Parliamentarians, not satisfied with Percy's letter, insinuate that he suppressed much which he knew, while Echard, a writer on the opposite side, asserts that Percy was induced by Pym to send this letter that his companions might be criminated, and thus furnish "a double evidence" preparatory to "a complete discovery."

daring designs, which Percy declares were positively rejected by all present, and in his interviews with the King, more than once forbidden by the King himself. Goring was anxious to learn who was to be the Commander-in-chief, while he himself refused any subordinate place. Several noblemen were mentioned by different persons, but no one proposed the Colonel himself. After a great debate nothing was concluded. The conspirators, if these petitioners can be so called, now discovered that they consisted at least of two opposed parties; the one restricting themselves to moderate measures, while the other seemed intent on nothing less than maintaining the King's absolute power.

According to Percy's narrative, in consequence of the disagreement of the parties, the whole project was laid aside—it had vanished! Goring seems to confirm this account of their inconclusive debates, in his pretended confession to the Parliament. "Certainly, if they had stayed where I left them, there was no conclusion at all. It appears there were two several intentions digested by others, (he avoids to say by whom) before they were communicated to me; and I know not whether my hearkening to them was a fault, but I am sure it was no misfortune."* According to Percy, Goring was the spokesman of the party who proposed "the violent courses"—the rescue of Strafford, and the march of the army to London. Goring on this point contrived an artful evasion. He told the Parliament, "I endeavoured to show them that as the design would be impious if the most desperate counsels had been followed, so it would be the weakest that ever was undertaken if they were omitted." By this ingenious turn Goring would screen himself by concealing the fact of himself having proposed "these desperate counsels." Probably not one of the party could have recollected the Colonel's mention of the warm condemning epithet, "impious."

Some time after—the precise interval which would be material to fix on has not, however, been ascertained,—Goring reveals the Army-plot, which no longer existed, and whose object appears never to have been determined, to his friend the Earl of Newport, the Governor of the Tower, who having conducted

* Nalson, ii. 275.

him to the Earl of Bedford and Lord Mandeville, they, to relieve themselves from the weight of this dangerous communication, hastened to inform the other leaders of the Parliamentary party. Percy, Jermyn, and others of the Army-cabal, received private notice that they were betrayed, though it was not known by whom; for Goring required that his name at present should be concealed. They instantly took flight; so suddenly, that Jermyn had not time to change his dress, and went off "in his black satin suit, and white boots," which circumstance was adduced as evidence by the Parliament that the courtly beau had not intended to leave England on that day which the King's warrant he carried with him pretended. The flight of nearly all the party tended to confirm the deposition of Goring, and their guilt, and struck an universal panic, which greatly served the purposes of the anti-Straffordians.

The moment which Goring chose to divulge this Army-plot was most favourable to the views of that party, who were in great want of some fresh collateral aid to lay the head of Strafford on the block; and Goring was quite certain of thus recommending himself to their high favour. He seems to have watched for the lucky hour.

Lord Mandeville, afterwards Lord Kimbolton, and finally Earl of Manchester, who was so perfectly acquainted with the history of his times, and a chief actor in them, is an authority as unquestionable as impartial. His Lordship has in explicit terms declared the motives of Goring's treachery, and the dexterity and artifice with which he chose this particular moment for his discovery. "Col. Goring, whose ambition was not answered in being promised the place of Lieutenant-General of the army, and finding others employed whose persons he disliked, he having a full information from Mr. Percy and Mr. Jermyn of all the design, thought it would tend most to his security and advantage to reveal the conspiracy, and being versed in all the methods of falsehood, he chose the time and means which he thought would be most acceptable to the Parliament."*

The causes which Lord Mandeville has assigned for the conduct of Goring, we can confirm from other sources. We have

* Nalson, ii. 273, from the MS. Memoirs of the Earl of Manchester.

the remark which Jermyn privately made to Goring, on Goring's objecting, as Goring pretends in his deposition, to marching the army to London. "You do not," said Jermyn, "dislike the design; for you are as ready for any wild mad undertaking as any man I know; but you dislike the temper of those persons who are engaged in the business."*

But we have another authority which Lord Mandeville could not have seen, which confirms the motive assigned for Goring's abandonment of the party which he had evidently joined—it is that of the Queen herself, who informed Madame de Motteville that Goring was enraged at the disappointment of not having been chosen General-in-chief. However strenuously Goring denied before Parliament that he had ever contemplated on the desperate designs so dexterously ascribed by him to others, the Queen's story proves quite the contrary, and confirms the narrative of Percy.† Goring had proposed to rescue Strafford; but Wilmot had entertained a similar project; each unknown to the other. The ambition, if not the zeal of both these military adventurers was equal. The King and the Queen, to whom these officers had separately, in confidence, communicated their design, dared not give a preference to either, certain by their choice of converting into a dangerous enemy the other, and dreading at that critical moment a discovery of this secret intercourse with the army. The perplexed monarch inclined to give the command to Goring, and to satisfy Wilmot by the equivalent of another splendid appointment. The courtly Jermyn, Master of the Horse to the Queen, the suavity of whose manners was imagined could not fail to reconcile these contending interests, and who valued himself on the impossible faculty of pleasing all and displeasing none, was dispatched to persuade either of these officers to relinquish the chief command to the other; but Jermyn found that his flatteries and

* Rushworth, iv. 254.

† Percy charges Goring with proposing "the violent courses," while Goring asserts that he knew nothing of the plot till it was communicated to him by Percy. Here is a palpable contradiction by the parties themselves; but the veracity of Percy may be trusted. Goring swore to Sir Philip Warwick, which oath, observes Warwick, "was no great assurance," that he never revealed the plot till he knew that the chief members of both Houses were before acquainted with it. The Earl of Manchester's and the Queen's account agree with Percy's narrative.

cajoleries were quite inefficient with these sturdy and secret rivals.

It may, perhaps, be deemed a most uncertain thing to assign the motives of a person of the character of Goring. Bold in enterprise, dexterous at any sudden emergency, and scornful of danger, with considerable abilities, he was, however, dissipated in his habits, and utterly profligate in his principles. If this volatile man were impatient at the vacillating and timid conduct of the King and the Queen ; if he did not much like some of his associates, and perhaps suspected the fidelity of others ; if he were too proud to play a subordinate part ; all this might account for his desertion of that party, but will hardly for his avowed perjury, and his reckless treachery. The truth is, that Goring, versatile in his conduct, was apparently of no party, but dexterously and cunningly profiting by both. His whole life was a series of such acts. He would have been willing to have obliged both parties, would both have been satisfied to have been betrayed. He gave a remarkable instance of this duplicity on the present occasion. Jermyn, on his flight, ran off to Portsmouth to his friend Goring, who was the Governor, and who at that moment he knew not was his betrayer. Jermyn had a royal warrant to procure a frigate ; Goring had just received an order from Parliament to arrest Jermyn. He hurried his friend aboard, and pocketed the order from the Parliament, pretending afterwards that it had reached him an hour too late. When Governor of Portsmouth, he took large supplies of money from the Parliament for fortifying the place, and at the same time from the King to admit the Royalists on some favourable opportunity. He declared that he held the place faithful to the King and Parliament for their use, and not to be delivered up but by both their consents ; and finally, having first decided for himself, passed over into France with the money he had received on both sides, without breaking his promise to either. It was his pride to cozen, and then laugh in the best humour at him whom he had cozened.

Goring seems always to have relied on the ingenuity of his own duplicity, on the gracefulness of his person, and his consummate address ; these resources he could command at all times ; to be deceived by him was sometimes to love him, for

he showed himself to be an excellent actor on the most critical exigencies. Accused, he had always the art of persuading others of his integrity. Lord Digby, having listened to his tale of the Army-plot, where Goring, on his own unavoidable confession, was guilty of a wilful perjury in consorting with persons under the most solemn oath of secrecy, with a reserved intention to betray them, his Lordship indignantly exclaimed, that "He was a perjured man!" Goring, pathetically appealing to the Commons for having broken all former ties of amity for his present duty as a subject, cunningly professed that the military were to submit themselves to Parliament in passive obedience, which he did not weakly express thus, "It belongs to an army to maintain, not to contrive the acts of State." The Commons, gratified by this profession of unlimited obedience, not only voted that Colonel Goring had done nothing contrary to justice or honour, but also voted the expulsion of Lord Digby from the House as unworthy to continue any longer a member!

Dissimulation was the habit of the man who could be at once a favourite with the Parliament, and at all times could ingratiate himself with the King. Clarendon has given one of his finest touches to the portrait: "He would appear with a bashfulness so like innocence, when in truth it was a formed impudence to deceive; and with a disorder so like reverence, when he had the highest contempt of them." Goring was a man whom no oath of secrecy could bind, and whose oath on any occasion, even by his friends, was not deemed as any proof of evidence.* Of such a man it is as vain to conjecture the motives, as it is difficult to comprehend the views, when we examine his mutable actions. When he first met the Army-confederacy, proposed the most desperate schemes and aspired to the command, his ardent ambition might vouch for his sincerity; but when he disliked to act with some of his new associates, he cared not how soon he broke with them, and courting the Parliament by a very timely service, in divulging a plot which seems to have no longer existed, he secured his own safety, and his own good fortune,—reckless of a soldier's honour, with a dispensation granted by the House of Commons from all moral obligation.

* Sir Philip Warwick's Memoirs.

In this little comedy of a confused plot, there was an under one. Mrs. Macaulay tells us that "The Queen, who without the requisite talents had more than a female propensity to intrigue, entered with greater violence than judgment into the extreme of the King's proposition of bringing the army up to London, to surprise the Tower and overawe the Parliament." In this great conspiracy Henrietta's confidential agents were Davenant and Suckling, and she adds "a Mr. Jermyn." Why "a Mr.?" Our historian must have been as familiar with that name as any other in Clarendon's History; she here betrays that feminine disposition which she has herself so singularly confessed. Our lady democrat, indulging not only her sexual but her political "propensity," delighted thus to spurn at the silken favourite of the Queen; the future Earl of St. Alban's, and afterward the secret consort of Henrietta. In love affairs can a female historian grow malicious in imagination, and tinge with the gall of jealousy or envy, the page of obsolete amours?

The agents assigned to the Queen were certainly the sort of counsellors quite suitable to Henrietta's profound politics of which she has been so gravely accused. It may be easily imagined that the plots of these gentlemen were romantic, well adapted for one of the Queen's pastorals; they were more expert in such dénouements than they ever showed themselves in political ones.

Pym wound up the public to the highest pitch of dismay and curiosity, by rumours, and afterwards by gradual disclosures, for partial revelations produced more effect than would the whole, had it been at once revealed. He first broke the alarming, though yet obscure intelligence, to the House, of "desperate designs both at home and abroad." They were in a mood to imagine more than was told. They sate from seven in the morning to eight at night. Indignant as much as terrified, the Commons resolved instantly on "a Protestation," not only to be signed by all the members, but shortly after ordered by themselves, for the Lords first threw out the Bill, though they afterwards subscribed it—"that the Protestation should be subscribed by the whole nation!"*

* Two Lords refused their signatures, alleging that they knew of no law that enjoined it, and that the consequence of such voluntary engagements might produce effects that were not intended.

This was in fact the Scottish Covenant—so closely they copied in all their proceedings that model, which so long admired, was now delightful to imitate. It had rested in their thoughts, and, as we shall find, it now crept into their Parliamentary style. A short time previous, that honest Covenanter Baillie had hinted to the Presbytery of Irvine, that “the lower House is more united than ever; and they say *not far from a Covenant.*” He was no fallible prophet, for he was in all their secrets, and a short time after writing on this fierce debate he exclaims, “Blessed be the name of the Lord! They all swore and subscribed the Writ. I hope in substance our Scottish Covenant.” And the politic Covenanter remarks, “We see now that it hath been in a happy time that so much time hath been lost about Strafford’s head.” This humane man maddened by his Presbyterial notions, loses even in his language any decent sympathy, and notices “the head of Strafford” as the slayer would his stalled ox. But the zealot was right enough in his notion of the Scottish Covenant of the English Parliament! Sir John Wray in his anti-papistical, anti-episcopal, and choicely puritanic speech, this day took care to remind them of that Israelitish term, and he seems to have had the merit of introducing that biblical oratory which so long after illumined this new style of the British Senate. “Let us endeavour to become holy pilgrims (not papists) and endeavour to be **LOYAL COVENANTERS** with God and the King; first binding ourselves by a Parliamentary or **NATIONAL OATH** (not Straffordian nor a Prelatical one) to preserve our religion entire and pure without the least compound of superstition and idolatry, Mr. Speaker! making Jerusalem our chiefest joy, we shall be a blessed nation. But if we shall let go our Christian hold and lose our Parliament-proof, and old English well-tempered mettle, let us take heed that our buckler break not, our Parliament melt not, and our golden candlestick be not removed.” Matters must have advanced very far when such a speech in the English Parliament was not only listened to, but seemed worthy of being recorded.*

* In the true spirit of party-writing, the wretched Oldmixon calls this “a true English speech—how piquant and pleasing is the blunt honesty of this Lincolnshire knight!” and contrasts it with “the long sentences, the sophistry, and affectation in the Lord Clarendon’s florid discourses.” All that we can add of this “honest Lin-

Hume has said of this famous "Protestation," that "in itself it was very inoffensive, even insignificant, containing nothing but general declarations." The passionless historian, in the calm of his study, saw little more in this extraordinary act of the Commons but an incident to be recorded. The Covenanters of that day, however, grimly rejoiced; and Father Philips, the Queen's confessor, with tremulous nerves, wrote, "The Protestation is much like, but much worse, than the Scottish Covenant."

If we now look at this State-document, we may consider it as conveying to us a singular mixture of the two distinct parties in the House, who were then acting for different ends, though acting in unity—the Puritanic and the political. Hence we find the party who had chiefly in view "the true reformed religion," inveighing against "Papistry," while the Politicians—they had hardly yet earned the distinction of Republicans—whose theme was "tyrannical Government," did not fail to lay great stress on "Illegal taxes." This famous Protestation was drawn up in heat and haste, and by an expression which none complained of at the moment, offended their friends out of the House, and flurried the Covenanters. The Commons had declared in their Protestation that they were "to protect and defend the true reformed Protestant religion expressed in the doctrine of the Church of England." This phrase, doubtless, had long been Parliamentary, and they had been so accustomed to it, that it naturally occurred in their eagerness to draw up their national "Covenant." But the doctrine of the Church of England included Episcopal government, which they were fast overturning, and rites and ceremonies which they had formally denounced as Romish. Many pretended they could not subscribe to maintain an establishment they had resolved to destroy, and doctrines which they were perpetually disavowing. The Commons were reduced to the humiliating necessity of sending after their Protestation, an explanation of their meaning, which was that, by the doctrines of the Church of England, they meant nothing more than whatever it held contrary to Popery, and Popish innovations, without extending to

colnshire knight" is, that his sagacity lay as much in his nose as in his brains, when he smelt gunpowder in the House, and spread a panic by land and water, as we have already noticed. See p. 156.

its government and ceremonies. In a word they meant nothing more by the Church of England but what the Kirk of Scotland, in its spiritual illumination, allowed to all Christians—viz., all they enjoined and nothing they disliked. This is a striking instance of the passions of Parliament! When Charles the First found himself compelled to publish an explanation of the famous “Petition of Right,” to prevent the country from misconceiving its purport and his assent, the King heard only the scream of insurgency, but in the present case, where the Commons were fixed in the same dilemma, their time-serving and factious Explanation was embraced by their Covenanting friends with Hallelujahs!

Clarendon’s account of the Army-plot, Mr. Brodie, with more than the severity of a partisan, has charged as “exceedingly disingenuous, and even inconsistent,” and convicts Clarendon of having, on this particular occasion as well as on another, in both of which he (Clarendon) is mistaken,* fabricated a spurious document. With a freedom which exceeds even that of historical inquiry, Mr. Brodie, in more than one place, repeats his condemnation of the noble writer as “a dexterous forger of speeches and letters,” from an ingenuous story told of himself in his own life of his adroitness in adopting the peculiarities of the style of others. Clarendon once displayed this faculty in two political *jeux d’esprit*, in the shape of the speeches of the eccentric Earl of Pembroke, for an accommodation with the King; and the Puritan Lord Brooke, for utterly rooting out all courtiers. The contrast was amusing, and the speeches were inserted in some of the Diurnals. The sullen gravity of our contemporary heavily criminales these pleasantries of the day. Charles the First, who had flattered himself that he could never fail in discovering Clarendon by his impressive style, and who backed his critical discernment by wagering an angel with Lord Falkland, had only the merit of being deceived and charmed by the adroitness of the mimetic genius of the immortal writer.†

* See Brodie, iii. 306, where in a note alluding to “the Porters’ Petition,” which Clarendon has given, and which Mr. Brodie, ashamed even of his ridiculous “Radicals,” has “no hesitation in pronouncing a forgery by that author.” Mr. Hallam has chastised this precipitate and passionate historian, by referring to the Journals where this very petition is fully noticed.

† Political fictions are dangerous; for we historians, who are always grave, are not always sagacious. Such extemporary pleasantries, and sometimes lampoons,

But Lord Clarendon must be judged by our candour, as well as by the passions of party. We must adjust our views to that point of sight whence he contemplated the scene.

Clarendon, as far as the King stood implicated in marching the army to London, which he says "was the chief matter alleged," calls the plot "an imposture," and he was even warranted to infer by the letter of Percy to his brother, the Earl of Northumberland, that "it is evident there was no plot at all!"

But to turn the Army-plot into a *ruse* of the party, and to show the little danger which they had attached to it, Clarendon charges Pym and others with agitating the public mind and raising terrifying tumults, while they never divulged the plot till three months after the presumed discovery. Here the noble writer supposes that the discovery was made nearly as early as the plot was concerted; the confederacy occurring in March, while the plot was only publicly denounced in May. Mr. Brodie detects, as he concludes, the inaccuracy of Clarendon. But he should have acknowledged that the incident was obscure; its correctness depended on the precise date of Goring's first communication to the party. This has not been satisfactorily ascertained. If the Queen's account be correct, Clarendon may not have widely erred, for the Queen said, that on the very night of the interview with Jermyn, when Goring found that he was disappointed of the chief command, stung with anger, he hurried to discover the whole design. Mr. Brodie acknowledges that the plot was imperfectly known to Pym about twelve days before the public disclosure. It was let out by parcels—which answered the purpose better than had the whole been known at once. Mr. Brodie concedes something still more, when he does not deny that during this very period, while the nature of the plot remained vague and unknown, it was, however, carefully noised about the city, and had stirred up the

as these of Clarendon, were practised by others—it was a fashion with the wits, who were chiefly Loyalists. Butler forged, as Mr. Brodie, a sound advocate, could prove. Sir John Birkenhead was a clever fellow at these spurious speeches and letters. President Bradshaw, on his death-bed, was made to recant what he never recanted: Henderson, the polemic, was thrown into the same state. This was practised as well on the other side. Two speeches are printed of Strafford's, full of contrition for his past conduct, which he never could have spoken; we have the authentic speech taken by Rushworth himself when on the scaffold.

tumults. The party, therefore, in conformity with their new system of policy, had been providently spreading the infection of a panic, though they were yet ignorant whether the causes of their terror were at all adequate to the immense consequences they were producing.

Clarendon has given "the Petition of the Officers," which has not elsewhere been preserved; and it has excited surprise how the noble writer obtained the copy of a petition, which is acknowledged to have been destroyed. This "petition," Mr. Brodie shows, "carries on its face the most unequivocal marks of fabrication"—indeed it alludes to events which did not happen till after the time assigned to it. This strange discordance Rapin had already detected, and justly inferred that the petition inserted in Clarendon's history could not be the real one, which Mr. Brodie amply confirms.

Yet must not the more recent historian be indulged in the gratuitous triumph of his self-complacency, when he exclaims, that "he has set Lord Clarendon's veracity at rest." Clarendon, after all, was not a forger as Mr. Brodie from too warm prepossessions hastily imagines. The fact is, that the petition is what it professes to be, but it has been erroneously assigned to a period to which it does not belong. To such a mistake the collectors of historical documents, undated, are liable. Had his Lordship attentively examined it at the moment of its insertion into his history, he too might have discovered the error; but such papers were probably collected at distant periods, and further, it appears that an Amanuensis usually transcribed these state-papers into the manuscript of the noble writer. This petition of the officers was drawn up several months after the time assigned to it in Clarendon's history, by Captain O'Neale, and other of the army royalists.* This is a curious instance where an historian has been condemned during half a century for an imposture on apparently the most obvious evidence, till the sagacity of the later historian has detected the accidental inadvertence, and vindicated the honour of the elder.

* We owe this detection to the acuteness of Mr. Hallam, who by the very documents which Mr. Brodie has printed, was enabled to discover the fact which Mr. Brodie had overlooked, at the very moment he was so bitterly criminating Clarendon for having fallen into a similar mischance.

Mr. Brodie's observation on Hume is a specimen of unphilosophical taste. He scolds that illustrious philosopher for ridiculing the idea of marching the army to London; but "ridicule," adds the graver Scotsman, "which is a species of argument that he always uses, will never rebut the most decisive proofs that the thing was contemplated; and Hume overlooks the circumstance of military assistance being expected from France—assistance from Catholics, &c., while the metropolis would be in the power of the army." *

The argument of Hume, however, is perfectly serious and to me conclusive. "The King rejected the idea as foolish, because the Scots who were in arms, and lying in their neighbourhood, must be at London as soon as the English army. This reason is so solid and convincing that it leaves no room to doubt of the veracity of Percy's evidence, and consequently acquits the King of this terrible plot of bringing up the army, which made such a noise at the time, and was a pretence for so many violences." "This terrible plot" seemed to Mr. Brodie the most exquisite ridicule! †

What "military assistance was to be expected from France?" Pym indeed declared "that the French were drawing down their army in all 'haste to the sea side.'" This must have been one of his chimeras to alarm the mob. We discover no such

* Brodie, iii. 115.

† The judicious Malcolm Laing indulges an odd fancy which Mr. Brodie has no difficulty in adopting. He says that "a part of the army would have sufficed to march against the Parliament, while the main body remained to oppose the Scots." This might have happened had the Scots been less shrewd than they showed themselves to be at all times during this reign. But supposing that the English army had marched to London from York and taken the whole Parliament prisoners, and this is supposing an impossibility, they would still have to fight with an enemy of undiminished strength and flushed even by a triumphant invasion. But a circumstance more important has been overlooked by these writers. The communications between the Scots and their paymasters, the Parliament, were so closely kept up, and each so entirely depended on the other, that had any part of the English army moved towards the Metropolis, it would inevitably have produced a battle, or a pursuit. When Malcolm Laing refers to the petition in Clarendon, "where the officers say," to secure the King and Parliament from such future insolencies, &c., they would wait upon him, "that is, to march directly to London:" Mr. Brodie eagerly repeats this confirmation of Malcolm Laing's idea. But neither of these writers was aware that the petition they were referring to had been drawn up at a subsequent period, and by another party. Their premises, therefore, being false, their conclusions can be no otherwise.

movements in French history. Richelieu still was in the vigour of his administration, and we are acquainted with the vindictive policy which the great Cardinal had successfully adopted to depress the English Monarch; Richelieu was at that moment the secret ally of the Scots, and, had circumstances admitted, would not have scrupled being the ally of the English Parliament. Charles had already sternly refused to submit to his aid. The idea of a French invasion, particularly that Portsmouth was to be given up to them, could only have originated in the false rumours which were perpetually renewed by the encourager of political panics, and which are gravely recorded by their historian as secrets of state.

The Army-plot seems to be a jumble of incidents and cross-purposes. The first malcontents, consisting of young officers of distinction, had confined their attempts to the prevalent mode of redress, so freely exercised at that moment—a petition to Parliament. Unquestionably when those eminent officers, who were all Royalists, consulted the King on the form of their proposed petition, it renewed the hope of Charles of recovering his regal influence over the military. The King, however, proceeded so cautiously in the style of the petition, that more than one was destroyed before he confidentially ventured to affix his initials.

A distinguished military adventurer, Colonel Goring, who seems to have contemplated making his fortune in one day, proposed the daring measure of the march of the army to the Metropolis. We are told by Percy, that this mad project was instantly rejected by the first petitioners, and twice by the King himself for its folly and impracticability. It was indeed a scheme suitable to the romantic notions of the Queen and the heated fancies of her pair of poets, and her courtly Master of the Horse, who, however, ridiculed it in private. The parties who formed the confederacy could no longer agree—the whole project was given up—the petition was destroyed, and the confederacy was dissolved. Thus the Army-plot, as it is called, ceased to exist, if indeed it can be said that it ever commenced.

This was, however, a crisis, and the fate of Strafford was in suspense. Charles may have willingly listened to many a scheme for the abstraction of this victim of state. To what last effort

would not Charles have submitted in order to hold himself guiltless of the murder of a great minister, and a faithful servant? The King had bowed down to his personal enemies, as he conceived some of them to be, in the new administration of the Earl of Bedford,—who pledged the life of Strafford for their admission into power. In his despair he probably listened to those adventurous spirits, who were projecting the rescue of the noble prisoner from the Tower. A passage in Strafford's farewell letter to his secretary, Sir Henry Slingsby, bears a dark indication of some uncertain project.* Sir John Suckling had procured a resolute captain, with a hundred picked men, to be admitted into the Tower, but Sir William Balfour, the Governor, was Scottish in heart, and afterwards showed himself a hero in the Parliament's service. Balfour refused the bribe of twenty-two thousand pounds, and the marriage of the daughter of Strafford with his son—the condition of his connivance at the meditated escape.

Pym, on the earliest communications of the army-plot, was unquestionably frightened—but not out of his wits—for from the first intimations, however they may have reached him, to the deposition of Goring, and the subsequent ones which gradually came out, this industrious master of intrigues never turned a plot to his own advantage with more dexterity, or ever invented one more successfully for its important results. The conspiracy of Catiline did not shake Rome with a more general panic, than that which now disturbed the metropolis, and rapidly spread through the kingdom. The terror that the King had still the military at command, dismayed the hearts of the Commons, who seem to have felt themselves in the condition of Belshazzar when he beheld the hand-writing on the wall—"the joints of my loins were loosed, and my knees smote one against the other." And they manifested their terror by soon dispatching

* After the bill of Attainder had passed, Strafford in his farewell letter mysteriously writes—"God may yet, if it please him, deliver me—the person you were last withal at Court sent to move that business we resolved upon, which, if rightly handled, might perchance do something ; but you know my opinion in all, and what my belief is in all these things—I advise you to absent yourself till you see what becomes of me. *If I live* there will be no danger for you to stay, but otherwise keep out of the way till I be forgotten."—Rushworth, viii. 774. It is quite evident that in his cup of adversity even its dregs were tinctured with some faint hopes.

to the English army "four cart-loads of money, and more was ordered suddenly to follow."* So that the first petitioners who had concerted a petition, which was never presented, and who now were all in flight, are proved by the subsequent conduct of the Commons themselves not to have been quite so unreasonable in raising a mutiny—for their defrauded arrears!

As the evidence is in the King's favour, that he was not privy to "the wild mad undertaking," it has been insinuated by those who think it makes for their cause to implicate Charles the First, that the evidence was given by all parties in a manner not to lose the royal favour. It is remarkable that the greater number of those implicated in the Army-plot were Royalists, for they afterwards showed their personal attachment to the King. There had been nothing very strange, had Charles, considering the miserable condition to which he was now reduced, attempted to conciliate the favour of the army—the Commons themselves in their fright lost no time in doing it.

Such is the history of a plot which never occurred, but which was contrived by the arts of faction, and the skill of Pym, to produce the same results as if it had. It is the history of a confederacy, or a conspiracy where people were not all of one mind, and where oaths were probably taken with different intentions. The evidence is contradictory; for every one in criminating another, was very cautious to spare himself. An oath of secrecy, said to have been taken, is denied by others on their oath; and a petition bearing the royal initials, no one could produce. He who publicly perjured himself, furnished most of the details; others probably as carefully suppressed what has never reached us. And to make the end as obscure as the beginning, the Commons, having issued proclamations for apprehending the conspirators, and having taken them, never proceeded against one of these persons; every one seemed ready to vindicate himself and to criminate others.

But Pym was astute; he saw enough and imagined more; the plot which had been given up by the plotters to such a politic partisan was as serviceable as the plot which was going on. Clarendon might conscientiously affirm that "it was no plot at all," and believe too little of what had passed away;

* Rushworth, iv. 292.

Brodie and Macaulay may maintain with Pym, that it was a most desperate plot, and describe that which yet never existed. Had the army received their pay, we should have had no plot. And had Goring not perjured himself at the moment Pym eagerly grasped at all the benefits he knew how to derive from a Royalist-plot, in the pending trial of Strafford, this affair would never have entered into our history—nor led to those mighty results which were soon to occur.

CHAPTER XV.

THE MARQUIS OF HAMILTON.

MIXED characters, when portrayed through all the shades of truth, are not drawn without difficulty ; but the motives of subdolous and artificial men, belonging, as it were, to two opposite parties, yet governed by no other principle than their own preservation, may be as mutable as the events of their lives. Such persons at times may be as zealous in the cause they adopt, as occasionally they may be equally prompt to betray it. To both parties the integrity of these characters becomes alike problematical. Of the Duke of Hamilton and his brother the Earl of Lanerick, Warburton has not hesitated to declare that they were “both knaves,” notwithstanding the apologies and the eulogies of Burnet ; while Hume, as if his penetrating acuteness were at fault, could only decide that “the numerous accusations against Hamilton have neither been proved nor refuted.”

The history of the Marquis of Hamilton affords a striking illustration of the true character of Charles the First—of its better and its infirm qualities : of that warmth in his personal attachments to which this monarch was so frequently a victim, having adopted for a principle of conduct, “never to suspect nor desert his friends,” and of that deficient discernment in human character which seems to have operated such a disastrous influence over his affairs.

What, indeed, is more endearing to a feeling heart than an inherited friendship ? The constitutional temper of Charles was susceptible of this profound impression ; and when the day came

that Charles required a partner of his regal cares, he could only view in the son of the friend of his father, that devoted being who is not to be found among the casualties of life.

The father of the present Marquis had distinguished himself in the service of the late King, by his skilful conduct in the Scottish affairs, which had required great prudence and management. James the First had conferred on him a title which had never before been borne but by the royal blood—that of the Earl of Cambridge. Hamilton, indeed, was the nearest kinsman to the royal house of Scotland. Both the fathers had encouraged the mutual affections of the sons; and they had grown together in their prime. When Charles was Prince, young Hamilton was his frequent companion in “the hard chases of the stag and in the toilsome pleasures of a racket;”^{*} and Hamilton was one of the young noblemen who hastened to wait on the Prince in Spain. Charles placed Hamilton on the same equality as Buckingham; the Prince called him by the endearing familiarity of his baptismal name, and “James” was as usual with the Prince, and afterwards the King, as “George.” On the death of Buckingham, the Marquis enjoyed more of the royal favour than was even shared by his other kinsman, the Duke of Lennox, whose devotion to the King was shown, not only during the life, but after the death of Charles.

On the decease of his father, who died early, the Marquis of Hamilton withdrew into privacy; a remarkable step for a young nobleman; and those who have attempted to inquire into the cause of this secession, have only clouded it over with mystery. Burnet has always ready a favourable motive for the conduct of the Hamiltons. The munificence of the father had so heavily encumbered the family estates, that the son could not maintain the same eminence at Court, and the pensive youth delighted in the retired life he led in the isle of Arran.

We may infer that the personal affection of Hamilton for the King was not of that nature which rendered his voluntary exile very painful. Charles, however, never forgot the companion of his youth, but often solicited his hermit-friend to return to

^{*} Sir Philip Warwick sarcastically adds, “by which last he often filled his own and emptied his master’s purse,” 105. So early then did the Marquis’s cool conduct betray his love of self-preservation.

Court, and accept the favours and the honours which he designed for him ; even Buckingham offered his prodigal friendship. On the unexpected death of the favourite, the high office of Master of the Horse was pressed on him ; Hamilton could no longer refuse ; and from this day the Marquis possessed the boundless confidence of his royal master.

A beautiful instance of that generous, if not that wise principle which Charles had adopted in the intercourse of friendship, was shown to Hamilton. The Marquis, in his absence in Sweden, as General of the Scottish troops, which, by the secret orders of Charles, had joined Gustavus Adolphus, was accused of treasonable designs ; it was hinted that even the life of the King was not safe in his hands. The Lord Treasurer, Weston, gave weight to the accusation, cautioning the King not to admit Hamilton to his bed-chamber. Charles rejected the calumnious insinuation, and, on the return of the Marquis, privately communicated the infamous charge. The confusion of Hamilton was remarkable—Charles relieved him from the surprise by not suffering him to speak in his own vindication, but, to put an end to the vile calumny, the King commanded the Marquis that very night to sleep in his bed-chamber ! Hamilton often declared that he looked on this noble confidence, and the remembrance of that night, as having obliged him more than all the honours and bounties which he had received.*

When the troubles in Scotland broke out, it was a natural choice in Charles the First, among the numerous Scotchmen who formed so strong a party in his Court, to fix on the Marquis of Hamilton for the confidential office of his High Commissioner in Scotland. Not only was the King led to this by the strong affection which he bore the Marquis from his early days, but because, in some respect, Hamilton might be said to have an hereditary claim to be the representative of Majesty. The late Marquis had served as High Commissioner in Scotland, and had prudently contrived a settlement, not however without violent opposition ; this difficult adjustment of affairs had endeared him to the monarch, but it had provoked the sullen Presbyters and democratic Knoxites. When Charles had decided to carry matters further than his father had ventured,

* Burnet's Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton, 13.

he consulted Hamilton, and when the universal explosion burst forth as it were at a single moment, over mitred heads, and Episcopacy was about to be abolished, at that disastrous moment did Charles appeal to the friendship and confide to the fidelity of the Marquis of Hamilton, to be his sole adviser in the affairs of Scotland, and to allay, or to chastise the perturbed spirits of his countrymen.

It must be confessed that this appeal of his Royal master to the zeal of his friend was as painful as it was critical. The Marquis was conscious that his name was unpopular among his Scottish compatriots; nor was he more esteemed in England.

The liberal bounties of his Sovereign and his friend had raised up to him enemies both in the Court and the country; the Marquis possessed certain monopolies of wine and iron, by which he had pressed harder on the people than any other man durst; all which profits reverted to Hamilton and to his pensioners. This accusation, which had cast some odium on his name, we receive from Clarendon, who could not have known what Burnet informs us, that these monopolies, according to the custom of the times, were only assignments of the revenue derived from certain taxations for repayment of debts which Hamilton had contracted by the King's secret command, when he joined Gustavus Adolphus with six thousand Scots, in the thirty years' war. Hamilton, too, was as little a favourite at Court as with the people. The contrivances by which he eluded intermeddling further in any business than suited his ease or his interest, were considered as a perpetual evidence of his dexterity in self-preservation. There was an imperturbable calmness about Hamilton which no zeal could kindle, and which gave the appearance that he was never in earnest. The truth is, that the Marquis was a person of great reflection and foresight, one of a melancholy turn, who raised objections more easily than he could frame resolutions, and foresaw danger much more clearly than he could predict success. He was ever in that comfortless state of reserve, though not perhaps of indifference, to which the crooked politician is doomed who dares not entirely trust himself to any one, knowing that his friend may become his enemy, and his enemy his friend. His eulogist, Burnet, acknowledges that "Had not his mind been of a great

and undaunted stayedness and calmness, the shocks he met with had dashed him to pieces." And what was still more fatal to the great affairs in which Hamilton was to be so eminently engaged, was the melancholy cast in his character. This was frequently observable even in his countenance. It induced him to think that he was destined to be unfortunate in all his enterprises. At times he believed that he was acting under the blasting influence of some inauspicious star, which was thwarting all his attempts. This sad feeling appears by his frequent requests and determination to retire from public affairs. This singular state might have been the result of the extraordinary exigencies in which this politic Marquis was so often placed. There was a painful and secret conflict in his mind, when sometimes pursuing a conduct quite opposite to his principles, he wavered between his allegiance to his Royal friend—his attachment to his country and his countrymen—and his regard to self-preservation. Hamilton had therefore to manage with perpetual anxiety the oppositionists he found in both countries; but his views of the future were of so melancholy a cast, that when he advised Strafford and Laud to retire, he also seems to have anticipated both their fall and his own.

In the rising troubles of Scotland the unceasing torment in the heart of Hamilton was to decide whether, to employ his own language, "the madness of the people was to be indulged," or "the kingly way was to be enforced?" He had the melancholy sagacity to foresee from the first the future scenes which were preparing. It was the sad and solemn second sight of his countrymen, contemplating on the phantoms of his despair amid the clouds and storms.

When the King communicated his determination to invest the Marquis with the character of the High Commissioner for Scotland, it was unfeignedly protested against by the Marquis, who declared it to be an employment full of danger, and the success always doubtful. Afterwards when it became necessary to renew a second time the Commission, the same repugnance was even more forcibly testified. He dwelt on the hatred which the chief Covenanters bore him—on the rage and malice of the common people against him, so that his life was in hourly peril, which indeed he valued not for his Majesty's service, but that

his violent death, knowing his Majesty's keen sense of such an act, would hinder the business from ending quietly. "The work, too, is of a nature," he added, "which must certainly make me lose your Royal favour, for it is so odious, that the actor of it must be disliked by your Majesty, for though I should do all things by your Royal command, yet your Royal honour would oblige your Majesty not to seem to care for me. I am now perfectly hated by all your subjects who have withstood your Majesty, I shall hereafter be by all who wish prosperity to your affairs in both kingdoms."

After this enigmatical style, the Marquis suggested a very extraordinary mode for his own self-preservation. "Where, or how, I may be called to an account for this undertaking I know not, it is a business of that nature that a pardon ought humbly to be begged before it be meddled in, since it is an act so derogatory to kingly authority.

"Is it fit for an honest man and a gentleman to be made the instrument of doing that which he hath so often in public and private condemned in so high a degree, and withstood to the certain loss of most of my country, and many of your Majesty's court and kingdom of England? Nor can I ever hope to live without perpetual accusations of such who will find themselves grieved by that which will be done, for not dissuading your Majesty from this course, or at least for accepting that employment and proving your instrument therein."

These were the confused and hesitating emotions, the melancholy prescience, and the uncertain results, which perplexed the mind and tormented the heart of the Marquis of Hamilton, on his acceptance of the critical office of the High Commissioner for Scotland. It was distressful to his feelings—disastrous to his quiet. But amidst these conflicting sentiments, we discover that extraordinary caution for self-preservation which constitutes the marking feature of his character. Hamilton had much fear, through all the doublings of his winding ways, that he should be forced into many an equivocal position, and while his ambiguous character should raise suspicions in all men, "he could not hope to live without perpetual accusations." The Marquis suggests a mode of self-preservation as extraordinary as the exigence itself—that a pardon as he calls it, or rather a private

warrant from the King, should be granted to him before he opens his dark negotiations. This was the Royal Amulet to preserve him from the noxious influence of his own witchcraft.

And this singular warrant, extorted from the entire confidence and personal affection of Charles, was actually granted. Burnet, in his *Memoirs of the Hamiltons*, alludes to it; he found it among the Hamilton papers, but as he probably did not consider it as very honourable to his hero, he dropped it, among other important suppressions which that partial, though entertaining biographer acknowledged, at an after-day, when from a servile Tory, Burnet turned into a furious Whig. This private warrant has, however, been recovered by the zealous industry of Lord Hardwicke: it is granted to the Marquis "to converse with the Covenanters," and runs thus, "for which end you will be necessitated to speak that language which if you were called to an account for by us, you might suffer for it. These are, therefore, to assure you, and if need be hereafter to testify to others, that whatsoever you shall say to them, to discover their intentions, you shall neither be called in question for the same, nor yet it prove any way prejudicial to you; nay, though you should be accused by any thereupon."

We must now notice a very curious anecdote of a private interview of Charles the First with the Marquis of Hamilton, told by Clarendon with all the charm and warmth of his narrative genius. It is no gracious task to tell a story after Clarendon, but I will not content myself with a cold reference.

His Lordship describes the Marquis's conduct on this occasion. "It was as great a piece of art, if it were art, as I believe will be found amongst the modern politicians." "The Marquis came to the King, and with some cloudiness, which was not unnatural, and trouble in his countenance,* desired his Majesty

* It is delightful to compare contemporary writers who could have no knowledge of each other's writings, which only posterity can possess—at distant intervals, and when their authors are no more. Confronting these writers together, who never before had met, often furnishes an indisputable confirmation of that truth in history which it has been too much the fashion to depreciate. The cloudiness in the countenance of Hamilton, so expressive of his character, is also noticed by one who well knew him—Sir Philip Warwick. "I wondered much"—when Hamilton was a young man and an early favourite at Court under James—"that all present who usually at a Court put the best characters upon a rising man, generally agreed in

to give him leave to travel." The King was surprised and troubled. The Marquis declared he foresaw a storm—and by his own unskilfulness he might be more obnoxious than other men. The King assured him of his protection, and bade him be confident. The Marquis with some quickness replied, "I know your Majesty's goodness would interpose for me to your own prejudice—and I will rather run any fortune from whence I may again return to serve you." He had communicated with the Archbishop and with the Earl of Strafford, at whom the same fatal arrows were aimed, but he added, "the Earl was too great-hearted to fear, and the Archbishop was too bold to fly."

Charles at that critical moment was disturbed by his own fears—and was silent. The Marquis resumed. "There is one way by which I might secure myself without leaving the kingdom, and by which your Majesty, as these times are like to go, might receive some advantage; but it is so contrary to my nature, and will be so scandalous to my honour, in the opinion of men, that for my own part I had rather run any fortune." The King impatiently asked what that way was? The Marquis replied, "that he might endear himself to the other party by promising his service to them, and concurring with them in opinions and designs,—that his supposed interest in his Majesty's favour might induce the principal persons to hope he might have the influence they desired. But he knew this would be looked on with so much jealousy by other men, and shortly with that reproach, that he might by degrees be lessened even in his Majesty's own trust; and therefore it was a province he had no mind to undertake," and concluded by renewing his suit for leave to travel.

The King saw nothing in this political expedient, but what might tend to procure him important information. With boundless confidence in the integrity of the friend, and the companion of his youth, Charles was delighted to retain Hamilton in his active service, and again assured the Marquis that "it should not be in any body's power to infuse the least jealousy of him into his royal breast."

this, that the air of his countenance had such a cloud on it, that Nature seems to have impressed aliquid insigne, which I often reflected on when his future actions led him first to be suspected, then to be disclaimed against." p. 103.

Clarendon, commenting on this secret anecdote, observes that Charles was so constant in this resolution, that Hamilton enjoyed the liberty of doing whatever he found necessary for his own purposes; with wonderful craft and low condescensions and seasonable insinuations to several leading men, advancing their distinct and contrary interests; so that he grew in no less credit with the English Parliament than with the Scotch Commissioners, and with great dexterity was preserved from any public reproach which would have ruined any other man, nor for a long time did he incur the jealousy of the King, to whom he continued to give the most important information, which, adds Clarendon, if there had been persons enough who would have concurred in prevention might have proved of great use. This confession of Clarendon, whose prejudices strongly lie against Hamilton, we shall find essential, as we advance in the investigation of this extraordinary character.

The piece of secret history which we have from Clarendon requires a critical examination. The drift of the conversation, as given by the noble writer, accords with the ideas of Hamilton, as we find in the Hamilton papers published by Burnet; and that extraordinary scheme of communicating with the Covenanters is authentic. Yet to invest this remarkable conversation with authenticity is not easy. Lord Clarendon prefaces the conversation by assuring us that he received it "from a very good hand." Was it from the King himself? We know it was not from the Marquis, for at no time would he plead this justification, even at the urgent moment of his trial, so tender in this Machiavelian intrigue was he of the credit both of the King and himself. A sceptic might reasonably object to the full details of a conversation between two great personages at which no one was present. He might admire the description even of their gestures.

Clarendon, though indistinctly, has fixed the time of its occurrence. It was "after the calling of the Council of the Peers at York was resolved upon, and a little before the time of their appearance." Now the Peers, after a summons of twenty days' notice, met on the 24th of September, 1640; so that the conversation as given by Clarendon must have taken place in July or August of that year.

We can ascertain that on the 5th and 8th of July, 1639, Hamilton delivered to the King his two papers of Advices and of Reasons which we have noticed;* and that Hamilton, having succeeded in obtaining a licence to protect himself in the subdulous part he was about to act, this extraordinary private warrant is dated at Berwick nine days after, the 17th July, 1639.

The conversation, reported by Clarendon as having occurred in 1640, could never have taken place, since its object had already been long obtained. Hamilton at that period is represented as breaking his scheme for the first time to the King, and as suggesting with a mixture of diffidence and aversion that ample and singular licence which he already possessed.

Here then is a conversation which could not have taken place at the time assigned, and yet one that on the whole exhibits a true account of a strange and secret incident between the parties. The whole tenor of the conversation indeed accords with the sentiments of Hamilton as they appear in the papers of advice he laid before the King, and the important political secret of his double-dealing, as given by Clarendon, is indisputably ascertained.

How are we to resolve this paradoxical case? Were the papers of Hamilton, among other papers of the King, inspected by, or reported to Clarendon? It is evident he knew nothing of the warrant, for he would not have passed over in silence this political curiosity. The great historian was right in his conclusions of the unlimited confidence of the King, and the exemption of his minister from all responsibility in his ambiguous course.

The delicacy of Lord Clarendon's situation may have been this: he could not publish these arcana of state, as he would any public document; but in the dramatic form of a conversation, which could never have occurred at the period assigned, he followed up the train of ideas which we actually discover in Hamilton's papers; and to impress on the reader the authenticity of the secret history, his lordship assures him that he received it "from a good hand." But with all the felicity of his

* Burnet's *Memoirs of the Hamiltons*, p. 144—who furnishes the respective dates of these papers.

ingenuity Clarendon could not conceal the impossibility of giving a secret conversation between the King and the Marquis. Whose was "the good hand" which could furnish those fine individualising touches of the two great personages, in secrecy and privacy? Who heard his lordship's wish to be permitted to travel? Who marked "the cloudiness on his lordship's countenance?" Who observed when "the Marquis with some quickness replied"—or when "the King was much disturbed," or when "much delighted with the expedient?" These are the creative, yet veracious, touches of a great master, who from his familiarity with the temper, the habits, the languages of the personages themselves, could speak their very thoughts, and paint their very gestures—and thus endow the men he well knew, with the immortality of his own genius.

And thus I think we may infer that should the conversation of Clarendon prove to be in some respects an invention, it cannot be denied that it revealed to the world an important truth.

Hamilton, once possessed of this secret warrant, proceeded to act with extraordinary zeal; and when it happened, as it frequently did, that his conduct and his language afforded sufficient reason to alarm the friends of the King, and to set on watchful informers who were thus enabled to convey certain evidence of the prejudice to the King's service done by Hamilton, to the amazement and incomprehensibility of the best friends of Charles, whenever Hamilton was admitted to the King's presence, all the charges against him, however positive, were thrown aside in silence. A private interview—a whisper in the King's ear—the plea of the secret warrant—reinstated the Marquis in the royal confidence, which we shall show, however startling his conduct, he never lost. We should not therefore be surprised at the strong conviction of many, who have denounced Hamilton as a traitor, since even his perpetual eulogist Burnet does acknowledge that, "he (Burnet) often stumbled," as he phrases it, "at some of his speeches, which were hard to be understood," but when he discovered the secret warrant, "it reconciled the truth of these (unfavourable) reports with the innocence of the Marquis."*

* Burnet's *Memoirs of the Hamiltons*, 148.

There seems to be no reason to suspect the sincerity of Hamilton on his first entrance into the office of High Commissioner in the Scottish affairs. He warned the King of the real intentions of the Covenanters. "It is more than probable that these people have somewhat else in their thoughts than religion. But that must serve for a cloak to rebellion, wherein for a time they may prevail; but to bring them again to a dutiful obedience, I am confident your Majesty will not find it a work of long time, nor of great difficulty, as they have foolishly fancied to themselves." He put the King on his guard, that his agents abroad might prevent any arms being bought up by Scotchmen. He counselled Charles to hasten with his fleet and his army, or he must yield to all the demands of the Covenanters; but he leaves the King to decide how far in his justice he should punish the folly of the people, or how far he should connive at their madness. Hamilton ever viewed the two opposite sides of a question, dubious of both.

Something of vacillation appears in the Marquis's closing hint. Hamilton, on his entrance into Edinburgh, was certainly awed by having been met by the greatest number of the people which had assembled together for many years; sixty thousand persons in the small city of Edinburgh formed an army, unarmed. This concourse was headed by five hundred ministers. When the Royal Commissioner attempted to elude their oratory in public, they pursued their victim of State to his privacy; there, with tears in their eyes, they came to inform him of the danger in which their religion stood.

When the King first received the encouraging news that the reduction of the Covenanters would not be a work of difficulty, he wrote to Hamilton a letter, of which I shall transcribe the important passages—they conduce greatly to let us into the character of this active, however unfortunate sovereign.

"HAMILTON,

"Though I answered not yours of the 4th, yet I assure you that I have not been idle, so that I hope by the next week I shall send you some good assurance of the advancing of our preparations. This I say, not to make you precipitate any thing, for I like of all you have hitherto done, and even of that

which I find you mind to do—but to show you that I mean to stick to my grounds, and that I expect not any thing can reduce that people to their obedience, but only force. In the mean time your care must be how to dissolve the multitude, and to this end I give you leave to flatter them with what hopes you please, so you engage not me against my grounds, consenting to the calling of Parliament, until the Covenant be disavowed and given up.

“Your chief end being now to win time, that they may not commit public follies until I be ready to suppress them; and since it is, as you well observe, my own people, which by this means will be for a time ruined, so that the loss must be inevitably mine, and this if I could eschew, were it not with a greater, were well. But when I consider, that not only now my crown, but my reputation for ever, lies at stake, I must rather suffer the first, that time will help, than this last, which is irreparable.

“This I have written to no other end than to show you I will rather die than yield to those impertinent and damnable demands, as you rightly call them, for it is all one as to yield to be no King in a very short time. So wishing you better success than I can expect, I rest,

Your assured constant friend,

“CHARLES R.”

The first instructions of Hamilton were to proclaim the Covenanters traitors—he ventured to transgress his instructions, as he then observed, at the hazard of his head. At that moment the Marquis had not yet obtained the private warrant of the King, which was subsequently granted. His sole care now was to disperse this enormous multitude; to soothe and to wheedle, not to menace and condemn. Now he writes to the King not to hasten his warlike preparations.

Charles on these opposite counsels was entirely compliant: with unabated confidence in his Minister, the King replies with great sense and patience—

“HAMILTON,

“The dealing with multitudes makes diversity of advertisement no way strange, and certainly the alteration from worse to less ill cannot be displeasing; wherefore you may be

confident I cannot but approve your proceedings hitherto, for certainly you have gained a very considerable point in making the heavy multitude begin to disperse, without having engaged me in any unfitting thing. I shall take your advice in staying the public preparations for force ; but in a silent way (by your leave) I will not leave to prepare, that I may be ready upon the least advertisement.

“ Your assured constant friend,

“ CHARLES R.”

Now Hamilton discovers that the Covenant is not illegal, and the bond of mutual defence which they had subscribed, and which Charles insisted should be given up to him, would admit of explanations. The King's Advocate in Scotland, Sir Thomas Hope, was himself a warm Covenanter, who appears to have silently directed their movements. The Marquis now alarms the King with the state of his affairs, both in England and in Scotland, where a close alliance was formed between the two parties, both equally adverse to him. On the first rupture the Covenanters would march into England, confident as they were of having many good friends there : nor had France ever forgotten the Isle of Rhé, for her secret hand was cherishing the malcontents of Scotland. In spite of these critical difficulties, Hamilton craves his Majesty's pleasure, to whose service he would willingly sacrifice his life.

At this conflicting state of affairs, Charles expresses no wonder, no alarm ; he only regrets the spirit of the dispatch, while he informs Hamilton of the strength of his army, the goodness of his artillery, the arms which he had procured from Holland, his fleet ready. The King adds, “ and last of all, which is indeed most of all, the Chancellor of the Exchequer assures me of 200,000*l.* for this expedition. Thus you may see that I intend not to yield to the demands of those traitors the Covenanters.”

The Marquis continues disheartening the King—many of the Council in Scotland were secret Covenanters—and certainly he did not communicate any false intelligence when he feared that his Majesty would be faintly followed by the English. Charles wrote—

“HAMILTON,

“I must needs thank you that you stand so close and constantly to my grounds, and you deserve the more, since your fellow counsellors do rather dishearten than help you in this business, for which I swear I pity you much. As long as this damnable Covenant* is in force, whether it be with, or without explanation, I have no more power in Scotland than as a Duke of Venice, which I will rather die than suffer. If they call a Parliament without me, it would the more loudly call them traitors, and the more justify my actions. My resolution is to come myself in person, accompanied like myself; sea-forces, nor Ireland shall be forgotten.”

The Marquis now attempted to menace the Covenanters, who not being yet ready for an open rupture, affected to talk only of “their innocent intentions.” The Marquis now asks leave to return to Court, that he may personally explain the emergent difficulties to the King. There were at least three of these “speedy journeys.” At every return of the Marquis from Court, he found affairs more embroiled, and the “Tables,” or Committees of the four classes of the nation, more frequently summoned. Whenever the Marquis published a royal declaration at the Market-cross, right opposite, on the same day, was suspended their Protest.

The King is more perplexed—in one letter Charles tells the Marquis, “I confess this last dispatch does more put one to seek how to judge of the affairs of that kingdom than any that I have yet received.” In another, Charles sensibly observes, “Why I should go further, I see no reason; for certainly those who will not be contented with what I have done already will be less contented if I should do more.” The style of Charles is evidently changed; the regal tone is lowered, and as was usual

* This term “damnable Covenant” doubtless appeared to Rushworth, who copied part of the King’s letter from Burnet, excessively offensive, and strongly indicative of the tyrannical character of Charles; for Rushworth has distinguished the words in the printing. The expression, however, had been first used by Hamilton, as we learn from Charles himself, who, however, would not have hesitated to have employed the term had it occurred to him. Doubtless, however, this style inflamed the prejudices against the King with the many, who looked on this “Covenant” as sacred as the one in holy writ.

with him, those lofty pretensions of Royalty which resulted from the theoretical politics of ancient days are laid asleep. Even that more than tender point—Episcopacy, is surrendered! Charles yields all! “The Buke,” as the Liturgy was called, and the Church discipline of the five articles of Perth. The King only changes an ambiguous expression in the paper which Hamilton was to offer the Assembly at Glasgow, by which instrument the humiliated Monarch had given way to all their demands.

The Assembly at Glasgow met, their Presbyters with their Lay-elders, and as Hamilton describes it, “not a gown among them, but many had swords and daggers.” In this curious dispatch the Marquis delineates the Scottish Counsellors,—personalities which Burnet could not venture to publish; * but it was a gallery of portraits and full-lengths of contemporaries, which struck Charles with great admiration of the skill of the artist.

Our baffled statesman desponds—“So unfortunate have I been in this unlucky country, that though I did prefer your service before all worldly considerations, *nay even strained my conscience in some points*, yet all hath been to small purpose; for I have missed my end in not being able to make your Majesty so considerable a party as will be able to curb the insolency of this rebellious nation, without assistance from England, and greater charge to your Majesty than this miserable country is worth. As I shall answer to God at the last day, I have done my best, though the success has proven so bad as I think myself of all men living most miserable. And seeing this may perhaps be the last letter that ever I shall have the happiness to write to your Majesty, I shall, therefore, in it discharge my duty so far, as freely to express my thoughts in such things as I do conceive concerneth your service. I have sent this by a faithful servant of your Majesty’s, whom I have found to be so trusty, as he may be employed by you, even to go against his nearest friends and dearest kindred.”

If this “faithful servant” were a Scotchman, he did not find his like among the closest intimates of Charles. The warmth of the style, we must infer, denotes the earnestness of Hamilton.

* It is in Lord Hardwicke’s State-papers, ii. 113.

"If I keep my life (though next hell I hate this place) if you think me worthy of my employment I shall not weary till the Government be again set right, and then I will forswear this country." And he closes this most desponding dispatch by a solemn request to the King—

"I have only this one suit to your Majesty, that if my sons live, they may be bred in England—I wish my daughters be never married in Scotland—I humbly recommend my brother to your favour. May all your intentions be crowned with a wished success, which I hope to live to see, notwithstanding of all the threats that is used to Your Majesty's, &c.

"HAMILTON."

The King must have been affected by the pathos; perhaps never before had a disappointed minister composed a cabinet dispatch so much in the style of a last will and testament.

But while the Marquis desponds from his own personal disappointments, he plans the future operations of the King; advises what places should be secured, where the fleet was to lie in the Frith, where the royal army was to enter Scotland. He has not omitted noticing that the ambition of the Bishops had been great, and their folly greater. It is evident that Hamilton, though ministerially he protected the Bishops, and even supported them in their personal distresses, was no better friend to the Episcopalians than other Scotchmen.

Charles was struck by the important communication of this elaborate dispatch, and returned an answer by the same trusty messenger—

"HAMILTON,

"I have sent back this honest bearer both for safety of my letters, and to ease me from length of writing; therefore in a word I thank you for your full and clear dispatch, totally agreeing with you in every point, as well in the characters of men, as in the way you have set down to reduce them to obedience; only the time when to begin to act is considerable: to this end I have fully instructed the bearer with the state of my preparations, that you may govern my business accordingly. You have given me such good satisfaction, that I mean not to put any other in the chief trust in these affairs but yourself."

It was now the close of the year 1638. The King now allowed of the Convention, or Assembly, as it was called, of Glasgow, but it was carried on in such a disorderly way that the Marquis resolved to dissolve it. The Bishops had been insolently cited to appear; their lay-elders and their ruling-elders were in fact a cover for these democratic conventions, exacting unlimited freedom. Hamilton, in dissolving the Assembly of Glasgow, betrayed such visible marks of grief as affected its members. The Assembly, though declared traitorous, if they continued their sittings, would not disperse, but proceeded with increased rapidity and violence. Having deposed the Bishops and excommunicated eight, the Assembly closed by addressing a letter to the King, justifying their proceedings, and complaining of the usage they had endured from the Royal Commissioner. The Marquis flew back to Court, leaving the country in confusion and revolt.

Charles, incensed at his affronted authority, resolved, though reluctantly, for he could hardly depend on an army which had more of the parade than the force of one, to reduce the Covenanters to obedience. The saddened spirit of Hamilton we may conceive to have been in torture; for now his duty to his Sovereign and his friend was to compete with his love for his country—his affections for his relatives—and his intercourse with his most intimate connections. One of the charges afterwards raised against Hamilton, is, that many of his friends and followers passed over to the Covenanters.

We may infer, in justice to Hamilton, that having evidently reluctantly accepted the office of High Commissioner, he had flattered himself that he should have restored tranquillity to his unhappy country, without coming to the last extremities. In his heart he was Scottish, and could have little sympathised with the fatal predilection of Charles for Episcopacy in an unepiscopal land; and to this perhaps he alludes when he declared that “his duty or his love to the King, had made him digest some things which otherwise he had not borne so well. On the other hand he perceived the rebellious spirits of some of his countrymen, kindling through the people whom they had lured on and inflamed by the cry of religion. Hamilton might have rejoiced to chastise the insolence of some of the leaders of the Cove-

nanTERS, but when he turned to them, could he strike at his dearest connections, the followers who were to fortify his influence, the fellow-citizens who looked up for their protector in a Hamilton? Doubtless the patriot confessed the real sentiment of his heart, when he owned that "the thing in the world at which he had the greatest horror, was the engaging in a civil war with his countrymen."

There was still at that day an irascible national jealousy; the Scottish man at times seemed to imagine that Scotia had sunk into a province of Britain; and there had been artful rumours, and even accusations, that Hamilton aimed at the sovereignty and independence of his father-land. This ambition, however, no action of his life had betrayed, and those who had so confidently rested their surmises on the little army Hamilton had led to Germany, and on the intention of the Marquis, as they conceived by his mysterious conduct, to plunge the nation into universal confusion that he might fish in such troubled waters, these persons knew not what is now known, that the army of Hamilton had been raised by the secret command of Charles, for the possible recovery of the Palatinate.

Hamilton, however the affection for his native land might prevail, could still conscientiously have acted against Scotland; for when accused as "an incendiary" he distinguished between the conquest of a kingdom and the suppression of a rebellion. He declared that "he had never advised his Majesty to conquer that kingdom, for he takes the suppressing of a party in arms against the King, or who were rejecting his authority, to be very different from conquering the kingdom."*

The Marquis was now to command an army and a fleet against his countrymen. When he received orders to open hostilities, he again urged that the issue of a battle, always dubious, was much more so when the one side was desperate and the other but half cordial.† The event justified the prediction.

The Marquis, General by land and sea, and always in his military capacity remarkably inefficient, anchored his fleet in

* Burnet's *Memoirs of the Hamiltons*, 255.

† Burnet's *Memoirs of the Hamiltons*, 132 and 139. Confront the opinion of the Marquis with Clarendon, i. 214. They are similar. Burnet's work was published many years preceding Clarendon's.

the Frith. He had promised by frequent incursions to harass the coasts, and by perpetual alarms to create diversions and scatter their collected forces. The only exploit he performed was possessing himself of an island which had been left unprotected, and landing five thousand soldiers to air and exercise themselves, from the close confinement of the ships. The Marquis himself appears to have been more actively employed than his army. The lady his mother,* a zealous Presbyterian and a flaming Covenanter, and whose two daughters were the wives of Covenanters, came down to visit her dutiful son, and her hurtless enemy; the Scots on shore laughed, observing that "they knew the son of so gude a mither could ne'er harm them." Hamilton never attempted to interrupt the fortifications of Leith, where all hands were at work, and even all ranks. It appears that Hamilton was in communication with several of the chiefs of the Covenant: one interview is attested in the presence of witnesses; but others were under more suspicious circumstances: we are told of a conference at night with Lord Loudon on the birks of Barnboulg.

Yet the Marquis could defend his own conduct in having never betrayed the King's service, avowing that such secret conferences were designed for the best purposes; and it has farther been alleged in his favour, that his troops were raw and undisciplined, incompetent to act against Leith.

It is certain, however, that the total inactivity of the Marquis in his military operations, and the rumours of his apparent confederacy, had raised strong suspicions among the King's party; Charles himself had none; and the royal correspondence continued almost daily with Hamilton.

Again the King's resolution was to be shaken by the account the Marquis gave of the numerous force of the Scots, and a treaty was suggested in preference to a battle. Thus affairs languished, till Charles acknowledged the mortifying truth of which the Marquis had formerly apprised him. We gather this from a letter of Secretary Vane:

"His Majesty now doth clearly see and is fully satisfied in his own judgment that what passed in the gallery betwixt his Majesty and your Lordship and myself, hath been but too much verified

* Lady Anne Cunningham, daughter to the Earl of Glencairn.

on this occasion. And therefore his Majesty would not have you begin with them, but settle things in a safe and good posture." Such doubts on the royal side of its own strength, and such resolution on that of the insurgents, terminated in the hasty pacification of Berwick.

After that event, when the Earl of Loudon, then at London as a deputy of the Scottish Covenanters, was committed to the Tower for having subscribed a letter to the French king, soliciting his aid against England, the dexterous management of Hamilton on that occasion is remarkably displayed. The alarming situation of Loudon, imprisoned on no doubtful act of treason, embarrassed his Scottish friends, who, it is certain, dreaded the result. The King had designed to bring Loudon to his trial, but a rumour seems to have spread among the Scots, that Charles had given orders for beheading him without a trial; that story, such as it is, we shall shortly more critically examine. Hamilton had frequent interviews with Loudon in the Tower; he obtained his enlargement in that spacious state-prison, and found no difficulty in convincing the King that Loudon was not formed of that hard Scotch temper which no art could render malleable: he would spread out and soften at the stroke of court-favour. The man, whom some have told us the King had commanded to lose his head, was now seen at the King's levee—and

"Kiss'd the hand just raised to shed his blood."

Loudon, in fact, was gained over by the King, and made Chancellor; and we are told that Hamilton, in a private conference at Whitehall, was locked up with Loudon from two in the morning till four in the afternoon.* Such was the influence and the mysterious conduct of the Marquis of Hamilton; the present was a great *coup d'état*; the crafty politician not only appeared to have abstracted a friend for the King from his enemies, but he had secured his own reputation with the Covenanters, by saving the Earl of Loudon, whose head they well knew was in jeopardy.

* Nalson's Collection, i. 376. Nalson, in preserving the information delivered to the Secretary of State, by a physician "who suspected the Marquis to be an arch-traitor," leaves the reader to exercise his own judgment. Nalson did not know what we know. The information given to the Secretary is, without doubt, genuine and correct.

It is evident that Hamilton remarkably studied the interests of the opposing parties, but this being serviceable to both, whatever good was effected by him, was always neutralised. If ever there were a politician who had sagacity to dive into the secrets of the man with whom he came in contact, we surely may fix on Bishop Williams. When this statesman had resolved to be serviceable to Charles the First at that critical moment when the Scottish intrigues and the Scottish army were equally advancing in England, Williams, who had always declined the acquaintance of the Marquis, now sought his intimacy. This shrewd observer of human nature acknowledged that he was at a loss to decide whether Hamilton were a good or an evil genius. "I have found him to be very opposite to the vulgar opinion formed of him, which considers him cunning and false. I believe him not to be false to the King, nor do I find any great cunning in him, but rather that he wants a head-piece."* It is possible that the mystery which involves the character of Hamilton may have originated in the single circumstance that he had designed great matters, without the capacity of conducting them.

Knowing, as we now do, that Hamilton carried about him the secret warrant which held him irresponsible for his double-dealings, it is hard for us to decide at once on his guilt or his innocence, on his sincerity or his duplicity. Was he with the King, or with the Covenanter? The Searcher of all human hearts alone can detect the silent motives of man. The intelligence Hamilton gave the King was always true; his warnings were predictions, and his counsels, as Lord Clarendon himself acknowledges, were always useful.

But he is accused at the same time of having revealed the King's plans; of having told the Covenanting Lords that he had no commission to fight, which intimation rendered them more hardy; and it is even said, that he advised the Covenanters not to trust the King. At York, such was his dexterous conduct with the Scotch Commissioners in his promises of future service, that he secured his own indemnity with them; and, on a later occasion, he equally secured the favour of the English Parliamentarians, from the recommendation of their allies the Scotch, who declared that Hamilton had always been true to them.

* Hacket's Life of Williams, pt. ii. 143.

Once, after an elaborate address from his chair as High Commissioner, when he had earnestly impressed on his auditors the severity of his duty in delivering the royal commands, he descended from that chair of State, and familiarly mingling with some of the noble leaders of the Covenant, he took them into another apartment; there he observed, "Before the Lords of the Council I spoke to you as the King's Commissioner, but now I am come among you like a kindly Scotchman." And it is added, that he advised them to persevere, by which they would carry every thing before them, but if they fainted, or gave way, they were undone.*

It was therefore not only with many suspicious actions, but with many loose speeches caught by listeners—and with private conferences with the leaders of the Scottish and of the Parliamentary parties, observed by watchful eyes, that Hamilton was repeatedly charged by the Court-party. The unfavourable result of all his negotiations seemed to confirm the whole tenor of his conduct in the minds of those who did not hesitate to condemn Hamilton as an arch-traitor. The royal confidence was hardly ever shaken—yet once it seems to have been startled, for even Charles could not avoid remarking that "Hamilton had been very active in his own preservation."

The Earl of Lanerick, the brother of Hamilton, the King had commended for the frankness of his speech, and the openness of his nature, and even Clarendon distinguishes him both for his ability and his honour; yet by others the Earl is considered to have adopted the same line of conduct as the Marquis. Lanerick was selected to supply the place of his "unfortunate brother;" and matters were now reduced to this point, that one brother was to be answerable for the other! We learn this from a communication of the Earl to some confidential friend to whom he sent a dark account of that mysterious affair which in the Scottish history took the name of "The Incident,"—an extraordinary story, of an "Incident" which never

* This remarkable conversation is given by Bishop Guthry, who at the same time furnishes his authorities. The same story had reached Montrose in the same words. It must have staggered those who considered the Marquis of Hamilton as the King's Commissioner. The language is so strong that one may doubt its correctness—it was instigating the insurrectionary spirit, and can hardly be excused on the plea that Hamilton was covertly attempting to wind himself into their secrets.

occurred, and which shall form the subject of the following chapter.

The mysterious conduct of the brothers still continued. Two years after the affair of "The Incident," when in 1643 the Scots had resolved to raise an army to maintain their "cause," the Marquis sate among them, and seemed only a looker-on; while his brother Lanerick, who had the custody of the King's signet, put it to a proclamation to raise this very Scottish army. This extraordinary act done, the ambiguous brothers hastened to Charles, at Oxford, to justify their proceedings, and to explain that inevitable crisis which affairs had taken. They had however been anticipated by the zealous friends of the Monarch, and the ever-watchful and vindictive Montrose had again denounced the Hamiltons for their infidelity. Yet even in the present alarming event, Charles seems to have seen no treachery, but only misfortune in the brothers. Had they been criminal, would they have returned to Court—they who could have framed apologies for their absence? The charges against Hamilton were, however, of so high a nature, and took so wide a view of all his proceedings, and were so positively asserted by the Marquis of Montrose, that to satisfy the friends about him, the King was compelled to put both brothers under arrest. The Marquis had of late been created Duke of Hamilton, and he who had so long deprived Charles of the zealous services of Montrose, and whose rankling jealousies of that aspiring genius had induced him to pursue the meanest artifices to accomplish Montrose's ruin, now drank himself from the poisoned chalice, returned to his own lips.

The imprisonment of the Hamiltons was, however, not commanded without reluctance. The Duke received the assurances of his Majesty's favour, from the first moment of his confinement, by Secretary Nicholas; and William Murray, of the bed-chamber, the confidential agent of the King, brought repeated messages of the King's unchangeable amity. The charges never came to a trial; but the imprisonment of the Duke lasted two years. His brother Lanerick escaped from his confinement to London, and finally returned to Scotland. When some advised the King to hang Lord Lanerick's page at the window of the apartment, for aiding his master's flight, Charles

declared that "no servant should suffer for his fidelity to his master."

Lanerick, pursuing the same principle of conduct, whatever was that principle, appeared in Scotland loyal to the King in raising a party against the proud and fierce Argyle, and at the same time friendly to the Covenanters; for even his eulogist Burnet acknowledges that he was forced to comply in many things with the public counsels.

The few at Court who pretended a semblance of friendship for the Duke of Hamilton suggested to him that to clear himself from the heavy imputations attached to his name, it would be necessary to concur vigorously in his Majesty's service in Scotland; but Hamilton declared that till he was legally exonerated by a public trial, it was not fitting for him to act; nor had he any longer any hopes to recover Scotland, where his presence had so often failed. When he was lying under the imputation of having betrayed the King's service, he was at the same time receiving letters from Scotland upbraiding him for his services to the King, and in the style of the Covenant, assuring him that "had he been as faithful in serving the King of Kings, he would have been rewarded, but that now he was well served for preferring the one to the other." Such is the catastrophe of a worn-out politician,—such as Frederick the Great once sarcastically likened to "squeezed oranges," which once used are thrown away.

The Duke of Hamilton at length was relieved from his imprisonment in the castle of St. Michael's Mount, in Cornwall, when it surrendered to the Parliamentary forces. This mysterious man had long kept up an interest with some of the leaders of the Parliament. At the time of Strafford's trial and Laud's fall, when a dark cloud was hanging over his head, he found a shelter in the favour of the Scottish Covenanters, for many personal obligations he had conferred on some of that party. At that critical moment he pressed the Scots to intercede for him with their English allies, which they not only did, but bound themselves for his future good behaviour to the English Parliament. We are told from good authority, that Hamilton became a confidant in all their private designs against one another, and at times obtained many concessions from the King.

The last great act of his life closes this involved scene of

human passions, and it will leave the enigma of his life unsolved. Hapless and hopeless, as his fortune had been, at the sight of the imminent danger of the imprisoned Monarch, Hamilton seemed to rouse within him a mightier spirit. He raised a Scottish army to restore his unfortunate Sovereign. But even in this last expedition to England, at the head of a considerable army, his melancholy weighed down the heart that now beat with more generous emotions. The night before he marched, in taking leave of a friend, Hamilton not only expressed his sense of the danger, but the conviction of its destruction to himself. He had, however, determined to stake his life on this last cast. The conduct of this army betrayed a fatal secret, that the Duke of Hamilton was the most inefficient of Generals. He had formerly shown this in Germany, where a fine army had mouldered away under his hands—in the Frith, where in spiritless inactivity he had not risked a single military movement. And now his persecuting genius rose before him in that very army whose precipitated march had entered England, greater in number than in strength. The Duke, as if conscious of his own deficiency, had been persuaded to submit the conduct to the Earl of Calander as Lieutenant-General; yet neither were cordial to each other, and the friends of the General divided from the friends of the Lieutenant. Some veteran Irish troops disdained to serve under the Scotch commander, who was a punctilious old soldier trained up in the German wars. The army marched without unison, and often in separate divisions. The Scots did not combat so resolutely for the King as they had fought earnestly against him. The Kirk had not blessed Duke Hamilton's army. Their greatest disaster was, that they had to encounter Cromwell. Five weeks the Scots had been suffered to advance, though perpetually harassed, till at length they were defeated. Scorning to retreat homewards with ignominy, a mutiny broke out, when the Earl of Calander escaped to Holland, and the Duke of Hamilton was carried prisoner to Derby. Hamilton was now so sincere, that he cared not to preserve himself, if he could not preserve his army.

The Duke of Hamilton now had no enemy to deceive, and no friend to confide in. He entered his prison and he maintained his honour, which now no promises could seduce, and no per-

secution could menace. In the second evening of his imprisonment, when a stern serjeant peremptorily commanded him to leave the court-yard where he was sauntering, the Duke was struck by this first mark of that great change in the condition of him who not a few days before had commanded so many thousands; but he knew that his master in solitude had long borne, as a monarch should bear, the indignities of his ill-fortune. Never more did Hamilton imagine that he should view that countenance of Majesty and of friendship. Yet this happened! At the close of the following year the Duke was removed to Windsor Castle, where also was the King. When Charles was leaving Windsor to hasten to his trial or execution, Hamilton prevailed on his keepers to be allowed to speak to the King, as he passed by, but for a minute! The interview was hardly suffered to last that single minute which had been so hardly begged. As Charles was passing, the Duke hurried to meet him, and kneeling down, had only time to say, with that powerful emotion which is beyond all feigning—"My dear Master!"—Charles embraced the old companion of his youth—the minister whose counsels had occupied him so many years—the confident of his secret thoughts, and now the sharer of his adversities—shortly too to be the participator of his fate. The King embraced Hamilton, and had only time to reply—"I have been so indeed to you!"

The confidence of Charles in the Duke of Hamilton remained to the last uninterrupted, though the enemies of Hamilton were ever instilling into the King's mind the darkest suspicions, and what to a monarch, and more particularly to Charles, was most likely to excite his jealousy, insinuating against Hamilton the most treasonable aspirations. When the King was confined in the Isle of Wight, and the governor informed him of the defeat of the Scotch army under the Duke of Hamilton, Charles observed that "It was the worst news that ever came to England." The governor thought that "his Majesty had no reason to be of that opinion, for had Hamilton beaten the English, he would certainly have possessed himself of the thrones of England and Scotland." It had long been a popular notion that such was the concealed ambition of the Duke of Hamilton.

The King, however, was not of the opinion of the governor;

for after a short pause, his noble confidence in Hamilton was such, that Charles replied "You are mistaken; I could have commanded him back with the motion of my hand." *

CHAPTER XVI.

THE INCIDENT.

"THE Incident," as it was called, is a presumed event in the history of the Hamiltons, which occurred on the second visit of Charles to Scotland, and which no one could comprehend at the time. It baffled the inquisitive Clarendon, though the King gave him all the benefit of his knowledge.

In the mysterious intrigues at this period, the more we labour the darker grows our work. These plotting and counter-plotting politicians, like the silk-worm, cloud themselves over with their own opaque web, till at length they perish by their own ingenuity. Some recently acquired information will throw a partial light in these dark passages.

Montrose, who had long been in the secrets of the Covenanters, and had watched the ambiguous conduct of the Hamiltons with some of that party, and was convinced in his own mind that the brothers were both traitors—Montrose was himself engaged with the Covenanters, much against his will, in consequence of the King's first ungracious reception of him, which had been contrived by the artifice of Hamilton.

When the King was at Edinburgh in 1641, William Murray of the bed-chamber, at that moment an avowed enemy of the Marquis of Hamilton, and attached to the Earl of Montrose, became the medium of communication between Charles and his future hero. Montrose, since his personal interview with the King at the pacification of Berwick, was supposed, though unconquered in arms, to have been vanquished by words; a paper had been attached to the door of his apartment even at that time, inscribed—

Invictus armis, verbis vincitur.

He was now under restraint in the castle by order of the Cove-

* Ludlow.

nanters. Montrose assured Murray that the proofs of treason were ample, and sufficient to bring them home to the Hamiltons, who had confederated with Argyle to betray the King through the whole of the Scottish transactions. Montrose offered to maintain his proofs in Parliament; the offer was nearly tantamount to a proof—as Clarendon in a suppressed passage informs us, that by the law of Scotland the delator who wrongfully accused of high-treason was himself condemned to the same punishment the convicted traitor would have suffered. We are informed of another fact by Clarendon. The offer of impeaching the three noblemen to break their factions, was accompanied by a more extraordinary one—that of getting rid of them altogether by assassination! which, says Clarendon, Montrose frankly undertook to do. Events of this nature the still barbarous customs of the age had not rendered so singular and repulsive as they appear to our more subdued manners; the Court of France, where Montrose had sometime resided, offers several remarkable instances, even under the eyes of Louis the Thirteenth, called “the Just.”

At this moment the King seemed embarrassed and fluctuating in his own opinion of the fidelity of the brothers; other obscure suspicions of a confederacy, which we shall have shortly to show, also developed themselves. Forbidding with abhorrence the horrid expedient of the military adventurer, Charles, however, consented that the proofs of treason should be laid before Parliament.

So far we have proceeded with Clarendon’s account, who knowing nothing more, describes on a Sunday morning the sudden flight of the Hamiltons and Argyle—the city of Edinburgh under arms—and the reports the three lords gave out of dreadful conspiracies against them. The Hamiltons sent letters to the King and the Parliament, “not without some reflections on his Majesty.”*

This remarkable passage, which long implicated Charles in the rumour of the assassination, has been cleared up by the letters of Secretary Nicholas, to which we shall shortly refer.

Lord Lanerick has addressed to some confidential friend “A relation of the Incident.” It is an episode in the history

* Clarendon, i. 576.

of the Hamiltons ; it betrays their distracted feelings. Such was the peculiar situation of the brothers, that both had acted in a manner to become equally suspected even by their partial master.

“ You should blush when you remember to have owned so much friendship for one branded with the black name of a traitor ; or to have loved a person that was capable of ingratitude to a deserving master, for though I should have forgot his Majesty as a subject, I could never have forgot his Majesty’s particular favours to me, who from nothing hath heaped both fortune and honours on me. I must beg of you the trouble of reading this paper, and shall not desire a more favourable construction of my actions, than you would of his you never saw.

“ It is true *the opinion I found his Majesty had of my brother* I conceive made him in some measure *jealous of me*, which upon divers occasions I strove to clear myself, and professed to him that my affection to his service was such, *as if I believed my brother were not so dutiful to him as he ought to be, no man should more willingly contribute to bring him to his deserved punishment than myself.* His Majesty then, and upon divers occasions, was pleased to say, he believed me to be an honest man, and that he had never heard any thing to the contrary ; but that he thought my brother *had been very active in his own preservation.*

“ This expression of his Majesty’s made me look more strictly unto my brother’s actions, to see if I could find that in any particular whereby he strove to preserve himself, he had prejudiced the King’s just designs. Possibly my blood might claim such an interest in his as to procure a partial construction of his actions from me ; but truly, the nearer I looked into his thoughts, the greater affection and fidelity I found in him to his master ; and if in this judgment I have erred, it was the brain’s fault, not the blood’s, for all interest I laid aside.

“ I must confess his Majesty found great opposition in this country, yet, (as I hope for mercy, though I found myself suspected by him,) I strove to do him the best service I could ; and when all differences were coming to some accommodation, and I in hopes his Majesty might have returned with satisfaction to England ; all those hopes were destroyed, by this unfortunate

accident which now forceth this distance betwixt his Majesty and us."

After an account of this presumed plot, Lord Lanerick declares, and the confession may be true, of the miserable days of these plotting intriguers, "*I was not so much troubled with the hazard of losing a life, wherein God knows these many years I have not taken great pleasure, as with the great prejudice I saw this would bring to his Majesty's affairs and the peace and quiet of this poor kingdom.*"

His lordship concludes in this extraordinary style: "I was informed his Majesty had let fall some expressions to my disadvantage in the Parliament House; whereupon I again sent to him begging him to believe that I had not a heart capable of a disloyal thought to him; and that *if I believed my brother had any, he should not be troubled with thinking how to punish him, for I had both a heart and a hand able to do it.*"

Here is an offer of assassinating his own brother, should that brother prove to be a traitor! What extremes of passion agitate politicians in their crooked course! Lanerick offers to return to court at the risk of his own life in the midst of his enemies, "confident that his Majesty knows not of the base design, though the King protects those who are accused."* This alludes to Montrose and his party.

The narrative by Lord Lanerick of the presumed immolation of the three lords at the feet of his Majesty, betrays such incoherence, that the whole pretended conspiracy was long considered as having no foundation in reality, and by many was treated as a subject of ridicule. The three noblemen were to be called into the King's drawing-room on parliamentary business—two lords were then to enter at a garden-door, followed by two or three hundred men, when, proceeds the Earl, "they should either have killed us, or carried us aboard a ship of his Majesty's which then lay in the road." After all, the assassination might have subsided into a deportation. It is quite certain that in this novel political scene, Charles would never have endured to have been even a spectator; the assassination of the three lords could never have taken place in his presence. Charles has never yet been accused, among the calumnies heaped on his head, of this

* Lord Hardwicke's State-papers, ii 299.

sanguinary disposition. The stretch of his arbitrary command was an imprisonment.

Charles, indignant at the suspicions of the Hamiltons, insisted on a public trial of the presumed conspirators. We learn from that faithful recorder and actor in the passing scenes, Principal Baillic, that all parties considered it as most prudent to leave this dark and involved affair to a private committee; and in England it was consigned to the Privy Council. The Scotch Committee appear to have been strangely perplexed by the contrary depositions; the truth of some things could not be denied, and the falsity and absurdity of others seem to have been as evident. It was considered prudent that the original depositions should be suppressed; some notes of them, however, have been preserved.* In England it was resolved that all the documents relative to "the Incident" should remain under the Secretary's care, to be inspected by any of the Peers, but not to be published without the King's command.† The chief point with Charles was, the vindication of his own honour, so cruelly implicated by the terrified Hamiltons. That remarkable passage in Clarendon that the Hamiltons addressed the Scottish Parliament "not without some reflections upon his Majesty," receives a fresh light from one of Secretary Nicholas's letters to the King, which has recently appeared in the Evelyn papers. The Secretary writes from London to the King at Edinburgh, "The Marquis of Hamilton's second and third letters to your Majesty, whereby he begs your Majesty's pardon, which argues he is not so faultless and innocent as we (the Privy Council) would here render him." This can only allude to the Marquis having implicated the "King in the base design," as Lord Lanerick calls it. And therefore the Secretary congratulates the King on the result of the examination of the Privy Council, that

* These notes or contents of the depositions are preserved by Balfour in his *Journal of Parliament*; and are in Malcolm Laing's *Appendix to his History of Scotland*, iii. 515.

† On inquiry, I do not learn that these papers are in the State-paper Office—they remained probably with secretary Nicholas, and, if not lost, must be among his MSS. My friend Mr. Amyott, to whom, if his modesty would allow it, I would apply the happy designation of Sir David Dalrymple of Lord Hardwicke, as "learned in British History," did me the favour to examine the book of the Privy Council, but not a single entry has been made of this singular transaction, so careful were they, for the honour of the King, to bury it in impenetrable obscurity.

"there was nothing which in any sort reflected on the King's honour." Nor has Charles been accused of any criminal act by the party. The Secretary designates "the Incident" as "that unhappy business"—and requests the royal command respecting the publication. The King simply notes on the letter, "There needs no more."*

What is more certain than "the Incident" is, that Lord Clarendon heard from Montrose himself that Murray, after having been the warmest encourager to the proposed impeachment of the Hamiltons, and offered himself to prove many notable things against the suspected nobleman, was the only man who discovered the whole "Counsel"—that is, the intended impeachment—to the Hamiltons; and what is as mysterious as "the Incident" itself, Murray, the avowed enemy of the Marquis of Hamilton, suddenly deserted Montrose, whom he had courted, and whose intermediate agent he had been with the King, and as suddenly became the intimate friend of Hamilton. The alarm of the Hamiltons, occasioned by the dread of assassination, I would ascribe to the same manœuvres of Mr. William Murray of the bed-chamber. In betraying the projects of Montrose, he probably mixed up an exaggerated account of that "frank" offer of assassination, which the daring and vindictive Montrose would not have hesitated to have had performed by his creatures, for he was himself then confined in the Castle by the Covenanters. The Marquis of Hamilton, practised on by the artful insinuations of the faithless Murray, evidently suspected that the King had consented to this inexpiable crime. Hence his regrets and requests of pardon, noticed in the letters of Secretary Nicholas. That Hamilton had entertained this suspicion, though he certainly ought better to have understood the character of Charles, is confirmed by an affecting circumstance. Shortly after the mysterious "Incident," and at the moment the Marquis was created a Duke, Charles tenderly reproached him for having suffered so foul a suspicion to enter his mind, reminding Hamilton that on a former occasion, when a like charge had been laid against Hamilton himself, he had instantly rejected it with scorn, and as a proof of his unchange-

* Secretary Nicholas's correspondence in Evelyn. Pym's report of the Committee in the tenth volume of the Parliamentary History.

able confidence, had commanded Hamilton that very night to sleep in his chamber.

In a conspiracy of which we hardly know the conspirators, and in an "Incident" which never occurred, some reasonable conjectures may be allowed. Malcolm Laing, after an able review of this mysterious tale, concludes that "the Incident" was not altogether a fictitious plot, and that the proposed arrest of the Hamiltons was probably assented to by Charles, under the influence of the extraordinary communications of Montrose: these, in fact, opened a scene of confederacy which extended to London as well as Edinburgh. At this moment Charles saw himself surrounded by conspiracies. One of his motives in hastening to Scotland had been to obtain possession of an engagement bearing the signatures of several English Peers, and, as he was told, of some Commoners with the Covenanters, and which we shall find he but "narrowly missed." If the arrest of the three Lords had the King's concurrence, what need was there of the three hundred men? That the King might have designed to arrest them is not improbable, but the rumour of the assassination, or the deportation, probably originated in the artful insinuations of Murray, and in the confused accounts of the contradictory evidence of some officers, who seem to have been let into a plot, which they did not themselves understand. The plot, whatever it was, may have been the contrivance of the daring Montrose, who consigned the management to the Earl of Crawford; but even this point is difficult to conceive, for Montrose, who was then soliciting the royal favour, would hardly have ventured to lose it, by an assassination which had been solemnly interdicted by the King.

There was another circumstance which had risen out of the mysterious "Incident" not the least observable. When the news of the flight of the three Lords from Edinburgh reached London, it created the same consternation as in the Scotch city: it was magnified by Pym in Parliament* into one of those popular delusions which they began to practise; it was said to be a Papistical conspiracy against both the Kingdoms; and the Lord Mayor is directed to double guards and watches in the city and suburbs! A simple observer might suspect the exist-

* See Pym's Speech in Cobbett's Parl. Hist. ii. col. 915.

ence of some secret cause proportioned to this strange effect. Why were the leading members of Parliament thus panic-struck? The revelations of Montrose evidently had affected them—that concealed intercourse which was shortly to be made apparent to the world, and which was yet imperfectly known to Charles, had cast the parties into confusion and dismay.

About the time of "the Incident," Scotland was a focus of political intrigues,—intrigues which have not entered into history, although they have left some obscure traces. The Scottish parties were so embroiled together, that Charles insisted, as each was ready to vent their mutual recriminations, on an act of oblivion on all sides. The King threatened that if the Covenanters accused the Earl of Traquaire and others, he would reserve three or four of their own party. The violence of their machinations we discover in the desperate style of the two great leaders of both the parties. When the Covenanters were insisting on having Traquaire tried by their Parliament, as "an incendiary," which was the reigning party-name for any of the royal ministers, more than once he swore that "before he perished he would mix heaven and earth and hell together!" In this chaos of his emotions, we may conjecture that the wild elements combined the secret intrigues of some Englishmen with the Scots, and of Argyle and other Covenanters with the Cabinet of the Louvre. The desperate language of Traquaire was replied to by the bold challenge of the Covenanter, Mr. Archibald Johnston, who figures in Scottish history as Lord Wariston. Wariston fiercely offered the King, as he himself expressed it, "to be yoked in one chain with the Earl of Traquaire, and let him accuse me, and me accuse him, then let the judgment go free, and the nocent suffer." Treasons hung on the lips of every one; and Wariston tells that "these recriminations deserve justice rather than mercy." The Covenanter asks not for blood, but surely he desires it. What scenes were these for the unhappy monarch! And what a man was this Wariston, the head of the Covenanters! This fierce Covenanter was one who, as he describes himself, "did not weaken his hands in the work of God." He was a terrible being—the Talus with his flail of iron, whom we have already noticed in the history of the Puritans. He often discovers the simplicity of his system of politics; it consisted

of the strength of the Scottish army, and his own unalterable intrepidity. He wrote, with concise energy, from London to his brothers in Scotland, "Commend us to be stout,—prepare your armies.—The Lower House grow in strength.—They have *Strafford's life*—are thinking on *monies for us*—Lord encourage and direct them!" There is more dignity in his patriotism when he declares that his only end is that "the honour of the kingdom be preferred to the King's point of honour."* However, be it not forgotten, that this warm patriot and inspired Covenanter closed his life with the weakness which he said he himself feared; he could not resist the seduction of office. In Cromwell's time he begged not to be sent up to London, dreading "the snares." Encumbered by a numerous family, and having large sums not likely to be repaid for public services, the Usurper, for so the Presbyterians called the Protector, prevailed on Wariston to have his accounts settled, and to serve him. The offer was accepted, but deep was the interior conflict of conscience and poverty. We are told that it cast the fierce yet honest Wariston into a state of melancholy; with a dejected spirit nothing went well with him; and, finally, it cost him his life at the Restoration.

The close of "the Incident" was as curious, though not as mysterious, as any part of it. The projected tragedy terminated in a perfect comedy. The Lords who should have been assassinated, were elevated into higher dignities. The Marquis of Hamilton was created a duke; the Earl of Argyle had a marquise bestowed on him. Lesley, the Scotch general, was overcome by an earldom; a Scotch laird was metamorphosed into a viscount. Even the Covenanter, Mr. Archibald Johnston, was knighted, pensioned, and commissioned as a Lord of the Sessions, and well known as Lord Wariston. Lanerick and Montrose alike, lost not a shade of the royal favour. The very Presbyters, who were triumphing over the distribution of the Bishops' lands, which, however, were chiefly thrown to the devouring rapacity of the aristocracy,† and who so often had tried the gravity of

* Dalrymple's Memoirs of Charles the First, 122 and 136.

† I refer the reader to a curious passage in the Diary-letters of honest Baillie, (i. 334,) for an amusing specimen of the manner in which the vultures hovered over the great dead bodies of Episcopacy, till they were glutted by the carnage. It seems that when they came to the grand pillage, the Presbyters were not allowed all the

Charles by their volume of a sermon, when, like a true Scot, the King even attended the Kirk, had their Henderson and Gillespie pensioned and preferred. Charles must have considered himself fortunate to have been permitted "to pardon" his own friends, with an understanding, however, that he was to neglect them; "the incendiaries," as the ministers of Charles were called, had been threatened with the recent fate of Strafford, and they were now rewarded for their zeal by a royal pardon! Some of the adherents to the King sarcastically observed that should any of them be desirous of preferment, they had only to join the new rebellion which had just broken out in Ireland. Charles, indeed, was now only exercising the weakness of sovereignty, for his real power was limited to granting concessions and conferring titles. Yet what availed this state-policy? In Scotland, Charles was only disappointing his friends without conciliating his enemies, so transient is the feeble gratitude for extorted favours! It must be acknowledged that monarchs incur misfortunes which are peculiarly their own.

The King, indeed, had of late been so accustomed to grant concessions, without any return of thanks, that the lip-service of the vehement gratitude of some cunning Scots, looked much like that loyalty from which he had been so long estranged. Charles mistook quiet for peace. Whatever was his design in his present political journey, the policy proved fatal; in going in person to Scotland, as Clarendon forcibly expresses it, he had only "made a more perfect deed of gift of that kingdom," and what was not less fatal, the management of the Scots indicated to their English friends, who had watched their motions, and rejoiced with their rejoicings, that the King must yield all to them. It would indeed have reproached the incapacity and the enterprise of the party, if Charles had not shown himself as weak and as weakened a sovereign at London as he had done at Edinburgh.

portion they had calculated on. "Glasgow was pitifully crossed by the Duke, who must needs have the temporality of that bishoprick; the spirituality fell to the town-minister, which is but a small thing. But to content Glasgow, the bishoprick of Galloway was given to the College. Aberdeen University got its bishoprick—Ross, Murray, and Caithness are divided to North-land gentlemen of any small deservings; Argyle Isles, I suspect, to Argyle. The bishopricks were so quickly dilapidated, that we were near to have made a protestation in Parliament in the Church's name"—that is the Presbyters!

So contagious is the example of a successful insurrection, that even the Irish nation in their atrocious rebellion, now pretended that they were only following the example of the Scots, and pleaded for their liberties and their religion as well as the sons of Calvin; but these Papalists proved to be more barbarous even than the Covenanters!

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LETTER OF THE SCOTS TO THE FRENCH KING.—A DESIGN OF THEIR SEPARATION FROM ENGLAND.—BURNET'S ANECDOTE OF LORD LOUDON EXAMINED.

THE Earl of Traquaire, who succeeded the Marquis of Hamilton in the difficult and dangerous office of High Commissioner for Scotland, was a person of considerable abilities, who from a private gentleman, by name Stewart, had been raised to distinction; an adventurous intriguer unquestionably, and one whose fate resembles that of many of this class, for according to the calamitous list of "Scot of Scotstarvet's Staggering State of Scots' Statesmen," this versatile politician, after all his shiftings, closed his career in indigence and obscurity. Traquaire was now fixed in a dilemma, from which by no artifice could he extricate himself—he was secretly the great enemy to Episcopacy, and it was now his office to protect the very order which he sought to abolish.

The Earl of Traquaire was a favourite with Lord Clarendon, who in a suppressed passage declares, that "He was one of the wisest men that he had known of that nation," and in his text, as formerly published, seems reluctantly to record the suspicions of others, that Traquaire was privy to the conspiracy against the Church. This his lordship at first doubted. But in the suppressed passage the doubt seems to have disappeared, for we find a fuller detail of his ambiguous conduct.* Traquaire was openly accused by the Scottish Bishops before the King

* Compare, in the last edition of the first volume, page 192, with the Appendix, page 512. The contrast is very striking, and the confession of Clarendon, that the Earl designed, by an alteration in the ecclesiastical, to make more reasonable a reformation in the temporal state, seems to settle the question.

for his treacherous deportment in the Scotch business; and Bishop Guthry, with his strong feelings for Episcopacy, has ranked him among the rogues and traitors.

The duplicity or the versatility of this political character is strongly marked. Secretly hostile to Episcopacy, he had himself joined in ejecting the order of Bishops from the three estates of Parliament. But when he found the King still so tender on the point of Episcopacy, Traquaire, to help the King out of this difficulty, cunningly suggested that "Let the Parliament do what it would, there were still grounds for the restoration of Episcopacy whenever the King could carry the point; for Bishops, by the laws of Scotland, forming one of the estates in Parliament, no Act whatever that passed without them could have force in law, and much less the Act that had abolished them, since they never appeared there, and had protested against it."* This was what a modern French statesmen has called an "*arrière pensée*."

Traquaire's concealed feelings towards the Bishops, and his Cabinet-opinion as Privy Councillor, exhibit him in those very opposite positions into which the man of intrigue is sometimes so painfully thrust. The worldly wisdom of these Achitophels is to live on expedients—their only art is a trick of the moment;—but expedients will fail, and the deceiver is liable to be himself deceived.

The Scottish Commissioners, to quiet the people, published their own constructions of the articles of the late hurried treaty of Berwick. As much had passed in loose conferences, where any harshness in the wording was softened by the royal exposition, but not altered, that the honour of the King might suffer no degradation, and as these conferences were written down every night when the Commissioners returned to their camp, different persons would assign different results; what was set down as positive by one, to another would be dubious. The concessions which the Scots gave out were utterly disclaimed by the English, and "The Scots' false paper," as it was called,† was burnt by the hand of the common hangman as a slanderous libel,

* Burnet's Memoirs of the Hamiltons, 119.

† This paper is preserved in Frankland's Annals, 791. Malcolm Laing does not think "the Scots' Paper" to have been as false as the hangman proclaimed it.

"Everybody disavowing the contents, but nobody taking upon him to publish a copy that they owned to be true." A curious instance of the absurdity of a treaty where the parties refer to what is not contained in it!

The Scots made an appearance of disbanding their army, by burning the tents which formed their camp, but they detained their officers, and Scotland presented the same unchanged scene. The Tables of democracy continued their sittings. The new Assembly, to spare the King's prejudices, avoided every allusion to the Assembly of Glasgow, which he had condemned as illegal, but they were careful to reproduce all its former resolutions.

Charles, though slowly, withdrew from that last hold of his sovereignty—the contested Episcopacy. The act of the Assembly declared that "Episcopacy was *unlawful* in the Kirk;" that term, on any explanation, Charles firmly rejected. The King was willing to allow that Episcopacy might be declared to be "contrary to the constitution of the Kirk," but he never would acknowledge that "Episcopacy was unlawful." "There may be," he observed, "many several constitutions, but whatever is absolutely unlawful in one Church, cannot be lawful in another of the same profession of religion."

Such was the argument of Charles, which has incurred the censure of two able historians. Malcolm Laing considers it as "an immaterial difference, unworthy to form an obstacle to a national settlement;" and Dr. Lingard condemns it as "a mere quibble."

The historians of Charles the First rarely place themselves in the perplexed situation of this unfortunate monarch. History requires its abstractions as well as poetry; the historian, like the poet, should personate the character he represents, placing himself in the condition of the human being whose actions he records. With the same fixed views before him, and with the sympathy of the same feelings, he should penetrate, like Tacitus or Clarendon, if blessed with their art, into the secret recesses of the mind. The instance before us is an illustration of this critical maxim.

When we discover the royal Episcopalian compelled to hang his wrath on this slight thread, it serves at least to indicate the wounded sensibility, which could not endure that the obnoxious

term *unlawful* and *Episcopacy* should lie in such close connexion. But in the mind of Charles there was a deeper dread of this sweeping conclusion, for *cæteris paribus*, had Charles acknowledged Episcopacy to be unlawful in one Church, it would, or it ought to, extend to the other. The King was not raising a cavil, but opposing a principle,—a principle which was striking at the Church of England; and it proved to be an awful anticipation,* nor was it unperceived by Charles himself. He indeed was so fully aware of the perilous state into which his Anglican Church was thrown by the establishment of his Scottish Kirk, that he had drawn a solemn oath from the Chancellor of Scotland (Lord Loudon), the Earl of Argyle, and Lesley, that they would never interfere with the religious worship of England, and never on this subject aid the Puritans by their arms. This circumstance, which appears in the manuscript of the French Resident, was communicated by the King himself to that person when, in 1644, Charles expressed his indignation at the conduct of the Scotch party at London.†

The sons of Calvin expelled the Prelates, who constituted the third state in their Parliament, and excommunicated eight. They even procured three or four apostate Bishops to abjure

* The argument here used I had written before I discovered the same in Malcolm Laing himself, iii. 172. This historian has even assigned another motive for Charles's "Quibble," as Dr. Lingard calls it. It is one not less forcible; "If Episcopacy was condemned as unlawful in the constitution of a church, it could never be restored." Thus while this acute historian censures Charles for his hesitation at "an immaterial difference," when he comes to explain the King's views, he offers the most satisfactory apology for the King's conduct. It has been the peculiar fate of Charles, placed as he was frequently in the most trying positions, to be condemned in the same page which bears its refutation, whenever the historian has taken enlarged views. I have remarked this circumstance so often that I am provided with a copious chapter of instances, where several of our most eminent modern writers of the history of this period, while they condemn this hapless monarch, have in the very same page contradicted themselves, correcting the popular notions they adopt, by a more intimate knowledge of their subject.

† I give the original passage. "Le Roi de la Grande Bretagne est tres malcontent des Ecossois. Il m'a juré que lorsque par la nécessité de ses affaires il fut contraint de consentir à ce que les Ecossois avoient fait contre la Religion, prévoyant que les Anglois se serviroient d'eux pour la revolte, il avoit tiré serment sur leur foi et sur leur honneur, du Chancelier d'Ecosse, du Comte d'Orgueil (Argyle) et Lesley, que jamais ils ne se mêleroient de la religion d'Angleterre, et ne l'assisteroient jamais de leurs armes en ce sujet."—*Subran's manuscrit Négociations en Angleterre*, vol. ii., fol. 148.

Episcopacy as “an Order as hath had sensibly many fearful and evil consequences in many parts of Christendom.” * And doubtless they inferred, that Presbytery is “an Order” guiltless of all crimes, and too wise to have troubled the world with any follies of its own.

For this time, however, the obnoxious term was softened—Charles had wholly succumbed—even his favoured Episcopacy was surrendered to “the madness of the people.” But the Scots had yet much to labour for. Turning from their Presbytery, they looked towards a revolution in their Government. This was an advantage to Charles, for it convinced those of the English nation who were free from faction, that it was no longer “the Bishops’ war,” as it was termed, but a destruction of regal authority at which some refractory spirits aimed.†

The Assembly decreed to ratify the Covenant. Traquaire had suffered every point to be carried, and, strange as it seemed to Charles, the Earl himself had subscribed the Revolutionary Bond. The name of Traquaire became popular, and resounded from the pulpits; Scotland blazed with bonfires! The half-timid and half-daring Lord Commissioner hastened to Whitehall to plead his justification, averring that he could not prevail with the people, but by force, or by compliance. The Covenanting Earl was coldly received by the King, and again, as Baillie expresses it, “his credit was cracking.”

Traquaire now in disgrace at Court, though popular in Scotland, either to redeem the royal favour which he had lost, or not unwilling to check that political anarchy with which the nation was threatened by the ambition of a few, contrived a new shift by which he strengthened the King’s cause, and more clearly exposed the secret designs of the Covenanters. Traquaire had intercepted a letter addressed by some of the Scottish nobility “Au Roy,” where the subscribers offered themselves to be subjects of France; to renew that ancient alliance, that sympathy of common interests, which had formerly reduced the Realm of Scotland to a dependant province of France.

Charles now discovered sufficient cause for alarm, and Lord Leicester, our ambassador at Paris, in a private audience with

* The abjuration or renouncement of one of these apostate Bishops is preserved in Rushworth, ii. 957.

† Malcolm Laing, iii. 175.

Louis the Thirteenth, sounded his Majesty's intentions. His lordship attempted to take the King by surprise, by artfully assuming that his Majesty had received a letter from the heads of the Covenanters. The King declared he knew of no such letter. His lordship then offered to read the copy of an intercepted letter, of which the King of England retained the original. Louis, observing that the letter was written in French, read it himself, and then solemnly declared that he had never had any thing to do with them, and never would. "Le Roy, mon frère, peut être assuré que je n'aime les rebelles et seditieux"—Charles had desired the ambassador to say that the ground of their rebellion was not conscience nor religion.—"Non ! Je le croy, car c'est seulement une prétexte que tous les rebelles cherchent pour couvrir leur mauvais desseins."—"The true ground," continued the Earl, "is their hatred to royalty and monarchical government, wherein your Majesty and every King have a common interest."—"Je le sçais bien, cela me peut arriver aussi bien qu'à un autre, et comme vous dites les Rois y ont grand intérêt, et quant à moi je ne favoriseray jamais les mutins et les rebelles."*

When I read, many years ago, the French monarch's replies, I was persuaded, by the *naïveté* of such blunt sincerity, that it was clear of all political artifice. I considered that the witchery of the daring genius of the minister had withered the faculties of Louis, and that the French King knew nothing of the dispatch of the Scotch Abbé Chambre to Edinburgh, nor the continual intercourse with the Scottish party ; in a word, that Louis had yet no idea that he was in reality the ally and confederate of the insurgents of Scotland. Moreover, the existence of this French letter, addressed "Au Roy" by the Scottish lords, has always been denied by our historians, from Hume to Brodie. They have all asserted that no such letter was sent, relying on the testimony of Lord Loudon, one of the lords who was implicated in the treason, and sent to the Tower. He asserted that this intercepted letter was merely a rough copy, which, had it ever been intended, was never actually sent.

I became more intimately acquainted with the character and habits of Louis the Thirteenth in the judicious history of Père

* Sydney Papers, ii. Père d'Orleans, *Revolutions de l'Angleterre*, iii. 19.

Griffet. I discovered that never was there a monarch who carried the royal vice of dissimulation farther than this King; incompetent himself to govern, yet jealous even of his favourites on small matters, the sole political artifice he was capable of practising was that of never betraying his own thoughts. The man whom he had condemned to imprisonment, or to death, in a last interview he would even dismiss with marks of particular regard. Louis the Thirteenth was tutored by Richelieu, and never failed in the humble part of a pupil. That he deceived the Earl of Leicester by his apparent simplicity is probable, but modern researches often throw a new light over the dark passages of history, and communicate to posterity a knowledge of the times which no contemporary possessed. All the writers of English history have confided on the evidence of Lord Loudon, himself one of the conspirators. The letter in French by the Scottish lords, addressed "Au Roy," we now know was sent and was received. Monsieur Mazure recently discovered it in the State-paper office of France.*

It is precisely the same as the letter which Charles had read to the Parliament. Calculating on the effect he imagined it would have produced by exposing the designs of the Scotch party, he was mortified to discover that the Parliament either passed it over as a state trick, or little cared whether the French assisted their "dear† brethren" of Scotland, to which they probably had no objection.

* Histoire de la Révolution de 1688, par Mazure, iii. 405.

† The letter Traquaire had intercepted was a duplicate. Modern research has also brought to light both a brouillon and a corrected copy, different from the one dispatched to France. Dalrymple, Memorials of Charles I., 57—60. It is printed in Frankland, 810. The Scots found the French idiom difficult. One of the Scottish Lords refused to sign, objecting to their use of "*Raye de soleil*," not because it was treason, but because it was nonsense; for *Raye* is a Thornback, and it went to say, that "the glory of the French monarch shone like that fish." However, it went *une raye de soleil*, meaning *rayon*.

It may amuse the reader to see how party-histories have been written. Oldmixon, in his "History of the Stuarts," frequently referred to as authority by a party, describes in his peculiar style the scene which occurred when Charles from the throne acquainted Parliament of his having intercepted the letter to the French monarch, which the Lord-Keeper read. "The Lord-Keeper, holding the letter folded, read the superscription *Au Roy*, raising his voice so very theatrically, showing that whoever writes so, acknowledges the King they address to be their Sovereign. Here's logic as well as rhetoric! This acting is not yet over. Then the Lord-

In these Scottish transactions, an important circumstance does not appear in our history. A party among the Scottish nobility seems to have designed a separation from England, and to have resumed their rank in Europe as an independent nation. This object was suitable to the policy of Richelieu. We may trace all the French Ambassadors who resided in England, even under the administration of that Cardinal's successor, holding secret intelligence with Scotchmen. In the manuscript papers of Sabran I find many such confidential interviews. A political intriguer of this nation, whose name does not appear, but whose eminence is indicated by his having received a gold chain from the King of France, and evidently some Scotchman intimately connected with the Cabinet of the Louvre—the object of his interview with Sabran was to point out the future danger to France of an union of both the Parliaments of England and Scotland in the design of establishing one form of religion. He warned Sabran that the Parliament had already their secret deputies in Sweden, and among all the Protestant Princes, as also with the States of Holland. A league was ready to be formed against the Catholic Princes. He complained that Scotchmen were not so well received at Court under the administration of Mazarine, as of Richelieu. He designed, however, to revisit France before he returned to his country. As Sabran entertained suspicions of this mysterious personage, he encouraged him to open himself more freely; and it appeared that this Scotchman wanted to establish the independence of Scotland by the aid of France. He closed by a prediction. "We shall have our Covenant and independence too at London, so that the Scots would no longer be a province of England."

The information given by this mysterious personage was shortly after confirmed. The French Cabinet was thrown into a panic at the Parliament's secret intercourse with Sweden by a concealed agent, whose lodgings they had not even been able to

Keeper read the letter, expatiating on it to prove the treason of the Lords who subscribed it. The artifice of the letter stared both Houses in the face. I can't write this incident no more than I could have seen it without laughing, to see the Lord-Keeper gravely folding up the letter, then turning *Au Roy* to the Lords and Commons; then the King speaking to it; then the Keeper speaking again to it; when all the while it was a farce in the opinion of that august assembly."—146.

discover. This was not wonderful ; for he proved to be a Scotchman in the service of Sweden. Brienne, the Secretary of State, who carried on the correspondence with Sabran, and whose views on English affairs discover the most enlightened sagacity, having been formerly acquainted with all the parties in England, impresses on Sabran to flatter and to gain over the Scotch, for more than one purpose, either to be useful to the King of England, or to oppose the Parliament in the case of their erecting a Republic, which might trouble France. Sabran was to lay great stress on the ancient alliance which had never been interrupted between France and Scotland. If by money or by any other recompense he could gain over the Chancellor of Scotland to the French, there was every disposition to gratify him. “ Si vous venez à lui tâter, mesurez vos parolles comme n’ayant nulle charge de rien offrir, mais seulement de pressentir quelle seroit sa disposition. Deux raisons font qu’il ne s’en offencera pas ; la première qu’il est Ecossois, qui vaut autant à dire qu’intéressé ; l’autre que c’est la France qui le recherche, dont ils sont en possession de recevoir des bienfaits.” This Secretary of State was so greatly alarmed at the projected league against the Catholic powers, and at a combination with all the Protestants, that, as he writes to Sabran, a long dispatch was sent to the Plenipotentiaries then assembled at Munster, to sound the designs of the Chancellor of Sweden, (the famous Oxenstiern), who doubtless is the prime mover of this proposition which threatens the oppression and ruin of the Catholic Religion.

All these political terrors of the French Cabinet produced a ludicrous incident. Sabran proved it as difficult as it was delicate to communicate with the Scottish Chancellor, as he could only converse with him by means of an interpreter ; and such was the watchful jealousies of the parties, that he was hindered from seeing him as often as he wished. Sabran contrived an expedient. He sent an invitation for Twelfth Night to draw for King, to the Chancellor and his intimate associates, as a pretext for their meeting. “ This was a difficult affair to manage,” continues Sabran, “ for reasons which he could not mention, but which you may easily imagine.” He probably alludes to that feast-day, which was already condemned as “ a Popish super-

stition." The Chancellor accepted the invitation; but the day after he suddenly fell ill, as he said, so that the feast really intended for the Scotch, Sabran found necessary to keep, without obtaining its object, by making up quite a different party, inviting the three Dutch Ambassadors and the Resident of Portugal to assist him in celebrating a feast which had never been intended for them, and which had balked the deep designs of the statesman who was regulating the affairs of France and Scotland.*

From the letter which was addressed "Au Roy," and from the particulars we gather from Sabran's negotiations, we infer that there was a party among the Scottish nobles, who had contemplated, by an alliance with France, to separate themselves from England, and to establish their own national independence.

On this occasion a strange story has been told, famous among those who would blacken Charles the First as the most arbitrary of tyrants. The Earl of Loudon, as we have noticed, was committed to the Tower, being the only Scottish Peer then at London who had subscribed the treasonable letter to the French King; and on this circumstance we have a surprising tale.

When Burnet was once accused of having suppressed several things in his Memoirs of Hamilton relating to Charles the First, from fear of offending the Court, he pleaded that "some things could not bear telling." As an instance, he mentioned that when the Earl of Loudon lay prisoner in the Tower, Charles, in his passionate resentment, sent a warrant to Sir William Balfour, Lieutenant of the Tower, to execute the prisoner for high treason the next morning! The Lieutenant immediately went to the Earl, and desired his opinion how to avoid the execution. The Earl desired Balfour to hasten to the Marquis of Hamilton, whom, however, he could not meet with till the King had retired to rest. The Marquis and the Lieutenant are then represented as waiting in the outer apartment in despair, till one told Balfour that as Lieutenant of the Tower he had a privilege to knock at the King's chamber-door at any hour of the night. The Groom of the Bed-chamber announced to the

* Sabran's Manuscript Negotiations, ii. 17.

King that the Lieutenant of the Tower had come upon business. He was admitted, when falling on his knees, he prayed to know whether the warrant for the execution of Loudon was legally obtained from his Majesty, and whether he could legally proceed to the execution of it? The King replied, that the warrant was his, and must be obeyed. The Marquis of Hamilton, who had stood at the door, then entering, on his knees begged the King would not insist on such an extraordinary resolution. The King seemed peremptory. The Marquis in despair taking leave, said that "He would now ride post to Scotland, for I am sure before night the whole city will be in an uproar, and they will pull your Majesty out of your palace. I will get as far as I can, and declare to my countrymen, that I had no hand in it." The King was struck at this, and bade the Marquis recall the Lieutenant, when the King, taking the warrant, tore it to pieces.

This story appeared in the shape of a memorandum made by Bishop Kennet in a blank leaf of Burnet's Memoirs, as told to Kennet by a Mr. Frazier, who had heard it from the vivacious gossip of Burnet; Frazier further added, that having once mentioned it to that Duke of Hamilton who was killed in a duel, his Grace said that he had often ran over the papers in his collection, whence Burnet had drawn his materials, and he recollected such a relation. When Birch first printed the story,* it produced a great sensation with the Whig party of that day, as a complete evidence of the arbitrary conduct of their English Nero.

The correctness of this narrative must, however, be questioned. An extraordinary story against Charles the First from Burnet, at that day, was safe to tell and grateful to hear. The historical integrity of this warm and vivacious memoir-writer, on the subject of Charles the First, is impeachable, when we confront his adulative style on the unfortunate monarch in the Memoirs of the Hamiltons, written early in life, and the depreciated character which appears in the subsequent History of his Own Time. Had the tale run that Charles had commanded the assassination of Loudon, it would have borne more probability

* In an Appendix to the *second* edition of an Inquiry into the Share which King Charles the First had in the Transactions of the Earl of Glamorgan, 372.

than one of a private execution, which, at least, must have taken place before witnesses.

Lord Loudon was at that moment one of the Deputies of Scotland, confined to the Tower, where he had been examined by the Attorney-General and Secretary Windebank; and the House of Lords thought fit to remand him till further evidence was produced.* It is against all reason to conceive that Charles, while Loudon was thus placed in security, and pending an examination before the Lords, could have ventured to inform his Peers, whenever they chose to call for their prisoner, that he had been executed!

It is certain that the head of the Earl of Loudon was in imminent peril; for the act of treason, according to the laws of Scotland, could not be more evident; and the King was certain that an open trial would have done that which he is represented to have sought by the most frantic impolicy ever recorded.

Dr. Birch and other writers seem not to have known that the story itself had been already more largely told by Oldmixon, who refers for his authority to a "MS. MF.," as "an authority too noble to be called in question, and known to all the people of the first quality in North Britain." But Oldmixon, as I have frequently detected, is such an infamous interpolater, that his history is faithless as any of the French Varillas, who referred to manuscripts which were at length found to be the chimeras of his own brain. He is much fuller in his story than the one said to have descended from Burnet, and, indeed, he is remarkable for always improving a tale by new accessories. Among his *dramatis personæ*, he has introduced the Queen in bed, complaining of Hamilton's intrusion at two or three in the morning; "but the Marquis, taking her up short, let her know she was a subject as well as himself."† Secret history wonderfully improves under the pens of certain writers.

* Whitlocke's Memorials, 32.

† History of the Stewarts, 140. It is amusing to observe this writer delivering his opinion on historical composition. "One great advantage the Ancients had over the Moderns in writing history, was the liberty of their genius; and they had another, which was the credit they were in with their readers: we do not find the margeargents of Thucydides and Livy crowded with authorities. The historian's own word was taken." Yet so blind is party, that Micajah Towgood, in his "Essay towards attaining a true Idea of the Character and Reign of King Charles the First,"

Dr. Birch, a warm Whig, is very tender on the political tergiversation of his favourite historian, Burnet. To Bishop Burnet we are unquestionably indebted for a mass of very curious secret history, sometimes tinged by his prejudices, but much of which is veracious. Birch says, "It was not to be expected that the historian writing (the Memoirs of Hamilton) in such times and circumstances (under Charles the Second), should venture to relate at length the remarkable story to which he evidently alludes in a passage of those Memoirs." The passage of Burnet is, "There were some ill instruments about the King, who advised him *to proceed capitally against Loudon, which is believed went very far*. But the Marquis of Hamilton opposed this vigorously, assuring the King that if it were done, Scotland was for ever lost." If Burnet, in his loose and inaccurate style, alluded to the story which he told twenty years afterwards, he has certainly not afforded any indication that he had such a statement lying before him. What he says is true, as we find confirmed by Whitelocke, that "the King was *advised* to proceed capitally against Loudon."

Another circumstance, in my mind, seems fatal to the authenticity of the story. When Lord Hardwicke carefully examined this very Hamilton collection, and published the important papers which Burnet had only alluded to, or had passed over unnoticed, I find none of this strange history. Would Lord Hardwicke, the zealous patron of Dr. Birch, have neglected such a curious piece of secret history, which also would have authenticated the fugitive and suspicious tale of this execution before a trial?

Would the present noble owner of this collection once more open his archives, and inspect those family documents which have entered into the history of the nation, it is probable that he may have it yet in his power to inform us about Oldmixon's manuscript MF., and Bishop Burnet's tale which "could not bear the telling."*

The true close of this history of the Earl of Loudon we have already given in the chapter on the Marquis of Hamilton.

accepts this party-history "as a good collection of *facts*; though his zeal, perhaps, breaks forth into too frequent and warm sallies." When I shall give the history of this writer, my readers will learn on what principle he acted and wrote.

* Since this chapter has been written, I observe with pleasure that Dr. Lingard,

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SECRET MOTIVE OF CHARLES THE FIRST'S SECOND JOURNEY TO SCOTLAND.—THE FORGED LETTER OF LORD SAVILLE.

THE motive of the second journey of Charles to his "ancient and native kingdom" so late as in August, 1641, after the many extraordinary events of that and the preceding year, has been variously conjectured by historians. Among the most important of those events, the King had witnessed the imprisonment of Laud, the execution of Strafford, and the abolition of Episcopacy in that very kingdom to which it seemed as if the King were flying as to a last refuge. Since the death of Strafford, the regal power of Charles was reduced to a shadow of sovereignty; his personal distresses and the confusion in his councils were such at this moment that the King could not endure to be near Westminster, where one of the Bed-chamber said that nothing made the King more anxious to remove from his Court and his Council, than that variety of intelligence which at every minute was brought to him, and on which every one gave the most contrary opinions and the most alarming comments.* Charles was evidently too sensible of the decline of his power, for he did not conceal it from himself. In his frank confession to honest Secretary Nicholas, who at this time, alarmed for their common safety, was earnestly requesting the King "to protect his faithful servants," there is a melancholy and pathetic feeling. "I shall not fail to protect you according to my power, and (according to the old English compliment) I would it were better for your sake."†

whose unbiassed judgment is always to be highly valued, "gives no credit to Burnet's hearsay story." He does not seem to be aware that Oldmixon had told it so long before. I have sometimes thought that Oldmixon's mysterious manuscript MF., of which he does not assign the place where it may be found, was some collection by the Mr. Frazier who told Burnet's tale. Oldmixon also notices in his preface a Dr. Fraser who had lent him pamphlets and papers; and the name of a Dr. Frazer occurs in the negotiations with the Hamiltons, and that he was one of the secret correspondents of the King, appears by the Appendix to Barwick's Life, where he is thrice mentioned.

* Hackett's Life of Williams, ii. 163.

† Correspondence of Secretary Nicholas in Evelyn, ii. 60.

A secret motive instigated Charles to hasten to Scotland ; and his determination would suffer no impediment from friend or foe. The rapidity with which the King performed his journey, and the small retinue with which he entered Edinburgh, betrayed his impatience. This was no longer a royal progress. Charles rode from London to York in less than four days.

It is a curious fact that this royal journey to Scotland was equally dreaded both by the friends and the enemies of Charles ; the one imploring him not to leave England where his presence was deemed most necessary, and the other alarmed at this closer intercourse with Scotland. When the Scotch Commissioners at London were consulted by both parties on the propriety or the necessity of the King's journey to Edinburgh, they delivered an oracular response. " It was desirable," they said, " but the time might be made convenient :"—too subtle to press that which their English friends did not wish, and too prudent to refrain from the chance of partaking of those royal favours which they were sensible were ready to be showered on them.

At length when the King was at Edinburgh both parties were equally anxious to urge his return home. That such similar results should have proceeded from such opposite principles and such contending interests, has perplexed our historians.

It was thought by those who were in the King's interest, that he could not reasonably expect any great reverence to his person from the triumphant democracy of Scotland, and that the affairs of that kingdom could be more advantageously transacted at a distance.* The Patriotic or County Members, and the Presbyterian and Puritanic party in the House, at first protested against the King's journey to Scotland, and for this purpose even sate on a Sunday, excusing this profanation of the Sabbath by issuing a declaration of the urgency of the occasion. And when they found that no arts which they tried could change the royal decision, they appointed a Committee of their own party to attend on the King, on the plea of these gentlemen being present at the act of pacification, to cherish the kindly intercourse between the two nations. It is quite evident that a Committee of Three, consisting of Lord Howard of Escrick, a malecontent Lord who " had delivered himself soul and body "

* Clarendon, i. 490.

to the party, and Sir Philip Stapelton, a young political adventurer, both under the guidance of the wary Hampden, were only spies on the King, who in truth was thus placed *en surveillance*; and as Clarendon sarcastically observes on this Committee, and on their new office, that "It was their first employment, and the first that ever Parliament had of that kind." * The English Parliamentarians were morbidly jealous of their "dear brethren," and they entertained some reasonable suspicions that the leaders of the Scottish faction had betrayed, or might betray, their new friends in their copartnership of Revolution. A stricter intimacy of the King with the Scots might reverse the state of affairs, and the more dangerous and doubtful issues seemed to them to threaten to be the result of this political journey.

Unquestionably, among other expectations, the King looked forwards for a balancing power against his English Parliament among the Scots; while the Parliament itself had calculated on their support as the only means to carry on their own measures. Scotia was now the northern Mistress courted, alike tremblingly, by the King and the Parliament. She who was the abject creature of their favours, held their destinies in her hand.

When the last hope had vanished that Charles could manage his inexorable Parliament by yielding to them, humbled and degraded as the monarch felt by the fall of Strafford, there is no doubt that Charles would have leaned on the affections of his native kingdom, and by conciliating a whole people, have resumed that monarchical independence which he had lost. The King had already succeeded in gaining over some of the heads of the Covenanters—the Earls of Rothes, of Montrose, and others; and Charles was now hastening to his Scottish throne, thence to touch with his sceptre every act of concession to the Scottish people, and from the fountain of honour to shower his royal graces on their chiefs. At this moment we discover that even the Queen "began to speak honourably and affectionately of the Scottish nation," and Henrietta, desolate in her own palace, and trembling amidst the menaces of the Parliamentarians, appears to have had a serious intention of accompanying the King. The motive assigned for this change of feeling is,

* Clarendon, ii.

that "this hearty agreeance would be a sovereign help to the continual harsh rencounters of the English Parliament.*

But, besides the present, there was also a more secret motive concealed in the breast of the King. From the communications of Hamilton, and the disclosures of Montrose, Charles had gathered many intimations, many surmises, and no dubious conviction of a treasonable correspondence carrying on by the popular leaders of the Parliament with those of the Scottish party. To invite, as well as to aid foreign forces to invade England, is treason by law; and a great object in this political journey was to detect this secret confederacy, and to procure irrefragable evidence of this treasonable correspondence, of which Charles had formerly received intimations from his late unfortunate minister.

Charles, in the preceding year, had already heard of a written engagement to the Scots, subscribed by several English Peers, and, as he was told, by several leading members of the House of Commons. On the first proposal of the treaty of Rippon, in September, 1640, Sir Henry Vane, the Secretary, notices the curious fact that on the morning of the 24th of that month, when the King at York took his chair, the Lords desired justice upon Sir William Bartley for having said that the rebels had thirty-seven of the heads of the nobility who had invited them to come into England. Lord Hardwicke observes, that this was the first getting out of the story of the letter and subscription said to be forged by the Lord Saville.

Charles had eagerly sought to possess himself of so undisguised a document of treason. The King appears to have tracked it to its secret covert—it was deposited with Archibald Johnston, afterwards the well-known Wariston; as we learn from Burnet, who was the nephew of Wariston, that the King earnestly pressed his uncle to have it delivered up into his own hands. Charles did not succeed in obtaining it, but in a remarkable passage in the *Icon Basilike* the King evidently alludes to this circumstance, and which could only have been known to himself. "I had discovered, as I thought, the unlawful correspondence they had used (alluding to the incident of the seizing the six members), and the *engagements* they

* Baillie, i. 827, who informs us of the Queen's resolution.

had entered into, &c., of all which *I missed but little to have produced writings under some men's own hands* who were the chief contrivers, &c." * During the treaty of Rippon, Charles in vain renewed his efforts to obtain these "written engagements." The stern Covenanter, Wariston, does not appear to have denied that such a writing existed, but he pleaded the sacredness of his oath as an apology for his refusal to betray the trust.

"The forged letter of Lord Saville," as it is called in our history—a document of treachery and treason, for it was compounded of both—no historian, save one of no authority, pretends to have seen, and the particulars concerning it vary, as usual, in relations of obscure incidents. We have to pursue this fictitious and invisible fugitive through an obscure labyrinth of circumstances; but by what is known, among much which remains unknown, we may show its reality, and even detect its purpose. We cannot ascertain the moment when the King discovered the existence of the "written engagement," but we have evidence that he did discover it; we cannot appeal to the document itself, for we may suspect the authenticity of that which has been given as the original. We cannot harmonise some discordant accounts from authentic writers, as Clarendon and Burnet, yet we shall show that it would be absurd to question its existence, or even to doubt the forger. We are surprised when Dr. Lingard tells us, that "he does not mention the letter said to have been forged by Lord Saville and sent to the Scots; the assertion rests on very questionable authority:" an historian, in his researches, must conquer difficulties, if he loves the labour of truth.

The Scots, after their first invasion, were doubtful of their reception in England on a second; well might they have faltered, for it was a fearful step. Uncertain how the English people would countenance their own English friends, the Covenanters had some dread of provoking the national jealousy, which, once roused, might have sided with the King; and the invaders, who themselves were but ill-prepared, might have been involved in the endless conflicts of a civil war. They required something more palpable than advice and encourage-

* Laing's History of Scotland, iii. 520.

ment from their English allies. During this indecision, while hovering on the borders, they received an engagement subscribed by several Lords, whose names and principles were well known to them. These Lords dispatched an invitation to the Scottish army to enter England; they offered unlimited promises of support, and they expressed their confidence that the Scots were their best friends to remove their own grievances. It is said that this written engagement decided the doubts and quickened the march of the Scots. A rumour spread through the Scottish camp that "they were sure of a very great and unexpected assistance, which, though it was to be kept secret, would appear in due time."

These English Lords, however, did not come forward to aid their new confederates; the Scots, who had been lured to pass the borders, found that they had only to depend on their own arms, and to make their own way, by fair words and meek pretences.

When the English and Scotch Commissioners met together to open the Treaty of Rippon, Lord Loudon and Sir Archibald Johnston, afterwards the famous Wariston, requested a private interview with Lord Mandeville, better known as Lord Kimbolton, and finally as Earl of Manchester. The Scots opened with severe expostulations, charging Lord Mandeville and other Lords with a shameless breach of their promise and the violation of their solemn engagement, declaring that never would they have invaded England, had they not entirely confided in the faith of those English Lords, according to the articles which they had signed.

Lord Mandeville seemed lost in astonishment; he solemnly declared his perfect ignorance of any such articles. Lord Loudon again urged it as an act of great ingratitude towards them who had hazarded all that was dear to them, on the faith of this solemn engagement. Loudon observed that when he was a prisoner in the Tower, Lord Saville had treated with him in the names of several of the nobility and gentry, and on his return to Scotland, Saville had sent him this very agreement subscribed by these Lords, by the hands of Mr. Henry Darley.*

* In a narrative of obscure and secret transactions, differences appear, even in telling the same circumstance. We may instance this in Burnet's account. Lord

And this the Lord Saville, they doubted not, would avouch to be true. A meeting with this Lord was agreed on. Without any knowledge of what had just occurred, Saville was taken by surprise, and in his confusion acknowledged that he had never acquainted those Lords with the business, whose signatures appeared to this deceptive engagement; he openly confessed that he had counterfeited their hands! The apology the guilty Saville offered was, that observing a backwardness in the Covenanters to hazard an invasion, he considered those names would have most weight with them; that since this expedient, he added, had answered its design, and that a Scotch army in England would serve their best purposes, he desired their silence, that all discoveries might be prevented, exhorting them to improve the occasion which this fictitious instrument had the merit of having presented to them.

The honour of the noblemen implicated in this extraordinary transaction was thus cleared, all but that of the faithless Lord to whom it cost no blush to own the infamous forgery. Yet at this conjuncture it was not deemed prudent, on either side, to express their indignation by rejecting Saville from their party. Lord Mandeville, however, requested that he might be allowed to acquaint those Lords whose names had thus been used without their privity, and that the Declaration, or Engagement, under their counterfeited names might be delivered up to them. A few days after, the deceptive instrument was sent for from Newcastle, where lay the Scottish camp; and in the presence of Lord Mandeville and the other Lords, who declared that their signatures had been so skilfully imitated that they could not distinguish them from their own writing,* the names were

Saville is there made to show Lord Loudon and another Scotch Lord, about the period mentioned, an engagement under the hands of these Lords, to join with them on their entrance into England, provided they refused any treaty but what should be confirmed by an English Parliament. The Scotch Lords desired leave to send this paper into Scotland, to which, after much difficulty, Saville consented. It was inclosed in a hollow cane, and one Frost, afterwards Secretary to the Committee of both Kingdoms, was sent down with it in the disguise of a poor traveller. It was to be communicated only to three persons, the Earls of Rothes, of Argyle, and Wariston. —Burnet's Own Times, i. 47. This is a detail which we cannot discover in the authentic narrative of Lord Mandeville, yet the secret mode of the conveyance of the Engagement is evidently alluded to.

* It is said by Oldmixon, whose authority has no other weight than the pro-

separately cut out and burnt, but the Engagement itself the Scottish Lords insisted should be preserved. Afterwards when the Scots laboured under difficulties and danger by the failure of supplies for their army, and seemed to lose confidence in their new confederates, they were once on the point of retreating and petitioning for the King's grace, and proposed to allege for their excuse that invitation from the Lords which they still retained.*

Such is the narrative of the singular political forgery by Lord Saville, drawn from the authentic Memoirs of the Earl of Manchester, the only one of the party who has left any memorials of their more secret transactions. It establishes the existence of the forged document, and even authenticates the forger. But the very precaution which was taken to bury it in secrecy, and to secure the supposititious subscribers from the danger they incurred, cast into great uncertainty the very existence of the document itself; and it even enabled the subdolous Saville, afterwards, as it appears, when he had ingratiated himself into the favour of Charles, to insinuate that the signatures which the King had heard of, were the real ones of those Lords whose names he had counterfeited.

It is said not only that Charles had nearly obtained possession of this paper, as the King expresses himself, "of which I missed but little," but that it was the foundation of the impeachment which Strafford was preparing to bring against the popular leaders in Parliament when he was himself impeached.† This is one of the obscure points in this history of deception. If none but certain Peers were the subscribers, Strafford could not hope by this instrument to discover those Commoners who were so deeply engaged in the Scottish intrigues; nor could he have brought forward as evidence a document so cautiously concealed, seen by none but those whom it concerned to hide it, and which, in fact, by the preventive care of Wariston had ceased to exist, as soon as it was seen. The rumour which Sir William Bartley

bability of the fact, that Lord Saville wrote letters to all the supposed subscribers on purpose to get answers to them, and by their names to those answers he so well counterfeited them, that when they saw their pretended hand-writing, every one of them declared that they could not swear they did not write their names, though they could swear they had signed no such letter.

* Nalson, ii. 427.

† Laing, iii. 520, who refers to Acherly and Oldmixon.

spread at the opening of the treaty of Rippon in 1640, and the pressing desire of Charles at that time to have the unknown document delivered up to him, are evident proofs that this secret instrument of treason was not unknown, but in a manner too indistinct and uncertain to be acted on. Strafford was not unprepared to impeach Lord Say and some of the patriots on more certain information and correspondence, such as the King afterwards himself obtained when in Scotland, probably through Montrose.

It is, however, curious to observe that had we not had the fullest account of this fictitious document from Lord Mandeville, its existence might still have been questioned, as well as the person who forged it. A later historian, indeed, furnishes not only much information respecting the forgery, but drags into open light the invisible document itself, which had hitherto resisted all the researches of preceding historians. Oldmixon has given it entire—but he is an author so utterly disingenuous and depraved, so guilty himself of historial forgeries and interpolations, that we know not how to trust the man whose honour has suffered the brand of infamy.

The extraordinary style in which he gives this historical document raises our suspicion of its genuineness. "This," he exclaims, "is the important letter which most authors make mention of, but none ever saw, and all are mistaken in." Nor less extraordinary is his mode of authenticating it; instead of simply assigning the place where it was deposited, he has thrown out a cartel of defiance. "These original papers relating to the affairs of Scotland carry with them sufficient evidence of their truth. But if that should ever be called in question, they will be so well vouched as will leave no room for suspicion, and be much to the confusion of those who suspected it." Never, in the sobriety of history, was ever a grave authority thus thrust on us, by the bluster of a literary bravo. We may, however, question the quality of his vaunted document. He tells us, "Welwood says twelve noblemen signed it, Mr. Acherley puts the Earl of Mulgrave, the Earl of Clare, and Earl of Bolingbroke's hands to it, as also the hands of several leading Commoners; whereas, in fact, there were no hands but those of the seven Lords," whose names he has subscribed to the

letter. Oldmixon is now fixed in this dilemma. If he transcribed the original, which Wariston appears to have detained, after having cut out the names of the pretended subscribers, on what authority does Oldmixon affix the names of the seven Lords? If he transcribed from a presumed copy of the original, he well knew that such a paper was no certain authority. The truth seems, that this treacherous historian was desirous of disguising the real nature of his communications, which probably would not bear too close an inspection, as happens to some other anecdotes of his Scottish papers.*

The intention of Lord Saville in encouraging the Scots to march into England, and in sending besides the present forged engagement, letters of his own invention full of illusory statements, was at first to get his great rival Strafford prosecuted by that party as an Incendiary. The implacable hatred and rankling jealousies long felt by the Savilles against Strafford in their rival dominion in the North, were the inherited and unextinguishable animosities of two great family feuds; when Saville was made a Lord, Wentworth placed himself in the opposition, and when Wentworth was created a Viscount, Saville changed sides, and left the Court to act against it.

The pre-eminent fortune of Strafford for a time had prevailed over his baffled and indignant enemy, who had now no other arts to practise than that of the most desperate malice. Saville was, therefore, at first in earnest in his advice and projects with the Scots, but when these had all the success he desired, and the Scots entered England, and Strafford fell, Saville found himself slighted and despised among the party whom he had flattered himself he should have led. It was then he determined that the Scots and their friends in their turn were to be immolated to his ambition. The reckless double-dealer looked round for the advantages which he might derive from betraying secrets of state of his own contrivance, and implicating those lords in an act of treason which he had

* In the recent edition of Burnet's History of his Own Times, is a remarkable though it be only a private reference by the Speaker Onslow to "a note in his copy of Oldmixon's History of the Stuarts, p. 145." Burnet, i. 48. We regret that this note remains unpublished; it may hereafter be consulted, should the volume be in the library of his noble descendant. I suspect that the Speaker entertained doubt of the authenticity of Oldmixon's communication.

himself forged. The utter worthlessness of this ignoble Peer would render even this nefarious scheme not improbable—it is, however, quite certain. After the fall of Strafford, Saville made ample discoveries to Charles. He hesitated not to avow the faithless part which he had acted, but he presumed that his returning loyalty and contrition had survived the early days of his conspiracy. This is explicitly told us by Lord Clarendon—“when all the mischief was brought to pass that he desired, he very frankly discovered the whole to the King, and who were guilty of the same treason, when there was no way to call them in question for it.”* Saville then appears to have insinuated to Charles, as we may judge by the King’s allusion to “the written engagement” which he said “he missed but little to have procured,” that the signatures which he had himself forged were real ones. Charles, who appears to have rarely exercised any critical judgment on the characters of those about him, not only invested this servile traitor with the white staff, but at length created him Earl of Sussex. But the faithless never cease their treacheries. The day at last arrived when this despised lord, with whom most men refused to associate, was refused by the King himself ever to be admitted into his presence.

Such is the history of the forged letter of Lord Saville. Can we now doubt the real existence of the forged instrument, or the person who contrived it? Neither Clarendon nor Burnet had seen it, but their accounts in the main are confirmed by the Earl of Manchester, an undeniable witness of the transaction. Dr. Lingard must allow us to conclude that no incident in history, so purposely obscured, and so secretly conducted, could rest on more substantial evidence.

* Clarendon, ii. 600.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE IRISH REBELLION.

PUBLIC men have been often placed in a position quite at variance with their real circumstances; thus he who has been looked on as the favourite of fortune, at that moment was its victim. Charles the First, apparently, had even become popular in Scotland. The King had yielded to the Presbyterian nation, and had showered his regal favours on their great ones; he was, as the Scots described Charles the First, "the contented King of a contented people." Yet amidst this festival of state, the King would rather have entered into the house of mourning. His thoughts were occupied by two events equally painful—the Irish Rebellion, and the menaced Remonstrance of the Commons. Charles beheld himself the monarch of three kingdoms alike engaged in revolution, or in rebellion, from very opposite motives, and not always from his own misgovernment.

Before the King left Scotland, he had received the first intelligence of the memorable Irish revolt; at the very moment he had conciliated the jarring interests of that divided land, on the same principle of his present proceedings with Scotland—by conceding to the full, the requests of the Irish deputation. These persons were hastening home in peaceful triumph, only to be mortified by the artifice or the incapacity of their governors; and to witness the greatest of national calamities, in a land of blood.

The King had granted two bills, one for the security of lands to their possessors, and the other for renouncing all claims on the part of the Crown. This happy settlement, which would have "attached the whole population of Ireland to the Royal interest," was prevented by the extraordinary conduct of the two Presbyterian Lords Justices of Ireland; the Lord-Lieutenant, the Earl of Leicester, not having yet left London. These Lords Justices are accused of being wholly devoted to the party in the English House of Commons; and it is alleged, that being aware that the passing of these bills would have secured the King's popularity, desperately disappointed the successful depu-

ties and the whole body of Catholics by proroguing the Parliament, a few days before their return from the King at Edinburgh.*

Terror and amazement ran through the nation. The history of the Irish massacre, as this rebellion is emphatically called, has been officially drawn up by Sir John Temple, a Privy Councillor; its pathetic picture may be viewed in Hume; its frightful details in Mrs. Macaulay. So shocking is the representation to a delicate mind, that the female historian warns her readers that should they dwell on it, their imagination would be impressed by images of the most horrid kind. At present more than one terrific cause was at work; their faith had combined with their vengeance. A religion which has shown itself too often sanguinary opened Heaven for them, in covering themselves with the blood of their companions; and the eternal hatred which the conquered had vowed to their conquerors, took no note of the unnumbered slaughters of the helpless and the innocent. The very animals in the field were deemed heretical, and lay in heaps, untouched even by robbers! Some fugitives, famished and crazed, having witnessed so many inventive cruelties, declared on their oaths that the ghosts of the murdered had flitted before their eyes! They deposed to scenes and listened to cries which could only have been the apparitions of their own terrified reveries. An involuntary shudder even now disturbs us in the repulsive minuteness of such detestable scenes. What seems most incredible in the history of these Sicilian vespers,

* Lingard, x. 161. Mr. Hallam inclines to think the conduct of these Lords Justices is rather to be ascribed to the weakness of their character. They may have been weak, and yet criminal. They had been warned by Charles as early as in March, 1640-1, that there was a design of raising commotions in Ireland, many Irish officers in foreign service, and others, were passing over to Ireland, by intelligence which he had received from Spain: this appears by a letter many years after discovered among the papers of Sir William Parsons, one of these Lords Justices; yet the intimation led to no active measures on their part.—Nelson, ii. 566. It is said that this Irish Rebellion was at first but a spark which might have been put out. They appear to have zealously persecuted the Romanists; Parsons, it is said, had declared, that “within a twelvemonth no Catholic should be seen in Ireland.”—Nelson, ii. 567. Strange is the history of religious parties! Scotland had risen, and the English Parliament adopted their cause against Charles's attempt to force Episcopacy on a Presbyterian land; and yet this very Parliament were intent on changing a land of Romanists to a land of Protestants. The King, who was called a tyrant, yielded; the Parliament, who were advocating the cause of freedom, would not even allow a toleration!

repeated in Ireland, is its authenticity. The Eastern tale of the slaughter of the Innocents is less strange; the dragonades of the French Huguenots were more humane; and the massacre of St. Bartholomew seems but a single scene of this direful tragedy.

To us who only read the history of this massacre with the indignant emotions of outraged humanity, it is curious to observe how coolly the politicians of both parties contemplated this national calamity. The Royalist, Sir Philip Warwick, tells us that "the Parliament, it was observed, were not displeased;" and the Commonwealth-man, General Ludlow, assures us, that "the news of the Rebellion, as I have heard from persons of undoubted credit, was not displeasing to the King." They both use identical words, though they could not have had any knowledge of each other. Hardened politicians! who thus could coldly calculate the political consequences of such revolting barbarities, and cast aside the sympathy they owed to a whole people of sufferers, for the malignant delight of a party-reproach!

A successful rebellion is contagious. The revolt in Scotland had been servilely copied by their English allies. Now Popery claimed her freedom as well as Presbyterianism. But if the sons of Knox had offered the Romanist the bewitching form of triumphant revolution, the rude democracy of the Kirk seemed contemptible to the passive obedience of the Mass-Priest. Unhappily for Charles, the Irish, in arming against a Puritanical Parliament, offered him their loyalty in the shape of rebellion. They pretended to hold a commission from the King, and proclaimed themselves to be the Queen's army. The situation of Charles was as critical as it was perplexing. He could neither countenance the loyalty, nor punish the rebellion of the Irish. Should he temporise with those who had risen in his name, it would be a confirmation of the malicious insinuation of the Commons, that the King himself had encouraged the revolt; and when he offered himself and his life, as he did, to suppress this unnatural rebellion, he excited the perturbed jealousies of the prevalent party in the Commons; for of all events which they most dreaded was that of seeing the King at the head of an army.

Deprived of the power of government, amidst this conflict of feelings and of interests, Charles wrote to the Parliament that to them "He committed the care of Ireland." Charles little suspected that in such few words he was delivering a deed of gift of his last remaining realm.

The deeper heads of the party in the Commons grasped at their prey with avidity—but the prey was not Ireland—it was the King himself! Affecting to interpret a casual expression in an unlimited sense, they at once assumed the entire management of the war, independently of the King. "In this manner," writes Mrs. Macaulay with an air of triumph, "they at once disarmed the Crown of that part of the executive power, which on this occasion had been universally apprehended." The cunning and the quibble are at least equal to the wisdom and the candour. It is mortifying to detect legislators and patriots congratulating themselves on a flaw in the indictment, and catching at subterfuges which might delight a senate of petty lawyers. Even the panegyrical historian of their deeds was not insensible to this artful interpretation, and this act of violated justice; for she apologises for their conduct, assuring us that they were only enabled to adopt this false interpretation by the "affections and opinion of the public."* But "the Public" is a peculiar phrase in our political history, where we shall usually find that there are at least two Publics.

The conduct of the Commons is very remarkable. They took on themselves the management of a war, but studiously neglected it.

It seemed unaccountable how they, who to the world seemed shaken by so many panics at Popish plots, now that a whole land had proclaimed their Papistry, and a people of Protestants were cast into their last extremity, should remain unmoved, and delay any efficient measures, while they were protracting the daily miseries of devoted Ireland. The King reproached the Parliament for their dilatory conduct, and offered to hasten in person to quell this sanguinary rebellion. "It was a business," observed the King, "which one man might conclude better than four hundred." But they would not trust the King even with an army of Covenanters, for at Edinburgh, their Committee, who

* Macaulay, iii. 93.

served as the Parliamentary spies over the King, had advised, that is, we presume, the only head among the party, Hampden had advised, that "if the Parliament agreed to this, the King would insist on the command." Ten thousand Scots would have marched at a day's notice, but the Commons in London refrained from voting to send a Scottish army till Charles was secured at Whitehall.

Meanwhile every day brought more dismal intelligence, and miserable men who authenticated the worst. In vain the Lords and gentlemen of Ireland, despoiled of their lands, petitioned—in vain the ruined merchants supplicated—in vain the last of an extirpated race invoked their vengeance. In vain they urged that a three hours' sail would relieve the nation, for no longer was required for a Scottish army to land in Ireland.

The patriotism of the stoical Commons lay not towards a land of misery; all their sympathies were absorbed in their deep councils, to confirm their past and to secure their future labours. Secretary Nicholas, writing to the King, observed that "the preparations for Ireland go on but slowly, and may come too late to prevent great mischief, notwithstanding the care of our Parliament."* The Secretary was judging by the exterior appearance of the language of the members and the votes of the House; he discovered no deficient indignation in the one, nor resolutions in the other, nor any languor in their preparations, but he probably wondered at the result—for Ireland was not relieved!

Hume acutely observes of the Commons on this occasion, that "their votes breathed nothing but death and destruction to the Irish rebels; but no forces were sent, and little money was remitted."

The truth is, that the Commons did not consider that the Irish rebellion was quite inopportune, at a moment when the King seemed to have become popular; his concessions in Scotland had satisfied that nation, and all those he had made in England, had satisfied the moderate among the English, and the Commons now discovered that their friends were falling off. At this critical moment this new rebellion served as a pretext to aggrandise their own influence by throwing into their hands an

* Evelyn, ii. Correspondence.

universal patronage; forces were raised which furnished them with an army of their own; the royal dépôts were emptied of their arms, which at once strengthened their hands, and weakened the King's. Monies were levied, which were disposed of, for their own particular purposes. In all this bustle, there was no haste to relieve Ireland!

Some among the Commons felt a secret pleasure in viewing the King entangled in new and more intricate difficulties. Had this insurrection not broken out, Charles would have returned in peace from Scotland. Some painful jealousies, too, the party in the English Commons had experienced in the prodigal caresses which had mutually passed between Charles and his Scottish subjects. Their Committee of espionage must have been startled at the overflowings of the old soldier Lesley, now the Earl of Leven, on his knees consecrating his oath—with so many others of the Covenant, who in their holiday of honours had sung such courtly hosannas. They were somewhat fearful that even their “dear brethren” were no longer to be rebels.

The Irish rebellion by the appearance it assumed, and by the imposture of a Royal commission, which the rebels asserted that they held,* was not unfavourable to re-excite the populace, or “the Public,” against the unfortunate monarch. The Commons, appealing to the declaration of the Irish, boldly ascribed the rebellion to the evil councils of the King, and even to a less pardonable cause, for they insinuated that Charles himself was the concealed instigator of this unnatural rebellion. They insolently menaced that if he chose not Ministers in whom they could confide—and where those Ministers were to be found was obvious—the Parliament would hold themselves absolved from granting any aid to avert the destruction of Ireland.†

* Sir Phelim O’Neale, the head of these Insurgents, it was afterward discovered, had torn off the great seal from some deed, and affixed it to a pretended Commission.

† This undisguised avowal, at the time it was made, was checked by the more prudent or the more moderate members. It does not appear in the Parliamentary history, but it was conveyed to the King by his faithful Secretary.—Evelyn, ii. 62. Correspondence. It was evidently thrown out at a moment when even politicians, in their hearts, expose nakedly some of their *arrière pensées*, by one who was familiar with the design of the party, which was to make the King wholly dependent on themselves. And this is amply confirmed by their subsequent conduct in this affair of Ireland. It was about this time that a member talked of deposing princes, but

Charles was returning from Scotland with melancholy forebodings; perhaps these were somewhat diverted by the assurance of a loyal reception by several bodies of gentlemen in the country, who were earnest to meet the King on his way. It is certain that many independent men sympathised with the difficulties by which the King was surrounded, after he had concurred in so many popular measures. At no period since his reign, was public opinion among honourable men so strongly disposed to protect the Royal honour. Among these now were also the citizens of London; a circumstance to which Charles had been little accustomed.

It would seem that the loyalty of the City depends on that of the Lord Mayor. Gournay, the present Chief Magistrate, in his zeal had resolved on a public reception of the King on his return, and to entertain the Sovereign at Guildhall. The Lord Mayor consulted Secretary Nicholas to learn the day of his Majesty's arrival. The Secretary pressed on the King its policy, and as Charles too much avoided these popular representations, and was not over-gracious in his manners, the honest Secretary found it advisable to insinuate some pretty forcible hints. "I humbly conceive it would not be amiss to your Majesty, in these times, to accept graciously the affections of your subjects in that kind, and to speak a few good words to them, which will gain their affections, especially of the vulgar, more than any thing that hath been done for them this Parliament." The King was docile to the sage council. But the zeal of the Lord Mayor exasperated the party in the Commons. Was their elaborate Remonstrance which would render the King quite odious to the people, and which had been so long hatching, and was now quite ready, to be preceded by the most popular testimony of the loyalty of their City of London? They would have intimidated the Chief Magistrate, but Gournay was equally indignant and intrepid; a character which his subsequent conduct to the last maintained. He was indeed never forgiven. They afterwards discharged him from his Mayoralty and lodged him in the Tower, putting the gold chain round the neck of their faithful creature Isaac Pennington.

that was premature, by some years, so this prophetic seer was sent to the Tower.—
Nalson, ii. 714.

In this reign of stormy politics, so trivial an incident as the banquet of a Lord Mayor has become a subject which requires even a critical investigation.

I will not detain the reader among the pomps and solemnities of the morning procession. On the King's entrance at Moor-gate he stopped his carriage by the side of a splendid tent, where he was received by the Lord Mayor, and addressed by the Recorder, to which having graciously replied, the King left his coach, and mounted his horse. As he passed, everywhere the streets resounded with the cries of "Long live King Charles!" He viewed every house adorned with tapestries. He was accompanied by a cavalcade of five hundred citizens, vieing in the richness of their dresses. Not a voice murmured, not a hand was lifted in scorn. Monarchs may well be excused if they deceive themselves, when a whole people create the illusion. The King was feasted with unusual civic magnificence.* Charles had graciously delivered "a few good words," and it was remarked that he took his hat off more frequently than he was accustomed to do. It was late in November, and "the days being short," the royal carriages drew up at four o'clock, and the whole *cortège* returned from the city dinner; the King, however, mounted his horse. All the attendants carried torches, and "the night seemed to be turned into day." "The noise of trumpets, which at their different stations in the morning had announced the approach of the King, was now changed for softer sackbuts, and dispersed bands of musicians were playing their voluntaries. On passing St. Paul's, the choir, standing in their surplices in the porch, chanted an anthem, which extremely delighted the musical Charles, who stopped till its close. In taking leave of the Lord Mayor, whom, with his son-in-law, Charles had knighted, and who had reconducted the King to his palace, warm was the royal gratitude, when breaking from the accustomed reserve of his manners, Charles embraced the Lord Mayor, charging him in his name to return the royal thanks to the whole City. The populace,

* Nalson has devoted six folio pages to a minute description of this great city feast and grand ceremonial. Some of the details might amuse those who are more experienced than myself in Lord Mayor's dinners on such Royal visits.—Nalson, ii. 677.

excepting some, perhaps, whose steps had been detained at the great conduits of Cornhill, Cheapside, and Fleet Street, which were "running with claret wine," had gone on in their attendance on the King to Whitehall; that scene of their recent tumults, and now of their hailing acclamations!

The King, in addressing Parliament, laid great stress on this public testimony of loyalty; and though some may lowly rate a king's speech in Parliament, yet it is probable that its sincerity was the consequence of those grateful emotions which had been so long estranged from his breast. "I cannot but remember, to my great comfort," said Charles, "the joyful reception I had now at my entry into London. I bring as perfect and true affection to my people as ever Prince did, or as good subjects can possibly desire—I will yet grant what else can be justly desired, for satisfaction in point of liberty."

"And yet within a month, a little month,"

shall the King, in personal danger, become a fugitive from his palace to escape from those hailing citizens, in a state of insurrection. There are events incalculable by any moral arithmetic; and it is not strange that the most sagacious have not always foreseen approximating events, which at the distance we view them, appear more closely connected together than they were to a contemporary observer.

The public reception of the King was but an evanescent scene of popularity, and the adversaries of Charles have represented it as a mere state-strick. The sudden contrast which soon followed makes the suggestion plausible, but yet it was not so! The great subsequent change in the conduct of the citizens was the consequence of that hazarded act of Charles, when he went down to arrest the five Members in their House.

On the present occasion there required no Court influence, since the loyalty of a courageous Lord Mayor, with his friends, and the state of public feeling at that moment, were abundantly sufficient to account for this public reception. But as this notorious testimony of civic loyalty has always mortified a certain party, and seems to call in question their general representation of affairs, Mrs. Macaulay observes that "The Queen had taken a great deal of pains that the King should be

received with a more than ordinary magnificence on purpose to mortify the Parliament.”* “The great deal of pains taken,” however, seems to have been entirely with those who would have put aside the reception altogether. It is curious to observe on this ticklish affair of the public loyal reception of Charles the First, how it sharpens the anger of our Republican lady. She who on certain occasions appeals to “the disposition of the public,” and has said, alluding to the tumults, that “the popular leaders had recourse to the spirit without doors to get the better of the opposition they found within,”† now irreverently scolds at “the majesty of the people.” She concludes, and not untruly, that “the sottish multitude are influenced by a variety of state-tricks.” As Gournay, in the language of Mrs. Macaulay, was “a bigoted Royalist,” and as his loyalty at least was courageous, there required no Court influence, nor the intrigues of Henrietta with this Lord Mayor, to account for his conduct. In fact, this piece of diplomacy ascribed to the Queen, she was in no condition at that moment to have ventured on. Abandoned in her palace, watched by a hundred eyes, and often terrified by the artful menaces of Parliament, the Queen could hardly have had either influence or intercourse with the Lord Mayor. And, indeed, in respect to the Queen’s interference with that functionary, the recent publication of Secretary Nicholas’s Correspondence with the King will set that tale at rest. Here we discover Gournay’s application, backed by the recommendations of the honest Secretary.‡

The King had been well informed of the activity of the party in the Commons during his absence ; of their secret juntos, as well as their more open courses. His concessions, and his

* It is fair to observe that Madame de Motteville says, “The Queen endeavoured to make the King all the friends she could. She brought over the Mayor of the city of London.” i. 212. I have only the English translation of her Memoirs, and we cannot lay much stress on this vague style. We have other and better evidence on this head.

† Macaulay, iii. 118.

‡ I give the passage to show how facts, however unauthorised, pass current in party histories ; where one liar makes many. “If your Majesty please to give leave to my Lord Mayor and the citizens here, to wait on you into this town, I beseech your Majesty to command that timely notice may be given of the day, that they may provide for it ; for the best of the citizens express a great desire to show their affection, which I humbly conceive will not be convenient to decline.”—Evelyn, ii. 60. Correspondence.

promptness to redress all grievances, had served them but for triumphs, which they counted up only to multiply. Their diligent proceedings when the Houses were but thinly attended on some of the most important resolutions concerning both Church and State, were not the only causes of his uneasiness—there was something more latent, and because it was not yet brought into shape and light, but had long been mysteriously hatching in all the darkness of secrecy and intrigue, hung like a nightmare in the Royal slumbers.

During Charles's stay in Scotland, his faithful Secretary was furnishing the most alarming intelligence of "a Declaration," which afterwards appeared as the famous "Remonstrance." He was troubled to think what would be the issue of it, for he saw at once through the whole mischievous design, sagaciously observing, that "if there had been in this nothing but an intention to have justified the proceedings of Parliament, they would not have begun so high as the third year of your Majesty's reign to the present." The Secretary then did not know that they began much earlier, from the day Charles ascended the throne. These communications, however alarming, were not, however, so novel to the King as the Secretary imagined. Ere Charles's departure from England he had received an intimation from a quarter whose intelligence in secret affairs was well known to him.

Before Charles went into Scotland he had been warned by his old and active intriguer, Bishop Williams, of the pending grievance; for it must be confessed, that the King had his grievances, as well as the people. Williams had been diving into the secrets of these masters of revolution. He had turned short on them; and they who had been the occasion of liberating him from the Tower, naturally counting on the vindictive spirit of an aggrieved man, to join with them, now repented evoking a spirit of darkness who startled them, and whom they knew not how to lay. "I wish we were well rid of him!" exclaimed one of the party. The future Archbishop, on his side, was himself in terror, and had anticipated the pending stroke of late repeatedly aimed at Episcopacy itself. The policy of Williams had ever been the most emollient; and he had concluded, whether judging from himself, or from some in the

ranks of public spirits, that every patriot had his price ; and that a place, provided it did not disappoint the expectant, was a bed of roses for the most restless. He had all along been desirous of postponing the King's journey to Scotland for another season. I give his conversation with Charles as characteristic of this political character.

"The Scots," said Williams, "are sear boughs, not to be bent. Keep near to the Parliament, all the work is within these walls ; win them man by man, inch by inch. Sir ! I wish it were not true what I shall tell you. Some of the Commons are preparing a Declaration to make the actions of your Government odious. If you gallop to Scotland, they will post as fast, to draw up this biting Remonstrance. Stir not till you have instigated the grand contrivers with some preferments."

"But is this credible?" said the King.

"Judge you of that, Sir," replied Williams, "when a servant of Pym's, in whose master's house all this is moulded, came to me, to know in what terms I was contented to have mine own case in Star Chamber exhibited among other irregularities. And I had much ado to keep my name, and what concerns me, out of these articles ; but I obtained that of the fellow, and a promise to do me more service, to know all they have in contrivance, with a few sweetbreads that I gave him out of my purse." *

Such was the clear warning which Williams had given Charles. In this curious conversation, we detect not only the place where this memorable Edict of the party was hatched, but we are also let into the grand mystery of its incubation.

But we must now take a view of the proceedings of the Commons, before we arrive at the history of the famous Remonstrance ; it is the symphony before the opera.

* We learn from a manuscript note of Sir Ralph Varney's, to which Mr. Hallam refers, that "the Remonstrance" was projected in August before the King's journey, but was then considered as unnecessary, for the King was rapidly conceding their demands. However, it remained a favourite object with the Remonstrants, who were only waiting for an opportunity to revive it.

CHAPTER XX.

THE COMMONS PERSIST IN NOT RELIEVING IRELAND.

AT this critical moment when Ireland was threatened by universal desolation, the Commons opened an interminable discussion with the Lords; interminable were it to have depended on arguments. The Upper House had of late become refractory; it became necessary to hold up a sharper rod, and the Commons now assumed a dictatorial tone, which must have shaken the falling aristocracy.

In bringing in a bill for pressing, they prefixed a preamble which declared this Royal prerogative to be illegal. This was at least a debateable point. The King asserted "his ancient and undoubted privilege," as practised by his Royal predecessors. It was, indeed, a grievance to the subject, and liable to great abuse. When the Crown was desirous of relieving itself of any obnoxious member in the House, or any other person in any rank of life, the King had the power of pressing—that is, of appointing them to do some public service at their charge; and in some cases, as in a time of war, they might be sent out of the kingdom to the army.* The Commons were secure of the popularity of their protest, and the King was as tenacious of his ancient rights. It was one of the great misfortunes of Charles the First, that while the Commons were pursuing the most popular objects, they appeared to Charles only intent, by their encroachments, on reducing the Monarchy to the state of a Venetian Doge. To the Lords it seemed, that under the cloak of the urgent necessities of the state, the Commons were carrying a great party-measure. The Lords already had been thrown into some alarm for their own privileges. The style of the Commons was authoritative, and soon became menacing. It was to be a struggle between the two Houses.

The Lords objected to the preamble, which, to say the least, was ill-timed; and the bill could not pass with it, without a deliberation and a discussion, which would impede the momentous

* I have shown some cases in *Curiosities of Literature*.

interests at stake. They offered to pass the bill, laying aside for the present the preamble. The Commons adhered to the preamble. Neither House would yield—and Ireland was not relieved!

Pym, at the head of a Committee, told the Lords, that the Commons, being the representative body of the whole kingdom, and their Lordships being but as particular persons, and coming to Parliament in a particular capacity, that if they shall not be pleased to consent to the passing of those acts and others, that this House, together with such of the Lords that are more sensible of the safety of the kingdom, may join together.*

When we combine this menace with what we shall find Hampden afterwards declared on passing the Remonstrance, we discover that at this period the project of annihilating the House of Lords was now matured. The Hierarchy was to be rooted up; but the Peers were in the branches. All this was proceeding, day after day, and Ireland was not relieved!

Charles, as he had formerly done in the business of Strafford, imagined that he should reconcile the parties by his fatal interposition; and thus dispatch the more urgent business of Ireland. The King came down to the House and offered to pass the bill with a *salvo jure* for King and people,† leaving the discussion to a fitter time.

This interference of the King on a bill which was still in debate with the two Houses, and particularly an unhappy allusion, that the King was “little beholding to him whoever at this time began this dispute,” was declared to have broken into the fundamental privileges of Parliament. Both Houses alike caught fire. Those Peers who were the friends of the Commons did not fail to aggravate this violation of the Constitution. The Commons desired that an humble petition should be delivered to the King, that “he should take notice that the privilege of Parliament was broken, and to desire him (the King) that it may not be done so any more hereafter.” The Lords agreed

* Nalson, ii. 712.

† Mr. Brodie seems to limit the *salvo jure* Charles proposed, as if merely for the preservation of his own right—but this necessarily included that of the people's claim for exemption. He says “this usurped power had already been pronounced illegal.” By whom? As yet only by the Commons themselves. It was a subject for future discussion.—Brodie, iii. 243.

to this stern "humbleness."—And the King made an ample apology, simply assuring both Houses that "he had not the least thoughts of breaking the privilege of Parliament, which he would protect and support."

What must the Commons have now conceived of their own prevalent power, when, at the same time, they witnessed the King—the Bishops—and the Peers, all apologising and all equally submissive!

While both Houses were occupied in the common cause of their privileges, they had proceeded with unanimity; but when the Commons pressed for their preamble, the struggle was renewed, till the Lords refused to join in some petitions of the Commons. All this while Ireland remained unrelieved!

The mobs again were called out. "No Bishops!" was the watchword, and they were nearly anticipating another cry, "No King!" for in passing Whitehall, they said "They would have no porter's lodge, but would speak to the King themselves without control, and at their discretion." The Commons would have three fast-days appointed, and one monthly—for Ireland. No other relief was yet held out, to use the expression in one of their own "Petitions," for "a land weltering in blood."

The Lords, still eluding the preamble, proposed that ten thousand English should join the same number of Scots. And the King offered to raise the men if the House undertook to pay them. The Commons now resented the proposal of the Lords as an improper interference of the Upper House. One of the answers of the Commons to the Lords is remarkable for its terse insolence.

"They were not used to be capitulated withal. Their actions are free as well without conditions as capitulations; and the House of Commons desire it may be so no more. Further they desire that their Lordships would pass the Bill for pressing, in regard they conceive that the ten thousand English cannot go unless that is done."*

In vain the King, again and again, urged them to put an end to the miseries of Ireland, while the rebels were encouraged in their barbarities by the slowness of the succours which they

* The "Smart answer of the Commons" to two propositions of the Lords, is given in Nalson's Collections, ii. 771.

had voted, but never sent. The Commons, on their side, again and again, pressed the Lords to pass the Bill, with the preamble—without which Ireland would not be saved. They noticed the King's offer to furnish the ten thousand men, in the most extraordinary way imaginable—for a rumour spread that the King was coming down with his Papists to cut the throats of the good citizens of London, and fire the City!

Thus the Commons persevered in imputing the loss of Ireland to the obstinacy of the Lords. At length they sullenly ordered their Committee on Irish affairs to meet no more!

Such was the conduct of the Commons on this occasion, which requires to be explained. Even by the confession of their ardent eulogist, Mrs. Macaulay, this endless discussion occasioned a fatal pause in the military preparations.* With all the artifice of a partisan, that lady lays the whole weight of her censure on the heads of the Lords: then only she accuses of the guilt of this unpardonable remissness in the suppression of this unnatural rebellion. But, in truth, all its criminality originated with the Commons.

For an Englishman nothing is more instructive in his national history than a calm scrutiny into the shiftings of partisans when they are fixed in the torture of an inextricable dilemma. Mr. Brodie affords me a remarkable instance. The Scottish Advocate will not allow his clients, the Commons, should yield a point. He declares, "Had the Commons halted now, they must have been held to recognise it"—the privilege of pressing—"They had, therefore, no alternative now." This representation is incorrect, since the *salvo jure* left the discussion open at any future day. Mr. Brodie says, the King insisted not to pass the Bill without "a *salvo jure*, or preservation of *his right*." This seems to me unfairly given; it seems to restrict the benefit of the *salvo jure* merely to the King; but in the King's speech it is positively declared thus, "To avoid farther debate at this time, I offer that the Bill may pass with a *salvo jure both for King and People*."† Probably aware of the futility of this argument, Mr. Brodie suddenly mystifies the simple reader by a disclosure of certain secret motives in these transactions, on both sides:

* Macaulay, iii. 111.

† Rushworth, iv. 457.

"Considering what had occurred on former occasions," continues Mr. Brodie, "it is scarcely to be imagined that this Prince had profited so little by experience, as not to anticipate the result of this illegal interference with a Bill depending before both Houses." Mr. Brodie has justly expressed his surprise that Charles gained little from experience—but his wide inference is quite his own. "*And therefore we may conclude* that he was actuated by deeper motives than a mere desire to have his assumed right preserved." He reveals "the deeper motives,"—"When the King proposed, as a compromise, to raise ten thousand volunteers, provided the House would support them, and as that would have evaded what the Commons," as Mr. Brodie assures us, "*had resolved upon*,"—namely, the appointment of the officers—"it is likely to have been one view which influenced him and his secret advisers from the beginning." Thus it appears by Mr. Brodie that the real contest was "the appointment of the officers," and farther, that the Commons had resolved on this, without communicating with the King or the Lords!

The object is changed: it was not for "the preamble," but "the officers," which the Commons were disputing: they were clamouring for one thing but intended another. Had the King and Lords been as much in the secret as Mr. Brodie, it would have fully warranted their firm resistance. But it is clear that had the Commons first succeeded in passing their "Preamble" against Pressing—it could have had no connexion with "the appointment of the officers," and "therefore," to adopt Mr. Brodie's hypothetical style, "it is likely," that they had no such intention in the origin of their discussion.*

The country was thrown into jeopardy by this party-question raised by the leaders in the Commons. One of the most vituperative calumniators of the King, in a rare moment of his dispassionate politics, has acknowledged that on this occasion "The Parliament *connived* at the Irish rebellion, in order to charge King Charles with fomenting it."†

Can we now refuse to agree in one opinion, that true patriotism, undegraded by criminal intrigue, would have instantly relieved Ireland, and left "the Preamble" as a grievance to be

* Brodie, iii. 244.

† Lord Orford, Memoirs, i. 150. 4°.

resumed, as the King had said, "at a fitter time?" The ruling-party in the Commons on so many occasions, were alert at similar contrivances; and by practising more artifices than accord with the dignity of patriotism, have stamped their character, too often, with the subtlety and cunning of Faction.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE GRAND REMONSTRANCE.

THERE is great obscurity among our historians respecting the origin of this memorable and elaborate party-production. It is evident, that it could not have been drawn up in haste, for a temporary purpose; for in fact it is an historical memoir of all the infelicities of the King's reign, with a very cautious omission that all the capital grievances there commemorated had no longer any existence.

The secret history of this anti-monarchical attack, for such it is, and such were now a rising party in the House; the persons who framed it; the Councils which must have been held on it; the mode of their inquiries after some of "the grievances;" and the time occupied in its composition, for we find that it was long in preparation, and even laid aside in suspense, would all be matter of deep interest in the history of the artifices of a subtle party. We are at present* deprived of any memoirs of these persons; they appear not to have chronicled their acts of patriotism. We can only get glimpses of them as in a dark chamber, without light enough to see their faces, but not without evidence which yields us more than suspicions of the persons themselves. The reader has already heard some important intelligence from that great revealer of political events, Bishop Williams, and from the watchfulness of the vigilant Secretary Nicholas.

The Remonstrance at length was brought into the House. The party was sanguine. They had numbered their votes, and

* I say "at present," for Lord Nugent has long announced a *Life of the Patriot Hampden*.

moreover had practised a trick on those Members who disliked their violence, and deemed this act to be uncalled for at a moment when the Sovereign had shown by so many acts of his own, and by a recent change of councils, that wearied by opposition, he now was only seeking for public tranquillity. The trick practised was this. They assured these moderate men that the intention of this Remonstrance was purely prudential; it was to mortify the Court, and nothing more! The Remonstrance, after having been read, would remain in the hands of the clerk and never afterwards be called for. When it was brought forward, to give it the appearance of a matter of little moment, the morning was suffered to elapse on ordinary business, and the Remonstrance was produced late. They overshot their mark; the very lateness of the hour was alleged as a reason to postpone entering on the debate, for to the surprise of one who afterwards rose to be the most eminent person in the nation, and also of some of the authors, it now appeared that the Remonstrance was to be submitted to a very strong opposition.

At nine the next morning the debate opened, and several hours past midnight it fiercely raged, with every dread of personal violence among the members.* It was a full House, and was only carried by the feeble majority of eleven; Clarendon says only by nine. We find some notice of the calmness and adroitness of Hampden during this disorderly debate. When the Remonstrance had been carried, he moved for the printing, that it might be dispersed among the people. According to constitutional usage, it should first have been communicated to the Lords, and afterwards presented to the King. But this appeal to the people against the Sovereign, as it avowedly was, he observed run in the sole name of the Commons—an all-sufficient authority! Already this great man was meditating that

* As a curious instance how difficult it is sometimes to ascertain the plainest matter of fact, from even those who were present, Rushworth says, the Debate lasted from three in the afternoon till three in the morning: Sir Philip Warwick says it was three in the morning when the Remonstrance passed. Whitelocke differs from both, prolonging it from three in the afternoon till ten the next morning. It is certain that the House was debating hard at midnight, but began earlier than Rushworth mentions; for Secretary Nicholas, writing to the King, says, "The Commons have been in debate about their Declaration since twelve at noon, and are at it still, it being now near twelve at midnight."

separation from the Lords, which in due time occurred. This had been indicated by several signal unparliamentary courses, for the House of Lords had of late been refractory.* Even Hampden failed in the division for printing, on the first night; but it was a favourite measure, and his cool and determined diligence renewed the motion three weeks after, when the printing was carried by a considerable majority. So out-wearied, or so supine were the Royalists, though the King was excessively anxious that this cruel record of his disturbed reign, reflecting such an aggravated picture of tyranny and himself the tyrant, should not be sent forth among the people, unaccompanied by his defence, or his apology. Thus it happened that when the King desired that they would not print the Remonstrance till they had his answer, Charles discovered that it had already been dispersed.

This edict of Revolution had been nearly rejected, and unquestionably it would have been thrown out, had it not been for an accident to which it would seem our Parliaments are liable. The length of the debate, as much as its vehemence, exhausted the physical condition of the elder members; many through utter faintness had been compelled to retire, and honest Sir Benjamin Rudyard not unaptly compared the passing of the Remonstrance to the verdict of a starved jury. Clarendon complains on the present occasion, that while the party themselves had secured the presence of all their friends, the hour of the night had driven home the aged and the infirm, who could no longer await the division. Mr. Hallam has shrewdly remarked on Clarendon's complaint of the friends of established authority, that "sluggish, lukewarm, and thoughtless tempers must always exist, and that such will always belong to their side." A simple, but important truth! And since the wisdom, or the virtue, of a free people, must often depend on the subtraction or the multiplication of voices, it is a curious fact in the history of an English Parliament, that some of the most eventful changes in our Constitution, have been carried by majorities which wear all the appearance of minorities; and that the majority and minority on the same question, at different periods, have changed sides.†

* Macaulay, iii. 99.

† The great points of the National Religion, under Elizabeth, were carried by six, and some say by a single vote; the Hanover succession was voted in by a single

Thus it happens that the age and the health of the members become a material circumstance in the highest concerns of the nation, and nothing seems more desirable than that even an absent member should not be deprived of his vote, provided he had been present at the debate. An artful party in that case could not steal a majority from a thin House; and the robust, the diligent, or the juvenile, would possess no fractional advantage over the infirm or the supine, in that great sum of human wisdom which is to appear in the numerical force of a division of the House.

After the numerous concessions of the King, and the humiliated state to which the party had reduced the Sovereign, certain as they were that they could scarcely demand any thing short of the throne itself, which Charles would now have denied, what motive induced this ungenerous remonstrance of grievances redressed; of painful reminiscences; of errors chastened, and of passions subdued? Mrs. Macaulay tells us that "this Remonstrance was looked on by the opposers of the Court as absolutely necessary to their farther curtailing the power of the Crown, which was essential to the preservation of those privileges the public had already obtained." Such is the diplomacy of revolutionary democracy, and with the present party it was an irrefragable argument: we will not add with Hampden and Pym, though there is sufficient reason to suspect their designs; but the result proved that this party had decided on overturning the English Constitution by setting aside the Crown altogether.

But, in truth, this was not the first motive of the present personal persecution of the monarch. "The Remonstrance" was an act of despair. Those who have written since the day of the female historian, with less passion and closer research, though not with more ability, nor even with any undue sympathy for

vote!—Calamy, ii. 2. It is certainly difficult to get at "the sense of the Nation." On a question whether the Protestant religion was in danger under Queen Anne's government, 256 saw no danger, and only 208 remained in a state of alarm.—Calamy's Life, ii. 279. But it often happens that Parliaments correct their own errors; for we find questions which had been frequently lost by the weakest minorities, afterwards carried with little or no opposition. The *Nemine contradicente* is always rare. How can we hope to reconcile so many opposed interests, to conceive such different sizes of understandings, and conciliate tempers which no art of man can ever accord! In this imperfect state of human existence, we can only trust to the *Ayes* and the *Noes*!

this unfortunate prince, have agreed that a far different motive than the one alleged in favour of the Commons, was the real inducement of this ungenerous attack.

That motive was a conviction that their own supporters had visibly diminished; some of the most eminent names in our history had abandoned them; and their violent courses, contrasted with the sacrifices both of personal feelings and royal authority, of which Charles, of late, had given so many striking evidences, had affected the moderate, and alarmed the honest. Nor was it unknown to themselves, that their clandestine practices in their intercourse with the Scots, of which Strafford had made some discoveries, and Montrose had revealed more, were rankling in the mind of Charles. The King had lately accepted for his advisers some from themselves—and, under more prudent councils than Charles had been accustomed to, the heads of the party felt themselves in personal danger; for the throne might appeal to the people, and patriots might be impeached, as well as ministers attainted. They dreaded nothing more than a popular king. An able judge of these times has observed, that "Their Remonstrance was put forward to stem the returning tide of loyalty which threatened to obstruct the farther progress of their endeavours." *

The Remonstrance was made such a point to be carried with the Commonwealth-men, who though not yet in their strength, were so sanguine, that Cromwell, as yet a new name in our history, expected that it would pass with little or no opposition; and after it was carried with the greatest difficulty, and by means in which the parties were not fairly balanced, Cromwell swore, for at that time he was not half "the Precisian" he turned out to be, that had it not passed, "some other honest men would the next day have sold their estates, and abandoned Old, for New England." It is quite clear that the anti-monarchists considered this desperate act of theirs to be the test and ratification of their triumph; and some of those "other honest men," might probably have been found among the contrivers of this piece of political machinery.

* The same true statement occurs in Dr. Lingard, x. 157, and Mr. Hallam, i. 584. Let me add my feeble testimony.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HISTORY OF LORD DIGBY.

THE King's new private advisers were eminent for their patriotism and their ability; the virtuous Lord Falkland, the active Sir John Colepepper, and the sagacious Mr. Hyde. Their names were even popular; they had gradually retreated from the Opposition, and now stood by the side of the King, without extinguishing their honourable principles. Another person, whose councils, on more than one remarkable occasion, Charles adopted, and who appears not to have closely connected himself with the other ministers, was the fascinating Lord Digby. The restless imagination and the reckless audacity of this extraordinary man, made him the most dangerous adviser of a monarch, who himself was liable to do precipitate acts, repented often as soon as done, and whose temperament was the most sanguine that a prince so unfortunate has ever shown.

George Digby, the second Earl of Bristol, should rather be the hero of romance, than of history. He was himself so much a creature of imagination, that an imaginative writer would seem more happily to record the versatility of his fine genius, and the mutability of his condition. By adding only a termination to the adventures of Lord Digby, which he himself never could, the Romancer, in the simple narrative of his life, could place before us an extraordinary being—and the truths he would have to tell, would at least equal the fictions he might invent.

Among other peculiarities in the fate of this nobleman was the place of his nativity. Born during his father's prolonged embassy at Madrid, he did not leave that Court before his thirteenth year; he spoke the Spanish language with native elegance, and stole some of the fancies of its literature. This circumstance, scarcely noticeable in another person, in this Lord's romantic history becomes an incident, as we shall see, in which the fortunes of Spain might have revolved. He acquired the French idiom with the same vernacular felicity to the admiration of the Parisians, and this too might have changed the

face of the administration of Mazarine ! But in the language of the land of his fathers, he was neither Spaniard nor Frenchman, but a Briton. Thus Lord Digby was master of the languages of all the countries, in every one of which he was to become so variable and so conspicuous an actor. His eloquence, elevated and forcible, has the elegance which we imagine to be the acquisition of our own days ; his indignant spirit, bold in expression as in thought, sharpens his sarcasm, or stings with scorn, often sliding into graceful pleasantry. It is not a Canning we are listening to, it is Demosthenes ! His patriotism seems vital ; for no man in Parliament, at that troubled and critical period, marked his way so distinctly between the conflicting interests ; just to the Sovereign, he asserted the rights of the nation. He maintained the necessity of frequent Parliaments without calumniating the monarch, or flattering the people ; he could condemn Strafford without becoming an accessory in that judicial murder ; and we shall see that he spoke in favour of the Test Act, though he was himself a Roman Catholic.

Several years of studious residence at his father's retreat, when the Earl, on his return home, was banished to his seat, was a fortunate circumstance in the life of the son. Surrounded by the learned and the ingenious, who resorted to Sherborne Castle, Lord Digby became equally learned and skilful in the prevalent theology and philosophy of that day, and accomplished in elegant literature. One of the fruits of these early studies was his letters to his relation, Sir Kenelm Digby, against the Roman Catholic religion. When he himself chose to be converted, it is said, that he never would take upon himself to answer himself, except by a subtle apology, or rather a fanciful distinction, which he made between the Church of Rome and the Court of Rome.

Lord Digby's first step into life was strongly indicative of its subsequent events. His impetuous passions brought him into notice. On a casual visit to the metropolis, from the quiet shades of Sherborne, he engaged in an amour, and a duel ; both of which were none of his inferior delights through life. He chastised an insolent rival, who was a favourite at Court, and it was done in the purlieu of Whitehall. His Lordship was committed to prison. The severity of this treatment, with the

remembrance of his father's, now qualified him, by his discontent, to become an able coadjutor in the patriotic band of Opposition.

A lovely countenance, and an innate graciousness of person, which instantaneously fascinated the beholder; a voice, whose tones thrilled some obdurate beauty when on his knees he would creep, with prodigal sensibility bewailing his own want of merit; or which could throw an irresistible charm over his elocution, insinuating his own confidence to the listener; these were the favours of Nature; and hers, too, that temperament which courts danger, and the fearlessness which scorns death. There was something chivalric in his courage, quick to assert his honour by that sword which had often signalised his glory in the field. But the utmost refinement of art had accomplished a perfection beyond the reach of nature. With the emotions and the imagination of a poet, he often opened views of things as if they had a present existence, when, in truth, they were only events which had not yet occurred; events in which he was himself so often disappointed, and had so often disappointed the unreasonable hopes of others. Lord Digby was never wise by experience and misfortune; for his working genius was only invigorated by the failure of one event to hasten on another; nothing seemed lost, when so much remained to be acquired; and in his eager restlessness, the chase after the new soon left the old out of sight. By the peculiarity of his situation, Europe was opened for his career, and when he had wrestled with his fate at home, he met her as a new man, in France or in Spain.

But those who had prematurely blessed their good fortune, for having met with a wonder of human kind, and clung to him as their pride and their hope, were left desperate at a single mischance; these persons had set all their venture on his single card; they could not repair their ruined fortunes by new resources; and thus it happened, that those who had been his greatest admirers were apt to become his greatest enemies. None so easily won admiration and esteem, none more rapidly lost their friends. It was remarkable, as Clarendon observes, that Lord Digby's keenest enemies had been connected with him by the closest friendships. Digby accepted their esteem as a tribute to his own virtues and transcendent genius, and, as he

deemed it, as an evidence of his own skill in the management of men ; but their enmity he ascribed to their own inconstancy and their jealousy of his superiority. Lord Digby on all occasions was easily reconciled to himself.

Deliberation and resolution with him were hardly separable ; and the boldness of his conceptions was only equalled by the promptness of their execution. Digby had that hardness of mind which is called decision, and that hardihood of heart which is courage ; qualities not always found in the same individual. It was his constitutional disposition to embrace the most hazardous exploits, not only from an impatience of repose, but from a notion that the audacity of the peril would cast a greater lustre on his genius and his actions. Cardinal de Retz has finely observed on this feeling, that "the greatest dangers have their charms if we perceive glory, though in the prospect of ill-fortune ; but middling dangers have only horrors when the loss of reputation is attached to the want of success." Digby's designs were sometimes so hazardous that he would reserve some important point to himself, and not confide it to those whom he appeared to be consulting ; and this, as Clarendon observes, not so much out of distrust that they would protest against it, for he was very indulgent to himself in believing that what appeared reasonable to him would appear so to every one else, but from a persuasion that by this concealment, he was keeping up his own reputation, by doing that which had been unthought of by others. It was this unlucky temper in his nature which produced so many inconveniences to the King and to himself—for Charles the First was himself too prone to sudden enterprizes, and a counsellor so daring and so fanciful as Lord Digby was the unfittest minister for a monarch who, though easily induced to adopt such rash attempts, as quickly was startled at their difficulties.*

No man dared more than Lord Digby, and few had greater abilities to support that daring nature ; but no man's life, who had entered into such a variety of fortunes, was more unprosperous, nor were ever such great designs left unaccomplished by the genius which had conceived them. If Lord Digby possessed some extraordinary qualities, he had also others which were not

* Clarendon, ii. 102.

so, and which worked themselves into his character only to weaken it; like those roots and branches which grow out of the fractures of battlements and turrets, and come at last to loosen, or undermine, even such solid strength. It was his fatal infirmity, says Clarendon, that he too often thought difficult things very easy, and considered not possible consequences, when the proposition administered somewhat that was delightful to his fancy, by pursuing whereof he imagined he should reap more considerable glory to himself, of which he was immoderately ambitious.*

How did it happen that this extraordinary man so frequently acted in contradiction with himself? The character of Lord Digby has furnished some sparkling antitheses to the polished cynicism of the heartless Horace Walpole. Insensible to the great passions of a mind of restless energies, but petulantly alive to the ridiculous, Lord Orford could easily detect the wanderings of too fanciful a genius, but he wanted the sympathy, or the philosophy to penetrate to their causes. This man, who in so many respects may be deemed great, had some fatal infirmities. He would carry his dissimulation, perhaps, beyond the point of honour. On the trial of Strafford he appears to have left his party from his indignation at their measures; his eloquence on that occasion has reached posterity. But when with deep imprecations he protested that he knew not of the abstraction of an important document, which was long after discovered copied in his hand-writing among the King's papers, whatever might be the policy of his solemn oaths, and however desperate the predicament in which he stood, it has involved his honour. In the proposed arrest of the six members, when his lordship discovered how ill that measure was resented by the House, he immediately rose, and vehemently spoke against it, declaring that it was absolutely necessary that the King should disclose the name of the proposer of that pernicious counsel; and whispering to Lord Kimbolton, who was intended to have been one of those State victims, that "He now clearly saw that the King was hastening to his own ruin." Yet we are told by Clarendon that it was he only who had advised the measure, without any communication

* Clarendon, ii, 101.

with the Ministers. Even on this occasion his own character rose paramount. For a moment he had been "the creeping thing" which has left in the dust the trail of his political cunning, but his dauntless spirit soared as high as it had sunk, for Digby could not dissimulate when his courage and intrepidity were in question. He who had reprobated the dangerous and unsuccessful design, on the next day offered the King to hasten with a few gentlemen and seize on those very Members who had flown to the City, and bring them, dead or alive. Charles was startled at this greater peril than the memorable one of which he had already repented. In so chivalric a genius, one could hardly have suspected a selfish being, as we shall see his repeated deeds have stamped him to be; his feelings were concentrated within himself. Clarendon tell us that he was never known to have done a single generous action, even to those who had claims for their disappointments in their unwary dependence on him. He sacrificed his Protestant daughter to a Flemish baron for his own convenience. He was habitually addicted to gaming and to his amours, and lived, even at a time when in the receipt of a considerable revenue, a mean life, unworthy of his rank and name. In his last days, after the Restoration, he seems to have been so maddened by personal distresses, that his violent behaviour to Charles the Second had nearly incurred an act of treason, and it banished him from the Court.

Such is the anatomy of the mind and genius of this accomplished statesman and warrior; his actions only exhibit him in the motion of life.

The Commons excepted Lord Digby from pardon, in a negotiation for a treaty of peace. They pursued Digby with the same violence they had hunted down Strafford, designing that another minister should bleed on the scaffold. Digby flew to Holland. But he was not a man to repose in security at a moment of great agitation. We soon find him at York, where in a midnight interview with the King he arranged his return to Holland to procure arms. Taken, and brought into Hull, an adventure occurred which perfectly displays his versatile and dauntless character.

When Lord Digby found himself in the hands of the

Parliamentarians, he appeared as a sea-sick Frenchman, and retiring into the hold of the vessel, he there concealed his papers; their detection would have been fatal. The Governor of Hull was Sir John Hotham, a man of a rough unfeeling nature, sordid, and influenced entirely by his meanest interests; moreover, he was an enemy. Digby, in his usual way, deliberated, and resolved. The sea-sick Frenchman opened his part, by addressing one of the sentinels in broken English, till, by his vivacious gesticulations, the man at last was suffered to comprehend that the foreigner had secrets of the King and Queen, which he would communicate to the Governor. Introduced to Sir John, the disguised Digby took him aside, asking in good English, "Whether he knew him?" Surprised, Hotham sternly answered "No!" "Then," resumed Lord Digby, "I shall try whether I know Sir John Hotham, and whether he be in truth the same man of honour I have always taken him to be." Digby revealed himself, and in his persuasive manner left to Sir John the alternative of an ignoble deliverance of him to his implacable enemies. Hotham was mastered by the greatness of mind of Lord Digby, and so touched by the high compliment to his own honour, that the stern and covetous man, who had now in his hand whatever his interest or ambition could desire for their ends, spontaneously declared that such a noble confidence should not be deceived. The only difficulty now was to concert the means of escape; it was considered to be the safest that the Frenchman should be openly sent to York, with a promise that he should return to Hull. Such hair-breadth escapes were the delight and the infirmity of this romantic hero.

In the civil wars, from the first battle of Edge Hill, we trace Lord Digby's gallant achievements, and on one signal occasion his desperate bravery. He seemed as careless of death, as if he had been invulnerable to bullets, which, however, he was not, for he received many wounds very little short of life. As active in the cabinet as in the field, he was concerting very ingenious schemes to obtain a city by an intrigue, or to project a visionary treaty, but he did not command success. Whatever might be the skill of the sculptor, his marble was of too rough a grain to take his polish. His good fortune was always of short duration. He suffered a great defeat—quarrelled with his officers—and

was sent by Charles to Ireland. There his busied brain planned to fix the Prince on an Irish throne; but the Queen insisting that her son should hasten to Paris, Digby followed; a circumstance which first brought him in contact with the French minister.

On the death of Charles the First, Lord Digby at St. Germain addressed Charles the Second, offering his devoted services in a style which could only have been dictated by a nobleman, the intimate companion of monarchs, and by a genius even more distinguished than his rank.*

Lord Digby was now the servant of fortune. France opened a scene favourable to the genius of the man. The commotions of the Fronde had broken out. The insurrectionary state of England seemed to have been reduced to a French *pétite pièce*, as the comedians of the *Théâtre Italien* were performing one of their own ludicrous parodies. The French in Revolutions were then but childish mimics.

Lord Digby, not without difficulty, having procured a horse, entered as a volunteer in the Royalist army. One of those extraordinary occasions which can only happen to extraordinary men, for others are incompetent to seize on them, made his fortune in one day.

The two armies were drawn up against each other, at no great distance. One of the insurgents advanced out of the ranks, and in a bravado offered to exchange a shot with any single man who would encounter him. Lord Digby, without speaking to any one, leisurely moved his horse towards this vaunting champion, who stood still, apparently awaiting his antagonist. It was a dishonourable feint; for the bravo dexterously receding towards his own party as Digby approached, the whole front of the squadron fired. His lordship was shot in the thigh, and though he still kept his seat, it was not without difficulty he got back to his own side. Such intrepid gallantry, performed in the presence of the French Monarch, Cardinal Mazarine, and others of the Court, raised an universal inquiry. At that moment few knew more of the remarkable gentleman, than that

* It would be irrelevant to our subject to insert this admirable letter, which is the most striking evidence that the style of the present day has degenerated in its changes. It exists in the Clarendon Papers.

he was an Englishman. All pressed forward to admire the chivalrous lord, and on his recovery the King and the Cardinal instantly gave him a regiment of horse, with the most liberal appointments.

Every thing about Lord Digby was in unison with his imaginative character. The impress on his standard was noticed for the ingenuity and acuteness of its device. An Ostrich, his own crest, was represented with a piece of iron in its mouth, and the motto, *Ferro vivendum est tibi, quid præstantia plumæ?* "Thou who must live on iron, what avails the lustre of thy feathers?" But the motto includes a play upon words; the iron alluded to his sword, the feathers to his pen, to whose excellence he himself was by no means insensible.

Lord Digby's troop of cavalry was chiefly composed of English emigrants, who flocked to the standard of their idolised commander. He charmed them by the seduction of his imagination, the shadows of his fancy; they flattered themselves in flattering him. But neither the commander nor his followers had patience and industry. Victories and promotions were equally rare in the puny warfare; and the adventurers gradually fell off in murmurs, abandoning the hero who, they were induced to conclude, if he had the power, would never have performed his prodigal promises.

But Lord Digby, at the French Court, was in the element in which he was born, and had been trained; and there he was more idolised than by his military dependents. The beauty of his person, the delightfulness of his conversation, the softness of his manners, his elegant literature and his political sagacity, and, above all, his alacrity and bravery in action, put him in full possession of all hearts and eyes. His lordship was even admitted into the councils of the King and the Cardinal. He was invested with a high command in the French army, which gave him the full privileges of tolls and passes and licences over the river to Paris, so that his profits were considerable as his honours. Such a prosperous state might have terminated the career of other men. Digby was more gratified at having attracted the eyes of both sexes on him, than by the honours which had no novelty for him, and the fortune, which, however abundant, could never supply his invisible necessities. His revenues were

so large that it was imagined that his lordship designed to accumulate a vast fortune, for he maintained no establishment, was without an equipage, lived meanly, was never bountiful or even charitable, yet ever moneyless. Deeply involved in amorous intrigues and romantic exploits, more adapted for some folio romance than for the page of grave history, he was, however, not less intent on political ones, of the boldest nature his inexhaustible invention had ever conceived. When Cardinal Mazarine was compelled to quit France and retire to Cologne, while the popular clamour was at its height, that sage statesman recommended Lord Digby to the Queen, as an able and confidential adviser. In one of the flights of his erratic genius his lordship projected supplanting Mazarine, and himself becoming the Premier of France. He countenanced the popular cry against Mazarine, and suggested to the Queen, Anne of Austria, that her personal safety was concerned in keeping the Cardinal in exile. But though this fascinating nobleman had deceived an old statesman, he could not make a woman his dupe; for the Queen accepting his zealous councils with complacency, was equally cautious in informing Mazarine of his accomplished friend's conduct. When the Cardinal returned in triumph, it was contrived to send his lordship on a very hazardous expedition to Italy, where success seemed next to an impossibility. Digby surmounted the difficult task, and returning to Paris was highly complimented by the Cardinal, and rewarded—at the same time that he was cashiered and ordered to depart from the territories of France.

Here was a kingdom lost! Digby now repaired to the obscure Court which Charles the Second held at Bruges, and where some of the courtiers wanted half-a-crown for a dinner. Digby announced that he brought money which would last him a twelvemonth, but at the end of six weeks he had drained his treasury. As neither the monarch nor the peer could be of any use to the other, it was not found inconvenient to part. Digby had now to create a new scene of action, and he designed to enter into the Spanish service. He asked for no recommendation from Charles, but depended on his own resources—half Spaniard as he was; for the gaiety of his disposition prevented him from being wholly Spanish. But here he found obstacles;

his person was far from being agreeable in the Spanish army in Flanders, where about two years before, in a predatory incursion, rapine and conflagration had marked the progress of his troops through many villages and towns, and he listened to his odious name in lampoons and ballads. The poverty of the Spanish Court in Flanders offered no promise to a military adventurer.

But Digby knew the character and taste of Don Juan, the Governor of the Low Countries, who, unlike other grandees of Spain, was addicted to universal literature, and had a passion for judicial astrology; and Digby was an arbiter in literature, and an adept in the mystical and the occult.

The Spanish ministers and officers gave but a cold and reserved reception, but they soon marvelled at the delectable Spanish idiom from the lips of an Englishman! He, who had been, as it were, a native in all the Courts of Europe, was many men in one man: one who interested all in their various stations, according to their tempers and their pursuits. The confidential minister of the governor, Don Alonzo di Cardinas, had personally known our mercurial genius at London, and was the most obdurate, from "his own parched stupidity," till Digby, as Clarendon says, "commending his great abilities in State affairs, in which he was invincibly ignorant, the Don suspected that he had not known Lord Digby well enough before." Whoever listened was lost, and none more than Don Juan himself. No one indeed was so capable of appreciating the luxuriant genius of this accomplished man. At every leisure hour Don Juan sought the company of Lord Digby; frequently at his meals, and in the evenings, the Prince indulged in literary conversations, and, more retiredly, in whispering the secrets of the skies.

Nothing was now wanting to convince Don Juan that he had by his side the greatest genius in Europe, but some signal service, which might fix with the Spanish army the worth of their new compatriot. The Spaniards had long been annoyed by a fort, five miles from Brussels, which Marshal Schomburgh had rendered impregnable. The Spanish Prince had suffered repeated repulses in his attempts to reduce this fort. Many Irish regiments, who had followed the fortunes of their Sove-

reign, were in the service of France, and the garrison of this fort was chiefly composed of this soldiery. Charles the Second had lately been abandoned by Mazarine, in his terror of Cromwell, and the King was now a fugitive in the Spanish Netherlands. Digby one day surprised Don Juan by an assurance that the Spaniards should possess the fort. He had been privately negotiating with the Irish officers, and having convinced them that as their Sovereign was no longer protected by France, it could not but be agreeable to him that they should unite with Spain, who had afforded him an asylum, to the Irish it was perfectly indifferent in whose service they engaged, and they found no difficulty in resolving to pass over to the other side. The great Marshal Schomburgh, who was convinced that he was secure from all attacks, suddenly discovered that his orders were disobeyed, and himself in the midst of unaccountable mutinies. The Marshal was constrained to march out of his impregnable fort, and had the mortification to witness most of his garrison wheel about to the Spanish camp. The dexterity and secrecy which Lord Digby had displayed in this transaction to the Spanish Prince, looked as if he had magically changed the scene; and Don Juan declared that there was no reward equal to that service. From this moment Lord Digby, who no longer viewed any prospect of the Restoration, devoted himself to the Spanish Court.

Digby now anticipated some active part in the state; and to be an entire Spaniard, he deemed it necessary to become, what they call at Madrid, "a Christian." There was never wanting a favourable opportunity to execute what he had resolved on. Falling ill at a monastery where he visited his daughter, Father Courtnay, the Provincial of the English Jesuits, converted the able assailant of the Romish faith. This rapid conversion was not considered miraculous, even by the Spaniards,—and yet it seems so, for Father Courtnay was a person of no talents, and the learned Digby must have known the arguments of the Jesuit before he listened to them.

This step irretrievably lost him with the English. Charles laughed at the ascendancy of Father Courtnay over the understanding of the great philosopher, but, with his countrymen, Digby was not to be quit for their ridicule, and the King found

it necessary to conceal his own sentiments, in pursuance of the advice of Clarendon, in commanding Digby's absence at all future councils; and moreover, ordered him to resign the signet as Secretary of State, which, though now but a titular office, was important, for it conferred on him a political character at the Court of Madrid. Even Don Juan, who had not read this portentous conversion when they had conned the stars together, cast a cold glance on the wonderful young proselyte. The Prince, indeed, had incurred a reprimand from the Spanish Cabinet for suffering himself to be so powerfully influenced by Lord Digby: the jealousy of the Ministers was at work. No place, no pension came from Madrid; no compliment from Rome, but an exhortation, which relished of irony, that "since his Lordship had been converted, it behoved him now to convert his brothers."

When Charles the Second was invited to be present at the treaty between France and Spain at Fontarabia, Don Louis de Haro, the Spanish Minister, pointedly excepted against the King being accompanied by Lord Digby. Yet such was the spell of Digby's genius, that Charles, though his crown might have been at stake, could not part with his delightful companion, who, leaving the negotiators with the fate of Europe in their hands, as matters not very pressing, proposed to the King to take a circuitous route in their way, from city to city. His Lordship had been a curious traveller, who knew when to post, and where to loiter; thus delighting and delaying, a rumour reached them that the treaty had been concluded, and the Plenipotentiaries had taken their departure. The sauntering monarch then discovered how far he had been carried away by the fancies of his erratic conductor, to the detriment of very urgent affairs. The report, however, proved premature; but the adventure was auspicious to Lord Digby, for no sooner had he come in contact with Don Louis de Haro and the Spanish grandees, than that statesman was as deeply captivated by this admirable man, as had been Don Juan. On Charles's return to Brussels, Lord Digby was invited to Madrid, where he was well received by the King; his wants were amply provided for, and he remained at that Court till the Restoration.

The Earl of Bristol, such Digby had now become, returned

home Spanish in heart, but he had lost an old friend in the Chancellor ever since his adventure with Father Courtney. He retained, however, the personal affection of the King, who on the Restoration had been more munificent to the Earl of Bristol than the Royal forgetfulness had allowed with so many others. As Digby could not be of the Privy Council, or hold any ostensible post in the administration, but had free access at all hours to the King, he ambitioned to be the head of the English Roman Catholics, but he found that the Jesuits would not divulge their secrets. That he could not be the Prime Minister of England, possessing as he did the King's ear, I suspect rankled in his spirit.

A curious incident now occurred, which shows that the genius of the Earl of Bristol, unmitigated by age, still retained the restless invention of his most fanciful days. The treaty of the Portuguese match, already advanced, was confidentially revealed by the King to the Earl, who, provoked that he had not a greater share in foreign affairs, than his old friend the Chancellor admitted him to, determined to exert his rare faculty of puzzling, and obstructing any project which was not of his own contrivance. He startled the King by an assurance that this proposed political marriage must be followed by a war with Spain; he described the critical situation of Portugal, and of that miserable family who would shortly be compelled to ship themselves off to their Brazils, as Spain in one year would overrun the whole country. He caricatured the Infanta, as repulsive in person, and known to be incapable of having any progeny, an objection which was fully verified by the event. There were, however, two accomplished ladies of the House of Medici, whom he luxuriously painted forth to the voluptuous Monarch, and whom Spain would consider as a Spanish match. He suggested that the King should send him incognito to Italy to make his election for a Queen of the most favoured of these two ideal ladies. He prevailed over the weakness of the Monarch; kissed hands, and took his departure; and though a letter was dispatched after him to stay any farther proceedings, he pretended that he had received the communication too late, and would have closed his secret negotiation with one of the ladies, but, as Clarendon sarcastically observes, "he had not the good fortune to be believed."

The same improvidence in his domestic affairs which had marked the wanderings of his emigrant life, ruined his happiness. Jealous of Clarendon's influence, he thought that the Chancellor had lessened his favour with the King. One day, in a closet interview, in a state of great agitation, he upbraided the King in unmeasured terms for "passing his life only in pleasure and debauchery, while he left the government to the Chancellor—but he would do that which should awaken him!" The King was equally surprised and confused; otherwise, as he declared, having been personally menaced in his private closet, he had called the guard, and sent his old companion to lodge in the Tower.

This extravagant conduct was the prelude of the Earl of Bristol exhibiting charges of high treason against his estranged friend the Chancellor. When these were brought into the House of Lords it was resolved, that by the statutes of the realm no Peer can exhibit a charge of high treason against another Peer in their own House; and further, that in the matters alleged there was no treason. What is extraordinary, the Earl himself fully concurred in these resolutions, but what is still more so, he preferred the same charges a second time. "Follies of the wise!" The King was so greatly offended, that warrants were issued for his arrest; and during two years, this baffled and eccentric statesman was forced to live *au secret*. But this singular man was familiar with the mutability of fortune, for on the Chancellor's final disgrace, we find that the Earl of Bristol came to Court and Parliament in triumph!

In the enmity of an ancient friendship, like the unnatural feuds of civil war, the hatred is proportioned to the former affection. In the persecution of Clarendon the Earl of Bristol was his own victim. His vindictive passion, perhaps, on this single occasion, blinded his luminous intellect and subdued the natural generosity of his temper, for that was such, that though he loved and hated violently, the softness of his disposition would easily reconcile him even to those who had injured him. Digby had more imagination than sensibility; his love, or his hatred, appeared by the most vivacious expressions; but it was his temper, more than his heart, which was engaged. His friend, or his enemy, in his own mind, was but a man, with whom he con-

sidered that a single conference would be sufficient to win over to his own will.

His glory was now setting, when Digby was yet to show himself to all the world, as the most elevated of human beings.

Lord Orford, among the contradictions in his character of Lord Digby, has sneered at his conduct on a remarkable occasion. "He spoke for the Test Act, though a Roman Catholic." Thus an antithesis, or an epigram, can cloud over the most glorious action of a whole life. This statesman, in the policy of that day, and at that critical hour, above all other considerations, held, that the vital independence of this country was in the firm and jealous maintenance of the Protestant interest. On this occasion he delivered his sentiments with his accustomed eloquence, but above the eloquence was the patriotism.

The present work will not admit of a development of the fine and original genius of this remarkable statesmen. From his speech on the Test Act and his "Apology" addressed to the Commons* might be selected passages, as important for their deep sense, as for their splendid novelty. The noble speaker avoided to decide, whether the boon of greater freedom to be granted to the Romanists would be dangerous; or whether the unreasonable ambition of any Roman Catholics had afforded any just grounds for the alarm which had so violently seized on, and distempered the major part of his Majesty's Protestant subjects. It is these fancies which he would now allay, and he thus illustrates the nature of popular fancies.

"My Lords, in popular fears and apprehensions, those usually prove most dangerous that are raised upon grounds not well understood; and may rightly be resembled to the fatal effects of panic fears in armies, where I have seldom seen great disorders arise from intelligence brought in by parties and scouts, or by advertisements to Generals, but from alarms on groundless and capricious fears of danger, taken up we know not either how or why. This no man of moderate experience in military affairs but hath found the dangerous effects of, one time or other; in giving a stop to which mischiefs the skill of great commanders is best seen." He closes the speech with these words:

"My Lords, however the sentiments of a Catholic of the

* It is preserved in Nalson's Collections, vol. ii.

Church of Rome, (I still say not of the Court of Rome,) may oblige me, upon scruple of conscience, in some particulars of this Bill, to give my negative to it, when it comes to passing, yet as a member of the Protestant Parliament, my advice prudentially cannot but go along with the main scope of it, the present circumstances of time and affairs considered, and the necessity of composing the disturbed minds of the people."

However we may be disposed to censure the eccentricity of this singular personage, his public character was always decided, and at the most critical moments of his political life his path was clearly traced before him. Lord Digby, from his first eloquent speech on the trial of Strafford to his last on the Test Act, poured forth the feelings of a patriot with the calm sagacity of the statesman. Had he lived in our times, it is probable that Lord Digby would have spoken against this very Test Act, and afforded Horace Walpole one more ungenerous sneer.

Little did Lord Digby imagine that he would only be known to posterity by the pen of his immortal adversary, the Chancellor, who in his solitude, though feeling himself personally aggrieved, had suffered no vindictive passion to cross the seas—a sad exile from his country and his glory; yet in his leisure hours at Montpellier, his great mind found a delightful task, in commemorating the splendid accomplishments and the daring virtues of his great enemy, which he felicitously distinguishes as "the beautiful part of his life." "It is pity," continues the noble writer, "that his whole life should not be exactly and carefully written, and it would be as much pity that any body else should do it but himself, who could only do it to the life, and make the truest description of all his faculties, and passions, and appetites, and the full operation of them; and he would do it with as much ingenuity and integrity as any man could do." And his Lordship finely concludes—"If a satiety in wrestling and struggling in the world, or a despair of prospering by those strugglings shall prevail with him to abandon those contests, and retire at a good distance from the Court, to his books and a contemplative life, he may live to a great and long age, and will be able to leave such information of all kinds to posterity, that he will be looked upon as a great mirror by which well-disposed men may learn to dress themselves in the best orna-

ments, and to spend their lives to the best advantage of their country."

This had been a fortunate suggestion, had it ever reached Lord Digby; but this Earl of Bristol lived eight years after this noble effusion, and though no man was more partial to his own genius, he has left his adventurous life unwritten. We have lost a tale of the passions, warm with all the genius which prompted his actions. The confessions of Lord Digby might have afforded a triumph over his vanities; Statesmen would have been lessoned, and men of the world, through his versatile conditions, and in his reckless life, would have contemplated a noble and enlarged image of themselves.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FLIGHT FROM THE CAPITAL.

THE menaced Remonstrance had been the secret terror of Charles the First: even in Scotland, at its first intimation, the King had earnestly impressed on his faithful Secretary that his friends should put a stop to it by any means. Heart-stricken at its presentation, the King desired that this Remonstrance should not be published, unaccompanied by his answer; he learnt that it was already dispersed!

The style of the Monarch, in alluding to this Remonstrance and to the seditious libels of the pulpits, betray his dread. "We are many times amazed to consider by what eyes these things are seen, and by what ears they are heard." With this enveloped satire on himself and his government, the very populace were now to sit in judgment over their rulers, and to comment with all their passions and their incompetence, on evils often aggravated, and evils which though they had ceased to exist, by their cruel recollections seemed to increase in number.

Rushworth has printed this memorable State paper in the extraordinary manner of a chapter in the Bible, consisting of 206 verses; every verse a grievance which had been redressed, or a grievance which Charles was now willing should no longer

exist.* He appealed to them in his replies "whether he had not granted more than ever King had granted?—whether of late he had refused to pass any Bill presented by Parliament, for redress of those grievances mentioned in the Remonstrance?" This Remonstrance was an elaborate volume, which might serve as the text-book of every Revolutionist in the three realms; and it laid open his infirm government to the eyes of Europe; or, as it was described in one of the King's Declarations, "rendered us odious to our subjects and contemptible to all foreign Princes."

This anomalous Remonstrance was the first formidable engine of that great Paper-war which preceded the civil, sad and wrathful image of the fast-approaching conflicts! This Remonstrance may also be distinguished as the first of those decisive acts by which the Commons usurped the whole Sovereignty of Government. It was an appeal to the people against the Sovereign, by the Commons themselves, and an actual announcement of the separation of the Lower from the Higher House, since it had not been deemed necessary any longer to require the concurrence of the Lords. "Our presumption may be very strong and vehement, that though they have no mind to be slaves, they are not unwilling to be tyrants; for what is tyranny but to admit no rule to govern by, but their own wills? And we know the misery of Athens was at the highest when it suffered under the thirty tyrants." †

The Remonstrance received an able answer, the secret production of Hyde, which Mr. Brodie candidly acknowledges, "was calculated to make a great impression," but which Mrs. Macaulay could only perceive "was vague, and totally deficient in justifying the King's actions." As if the King's actions were to be justified, any more than the proceedings of the Commons! It is, however, remarkable for the positive statement of that important circumstance in the reign of the calumniated Monarch, which, had it been fictitious, could hardly have been ventured on, in such an unreserved appeal to the whole nation—namely, the present prosperity of the people, and the national happiness during a period of sixteen years; "not

* Rushworth, iv. 438.

† His Majesty's Answer, Husband's Collect. 284 should be 283.

only comparatively in respect of their neighbours, but even of those times which were justly accounted fortunate."

The style of Charles had become more popular; the moderate councils of Falkland, Colepepper, and Hyde would have tended to tranquillize the disturbed state of the public mind; and Charles himself had evinced his own disposition for conciliatory measures, by all which he had himself done in Scotland.

The violence of the Commons now strikingly contrasts with the subdued conduct of the King. They seemed to have acquired a renovated vigour; their agitation was more intense; their hostility more open. The sovereignty of England now depended on the single vote of the Commons. The more the King was driven to yield, seemed only to inflame their consciousness of power. Secret motives were instigating this fiercer activity.

One motive was their dread of a change in public opinion; the stream which had hitherto carried them on was ebbing, or turning from its course. Charles, left to discreeter counsels, might win the affections of the honest and the honourable, who were not enlisted into a party. When Hampden reproached Lord Falkland for having changed his opinion, his Lordship replied to the patriot, that he had been persuaded at that time to believe many things which he had since found to be untrue; and therefore he had changed his opinion in many particulars, as well as to things as persons. This, at least, was an unbiassed opinion, for the virtuous Falkland had accepted office on the repeated entreaties of his Sovereign, but with the greatest repugnance. The Commons were now despotic. They ridiculed even Parliamentary customs when these thwarted their immediate purposes; when on one occasion Pym declared that the established orders were not to be considered like the laws of the Medes and Persians. When the shadow of the House of Lords was yet suffered to show itself, an extraordinary motion was made by Pym, that "the *major* part of the House of Commons, and the *minor* of the Lords, should be an authentic concurrence of both Houses.* Mr. Godolphin, objecting to this

* Sir Philip Warwick, 187. Abstract propositions little influenced the conduct of the demagogue who publicly promulgated them. He who thus violated the laws

novel Parliamentary reform, observed, that, if the *greater* part of the Lords went to the King with the *lesser* part of the Commons, it would be exactly the same thing. Pym was too resolute to be embarrassed by a dilemma. Godolphin was instantly commanded to withdraw, and an order entered in the Journals, that "the House should take into consideration the words spoken by Mr. Godolphin." It ended, as usual, with the threat, and Godolphin escaped without the treason! It would be difficult to determine whether the King had made, or the patriots were making, the greatest encroachments on the Constitution.

Another secret motive was at work which instigated the violence of the Commons. It was known to some in the House, that the King possessed from Strafford, Saville, and Montrose many discoveries concerning themselves. The patriotic leaders had betrayed their sensitive state on various occasions. They had clamoured against the King's journey to Scotland, and sent their Commissioners at his back; they had felt even a jealousy in the King's personal communication with his Scottish subjects; when the mysterious "Incident" occurred at Edinburgh, the parties at London were struck by the sympathetic terror. Charles possessed evidence for their impeachment, they imagined for their destruction. To maintain the power they had usurped, it was necessary to push on to every extremity; it was also a desperate effort for their own self-preservation. They decided to annihilate the House of Lords, beginning by the Bishops, and to degrade, to calumniate, and to terrify the Sovereign; dreading nothing so much as that reconciliation which seemed fast approaching between the King and the nation.

It is important to observe, that the inevitable results of these

has himself delivered for posterity one of the noblest descriptions of law which the whole compass of our language can produce, in a passage which rivals the splendour of one of the common-places of Cicero, and the logical force of Lord Bacon's profound meditations. "The law is that which puts a difference betwixt good and evil, betwixt just and unjust. If you take away the law, all things will fall into a confusion; every man will become a law unto himself, which in the depraved condition of human nature must needs produce many great enormities; lust will become a law, and envy will become a law; covetousness and ambition will become laws; and what dictates, what decisions, such laws would produce, may easily be discerned."

persevering persecutions of the Commons led to the fatally imprudent acts of the various parties who, on their side alike urged by their despair, fell the victims of the Commons.

The Lords now perceived their own danger in resisting the Commons ; the mobocracy again triumphed ! Many peers absented themselves, from disgust or from terror ; and thin houses supplied a majority for the Commons. The cry of " No bishops " had been for some time bellowed by the mobs, who more explicitly threatened " to pull the bishops in pieces." One evening, at torch-light, the Marquis of Hertford hurried to the Bishops' bench, and, greatly agitated, prayed them to remain all that night in the House. The terrified bishops earnestly desired their Lordships that some care might be taken of their persons ; messages to the Commons were totally disregarded ; some Lords only bestowed a smile. The Earl of Manchester at length undertook to protect Williams, the Archbishop of York, and some bishops his friends. Some escaped by secret passages, others by staying great part of the night in the House.

The final ruin of the bishops was hastened by the rashness of one, who on so many critical occasions had never been deficient in self-possession, nor in dexterous manœuvres. The Archbishop of York, the wily Williams, in this extremity, maddened by despair, committed an act of greater imprudence than were even some of the King's precipitate measures.

Archbishop Williams hastily drew up a protest, and by his artful representations, assuring them of the legality of the act, obtained the signatures of twelve bishops, wherein they declared that " All laws, orders, and votes were void, and of none effect in their absence." This protest was not to be used till it had received the royal consent. The Lord-Keeper, Littleton, however, to ingratiate himself with the Commons, as more than one testimony confirms, read it openly in the House, aggravating its offence. When this protest reached the Commons, it was instantly voted " high treason." " We, poor souls, who little thought that we had done any thing that might deserve a chiding, are now called to our knees at the bar—astonished at the suddenness of this crimination compared with the perfect innocency of our own intentions." Such is the language of Bishop Hall in his " Hard Measure." At night, and in a hard frost in

January, the bishops are dragged to the Tower. The news of their committal is announced by the ringing of bells and the blaze of bonfires, so prevalent was now the novel passion for Presbytery ! The infamy of the bishops was blazoned in scurrilous pamphlets both at home and abroad, and their " treasonable practices " were reiterated, till some discussed what sort of death could expiate such unheard-of crimes ? After a tedious prosecution of these victims of state, huddling them together, " standing the whole afternoon in no small torture, struggling with a merciless multitude," and in that dark night sending them all in a barge to shoot London Bridge, where the chance of escape was doubtful—the Commons did not make out their pretended treason. One of the party, to prevent involving them in any greater crime, desired that they should only be voted " stark mad, and sent to Bedlam." Another of their oracles being asked for his opinion, declared that they might with as good reason accuse these bishops of adultery, as of treason. They remanded them for another day, which day never came. The truth is, many in the nation did not conceal their abhorrence of their barbarous conduct in hurrying to their dungeons these dignified and learned personages. It is observable that in more than one instance the party evinced the sagacity of retreating when they discovered that they were in danger of losing ground in popular opinion. But though the bold design of the Commons was frustrated in condemning the bishops as traitors, they persisted in renewing the bill for taking away their votes at the same time with the bill for pressing, both which, as Clarendon states, had lain so long desperate while the Lords came and sat with freedom in the House. Both afterwards easily passed in a very thin House.*

Thus had the Commons signalized their triumph over the Lords ; nor had they ceased to harass the hapless monarch ; and the injuries and indignities offered to his person were " scorns put upon the kingly office," degrading it in the eyes of the very populace. The King was reduced to a state nearly of destitution. " Beggar as I am ! " he exclaimed, when once he pathetically reminded them of his personal deprivations ; " we have and do patiently suffer those extreme personal wants, as

* Bishop Hall's " Hard Measure."

our predecessors have been seldom put to, rather than we would press on the great burdens our people have undergone, which we hope in time will be considered on your parts." There was a bitter mockery in their pretended elevation of the character of majesty; they sometimes promised "to make him a great and glorious king," but they also told the Sovereign, that they had done him no wrong, for he was not capable of receiving any; and that they had taken nothing from him, because he had never any thing of his own to lose. About this time the Commonwealth men raised their voices; Harry Martin, in a novel strain had asserted, unproved, that "the office of Sovereignty was forfeitable," and that "the happiness of the kingdom did not depend upon the King nor any of that stock." Sir Henry Ludlow, the father of the celebrated General who has left us his memoirs, had openly declared that "Charles was unworthy to be King of England." The King had long witnessed the petitioning mobs; he daily heard how their pulpits sermonised sedition; and gay ballads were chorusing the fall of the Bishops, and menacing his own, under the palace windows. All seemed a merciless triumph over the feebler Sovereign.

Charles seemed abandoned amidst his new council; his old ministers had been forced to flight, or had been compelled to resign their offices to his new and suspected friends. The Sovereign afterwards had been placed amidst a council whom he could not consult on his most immediate concerns, and whose advice, it has been conjectured, on more than one occasion, had proved treacherous. His new Solicitor-General, the dark-browed St. John, was meditating his ruin; Lord Say and Sele had led him into perilous measures. With his new ministers, Falkland, Colepepper, and Hyde, however honourable, his personal intercourse had been but recent, and there was yet wanting on both sides that confidential intercourse which time only matures. Meanwhile, Charles was betrayed in his most retired hours; the apartments of the palace were surrounded by watchful spies, by corner listeners—and by mean creatures, who, on the denial of any favour, would fly to the Parliament, where they were certain of being enlisted among the recruits of patriotism. Pym unreservedly told the Earl of Dover, that "if he looked for any preferments he must comply with them in their ways, and

not hope to have it by serving the King." Hence it happened that the most secret councils, and the future designs of Charles were anticipated by his great enemies. These confederacies explain many extraordinary occurrences which could not have happened in the ordinary course of affairs, and which must have often surprised Charles himself as much as they have done the readers of his history.

The artifices practised on the infirm faculties of the Queen, who lived in continual panics during the King's absence, were not, surely, with Charles one of their least offences; he felt them as personal injuries. Threatened with impeachment, she was reminded that several Queens of England had perished on the scaffold. The tremendous secret had been revealed to Henrietta, by those who were acting by connivance with some of the party in the Commons. When the party petitioned to be informed who were the "Malignants" who had done that malicious office, they well knew who it was; and could they have been compelled to confess to whom they stood indebted for their information concerning the Queen, the juggle would have been manifest. The same person who had so confidentially acquainted the Queen with the design must have conveyed to them the alarm, and the language which broke forth from this terrified Princess.* But they well knew that the Queen could not betray those whom she held as her friends, and she was, in consequence, compelled to assure the very persons who she believed would willingly have required her life, that "although she had heard such a discourse, she had never considered it credible."

The King was often driven to similar compulsions. At length, when the Commons desired the execution of seven priests, in which the Lords were made to join, the King would only consent to their banishment. Among such numerous claims, which the Commons were daily urging, this sanguinary measure was the only one to which the King would not yield. Amidst the humiliating state of contumely which Charles was enduring, it was not among the least hopes of some who entertained deeper designs than the rest, that this Monarch, of a

* Clarendon, ii. 232. The recent edition furnishes a material verbal correction from the manuscript. The passage, as given by the former editors, to me is unintelligible.

temper hasty and indignant, would be provoked into some fatal indiscretion, and so it happened !

It was on the 3rd of January, 1642-3, without any conference with his ministers, that Charles commanded the Attorney-General to impeach the five members, and the Lord Kimbolton. A Serjeant-at-arms demanded that the House should deliver them into his custody, and returned with a message, but not an answer. That very night a printed order from the Commons was issued that no member can be arrested without the consent of the House, and every person might lawfully aid any member in his resistance, "according to the Protestation taken to defend the privileges of Parliament." This was an open defiance of the Royal authority ! In strictness, however, there was an irregularity in the form of Charles's arresting the members ; they alleged that their consent must be had before any proceedings were instituted against a member of their House—a subject, however, which admitted of many opposite arguments when the privileges of Parliament were afterwards discussed, and which might lead to some ridiculous results. "The Protestation," on which the irregularity is grounded, had been a recent act of the Commons. The King afterwards complained, that when he resolved on the arrest of the members, having no design to invade their privileges, "he had expected an answer as might inform us if we were out of the way ; but we received none at all. This was the first time that we heard 'the Protestation' might be wrested to such a sense. We confess we were somewhat amazed, having never seen nor heard of the like, though we had known members of either House committed without so much formality as we had used, and upon crimes of a far inferior nature to those we had suggested. Having no course proposed to us for our proceeding, we were upon the matter only told that against those persons we were not to proceed at all ; that they were above our reach, or the reach of the law, so that it was not easy for us to resolve what to do." * Amidst this unhappy conflict of prerogative and privilege, new and hurried ordinances were often recurring ; and most of the dissensions between the King and the Commons seem to have sprung from the latitude, and even opposite sense, in which

* Husband's Collections, 245.

both parties received them. As formerly, in the "Petition of Right," Charles discovered, in the exercise of his authority, that he had been deprived of it, by some unexpected explanation of a recent Act of the Commons.

On the following day, the 4th of January, Charles, to the astonishment of all men, went down in person to the House of Commons, to repeat his injunctions, if not to arrest the members in their open House. He came, too, attended by a formidable company. This memorable incident in the history of Charles the First cast his affairs into irretrievable ruin, at a moment when Pym is said to have acknowledged that "If that extraordinary accident had not happened to give them new credit, they were sinking under the weight of the expectation of those whom they had deluded, and the envy of those whom they oppressed."*

Clarendon positively assures us that the King's adviser on this occasion was Lord Digby. Mr. Brodie observes that the proceedings against the six members had been resolved on before the King left Scotland, and the utmost that can with propriety be imputed to that nobleman is, that he recommended what he saw had been determined upon.† Had this impeachment been solely the consequence of a long settled determination, it is remarkable that on so important a state-measure the King should never once have discussed it with those three ministers who possessed his entire confidence.‡ Whatever we

* Clarendon, ii. 183. The noble writer, in delivering the Patriot's confession, has evidently interpolated it with his own feelings.

† Brodie, ii. 151 and 280. Mr. Brodie refers generally to the correspondence between the King and Nicholas in Appendix to Evelyn's Mem. This would be an authority recently published, which could confirm that of preceding writers, who were not contemporary with the events. But I cannot discover any passage which specifically shows any such decision. Oldmixon, however, asserts, that the articles of High Treason were prepared by the King when in Scotland, and that the impeachment of the members was the consequence.—*History of the Stewarts*, 176, col. 2. We know that the King had been very assiduous in obtaining information in Scotland, and probably collected enough to satisfy himself of what he deemed treasonable practices; but on his return home, and the Act of Oblivion having passed, it seems not probable that he would have ventured to impeach these powerful leaders, had they granted him that tranquillity which he flattered himself to have restored in Scotland.

‡ Mr. Hallam solves this historical problem, not, perhaps, untruly. "The King was guided by bad private advice, and cared not to let any of his Privy Council know his intentions lest he should encounter opposition," i. 588. I suspect, however, that Mr. Hallam imagined at the moment of writing this, that Charles had "listened to the Queen." 583.

may deem the policy of this bold act of impeachment, we must not condemn it as any exercise of arbitrary power, since the King professed to put the members on their legal and fair trial. What the treasonable practices precisely were we can only conjecture, for the patriots were never brought to the bar. The articles exhibited by the Attorney-General seem to have been common between the impeached members and the Parliament. Did Charles imagine that he could compel the Parliament to condemn themselves or accomplices with their own leaders? Hume has profoundly observed, that "the punishment of leaders is ever the last triumph over a broken and routed party; but surely was never before attempted in opposition to a faction during the full tide of its power and success." Had the King in reserve some of their later intrigues, some yet unrevealed occurrences which had passed in their divan, for Whitelocke informs us that they had of late held frequent private meetings? The King was fully convinced that he possessed particular proofs of "a solemn combination for altering the government of the Church and State; of their designing offices to themselves and other men, &c."* Charles even considered that "the people would thank him for disclosing some of his discoveries."

It was the subsequent act of going down to the House in person, and with a considerable force, which was, as the King afterwards called it, "a casual mistake." The King went reluctantly, and not without hesitation, till quickened by a woman's taunt:—of what nature was that famous taunt, I must refer the reader to a preceding passage.† This reluctance seems to indicate that the project was not his own; it has even been surmised that the rash council came from that irresistible quarter; and Hume, taking his ideas from Whitelocke, ascribes it to "the Queen and the Ladies of the Court," who had long witnessed the personal indignities the King was enduring. It was quite in character that the vivacious Queen of Charles should have been transported at this "brisk act," as Clarendon might have called it, and rejoiced to see her Consort become "master in his own dominions," at least over those who were threatening her with an impeachment. Such a *coup d'état*

* Husband's Collections, 534.

† See vol. i. 426.

would charm her toilette politics, which were always the echo of some one who had her ear at the moment; she had no political head of her own. That person was now Lord Digby, who had equally fascinated Henrietta and Charles. The King was not likely to be swayed, on such a strong and decisive measure, by the sudden freaks and fancies of womanish councils, which on many occasions he had treated with raillery, or dismissed with argument. The irritated monarch was in more danger at this moment of having his natural impetuosity worked upon by "the sanguine complexion" of Lord Digby; an expressive designation, which some years after experience had taught the monarch to apply to his romantic adviser.

All that perilous boldness which characterises the singular genius of Lord Digby is stamped on this memorable impeachment, as well as on the more extraordinary occurrence of the succeeding day. His wonderful dissimulation in the House of Lords the instant he discovered the fatal effects of his own councils on the impeachment, reprobating the measure even to Lord Kimbolton, the very victim on whom he expected to have laid his hands, was not unusual with this versatile man. That he instigated the King to hasten in person to the House, if any one did, appears from this remarkable circumstance. After Charles had been baffled in the attempt, and found to his surprise that "all the birds had flown," the reckless Digby offered the King to take a dozen picked military men, Col. Lunsford, and other soldiers of fortune, and hasten to the City, and in the House where the fugitive members lodged, by a *coup de main*, to seize on them alive, or leave them dead. Charles, who had grown more sage than his counsellor by some hours, forbade this double rashness. The man who would willingly have cast himself on such a forlorn hope, was the sort of genius who only could have suggested, if any one did, the wild romantic scheme of the King coming down, with men armed, to the House of Commons.

On a hasty knock, the door of the Commons was thrown open, announcing the arrival of their extraordinary visitor: already warned, from more than one quarter, of his approach, the House had a little recovered from their consternation; still the presence of the Sovereign in the House of Commons, for all parties, was

a moment of awful novelty,* and our actors had now to perform a new part for the first time. The Speaker was commanded to keep his seat with the mace lying before him. Charles entered, solely accompanied by his nephew the Palsgrave. Immediately uncovering himself, the Members stood up uncovered. The King took the Speaker's chair "by his leave." He stood some time, glancing around, but seemed perplexed by the multitude of faces; he more particularly directed his looks towards Pym's usual seat by the bar, whose person he well knew. Charles in addressing the House assured them, that no King that ever was in England should be more careful of their privileges; but in cases of treason he held that no person hath a privilege. On the word of a King he declared that he intended no force, but would proceed against those whom he sought in a legal and fair way; he subsequently said, "according to the laws and statutes of the realm, to which all innocent men would cheerfully submit." He took this occasion again to confirm that whatever he had done in favour, and for the good of his subjects, he would maintain. He now called on the impeached members by their names. None answered. Turning to the Speaker, who stood below the chair, he inquired whether they were in the House? The Speaker, Lenthall, a person who never afterwards betrayed any sign of a vigorous intellect, and who, had he acted with less promptitude and dignity, might have fairly pleaded the novelty and difficulty of his unprecedented situation, seemed inspired by the greatness of the occasion. Kneeling to the King, he desired the Sovereign to excuse his answer, for "in this place I have neither eyes to see, nor tongue to speak, but as the House is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am here." The King told him that "He thought him right, and that his own eyes were as good as his. I see the birds are flown!" He

* An explanatory apology for this unusual proceeding was afterwards given by Charles. "We put on a sudden resolution to try whether our own presence, and a clear discovery of our intentions, which haply might not have been so well understood, could remove their doubts, and prevent those inconveniences which seemed to have been threatened; and thereupon we resolved to go in our own person to our House of Commons, which we discovered not till the very minute we were going—the bare doing of which we did not then conceive could have been thought a breach of privilege, more than if we had gone to the House of Peers, and sent for them to have come to us, which is the usual custom."—Husband's Collections, 246.

concluded by strenuously insisting that the accused Members must be sent to him, or he must take his own course.

On this occasion none but the Speaker spoke. All were mute in sullenness or in awe. No generous, no dignified emotions broke forth from that vast body of Senators. The incident itself was so sudden, and so evidently unpremeditated that Charles had not discovered his intention to a single friend. All were astonished or indignant. It was, however, a fitting and fortunate occasion for some glorious patriot to have risen as the eloquent organ of the public opinion, and have loyally touched a nerve in the heart of a monarch, who would not have been insensible, amidst his sorrows and his cares; he might have been enlightened by solemn truths, and consoled by that loyalty of feeling from which he had been so long estranged. Charles having spoken, and no friendly voice responding, left the House as he had entered, with the same mark of respect. But the House was in disturbance, and the reiterated cries of "Privilege! Privilege!" screamed in the ears of the retiring Monarch.

We are told by Clarendon that the King deeply regretted the wild adventure, and that "He felt within himself the trouble and agony which usually attends generous and magnanimous minds upon their having committed errors which expose them to censure, and to damage." Should it be imagined that this colouring exceeds the reality, we may at least trace the King's whole conduct after his late error, day after day, to retrieve "the casual mistake," and to adopt measures the reverse of those which argue a design of arbitrary rule.

All parties agreed to censure this bold and hazardous measure; for on unsuccessful enterprises men are judged of by the results. Fatal as was this false step, yet Charles was always conceiving himself justified in the impeachment; the King was desirous that the nation should be rightly informed of his own notions. On his return in the evening, he sent for Rushworth, whom he had observed at the Clerk's table, taking down his speech. The King commanded him to supply a copy. Rushworth, at all times in due dread of his Lords the Commons, who, in their tyranny, were already preparing the sad fate of the Attorney-General for having obeyed his Master's commands, and who honestly avows that he wished to be excused, reminded

the King that the House was so jealous of its privileges, that Mr. Nevil, a Yorkshire member, had been committed to the Tower only for telling his Majesty what words were spoken by Mr. Bellassis, son to Lord Faulconbridge. Charles, with remarkable quickness, observed, "I do not ask you to tell me what was said by any member of the House, but what I said myself." This fortunate distinction allayed the fears of the wary Clerk of the Commons, and is one among the other abundant evidence of the logical head of Charles. Rushworth transcribed the speech from his short-hand, the King staying all the while in the room. The King instantly sent it to the printer, and it was published on the morning.

These transactions passed on the 3rd and 4th of January, 1641-2. The five impeached members had flown to the city. The Commons on their adjournment formed a select committee at Grocers'-hall, at once to express their terror by their removal, and not to be distant from the council of the five. On the 5th, Charles having utterly rejected the wild bravery of Digby's resolution to seize on the members, went to the Guildhall, accompanied by three or four Lords and his ordinary retinue. He addressed the people in the hall, regretting their causeless apprehensions, and still relying on their affections; the accused members, who had shrouded themselves in the city, he hoped no good man would keep from a legal trial. He aimed to be gracious and condescending; and to be popular, he offered to dine with one of the Sheriffs, who was a known Parliament-man, and by no means solicitous of the royal honour. But Charles was mortified when the cry of the Commons echoed from the mouths of the populace. A daring revolutionist flung into the King's coach a pamphlet bearing the ominous cry of insurrection, "To your tents, O Israel!" for this Puritanic Israelite, designated as an Ironmonger and a Pamphleteer, only saw in Charles a sovereign who was to be abandoned, like the weak and tyrannical Rehoboam. Rushworth says, on the King's return there were no tumults; however, the loyal Lord Mayor was pulled from his horse, and with some of the Aldermen, after manifold insults, was fortunate to escape on foot.*

Events, fraught with the most important results, pressed on

* Nalson, ii. 322.

each other at every hour. Both Houses of Parliament, as if in terror, adjourned from time to time and from place to place. The city was agitated, and the panic spread into the country. All the plots and conspiracies which they had formerly heard, and had almost ridiculed, they now imagined to be very credible. Such rumours were the talk of the day and were cried at night. A conflict of the disordered multitude raged through Westminster. Their language was as violent as their motions. "It was a dismal thing," says Whitelocke, "to all sober men, especially Members of Parliament, to see and hear them." It had become necessary to fortify Whitehall.

On the 6th, the King ventured to issue a Proclamation for the apprehension of the five members who were to be lodged in the Tower. They were, however, more secure at a house in Coleman-street, in hourly communication with the Committee, till they were carried in state to Merchant-Taylors'-hall, to sit in the Committee itself.

On the 7th, the Royal Proclamation was declared to be false, scandalous, and illegal, and the Attorney-General was committed for having preferred the articles against the five members.

An inflammatory narrative, by the Committee, of the King's unhappy entrance into the House of Commons, was prepared with considerable art. They assiduously collected every loose expression, and every ridiculous gesture of some inconsiderate young persons who appear to have joined the King's party on their way. From such slight premises the Committee had drawn the widest inferences, till, in the climax of this denouncement of their "Rehoboam," they alleged, as evidence, the opinion of these blustering blades themselves, that had "the word" been given, "questionless they would have cut the throats of all the Commons." It is certain that Charles had enjoined his company not to enter the House "on their lives." A news-writer of the day acknowledges that "they demeaned themselves civilly;" and Lilly, by no means prejudiced in favour of "the gentlemen with halberts and swords," says—"Truly I did not hear there was any incivility offered by those gentlemen then attending to any member of the House, his Majesty having given them strict commands to the contrary."*

* Lilly's Life and Death of Charles the First, 108.

But the party had calculated on the effect of deepening the odium which the King had incurred ; and though this aggravation of the idle words of some idle men, little comported with the dignity of the Commons, it was an artifice which served their purpose, of exciting the public feeling against the indiscreet monarch.

A people already in tumult, were flax to the fire ; the populace seemed now only waiting to be led on to any desperate enterprise. Most of the shops were closed, and the wandering rabble, here and there, were listening to any spokesman. At such a crisis, orators and leaders shot up, certain to delight themselves with an indulgent audience, or to head compliant associates. A person of some consideration exclaimed, "the King was unworthy to live !" another that "the Prince would govern better." The rage of the infuriated Leviathan was at its height. The tub was thrown to the whale. It was proposed to conduct the accused members in a grand triumph to their House. A thousand mariners and watermen fly to the Committee to guard them on the river ; a mob of apprentices proffer their services by land.

During the preparations for the triumphal procession of the five, Charles deemed it necessary to remove from Whitehall.

Such a resolution was not made without difficulty, and the unhappy result is alleged to prove that a contrary conduct was the preferable one. The flight of Charles from the capital has been condemned. Some dreaded a civil war, should the King abandon the capital. The Lord Mayor, with many of the King's friends from the city, offered to raise a guard of ten thousand men, but that itself would have been the very evil for which it offered a preventative—a civil war. "If your Majesty leaves us," observed a sage citizen, "we are undone, and the members will carry all before them as they please." Presciently he added, "Sir, I shall never see you again !" Moreover, it was urged that the King had yet a strong party in the nation—a majority among the Peers, and no inconsiderable number of the Commons, who though they were separated by their fears, were not yet lost, and even his late error might be redeemed. But the King had lived of late without honour ; the Queen not without peril ; every hour was multiplying personal injuries

which he dared not resent. His late false step had ruined his hopes, and his confidence in his Lords had long been shaken since they could no longer protect their own privileges. At a distance from this rule of terror, these scenes of insurrection, perhaps his fortune might change; he might show himself to his whole kingdom, the Sovereign he desired to be; his presence in the Capital had only surrounded him by conspiracies in his palace, and dethronement from his Parliament.

On the tenth of January the King with his family, and a few of his household, took his melancholy departure from Whitehall, which he never again saw but to die before his palace-window.

On the eleventh, at noon, the Committee, with the five members, came by water to Westminster. The river was covered with long boats and barges—their appearance was warlike—"dressed up with waist-clothes"* as prepared for action; their guns pealed and their streamers waved; at land the drums and the trumpets responded. Clamouring against Bishops and Popish Lords, as they passed by Whitehall they jeeringly asked "What had become of the King and his Cavaliers?" The multitude rolled on from the city and the suburbs, with loud acclamations, following the citizens and the trained-bands, who carried "the Protestation" tied to the tops of their pikes, and several troops of volunteers, who, instead of feathers, decked their hats with "the Protestation." This "tumultuary army" was led by a Captain of the Artillery-ground, for whom an extraordinary commission for that purpose bore the novel title of Major-General of the Militia. Major Skippon, who had risen from the ranks, became an able officer in the Revolutionary war. The double triumph was complete by land and water. Its military character was the most striking novelty; and without a war, the Parliament could show an army. All these scenes remind one of Revolutionary Paris.

The King had flown to Hampton Court; this was the first flight in a life that was afterwards to be so fugitive. Here

* As Clarendon calls them. The term is not in Todd, and perhaps the use is obsolete. They are explained in Kersey's dictionary, as "all such clothes as are hung about the cage-work, or uppermost hull, to shadow the men from the enemy in an engagement; whence they are also termed *Fights*." The *Wark* or waist of ship is described as that part of her which lies between the two masts, the main and the fore-masts.

however, the distance was not found inconvenient for the march of that army of petitioners, for such they appeared to be by their number and their hostility. It was now that the apprentices, the porters, the beggars, and the "good wives" of the city* grew eloquent on paper. The most remarkable petitioners who went to the King were the deputation of a formidable body from Hampden's County of Buckinghamshire. Four thousand, as they were computed, says Rushworth, some have said six, riding every man with the cockade of a printed copy of "the Protestation" in their hats, had presented themselves at the doors of the Commons, calling themselves "countrymen and neighbours of Hampden." As they were probably expected, this Buckinghamshire cavalcade excited no astonishment, and they were sure of a flattering reception. It must be confessed this muster did great honour to the patriot, but the fact could not be concealed, that here was a formidable squadron of cavalry of Hampdenites, of which the Colonel had not yet been appointed. It was a regiment which might have given Charles more reasonable alarm than the Commons affected to feel, when Lord Digby drove one morning in a coach and six, attended by a single servant, to deliver a message to about fifty disbanded officers at Kingston, for which he was compelled to fly the country, and attainted of treason for "levying war."

On the twelfth, Charles flew to Windsor, having first dispatched a message to the Commons. He told them that some finding it disputable whether his proceedings against the members were agreeable to their privileges, he waived them—but would adopt others in an unquestionable way.

Between this day and the twentieth, a committee, for now the government seemed entirely at the mercy of a select committee, proposed a new Remonstrance on the state of the kingdom. To disperse this storm, the King sent down a remarkable message to both Houses. He offered that if they would digest all their grievances into one entire body, for settling the affairs of the nation on a secure basis, he would convince them that he had never designed to violate their privileges, and was ready to exceed the greatest example of the most indulgent Princes.

* Hume, vi. 477. The philosopher is perfectly Lucianic in his descriptions, particularly in his profane scoffings of these female zealots.

This healing message rejoiced the Lords, who implored the Commons to join with them in accepting this unreserved confidence of the King. But the Commons had to walk in their own path, not in that of the King's or the Lords'. On the next day they pressed the King to proceed against the members. The King inquired whether he is to proceed by impeachment in Parliament, or by common law ; or have his choice of either?

After these repeated attempts on the King's side to maintain the justice of his impeachment, it came to an almost incredible conclusion—the King grants a general pardon to all the parties ! The style is singular : “ As he once conceived that he had ground enough to accuse them, so now his Majesty finds as good cause wholly to desert any prosecution of them.” Charles would not falsify his late proceedings by declaring the innocence of the accused members, but assigns a reason which only leaves to posterity a testimony of his inextricable difficulties.

It might be imagined that the whole incident of the five members had now closed all farther negotiations. But while Charles existed as the Sovereign, there remained for the Commons, particularly for the Commonwealth-men, much to be done. They had not yet obtained possession of the sword, though they had wrested the sceptre from royalty. They advanced a step farther than the ingenuity of malice could easily have contrived. They petitioned the King to disclose the names of his informers against the five members, and to consign them to the Parliament ! This “ humble petition ” never could be answered by the King, and this they well knew.* Such was their Machiavelian policy ; to close their discussions they usually forced the King into a predicament in which he must either have been the most contemptible of Princes in sacrificing his friends, or in exposing the secrets of State, which involved his honour ; or appear odious to the people by a concealment of what he dared not avow, or for having alleged what he could not maintain.

* Rushworth notes, “ What answer his Majesty returned to this petition, or whether any, I do not find or remember.”—Rushworth, iv. 492. I observe by Mr. Brodie that a bill in vindication of the accused members was immediately prepared, but Charles justly alleging that it reflected on him, which it certainly did, refused to pass it. *Parl. History*, x. 338. *Cobbet*, ii. 1134-46. This fact completes the proofs of the rancorous personal persecution of the helpless Monarch.

At this moment the King was left abandoned amidst the most urgent wants. He could no longer draw the weekly supplies for his household, for the officers of the customs were under the control of the Commons. The Queen had pawned her plate for a temporary aid. His friends in terror were in flight; and the Sovereign sate amidst a council whom he could no longer consult. He was betrayed by the most confidential of his intimates. He was deserted by those who like Lord Holland had depended on his bounty, or whom like the Earl of Essex he had unaccountably neglected. "In this sad condition," says Lord Clarendon, "was the King at Windsor, fallen in ten days from a height and greatness that his enemies feared, to such a lowness that his own servants durst hardly avow the waiting on him."

Amidst the perplexities of State, and these personal distresses, the anxieties of Charles were increased by the fate of his Queen, and the pressure of his own immediate plans of operation. Henrietta's fears were restless since the menace of impeachment. The pretext of the Queen to accompany her daughter, betrothed to the Prince of Orange, to Holland, covered more than one design. There, in security, not unprovided with the means, carrying with her the crown jewels, she might execute some confidential offices, while the King resolved to fly to the North, as yet untainted by the mobocracy of the Metropolis.

There was yet an agony to pass through for the husband, in the separation from his adored companion—that hapless foreigner, now chased to a still more foreign land, to live alone among a people who never cast a sorrowing look on suffering royalty. Charles accompanied Henrietta and the Princess to Dover; many an importunate message was received from the Commons on his way, and the last hours of the parting of the family were disturbed by many a gloomy presage. When the Queen had embarked, Charles stood immoveable, watching the departing ship with the most poignant emotions. There was an awful uncertainty whether they should ever meet again. He stood on the shore to give them the last signal, the last farewell!—gazing with moistened eyes till the shadowy sails vanished in the atmosphere. When the vessel was no longer visible, Charles lingered for some time, pacing along the shore, wrapped

in deep and sad thoughts. The King had of late been accustomed to the deprivation of his power—to the destitution of personal wants, and it was doubtful whether he had a kingdom which acknowledged its Monarch, or a soldier who would obey his commands, for at this very moment, and on his road, he had been assailed by reiterated messages to deliver up the militia to the Commons. But he had never yet lost his wife—he had never felt that pang of love—the loneliness of the soul.

Yet he was still a father, and Charles contemplated on a melancholy pleasure on his return to Greenwich, in the embrace of the Prince. On this last tendril were now clinging his domestic affections; yet of this object of his tenderness the Commons hastened to deprive him. While at Dover, a worthless courtier had been refused to be admitted of the Prince's bed-chamber. With men of this stamp a favour denied implies a wrong received; and thus injured, this man declared that "since he could not be considerable by doing the King service, considerable he would be, by doing him disservice." Posting to the Parliament, he gave some pretended information of a design to remove the Prince into France, but more intelligibly offered himself as "their bravo" at taverns, and meetings, not deficient in insolence and audacity. This worthless rejected creature of the Court, though without talents, and having long lost his character, was publicly embraced and eulogised, even by Hampden. In the spirit of party no man is too mean to court, no arts too gross to practise. Charles had desired the Marquis of Hertford, the governor of the Prince, to bring him to Greenwich; on this an express order from the House forbade his removal. But the command of the father was preferred. Several Members hastened to Greenwich to convey the Prince to London, but the King had arrived; and they were silent in the presence of the father. Charles had been greatly agitated on his road by a message from the Commons respecting the Prince. Embracing his son, the melancholy Monarch, shedding some joyful tears, exclaimed, "I can now forget all, since I have got Charles!"

The King had granted so much, that he had nothing left to bestow, save one great object of the ambition of the triumphant party—the army itself.

They had first proposed to nominate the Lords Lieutenant of every county, chiefly their adherents, who were to obey the orders of the two Houses; the two Houses were now the House of Commons. The King had not refused even this point, reserving to himself a revocable power. But their policy was now, observes Hume, to astonish the King by the boldness of their enterprises. They declared that their fears and jealousies had so multiplied on them, that it was necessary for them to dispose of the whole military force of the kingdom, both for the safety of his Majesty and the people; this they had resolved to do, by the authority of both Houses—that is by their own authority. And they mercifully invited his Majesty to fix his residence among them.

It is remarkable of Charles the First, that whenever he acted unembarrassed by the distracting councils of others, there was a promptness in reply, and a decision in conduct, which convey the most favourable impressions not only of his intellect, but of his intellectual courage. When the Committee of both Houses went down to Newmarket to deliver this astonishing message, instead of finding the King subdued into pusillanimity, an object of the contempt they had so studiously shown him, they were answered by such an unexpected denial, in a style so vigorous and indignant, that it startled the Committee, who had relied on what of late had so often passed. They had come to vanquish a deserted monarch, and were themselves repulsed. Lord Holland would not venture to report the King's words, without a written memorandum. By this circumstance posterity receives an authentic specimen of Charles's colloquial discourse; we trace his warm undisguised emotions expressive of his anger, or pathetic from deep and injured feelings.

From the King's interviews with the Committee I transcribe those passages which will interest the readers of his history.

"I am confident that you expect not that I should give you a speedy answer to this strange and unexpected declaration.

"What would you have? Have I violated your laws? Have I denied to pass any one bill for the ease and security of my subjects? I do not ask you what you have done for me?

"Have any of my people been transported with fears and apprehensions? I have offered as free and general a pardon as

yourselves can devise. All this considered, there is a judgment from Heaven upon this nation if these distractions continue. God so deal with me and mine that all my thoughts and intentions are upright for the maintenance of the true Protestant profession, and for the observation and preservation of the laws of the land."

On the following day the Earl of Holland endeavoured to persuade his Majesty to come near the Parliament. Charles replied, "I would you had given me cause, but I am sure this Declaration is not the way to it. And in all Aristotle's rhetoric there is no such argument of persuasion."

The Earl of Pembroke pressed to learn of his Majesty what he would have them say to the Parliament? Charles smartly replied, that "He would whip a boy in Westminster school that could not tell that by his answer."

Again pressed by the Earl of Pembroke, after all that had passed, to compromise the demand of the Commons, by granting the militia for a time: Charles suddenly swore, "By God! not for an hour! You have asked that of me in this, was never asked of a King, and with which I will not trust my wife and children."

Well might Charles the First exclaim, as once he did, in addressing the Commons, "Surely, we too have our grievances!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CIVIL WARS.

As late as in my youth, the Civil Wars of Charles the First were still a domestic tale, as well as a public history. Their local traditions are scattered over the land, and many an achievement of chivalric loyalty, or of Commonwealth intrepidity, are commemorated in our county histories; for the kingdom of England, as the poet May, the Parliamentary historian, expresses it, was divided into more wars than counties.* We may listen to such narratives on the very spots of their occurrence. We may linger amid the scenes of some forlorn hope, or some strange and momentary stratagem; of the obdurate siege, where famine

* A Breviary of the History of the Parliament, 71.

was more murderous than the sword, and the dread surrender to an enemy as obdurate—as at the siege of Colchester ; or some sanguinary storming, as at Leicester, where they found a war in every street ; or some triumphant repulse, as at Lyme ; some midnight surprise, as at Dover Castle. Many an obscure village like Chagford in Devonshire, where Sydney Godolphin fell, or Chalgravefield, where Hampden shed his blood, or the Close at Lichfield, where Lord Brooke, the great adversary of the Church, pledged his solemn vow and perished, were places which, as Lord Clarendon has said of one of them, “ would never otherwise have a mention to the world.”

The Civil Wars of Charles the First, ere the Revolutions among our neighbours, formed an unparalleled story of the struggles and the passions of a great people. It was then peculiar to Englishmen, that there were few who had not derived from their very birth-place the most elevated feelings, though associated with obscure incidents and the names of unknown persons ; for however obscure might be the incident, and however unknown the person, the interest excited was not local but national ; and the man of whom the tale was told, whether Monarchist or Parliamentary, was a hero or a martyr. Thus it has happened that some whose name has only received a single mention, known but by a single act, are still chronicled in the memory of their townsmen, and we find their descendants among the old families of the place. Heroes have died unsung among these Civil Wars, and more noble blood has been shed in an obscure field of action than have cost some victories of renown.

Struck by so many ennobling and so many affecting scenes, in the variable contest, an artist of some eminence, a few years ago, designed a series of pictures to perpetuate the most remarkable incidents. He had loitered through many a summer day in their scenes ; he had stood on the broken town's wall where the enemy had forced an entrance, now concealed beneath the tall grass, and on which no Corporation would bestow an useless repair. From such a spot he had traced the combatants to the stand made at the market-place, or where the steeple of the church opposed the inroad like a fort. There the townsmen, too brave and too simple in their rude warfare to cry for or to give quarter, “ not from cruelty but from ignorance,” a contemporary

narrative mournfully records, would fight after the surrender of the place, maddening the vindictive soldiery. Our artist had pondered over the memoirs of contemporaries who had themselves been actors in the scenes which they described, and often discovered incidents which are still attested by the records of the town—by the evidence retained among ancient families, in diaries, letters, and other domestic memorials ;* and may still be verified by an inspection of the very places—spots for the dreaming fancies of the painter's graphical imagination !

The halls of ancient mansions are often hung with the antique gorget and the petronel ;† the steel basket-hilted sword, common in the Parliamentary wars, the ponderous brass spurs and the military gloves, which have not yet mouldered away. There they hang, and with them often “hangs many a tale.” The hero himself, who either defended or retook his own mansion, or perished in the field, no unwilling victim to martyred honour or to holy freedom, still awes us with his peaked beard and shining corslet among his obscure cousins in the portrait-gallery. Often in these aboriginal families, the domestic circle has its private anecdotes—they show the secret apartment where the sliding panel concealed all entrance ; there some hero lay secreted

* Among other curious circumstances of this nature which have happened to me, I may mention one concerning a gentleman of the time of Charles the First. In a visit to Lyme Regis, it was my good fortune to become acquainted with a very amiable gentleman of the name of *Pyne*. He was a descendant of *John Pyne*, whose name has been commemorated by Clarendon, v. 68. Mr. Pyne obligingly showed me some family papers.

This *John Pyne*, in the time of Charles the First, was “a gentleman well known and of a fair estate” in Somersetshire. He was of “a passionate and virulent temper, of the Independent party.” A letter of his was intercepted during the treaty of Uxbridge, which showed “a great detestation of the peace,” inveighing against the Earl of Essex and the Scots. The effect on the impending negotiation produced by this letter, which exposed the secret intentions of the Independents, is noticed by Clarendon. I found at the British Museum an original letter of this Mr. Pyne, which warmly congratulates that worthy, Colonel Pride, for his famous “Purge.” But the history of *Pyne* has not yet closed. This ardent Independent and country gentleman lived to witness the Restoration—and it seems from the family papers, that, after a considerable imprisonment, means were used that the Attorney-General came down with a *nolle prosequi*—and one day *John Pyne*, “travelling in a coach and four,” returned to his “fair seat ;” but the means practised with the ministers of Charles the Second, and most probably with Clarendon, are still felt by his descendants, and “the fair estate” was sadly “shorn of its beams.”

† A “petronel is a kind of harquebuss or horseman's gun, so called because it is hanged on the breast.”—Kersey's “New World of Words.”

from his pursuers, even from his family;* and there once the wealth of the family, hastily thrown together, was buried from the irruption of a predatory soldiery. They, too, have their affectionate or their proud traditions of devoted fidelity, and of sequestrations and imprisonments, which at the time only concealed family feuds under the cloak of patriotism; and of many a tender alliance, through more than one generation, crossed by the heirs of the courtly cavalier and the uncompromising Cromwellian.

Foreigners sometimes reproach our insular English for deficient sympathy with the miseries of war, estranged, as they are, from its actual scenes. The history of no people, however, has been more abundant with the calamities of that most cruel of all wars—civil war! The scroll of British history unfolds little but a barbarous and tragic tale. The blood of the English people was not consumed only by the two Roses; the protracted war of several years of the Sovereign and the Parliament was a malediction of Heaven; and so recently as in the days of our fathers, how many domestic feuds survived the battles of the Stuart and the Brunswick!

Civil, or intestine wars, are distinguishable from external, or foreign wars, by the personal hatred of the actors. They are neither combating for ancient glory, nor for new conquests. It is the despair of their passions which involves these fraternal enemies in one common vengeance. Even conquests in civil wars render the victors fearful. Whitelocke was deeply impressed by this sorrowful observation. "Thus," says he, "we may see that even after almost a conquest, yet they (the Parliament) apprehended no safety; such are the issues and miseries

* The history of these interior and secret apartments in old mansions is curious. They were long used, and often built by our Roman Catholics to conceal the celebration of their mass, and as an asylum for their priests. In the civil wars they were of great service in secreting persons, whose lives have been saved by half an hour from the soldiers sent after them. Many have lived in their own houses, for many months, unknown to their own family, save the single member who was trusted to procure their meal with the most cautious secrecy. Sir Henry Slingsby seems to allude to such an apartment in his own house. "Since they have from York laid wait for me to take me, I take myself to one room in my house scarce known of by my servants, where I spend my days in great silence, scarce daring to speak or walk, but with great heed lest I be discovered. *Et jam veniet tacito curva senectus pede.*"—Memoirs, p. 92.

of a civil war, that the victors are full of fears from those they have subdued; no quiet, no security!"* Where victories are painful as defeats, dark cypress, and not laurels, must be gathered. What can two armies of fellow-countrymen, sometimes two rival counties opposed to each other with provincial malignity,† destroy, but that which was their own? Him who so bravely assaults, and him who so bravely repels, the country might bless, had they the hearts to be recreants! What scenes are shifted in this tragic drama! The plundered mansion—the village in flames—the farmer's homestead ravaged! Whose property has the hero of civil war plundered?—his neighbours! Whom has he routed?—his friends! Who appear in the returns of the wounded and killed of the enemy?—his relatives! The sanctity of social life once violated, family is ranged against family; parents renounce their children; the brother is struck by the arm of his brother; even the affection of the wife is alienated; and finally, they leave the sad inheritance of their unnatural animosities from generation to generation. In civil wars not small is the number of those, whose names appear in no list of the sufferers, whose wounds are not seen by any human eye, but whose deaths are as certain as any which flies with the bullet. These are they who retreat into the silence of horror and despair, and die heart-broken—or linger on with sorrows unassuaged, or unutterable griefs.

But all are not patriots who combat for patriotism. All sorts of adventurers looking up to all sorts of hopes, take their station under opposing banners. There shall we find Ambition and Avarice, often Revenge and Ingratitude; so many are the passions civil war indulges and conceals!

The sufferings of the common people seem beneath the

* Whitelocke, 219.

† I fear that in the civil wars of Charles the First, when whole regiments were composed of men raised from a particular county, and came in contact with a similar one of another, the struggle became more obstinate and malignant. The men of Herefordshire encountering the men of Gloucestershire; the Lancastrians engaging with the Northumbrians; even the inhabitants of one town with those of a neighbouring town, would slash each other with the malice of provincial rivalry, and to the miseries of war add the paltry pride of the jealousy of a whole county. In the Memoirs of Captain John Hodgson, an active Commonwealth officer, in the Lancashire infantry, we detect this sort of feeling. Alluding to the bravery of his regiment, he says, "They were brave firemen—I have often told them they were as good fighters and as great plunderers as ever went to a field."—Memoirs of Captain Hodgson, 119.

dignity of the historical pen, and the sympathy of abstract reasoners. Every scene in history is to be something which may be acted in a theatre by the privileged actors. It is not the story of a few hundred persons in a nation ; but of the tens of thousands who are hourly to be immolated to the demon, who hears their shrieks, or notices their tears !

In a civil war not only men change their principles, but towns and cities are disordered by sudden phrenzies. During the wars of Charles the First and the Parliament, many a town, sometimes a whole county, were compelled to take a new side at the approach, or on the retreat, of an army. And this concussion of their passions, or clash of their interests, was again to be suffered as the place was lost, or was recovered. A civil war is more than one war, for it conceals enemies within, while it combats the enemy without. In the wars of Charles the First, often on the day the Parliament's warrant to enlist men was read, a messenger hastened to the Sheriff with the King's proclamation. If the people opposed the Parliament, they heard themselves lauded for their due allegiance to their Sovereign ; if they sided with the Parliament, they were flattered as the faithful servants of the State. The people thus seemed always in the right ; but whatever was the principle, they discovered that the result was ever the same. The people were to be plundered ! The friend they must not deny ; the foe they dared not. Political confusion nourished Anarchy and Tyranny—political confusion, like the wolf-nurse of the two rival founders of Rome, sent her progeny forth, raging uncontrolled from Dover to Berwick.

Military marauders, for such in civil wars even disciplined troops become, living at free-quarters, making war as their holiday, and enriching themselves by impoverishing others, would often reproach their fellow-countrymen to their faces that "They were conquered slaves !" Who now was to maintain laws, when lawlessness was itself the law, and the swordsman sate as the Lord Chief-Justice ? A contemporary bard has energetically described this unhappy crisis :

" The eyeless sword 's unable to decide ;
But with its two-edged skill it doth divide
The Client, not the Cause."

The enormities of the military on both sides tyrannised through the land. Often in vain was the white flag hung out and a parley prayed for, as the soldier, eager for pillage, rejected a capitulation, and took by storm, and sack, the place ready to open its gates. This intolerable state of suffering gave rise to a very extraordinary attempt at self-defence. In the west of England many country-gentlemen were persuaded to raise up a third party in the country, which should neither be Royalist nor Parliamentary. It was to consist of an army without soldiers, for they were neither to wear swords nor carry fire-arms. Suddenly appeared many thousand men, who it is said at one period amounted to a body of fourteen thousand, armed with clubs and flails, scythes and sickles laid on long poles; it was an agricultural war, and the agrestic weapons no longer wounding the fertile bosom of nature, directed the whole rural war against man himself. Announcing that they would allow no armies to quarter within their bounds, they called themselves Club-men, and decided all matters by their own Club-law. They professed only to defend their harvests and their granaries. At any given point they assembled in considerable force, and their ensign bore a motto in rhymes, rude, but plain—

“If you offer to PLUNDER and take our cattle,
You may be sure we ’ll give you battle.”

This third party in the Civil Wars at first were so strange, that neither of the two great parties knew whether to consider them hostile or friendly. The Club-men grew to be so formidable as to be courted by both for timely compliances and temporary aid. Cromwell, too decided a general to allow of any independent force, or of ambiguous favours, attacked this unsoldierly army, and so completely routed the rural troops, that they no longer appear in our history.*

It is remarkable that the term PLUNDER, for military spoliations and robberies, which we find in the rhyming motto of the Club-men, was now first introduced into our language—it was brought from Germany by some of those soldiers of fortune, whose deeds here were the clearest comments on a foreign term

* This novel insurrection of the CLUB-MEN, Locke has ascribed to the prolific brain of Shaftesbury when a young man. The fantastic invention of an army without soldiers was not ill-suited to his plotting and fanciful genius.

which time has by no means rendered obsolete.* It is curious to observe the latitude which the partisans of that day, and of all days whenever such of the mobocracy are in power, chose to affix to the term, which was by no means limited to military execution. An unlucky "malignant" indicted several of the mob-worthies for "plundering his house." The prisoners did not deny the fact, so that there were the fact and the law alike against them. The petty-jury, however, persisted in returning *Ignoramus*. The Bench asked how they could go against such clear evidence? The foreman would return no other answer than this—"Because we do not think plundering to be felony by the law."† Such was the magic of a new name for most ancient thievery! But the truth was, that the men at the bar were all "honest men," being all Parliamentarians.

The Civil Wars of Charles the First were accompanied by one of the most distressful emotions which an honourable mind can experience. On both sides men were induced to combat for a cause, in the justice of which they were not over-confident. Neither the object nor the conduct of the Patriots was always so evident to the contending parties as they may appear to later times. After the death of Hampden and Pym, new factions rose, who assuredly were not combating for the freedom of the English nation. Opinions sometimes wavered, as points of law admitted of a novel exposition, or as the last arguments were perplexed by the more recent confutation; even the warm apologists of each party were often disconcerted at unexpected circumstances, which too often betrayed the errors or the violence of their own.

In this ambiguous state there necessarily resulted the most confused notions, distracting their consciences and paralysing their acts. Many eminent persons fell victims to these mutable and contradictory proceedings.

Neither the Royalist, nor the Commonwealth-man, who were so on system, would hesitate in their decision; and both alike perished in the field or suffered on the scaffold. But these formed, perhaps, not the greater, nor always the most estimable

* May's History of the Parliament. Lib. iii. 3.

† Bruno Ryves in his "*Mercurius Rusticus, or the Country's Complaint*," which exhibits a weekly series of scenes of the Mobocracy Government.

part of the nation. Many great and good men acted they scarcely knew how; they fluctuated in their opinions, for which they had too often reason*—and what sometimes proved more fatal, they abandoned their friends—or if in their despair they concealed their private sentiments, these self-tormentors lived in the agony of their consciences.

Essex and Manchester obeyed the Parliament, but they were not enemies to the King; Falkland, and many others in the royal army, obeyed the King, but were not enemies to the Parliament. Sir Edward Varney, the Standard-bearer of the King, who perished at Edge-hill, marched in the royal ranks, from a principle of honour, but not from any conviction of the justice of his master's cause; on the other side, Sir Alexander Carew, who had distinguished himself among the hottest of the Patriotic party in the prosecution of the Earl of Strafford, and was in the full confidence of the Parliament, was beheaded—it is said at the instigation of his brother, such a hellish brood a Revolution hatches!—for his design of giving up Plymouth to the King. Sir Hugh Cholmley, long a Patriot of the highest reputation, and one of their active Commissioners, passed over to the King. In the Lord-Keeper Littleton we see a sage of the law, and a man of unblemished integrity, siding with the Parliament, and at last delivering up the great seal, and himself too, to the King. This was an immediate sacrifice of his own considerable fortune and his condition—but it terminated the solitary struggles in his mind. Unhappy men! The party they desert never forgive them, and those to whom they go never forget from whence they come.

This numerous class of honourable persons were not apostates from caprice or faithlessness; neither present nor prospective views influenced them. They were offering the greatest personal sacrifices in going over to the King, for they left behind them their estates to an eager and sequestering Parliament. The virtuous and sensitive Falkland, amid those reveries, in which, since the opening of the Civil War, his melancholy had

* Sir Philip Warwick tells an anecdote of a Dr. Farrar, a physician, whom he describes as a man of "a pious heart but fanciful brain, for this was he that would have had the King and Parliament have decided their business by lot." Many points which cost so much blood might as well have been decided by the dice. The physician was the philosopher.

indulged, was often heard to exclaim "Peace! Peace! Peace!" It was to escape from that prostration of his spirits, which had of late clouded over his countenance, deranged his manners, and sharpened his language, that Falkland, to end this war of his feelings, rushed to the death he sought in the field.

It may be suspected that even thorough-paced Partisans were haunted with many lurking doubts which at times darkened their convictions. Lord Brooke, that fiercest assailant of the National Church, who, on looking on St. Paul's, hoped "to see the day when not one stone of that edifice should lie on another," appears to me, notwithstanding his enthusiasm, to have stood in this comfortless predicament. To storm the Close at Lichfield he chose St. Chad's day, to whom the Cathedral was dedicated. His Lordship meant to give the most public affront he could imagine to the Saint; this was a remaining feeling of the old superstition, as if dubious whether his Saintship were, as he believed, a mere nonentity. Farther, he solemnly invoked Heaven, for some signal testimony of its approbation; or if his cause were not right and just, that he might perish! It is quite evident that he had contemplated on a possibility that his cause was not right and just, otherwise he would not have implored for a signal testimony. Lord Brooke, however, seemed hardly to have trusted Heaven with his life; for his invulnerable lordship was armed at all points in stubborn mail, and the only part of him uncovered with iron, was that "evil eye" which he had cast on St. Paul's. Great Churchmen, Laud and South, and the historian Clarendon, fancied that St. Chad himself had rolled the bullet which pierced the eye and confused for ever the metaphysical brain of the renowned adversary of Episcopacy, whom Milton has immortalised. It is more evident that had Lord Brooke's final conviction been freed from every doubt in that offuscating controversy, he had never so solemnly appealed to Heaven to confirm the verity of his positions and the justice of his violence.

If elevated characters, such as these, could not elude the severity of their fate, it was still more disastrous with the weak and the timid. "The two unfortunate Hothams, the father and the son," as May pathetically designates them, offer a memorable history in our Civil Wars. They were both ostensibly on

the Parliament's side. It fell to the lot of the hapless father to bear the dread exigency of opening the Civil War. As Governor of Hull he had been compelled by a strong party among the townsmen to close the gates against the King. The Governor appeared on the walls, on his knees, and with distracted looks, a pitiable object, solemnly protesting his loyalty to the King and his duty to the Parliament. The man before his own face was proclaimed a traitor by the King—the secret lay in his heart, for he was a Royalist. The Parliament dispatched the son to watch over the father—at length both came to betray each other ! The father was inveigled, by the miserable hope of saving himself, to aggravate the delinquency of the son ; and the son inveighed against the father as an enemy of the Parliament. The father and the son, destitute of affection and fortitude, on that day cast a blot on a name ancient and honourable, and both were hurried to the scaffold.*

A warm and genuine picture of the conflicting emotions at this period, we find in a letter from Sir William Waller, the Parliamentary General, to Sir Ralph Hopton, his former companion, and now one of the King's most zealous commanders. Waller feelingly dwells on that cruel situation in which the most intimate friends were now to be torn away from each other, and not only divided, but opposed in arms. Waller confesses, too, the fears which harassed a delicate mind not yet brutalised by war ; and is sorrowfully conscious, that he could not communicate that conviction, which he hardly seems to have felt himself.

“ My affections to you are so unchangeable that Hostility itself cannot violate my friendship to your person ; but I must be true to the cause wherein I serve.—I should wait on you, according to your desire, but that I look on you as engaged in that party beyond the possibility of retreat, and consequently, incapable of being wrought upon by any persuasion. That Great God who is the searcher of all hearts, knows *with what a sad fear I go upon this service, and with what perfect hate I*

* “ The woeful tragedy ” of the Hothams is told by Clarendon, v. 116. We now find by a suppressed passage that “ the vile artifice ” which had been practised on them was the contrivance of Hugh Peters, who was the chaplain sent to them to prepare them for death, and took that opportunity to wrest from them mutually arguments one against the other.

detest a war without an enemy. But I look upon it as *Opus Domini!* We are both on the Stage, and must act those parts that are assigned to us in this Tragedy; but let us do it in the way of honour, and without personal animosity."

This extraordinary state of affairs often produced a singular effect both on persons and on events. The most enlightened men of the age, and the most free from suspicion of any criminal selfishness, could not avoid, alternately, to gratify and to offend the two great Parties. Selden, in his firm integrity, had condemned "the Commission of Array" issued by the King, on a point of Law; the King remonstrated with him; the Parliament professed to be governed by the most learned of lawyers and the most forcible of reasoners, whose decision in this instance contributed to their own designs. Selden had flattered himself that he should equally guide their measures when he delivered his judgment against the Parliamentary ordinance to possess themselves of the militia or the army. On that occasion he raised his admirable faculties to their highest pitch, and he demonstrated as positively, as he had done in the case of "the Array," that it was "without precedent and without law." It must have mortified that erudite scholar and that profound lawyer, when he discovered that his legal knowledge was only to be consulted, and his arguments were only to be valid, when they concurred with the purposes of those whom he addressed; and were weak, and of no authority, when they came in contact with their passions. Such a severe judge of truth would not have been accepted as an arbiter either by the King or the Parliament. But Time has consecrated the decisions of Selden; and Posterity acknowledges the rectitude of that wisdom which was censured by both parties for mutability of conduct.

All in the ranks of the King were not insensible to the voice of the Parliament, and knew how to appreciate as dearly, their laws, their liberties, and their properties, as the Patriotic leaders in the Commons. There was a period when the Loyalists would plead in favour of their cause, that the King had long earnestly concurred in many popular acts; had of late more cautiously governed himself by law; and they might have pointed out at least one energetic passage in which Charles absolutely recanted his past political errors, tenderly reproaching those who persisted

in reverting to them, and warning his censurers that they themselves might fall into the like errors from the same suggestion of necessity.*

On the side of the Patriots were many who, without the views of ambitious men, had taken up arms neither to dethrone the Monarch, nor to change the Constitution, but they suspected the sincerity of the royal concessions. Rapin, with great candour and equal shrewdness, has stated this nice point of the distrust of the Parliament: a distrust on which revolved the calamities of the nation! "I do believe it to be something rash to affirm that Charles the First was not sincere in his promises. But then I am of opinion that his sincerity may be doubted, since he had never an opportunity to demonstrate it by effects."

And thus it was, that the people were now driven into this cruel alternative, to combat against or to defend the sovereign, with equal reason to do one, or the other!

It was necessary to develop this obscure point in the history of our great Civil War, by showing how it happened that such frequent defections alike occurred to both parties.

It may also correct the popular notion, which so conveniently decides that it was necessary that our civil liberty should be the fruits of violence and injustice; raised up by the passions and not by the wisdom of men. Many who were the actors in the solemn scenes of our Revolution, when they beheld the nation opposed to the nation; laws violated and authority usurped; a Presbytery raised on the ruins of a Hierarchy; the destruction of the monarch, and the dominion of demagogues—did not conclude that the constitutional freedom of England had become more vigorous or looked more beautiful. They did not conceive that Charles the First was that absolute tyrant, and that the Parliament were so absolutely patriotic, as we are apt to imagine. They did not assert that nothing more was necessary than to pursue a direct course, without fear and without doubts, without honour and without conviction.

* This remarkable passage is in the King's answer to the Parliament's petition, presented at York in 1642.—Husband's Collections, 127.

CHAPTER XXV.

“WHO BEGAN THE WAR, THE KING OR THE PARLIAMENT?”

SUCH is the title of a grave chapter in the favourite “Essay” of a party, “towards obtaining a true idea of the real character of Charles the First.”* With the Parliament in their last Treaty of Newport, it was an important point to clear themselves of the charge of rebellion by an acknowledgment that they only had recourse to arms in their own defence; but to do this they necessarily criminated the King. The King urged them to agree to an act of oblivion on both sides. Charles was willing to grant them security, but not justification. When the Earl of Northumberland was intreated to spare the distress of his old friend and master, by conceding such a condemnatory proposition on the King and all his friends, it was declared to be a *sine quâ non* in the treaty—the Earl observing, “The King in this point is safe as King, but we cannot be so.”

It seems to have afforded a melancholy satisfaction to the sufferers from the Civil Wars to imagine that their party were not the authors of the protracted miseries of the country. The inquiry has been a legacy left from one historian to another, and we find it a subject of acrimonious discussion with the most recent.† All these writers, in the march of their narrative, pause, to fling back the reproach on the adverse party, while both, with equal triumph, assign some insulated circumstance, or adduce some subtle argument, whence to date the origin of the Civil War. To remove the odium from their own heads, of

* This Essay professes to be “extracted from and delivered in the very words of some of the most authentic historians.” It was first printed in 1748, anonymously. The compiler was Micaiah Towgood, a dissenting minister. A third edition appeared as recently as in 1811. It is therefore appreciated, nor is it the least curious of the pamphlets concerning Charles the First.

This sort of works, pretending to offer nothing from the writer himself, but merely the opinions of others, has an appearance of candour and impartiality which is often very deceptive. The choice of the extracts, and the class of the originals, are made by the prepossessions of the compiler. Among “the most authentic historians” here quoted, we find chiefly warm party-writers, as Neal, Burnet, and Ludlow, till we sink down to the infamous Oldmixon.

† Brodie, History of the British Empire, iii. 335.

having first opened those calamitous scenes, each party has always been anxious to charge the other with the first aggressions, and to infer that their own side, whether Royalist or Parliamentary, persevered in all the simplicity of innocence, and, to the last hour of their exemplary patience, testified their utter repugnance to appeal to the sword. In detecting the artifices and perplexities of the advocates of both the great parties which were now about to divide the nation between them, we may smile at their strenuous invectives to criminate each other.

The day of debate had closed. The cry of conspiracy and treason on the side of the Royalists, and of suspicions and fears from that of the Patriots, had ceased. This terribly tedious paper-war of remonstrances and resolutions, of protestations and of messages, of declarations and of votes, of replies and rejoinders, had outwearied the vigour of their pens. Little sincerity appears in these public appeals, dictated as they are often by their fears and jealousies. Here they attack, and there they retort; here there are evasions, and there misrepresentations. Both parties perfectly understood one another, but it was alike their interest that the people should not learn that the struggle was for the actual Sovereignty. The one thundered against arbitrary government, the other against those who had assumed it. Both disguised their real intentions, for both dreaded to become odious to the people by afflicting them with the horrors of an unnatural war.

The people, distracted by law and by logic, by dusty precedents and involved arguments, each persisting that the law was on their side, and no one seeming to care what the law was, or whether there existed any law at all for their own acts, were also divided among themselves by contrary interests and heart-burning bickerings. The people at this moment were to be the umpires between the Sovereign and the Parliament—alas! the umpires themselves required an umpire! These rotary manifestos succeeded one another in ceaseless perplexity, designed to create a public opinion by winning over the affections or impelling the passions of their adherents, through the slow gradations of sympathy.

Their arguments, while arguments served their purpose, being framed on opposite principles, like two parallel lines,

might have run on to "the crack of doom." And as they attached to the same terms very different senses by this equivocal and ambiguous style, they had only to ring the changes on "Fundamental Law"—"The Parliament"—and "Peace," as triumphantly at the fiftieth time as at the first.*

In this war of papers the King obtained many splendid victories. Charles had called in for aid the pens of the enlightened Lord Falkland, and the adroit Sir John Culpepper, but more usually exercised the eloquent and keen genius of Clarendon. A statesman, however, remarked at the time, that wit and elegance, delightful as they were, could not long last useful, and he dreaded lest "their fine pen would hurt them." It was indeed evident, that in a contest which had in it all the elements of civil war, though they had showered their words against each other as hard as the flowers of rhetoric can hit, the parties would seize on weapons more decisive than arguments, convincing only those who required none, and with truths whose denials were persisted in, till the truths seemed to be fictions. While the battle was to be urged by the force of words, there was not an Athlete in the kingdom who could wield the club of Hercules, but Hercules himself. The profound thought—the deep insight into human concerns—the sharp and irresistible irony of the fertile genius of Clarendon poised the whole force of the Commons, who could only surpass him in the practical

* Rapin shrewdly observes that the King and the Parliament played with the term *Fundamental Law*. The Parliament gave the name to the trust which the people placed in the *two Houses*—and when it came to the last push, to the *single House* of Commons! The King would recognise nothing fundamental, but positive and particular laws. Hobbes, in his *Behemoth*, a work in dialogue, inquires, "What did they mean by the *Fundamental Laws of the Nation*? Nothing but to abuse the people." 260. Oldmixon more curiously explains, that by *Fundamental Law* Charles interpreted the Laws of the Land, meaning his own corrupt *Sovereign power*, but not that *Sovereign power* under which the kingdom has been so glorious since the last male monarch of the House of Stuart! 198. The phrase *Fundamental Law* is still a marketable article among the great political traders as "sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

The *Parliament*, meant for some time the two Houses and the King's name, separated from his person—Charles insisted that a Parliament included both Houses and himself.

Peace, with the Parliament, had as many different senses as the propositions for peace varied. Clarendon has well described it: "Both sides entertained each other with discourses of peace, which always carried a sharpness with them that whetted their appetite to war!"

politics of their own House. Clarendon, whose dexterity in style was such, that he could inimitably imitate the style of any man, never yet found one who dared to imitate the deep solemnity of his periods, and the vigorous redundancy of his own style. Charles, confident in the masterly skill of his replies, always accompanied his own by the papers of Parliament. The Parliament discovered their own inferiority, and were so utterly disconcerted, that at length, when they sent forth any of their own manifestos, they strictly prohibited the publication of the King's answers.

In vain the royalist Echard, following his Coryphæus Clarendon, struggles to show "the King's backwardness as to war," and as vainly the venal Oldmixon echoes his oracle Acherley, in denouncing the King for having originated the civil war. At York Charles raised what he called a guard for his person: it consisted of a single troop of cavalry, composed of volunteers from "the prime gentry," of which the young Prince of Wales was the captain, and a single regiment of six hundred trainbands, the ordinary militia of the county. Doubtless this was a nest egg for some future brood. At this moment Charles had no other force than the influence of his name. He was without any means to maintain an army had he possessed one; he was in extreme necessity, not having yet received the moderate supplies which he was awaiting from the Queen in Holland. He had neither ships, nor harbours, nor arms, nor monies. The Parliament had deprived him "of bread," as Clarendon pathetically expressed it, and the whole regal establishment was reduced to a single table for himself and the Princes. So far from Charles being considered in the least formidable, or even able to enter on a civil war, Hampden and Pym assured Sir Benjamin Rudyard, as that honest patriot declared on his death-bed, that they considered that the King was so ill-beloved by his subjects, that he would never be able to raise an army to oppose them. And even when the King had raised this very guard for his person, as he called these volunteers, the Secretary and historian of the Parliament in alluding to this particular event, confesses that "the kingdom was not much affrighted with any forces the King could so raise."*

* May's History of the Parliament, lib. ii. 58.

Yet it is on this very circumstance of raising this guard for his person that Charles is denounced as the real author of all the miseries of the civil war. The Parliament voted that it was the King's intention to make war. The words of Acherley are triumphantly quoted by Oldmixon, and the passage is important, for it will serve to detect one of those artful misrepresentations where a party-writer, to colour an extravagant charge, gives a fictitious appearance of the real state of affairs.

"Such a body of men," says this historian, "might, by an expeditious march, easily have entered the House of Commons, and dispersed the UNARMED Parliament, who looked on that proceeding as a clear evidence of his Majesty's intentions to make war upon them."*

Will not an innocent reader be surprised when he is informed that this "Unarmed Parliament" was the most WARLIKE imaginable?

The Parliament had already possessed themselves of the great depôt of arms and ammunition in the Tower of London, and the Arsenal at Hull. They were the sole sovereigns of the entire naval force of England, and twice during the last year, in February and March, 1641, they had passed their ordinance to place the militia, that is, the whole military force of the kingdom, under their own officers, and at their sole command. This is energetically stated in one of the King's answers. "All those pikes and protestations, that army on one side, and that navy on the other, must work us in an opinion that you appeared to levy war against us."† Their devoted train-bands of the City, and even the recruits presumed to be raised for Ireland, were themselves an army ready to be called out. They had an unlimited power over all the wealth of the capital, the royal revenues were now their own, and from the large sub-

* The verbose title of the Lawyer Acherley's work conveys some idea of its character. "The Britannic Constitution, or the fundamental form of government in Britain, demonstrating the original contract entered into by King and People; wherein is proved that the placing on the Throne King William III. was the natural fruit and effect of the original Constitution." It is a folio, and has passed through three editions. Yet this Whig production, apparently theoretical, seems to have been famous in its day, and now is cast into oblivion. I do not recollect this work as referred to by any late writer on the Constitution. Acherley is a source of inspiration to Oldmixon.

† Husband's Collections, 261. The King's Answer, 20th May, 1642.

scriptions raised for the Irish war, they borrowed what sums they willed "for the supply of the public necessity."* They parcelled out that unhappy land in lots of a thousand acres to adventurers, and a good citizen's patriotism was rated according to the quantity of his Irish purchases.† Thus this "UNARMED Parliament" were nerved by the true sinews of war—money and the *matériel*.

We shall often find that the chronology of Facts is something in the history of the Passions, and a simple statement of the movements of these Parties, at this critical period, will save much of their mutual declamation.

1642—April 23.—The King made his inefficient attempt to seize Hull; it contained the only dépôt of arms which he could call his own. Oldmixon considers this attempt on Hull as the first overt act of the Civil War. But it must be candidly acknowledged that if the affair of Hull is to be deemed an act of civil war, the Parliament had anticipated the King, for they had ordered that its entrance should be closed against him; besides, the King could not yet be said to levy war who had not yet an army. At the end of April the Lords began to desert the Parliament, which doubtless occasioned some surprise and some uneasiness. Not that these Lords withdrew from Parliament with any intention of raising a civil war. They had retired from the violent measures of Parliament, but they did not pass over to the King to encourage any on his side. They

* Rushworth, iv. 778. The Parliament borrowed at once £100,000 of "the Treasurie for Subscription." The forced loans of Charles himself yielded nothing like those "for the Public Necessity."

† They were selling the skin before they had caught the bear. The lands were not yet their own, but they presumed that in the Irish Rebellion, many millions of acres would be confiscated, and they were anticipating the sales! The value of the land varied in different counties, for 200*l.* was the price of one thousand acres in Ulster, 300*l.* in Connaught, 450*l.* in Munster, and 600*l.* in Leinster—the value was probably rated by the neighbourhood.—Rushworth, iv.

The King, at a moment he was not master to refuse, had given an unwilling assent to these desperate grants, relying on "the wisdom of his Parliament, without taking time to consider whether this course may not retard the reducing of that Kingdom, by exasperating the rebels, and rendering them desperate."

Noy had flattered the Monarch that he had discovered in "the Ship Money" "a purse without a bottom, never to be emptied,"—but the Commons were perfect Fortunatuses in their public purse, while they held the sovereign power.

thought that the Parliament durst not make a war, lest the people should rise for the King, while they impressed on the King that should he raise forces, the Parliament would easily persuade the people that their liberties and religion would be overthrown.* So intricate were the feelings and the events of that critical hour, that even honourable men, with tortured consciences and confused heads, designed secret purposes entirely the reverse of their actions. Those who wished to keep themselves, as Lord Clarendon expresses it, "negatively innocent," were the unhappiest men in the kingdom. The crimes of a nation suffer no man to be innocent.

May 5.—The Parliament declare their resolution to put their Ordinance for the Militia in execution, "warranted by the Fundamental Laws of the Land."

May 12.—The King summons the Gentry of York, and it was on this occasion that the Guard for the King's person was raised, for which, observed the Commons, "there can be no use, considering the fidelity and care of your Parliament."† There was at times something exquisitely ludicrous in the Parliamentary style whenever the King was to be mentioned.

May 20.—The Parliament declare the King intends to levy war, and they call out the Militia throughout the kingdom.

June 2.—The Parliament present those memorable nineteen dethroning propositions, which the King indignantly rejected. On this day arrived from Holland a ship with arms for the King.

June 10.—Troops and monies are openly raised by the Parliament in a new and extraordinary manner, "on Public Faith." They issued an order for bringing in money and plate, horse and horsemen, and arms. They fixed a premium for Patriotism, an interest of "Eight in the Hundred, on the Public Faith." The Treasurers found that place was wanting to store the treasure—the Commissaries were incompetent to appraise the horses and the arms, and hand the acquittances to the fortunate Patriots. Even the City dames hastened to the Mint to melt down their thimbles and bodkins, for they who had neither money nor horse were desired to subscribe.‡ We are assured several millions were thus raised—all for the maintenance of

* Clarendon, iii. 66.

† Husband's Collections, 259.

‡ May's History of the Parliament, lib. ii. 83.

the Protestant religion, "the Fundamental Laws," "the safety of the King's person," and "Eight in the Hundred!"

June 15.—As late as this day Charles was professing that he had no intention of war, but against this general arming the King sent forth his Commission of Array. The most remarkable circumstance in these equal movements is, that the King in his Commission of Array employed the very same reasons, in the identical words the Parliament had done in their Declaration, as May tells us: "Thus did the Parliament's prologue to their Ordinance serve the King's turn for his Commission of Array, *totidem verbis*." In this game of political chess, which both Parties were now so cautiously playing, move against move, check-mate occurred.

It is evident that the movements were perfectly regular on both sides. Who then began the Civil War? It is not by assigning some insulated circumstance, as so many historians have done, that we shall ascertain either Who first intended the war, or Who first began it? I would not dispute who were the warlike party. Yet we need not express our surprise with the sage Whitelocke, that "It is strange to note how we have insensibly slid into this beginning of a civil war, by one unexpected accident after another, as waves of the sea which hath brought us thus far."* The inevitable war had been mutually determined on, long ere any period which has been assigned by historians, biassed by their own party views. From the moment the Parliament assumed the Sovereignty over the Militia—that is, the Army, the only difficulty the Parties found, was to conceal their intentions.

When the Commons passed their resolutions that the King *intended* to make war upon them, Charles complained much of this Vote in regard to his *intention*, declaring that God knew his heart abhorred it. "And to such a height did he and his counsellors carry their hypocrisy," proceeds Mr. Brodie, "that even on the 15th of June, when arms had been purchased in Holland, the King repeated his professions," appealing to the Lords whether they saw any preparations or counsels that might beget a belief of any such design; and whether they were not

* Rushworth, iv. 754.

fully persuaded that his Majesty had no such *intention*, but that all his endeavours tended to Peace. The Lords at York unanimously signed a declaration to this purpose. "It is impossible," again exclaims Mr. Brodie, "to conceive a more melancholy picture of insincerity, nay downright perfidy, than Charles and his advisers exhibited on this occasion."

Mr. Brodie argues, as if the purchase of arms in Holland was still a secret, which the King and his Council were reserving to themselves. If so, "the hypocrisy and perfidy" were ludicrous, for they were concealing what was as notorious at London as at York. The Declaration animadverted on by Mr. Brodie, occurred on the 15th of June. Already on the 2nd of June the Parliament had issued their order against the pawning of the jewels of the Crown,* and on the 11th of June, two letters were openly read in Parliament from their spies at Amsterdam, handing over an inventory of the arms and of all the military stores.† Nor should the *intention* of making war be confounded with actual war. Charles without violence to his conscience, and certainly with the prudence of a statesman, might solemnly protest that he *intended* no War, though at the same time he should be levying troops. Warlike preparations are no proof that war is designed or desired; they may be preventive or defensive.

Clarendon tells us "that when the Parliament accused the King of *intending* to make war, they were so far from apprehending that he would be able to get an army to disturb them, that they were most assured he would not be able to get bread to sustain himself for three months, without submitting all his counsels to their conduct and control."—"Clarendon says this," exclaims Mr. Brodie, "who only in the seventh page preceding this one, relates that War of the most rancorous kind" (the epithet is gratuitous!) "had been determined on before the Queen left England. Such is the *veracity* of Lord Clarendon, that individual panegyrised and followed by Mr. Hume, who says that he was too honest a man to falsify facts."

Since war had been decided on by the King before the Queen's departure for Holland, Mr. Brodie argues, it settles the long-disputed point of who began the war, in favour of Par-

* Rushworth, iv. 736.

† Rushworth, iv. 745.

liament, and it shows the faithless narrative of Clarendon, who at the moment he represents the Parliament accusing the King of intending war, while they had really no such apprehensions themselves, knew himself that war had been resolved on by the King. Clarendon, we are told, had "inadvertently" dropped the important fact, which Mr. Brodie ungenerously fancies that his Lordship would not have confessed on reflection.

The modern historian, in his eagerness to assert the innocence of Parliament on this occasion, exults in discovering that the King intended war at a period, previous to the Accusation of the Commons, and that Clarendon knowing this, for he has himself told it, has reproached the Parliament as accusing the King of an intention of war, when they were persuaded that he could not even raise an army.

The question as it respects "the veracity" of Clarendon in this instance, is not what had been decided on by the King, previous to the Parliament's declaration, but whether the Parliament declared the King's intention of war, at the very time that they had no apprehensions of that nature, and that the King was precisely in the forlorn state which Clarendon has described?

This is easily answered, for there is not a passage in Clarendon's whole history more authentic than the present one, so unreservedly stigmatised by his accuser. The "veracity" of the noble writer is fully confirmed by May, the Parliamentary historian, who on this very incident of the King raising a Guard at York, which induced the Parliament's declaration, observes, "But the kingdom was not much affrighted with any forces which the King could so raise." And shortly after, even when the King had received some supply of arms and ammunition from Holland, the same historian remarks that "He wanted hands to wield those arms." This was their opinion, and as we have seen, it was the opinion of Hampden and Pym. The narrative of Clarendon has neither exaggerated, nor misrepresented the motives and the conduct of the Parliament at the moment they declared the King's intention of war. It was indeed not long after, in the defection of their House, that the Commons might have felt the fears which at first they had feigned. "So much for the veracity of Clarendon," as

Mr. Brodie exclaims, and so much was due to this fallacious arraignment.

With Mr. Brodie, the crime of Charles is the King's disobedience to the Commons, in not subscribing the nineteen Dethroning Propositions they shortly afterwards proffered. With Lord Clarendon the crime of the Parliament was their invasion of the monarchy. The Scottish Advocate contracts his views by the narrow standard of a legal case, and would often, by some subtle point, a quibble, or a flaw, put an end to the action. But the language and the acts of political men, placed in the most critical circumstances, are best judged by the statesman in his prudential wisdom, and are best explained by the philosopher, conversant with human nature.

Two of the most illustrious men in our history convey to us the feelings which actuated their contemporaries, in this perpetual discussion of who began the Civil War: one is the monarch himself, the other is the immortal Milton.

The torturing reproach of having first begun the Civil War haunted Charles to the scaffold—and in the few last minutes which separated life from death, solemnly the King declared, appealing to those who could hear him, "All the world knows that I never did begin a war first with the two Houses of Parliament—I call God to witness they began upon me—it is the militia they began upon—they confessed that the militia was mine, but they thought it fit to have it from me."

Milton, after alluding to the warlike appearance of some disbanded officers at Kingston, the Queen's packing the Crown Jewels, the attempt on Hull, Charles sending over for arms, and calling out Yorkshire and other counties, has delivered as a fact to posterity that Charles "raised actual forces while the Parliament were yet petitioning in peace, and had not one man listed."* Hence, probably, Acherley derived his "Unarmed Parliament!" Harris, in quoting the statement of Milton, observed that "there was *some truth* in these assertions;" an extraordinary sort of historical evidence! However, chronology often corrects the anachronisms of party. The ordinance for calling the militia preceded the Commission of Array, and the levies of the Earl of Essex took place when the King had yet

* Iconoclastes, 41.

only his guard of volunteers. The disturbed politics of Milton, were fraught with all the popular rumours and passions of that day. On the present occasion, to me, the monarch on the scaffold appears superior to the poet, in the dignity of solemn truth, and the loftier emotions which appealed to it.

Thus it happened that two parties, dated the same reproachful event at different epochs, to hold themselves guiltless, while they mutually recriminated for having done that, which both alike had long contemplated to do.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FIRST BATTLE BETWEEN THE KING AND THE PARLIAMENT.

THE battle of Edge-hill is one of the most singular recorded in military history ; it was the first battle of the Civil Wars, when the nation was yet strange to these unnatural hostilities.

The honest and the honourable men of both parties dreaded nothing so much as a battle ; and the people at large had never considered that the pending discussions of Privilege and Prerogative were ever to be terminated in a field of blood ; even the parade of two armies they flattered themselves would only hasten on a treaty which might finally set so many troubles at rest.

It was a war which, however, instigated by their leaders in the metropolis, was not prompted by the nation, divided as they were in opinions on new doctrines, and influenced by very opposite interests. One half of England remained in so neutral a state that some families never suspecting a war, had warily distributed their members on both sides, often perhaps with a view of protecting their estates, whatever party prevailed, and whole counties were so little concerned that they mutually agreed to sit still and not take up arms against their neighbours. A curious anecdote of the times strikingly shows that those who had neither abilities nor disposition for fighting were left undisturbed, and seem to have taken little interest in the battles between King and Parliament. In the journal of a Yorkshire squire, who lived in the immediate neighbourhood of Marston-

Moor, it appears that he went out hunting on the very day of that memorable engagement, but our sportsman in the details of his chase had not made even an allusion to the battle, though the roar of the cannon must have echoed to his "Tally-ho!" This anecdote I think is told by Horace Walpole; and a congenial one, evincing the disposition of some of the common people, to cast a ludicrous air over the heroes of the Civil War, of both sides, has been recorded by De Foe as having happened in his own family. The huntsman of his grandfather called his pack by the names of the Roundheads and the Cavaliers; Goring and Waller; so that the generals of both armies were hounds in his pack. When the times turned too serious for jesting, it became necessary to scatter the whole pack, and make them up with more canine surnames.

It is possible that even the secret instigators of the Civil War had never contemplated on those protracted scenes of misery which were opening for their father-land. A show of war might end in a bloodless victory, and at the worst they had no higher conception of a battle between their own countrymen, than what they called "a civil bout." A contemporary anecdote conveys this idea. On the first breach between the King and the Parliament, one deploring the fatal change about to ensue, another observed, "The *King* and the *Subject* must e'en have one civil bout, as we say, and then we shall all be very good friends again."* In vain the prudential sagacity of Whitelocke had presciently warned, that probably few of them would live to see the end of such a war; that they who drew the sword against the sovereign must throw away the scabbard; "and that such commotions, like deep seas once stirred, will be long ere they are again calmed." The sage Whitelocke voted to provide for war, but not for war itself. It was, however, the unhappiness of both parties to imagine that a single battle would terminate the conflict, and when that battle had been fought, it was as easily imagined that the next would be decisive. But in Civil Wars the first battle is usually the prognostic of many; for among its other calamities, is that of setting up the power of the military, particularly when foreign soldiers of fortune are invited, who always studiously prolong the season of their fatal prosperity.

* Harl. MSS. 6395, (503).

The Parliament had recourse to military men who had seen service in the Netherlands, to discipline their raw levies. Among these were many Germans. In some accounts from the country we find noticed "the honest German" who drilled them. Recruits drawn from the shop, or the wharf, or the manufactory, had hitherto more ably served them in mobs than they could in rank and file. The Parliamentary colonels who had regiments appointed to them, were generally country-gentlemen, and students from the Inns of Court. They were so inexperienced in their tactics, that they had not yet acquired the technical style. General Ludlow, that honourable Commonwealth-man, was evidently something jealous of these imported officers, the mercenaries of Royalty, some of whom were foreigners, and even suspected of Popery, for he alludes to these veterans "as a generation of men much cried up at that time." But Ludlow has himself furnished an anecdote, which shows how men who had never been in action, when once in the field, are but apprentices in their new craft. In the battle of Edge-hill, among other similar disasters of the day, one of these veterans, having drawn up his men into an open space, to make an advantageous charge, gave the word of command to "Wheel about!" "Our gentlemen," proceeds Ludlow, "not well understanding the difference between *wheeling about* and *shifting for themselves*, their backs being now towards the enemy, whom they thought to be close in their rear, flew back to the army in a very dishonourable manner, and received the next morning but a cold welcome from the General."

Even the common precautions of military discipline had not been practised, and the officers appear to have been as negligent as the soldiers. In the royal army they had the field-word given to know their friends in the heat of battle, "For God and the King!" but the Parliamentarians had no word to recognise their fellows from the enemy, and several instances occurred of their firing on each other. This error was no doubt soon corrected. At the sanguinary battle of Marston-Moor, the field-word of the Parliamentarians, in contra-distinction of the King's, was "God with us!" In that day the soldiers seemed to have depended on the colour of their coats as a signal of recognition; these, however, were as various as their regiments, and it sometimes happened that both parties wore the same colour. The

King had a red regiment, held to be "The Invincible Regiment," consisting of 1200 men. Among the Parliamentarians they had also a regiment of Red-coats. There were regiments of purple, of gray, and of blue.* It required some recollection when two encountered to ascertain the friend from the foe, which might depend on the colour, or even the cut of his coat.†

The simple citizens of a provincial town on a sudden attack would be startled by the pomp and glory of an army, which seemed terrible to those fearful spirits who were hurried from their quiet labours to defend the avenue, or to stand at the breach, in the very throat of war. The siege of Bradford has been described by one of its own townsmen. In his *naïve* narrative, there is a passage so true to nature, and withal so forcible in expression, that a higher genius might not have disdained it. "Every man was now ordered to his post, armed with such weapons as he was beforehand provided withal; the church and steeple were secured in the best manner we possibly could. They approached us with the sound of warlike music, and their streamers flying in the air—tremendous sight! enough to make the stoutest heart to tremble! to shake the nerves and loose the joints of every beholder! Amazing to see the different effects it had upon others, who were fired with rage even to madness, and filled with revenge almost to enthusiasm!" We were at that time, after twenty years of luxurious peace, little skilled in military affairs. The French Resident, Sabran, alluding to the critical state of Essex in Cornwall, who must be lost, he said, if the King seizes on the advantage he has now over him, and the reinforcements of Waller, dispatched too late, observed on both parties in the Civil Wars, "*Mais ils font tous si mal la guerre que je doute s'il l'aura combattu, ce qu'il ne pourra faire si avantageusement, et si ce secours arrive à tems le mettre lui-même entre deux feux.*" As it happened, Charles on this occasion escaped from Waller by deceiving him in altering his march.

* Vicars' Parliamentary Chronicle, second part, 200.

† The Marquis of Newcastle had a regiment composed of Northumberland men, called, from their dress, *White Coats*. These veterans behaved with the utmost gallantry, and though deserted at Marston-Moor by all their friends, they formed a ring to oppose Cromwell, and the White Coats fell in their ranks without the flight of one man. Whether from the colour of their coats, or their desperate courage, they also obtained the title of Newcastle's "Lambs."

The truth is, Sabran, accustomed to the military tactics of a continental campaign, was not aware that in our Civil Wars it was not always deficient skill which occasioned our bad generalship. A general was not always in earnest, and the pursuer in his career would often pause, to spare the massacre of his fellow-citizens. Essex, inclined to peace, seemed always to have avoided coming to extremities with the King. His name was untainted by fear, and his military reputation was the highest in the kingdom. By his dexterity in raising the siege of Gloucester he did the Parliament the greatest service. Essex, at a moment when he, disliking their proceedings, felt weary of his new masters, and was himself in a most critical position, nobly refused the unlimited offer made by the King, in a letter written by the royal hand, sternly and honourably referring to his Commission, which he said was "to defend the King's person and his posterity, but for the rest he counselled his Majesty to apply to his Parliament." On many occasions, indeed, with these mixed feelings, he seems to have been cautious in pursuing his advantages. On the King's side they often deliberated long without coming to any resolution, and as often resolved without deliberation.* The King's most able general, Colonel Goring, was an airy bacchanalian, who, on the most critical emergency, could not be enticed from the jollities of the table, slighting every alarmist, till the carouse was concluded. His rapid genius often repaired his neglect, but on one great occasion he suffered the Earl of Essex to escape, not to interrupt the harmony of a convivial party which he had engaged.

The Parliament had the appearance of an army before the King could complete a single regiment, but it was chiefly composed of citizens, and this undisciplined soldiery now saw themselves opposed to the volunteers in the King's ranks, men of name, of condition, and of wealth, while they themselves were so unknown to the world, that afterwards their loss was unperceived. Those who fell on the King's side were too eminent to be passed over. Many now beheld themselves in arms against those, from whom they were accustomed to solicit commands, more were marching against those old companions with whom they had shared in their common labours. The brother saw his

* Bulstrode's Memoirs, 113.

brother in the ranks he was led on to attack. A Parliamentary soldier, dying of his wounds, declared that his deepest grief was having received his death from the hand of his brother. Him he had recognised among the royal troops, and turned aside, but the carabine was impetuously discharged by the hand which had never before been raised but in affection.

A spirit of chivalric loyalty animated the slender ranks of the King's army. A spirit so strange to the political party in the Commons, that they had not calculated on that awakening force which had supplied the deserted monarch, left as he was without other resources than his standard and his name, with an army maintained by the nobility and gentry. The noblemen and gentlemen who crowded to ride in the King's own regiment, commanded by Lord Bernard Stuart, his kinsman, and brother to the Duke of Richmond, were so wealthy a body of the aristocracy, that Charles observed, "the revenues of those in that single troop would buy the estates of my Lord of Essex and of all the officers in his army." Wealth has always been considered by the infirmity of civilised man as the permanent standard of power; but in great revolutions, where the passions, more even than the interests of the actors are concerned, the artificial potency of wealth shrinks before loftier motives and mightier principles. The royal army was inspired by HONOUR, and the Parliamentary army was led on by LIBERTY. These are national virtues, more permanent in their operations, and less liable to consume themselves than that which "maketh itself wings and flieth away."

But there was a fatality in the character of Charles the First, a fatality which arose from that propensity to favour those who stood most near to him. Though of cold and retired habits, his social affections were excessive, and deprived him of all power of judgment. It is unquestionable that this monarch was deficient in the acute discernment of the real talents and capacity of those persons who were most closely attached to him, a weakness which repeatedly betrayed him into errors on some of the most important events of his life. It is observed in one of the suppressed passages of Clarendon, that "the King always loved his family immoderately, and with notable partiality, and was willing to believe that their high quality could not be

without all those qualities and qualifications which were equal to it, if they had an opportunity to manifest those endowments."* Charles credited them for that which he himself possessed. There was a romantic tinge in the character of Charles the First; it showed itself in that day-break of his active life, the stolen voyage of love to Madrid, to its setting-sun—his long imprisonments. All men about him witnessed in this monarch that greatness of spirit which he was prone to contemplate in those who were allied to him, or those who were closest in his intimacy.

This domestic weakness was the first ruinous error in the civil wars of this hapless monarch. Charles in exempting Prince Rupert, because the Prince was his nephew, from receiving orders from any one but himself, and by adopting the Prince's plans, was confiding his fortunes to a juvenile soldier, whose rash spirit and intolerable haughtiness made his courage his greatest defect. The Earl of Lindsay, who actually bore the commission of Commander-in-chief, thus became subordinate in power; and besides suffering this indignity, that veteran entirely disagreed with the royal boy's orders and plans. Unskilled in the military science, the Prince delighted solely in the impetuosity of his charge, and in the pursuit of the fugitive. He would rush on the enemy in view, but never at any time reflected on those he left behind, and was sure on his victorious return to find that the battle was lost. Prince Rupert could never correct his natural deficiencies for warlike enterprises, for he repeated the same error in the three great battles which decided the fate of Charles. Rupert had great courage, but neither science nor genius; he depended on his impetuous charge, and never failed in it. But it seems that the military genius, like the genius of poetry, requires to be reminded of that critical verse of Pope, as it was originally plainly given—

“ There are whom Heaven has blest with store of Wit,
Yet want as much again to manage it.”

The worst characteristic of this German soldier was his disposition for plunder, and pillaging the waggons, which occasioned Prince Rupert to be called “Prince Robber,” being, as Vicars

* Clarendon, iv. 603.

says, "thievishly wise."* The noble-minded Lindsay would not desert the King for the error of the royal judgment. Considering himself, however, no longer as his General, but as a private Colonel, he took his station at the head of his own regiment, to manifest that he was willing to die for the sovereign whom he could not serve.

The Parliament had selected for their Commander-in-Chief one who yielded to none in reputation. The Earl of Essex, whose unfortunate history seems to have occasioned him the displeasure of the ladies at Court, had been unaccountably neglected by the King. Essex had felt the coldness of that neglect, but he was of a temper which made him but half an enemy. The royal person was still revered as inviolable in the Constitution, and Essex looked on the sovereign with more awe than on his new masters. The Earl indeed had been perplexed by the novel doctrine which distinguished his allegiance to the King in his corporate, from his personal capacity; but stronger heads than his own had satisfactorily decided to arm in the King's name against the King. Invested with the distinguished title of "His Excellency," Essex was not insensible to its *glorioté*. We may often use the Abbé St. Pierre's felicitous diminutive of glory, when the personal vanity of the egotist predominates over the more elevated feeling. But there seems to have been a better motive in the conduct of the Earl of Essex. He had flattered himself, for his new masters had flattered him, that he should stand in the breach to allay the passions of the Parliament, and even to direct their councils, and thus to preserve the nation in its extremities. Men of middling capacity often indulge those bold designs to which only the greatest are competent.

It was in a state of such vacillating opinions and afflicted feelings that the two armies met; their animosities had not yet fleshed their swords, and their reluctant spirits weakened at the onset. Many on both sides alike dreaded a defeat or a victory.

The battle of Edge-hill is a memorable instance of one of those indecisive actions in which both parties alike imagined that they were defeated.

* Vicars' Parl. Chronicle, second part, 200.

It was on an October morning that suddenly on the heights of Edge-hill in Warwickshire was discerned a body of cavalry. It was the horse of the impetuous Rupert, who had preceded the royal troops ; they at intervals were hastening to rejoin him. Beneath, in the plain, called the Vale of the Red Horse,* stood the Earl of Essex, who had chosen his ground and arranged his order of battle, awaiting the attack. During several hours the Royalists were allowed to wind down the steep, without suffering any interruption.

Before the battle Charles severally addressed his lords and colonels in his tent—his soldiers and his whole army. His speeches on this remarkable occasion are animated. To the lords, Charles rejects with disdain the odious term of “Malignant,” and explains to the soldiers that of “Cavalier,” which had been degraded into infamy, while the plain republican rudeness had prided itself on that of “Trooper.”

“My Lords, and the rest here present,” said Charles, “your King is both your cause, your quarrel, and your Captain. The foe is in sight. Now show yourselves no malignant parties, but with your swords declare what courage and fidelity is within you. I have written and declared that I intended always to maintain the Protestant religion, the privileges of the Parliament, and the liberties of the subject. Let Heaven show his power by this day’s victory ! Come life or death, your King will bear you company, and ever keep this field, this place, and this day’s service in his grateful remembrance !”

“Friends and Soldiers !” exclaimed the monarch, “you are called Cavaliers and Royalists in a disgraceful manner. If I suffer in my fame, needs must you do also. Now show yourselves my friends and not malignants, fight for your King, the peace of the kingdom, and the Protestant religion. The valour of Cavaliers hath honoured that name both in France and other countries, and now let it be known in England, as well as horseman or trooper. The name of Cavalier signifies nothing more than a gentleman serving his King on horseback. Show yourselves therefore now courageous Cavaliers, and beat back all opprobrious aspersions cast upon you.

* One Brightman on the Revelations, chap. vi., in this name which the inhabitants of Keinton gave the meadow between Stratford-on-Avon and Banbury, “cleared up a terrible mystery.”

“Friends and Soldiers! I look upon you with joy to behold so great an army as ever King of England had in these later times. I thank your loves offered to your King to hazard your lives and fortunes with me, in my urgent necessity. I see by you that no father can leave his son, no subject his lawful King. We have marched so long in hope to meet no enemy, unknowing any at whose hands we deserve any opposition. But matters are not to be declared by words, but by swords. You all think our thoughts while I reign over your affections, as well as persons. My resolution is to try the doubtful chance of war, while with much grief I must stand to and endure the hazards. I desire not the effusion of blood, but since Heaven hath so decreed, and that so much preparation hath been made, we must need accept of the present occasion for an honourable victory and glory to our crown, since reputation is that which gilds over the richest gold, and shall ever be the endeavour of our whole reign. Your King bids you all be courageous, and Heaven make ye victorious!”*

The King gave the solemn word, “Go in the name of God, and I’ll lay my bones with yours.” With his own hand he fired the first piece, that first shot, the predecessor of years of national misery! Prince Rupert impetuously charged the right wing of the Parliamentarians, who dispersed in all directions, many of these fugitives never stopping till they reached the metropolis, where they brought the first news of a total defeat. There was also a defection in the army of the Parliament; an entire regiment passed over to the King. Fortune seemed favourable to the Royalists, and when Lord Falkland repeatedly pressed Wilmot, who commanded the King’s left wing, to charge on Sir William Balfour, who with a small unbroken body of the reserve of Essex’s army was roving about and doing fatal execution, this General replied, “My Lord, we have got the day, and let us live to enjoy the fruit.” Yet here the Earl of Lindsay fell, and the Standard-bearer, Sir Edward Varney was killed. The King himself was in imminent danger, as well as the Princes; the bullets dropped near them, or passed over their heads. Every one trembled for the King, and Charles was importuned to draw off from the midst of the action; but no

* Somers’ Tracts, Sir Walter Scott’s edition, iv. 478.

intreaties availed, and the King rode into the head-ranks encouraging them to maintain their ground, by the valour with which he himself set the example. At length perceiving the doubtful aspect of the field, he commanded the Princes to retire. Charles himself still lingered on the field with some of his lords and officers, but they knew not what had become of their horse, and their ranks had visibly thinned.

When Rupert with his cavalry returned from his imprudent victory, and a pursuit which had been protracted by the plunder of the baggage of the enemy, he saw the wide mischief which his rash conduct had occasioned. He found the King in distress with few attendants; the officers could not rally their scattered regiments, and the men were roving about without their officers. Thus instead of the victory which Rupert had so rashly anticipated, the Prince saw "the hope of so glorious a day quite vanished." It seems probable that had Prince Rupert not pursued the enemy too far, and lost so much time in plundering their waggons, he would have returned in triumph to annihilate the Parliament's forces, and it might have been doubtful whether a second army could ever have been collected. It is remarkable of this battle between disciplined and undisciplined troops, of military men and civil volunteers, that the greatest slaughter on the side of the Parliament was of such as run away, and on the Royalist, of those who stood and fell in their ranks.*

The day was closing, and the King was advised to abandon the field, but on this, his first martial exploit, Charles displayed that intrepid decision and that prodigal gallantry which afterwards he had so many occasions to show to the world. Charles was sensible that the soul of his little army lay in his own conduct, as the raising of it had been by his own person; and he thought, as he declared, to use the words of Clarendon, that "it was unprincely to forsake them who had forsaken all they had to serve him." The King perceived, and perhaps he wondered, that the Parliamentarians did not look as if they considered themselves as victors. Those spiritless troops of citizen-soldiers seemed to place their safety in keeping close together in an immoveable position.

* Ludlow, an unexceptionable witness, i. 44.

At this moment whoever had offered to advance, had probably struck a panic in his adversary, and had obtained an instant victory. Charles attempted to rally the cavalry for a fresh charge on Balfour, who, since the return of Prince Rupert, had ceased his active operations; but the troopers declared that their horses were so tired that they could not venture on a charge. Both parties were satisfied to look on each other.

The night parted them, "that common friend to wearied and dismayed armies." It was a cold October night, with a sharp frost on the ground, and piercing northerly winds, trying the strength of men on the King's side, who had not tasted food for forty-eight hours. The condition of the royal army was far worse than the other. The King would not leave the open field, sitting by a scanty fire kindled by bushes and brushwood. Charles dreaded the morning, when his thinned ranks would expose his weakness to the observation of the enemy. Sometimes they flattered themselves, while all seemed quiet, that the Parliamentarians had retreated; but at break of day they were found standing on the same spot. It is said that Essex could not venture to retreat, lest his men should disperse and run away; but he had provided his honest citizens with plentiful provisions, which, invested with the plenary Parliamentary power, he had levied on towns and villages, while the King's party, who, the peasantry had been told, consisted of those terrible Papists of whom they had heard so much, found no friends, but were forsaken to perish with cold and hunger.

Thus the King kept the field, and Essex did not lose his ground. The Parliamentarians were not conquered, nor were the Royalists defeated. Both armies continued looking on each other the whole day.

At length the King, to rest his wearied men, commanded them back to their old quarters, and Essex withdrew to Warwick Castle with his prisoners, yet not without marks of trepidation, for in his haste he left behind his wounded, and many carriages, and his rear suffered themselves to be chased by some of the King's horse. The loss on Essex's side trebled the King's, but the great names which had perished, or which were included among the prisoners, made the Earl's claim to this disputed victory more apparent to the world; while the Royalists,

when, shortly after, Banbury surrendered to the King, appealed to the pursuit of their retreating enemy as an evidence of the victory of Edge-hill. It signified little who were the conquerors, when both armies were equally desirous of leaving the other.

The singular circumstance of both parties, after the battle, refusing either to fly or to renew the attack, Clarendon considered incomprehensible. The Duke of Argyle and Lord Cobham in a conversation with Warburton, deciding as military men, insisted that Essex should have pressed on the King, or followed him up closely. When the King saw Essex neglect this advantage, and retreat northwards, the King should have marched to London, and ended the war at a blow. But Warburton, looking more narrowly into moral causes and the hidden passions of the leaders, as a profound politician, solved the incomprehensible problem of Clarendon. Essex's views and principles would not suffer him to destroy the King, no more than some of Charles's friends wished the King to take the metropolis by conquest, and had therefore, in council, dissuaded him from the march to London. It is certain that many Royalists dreaded a victory on their own side, lest Charles should imagine that he had conquered the nation. They cherished a hope that the Parliament, if prevented from obtaining a victory over the King, would stand as a perpetual barrier against any future arbitrary measures. Both parties dreaded to conquer the other as much as to be conquered. Such is the distracted state of a civil war !

While this memorable action was proceeding, the terror of the metropolis was not less than that experienced in the field. It is curious to observe the nature of those rumours and the panic of those flights which a great battle produces on a capital whose safety depends on the results. The first fugitives, who had been broken and dispersed by Prince Rupert's cavalry, had hurried on in breathless agony, to declare that all was lost ; that the King's army was terrible ; and as their fears multiplied, some imagined a number of incidents which appear not to have occurred. The Earl of Essex had fallen in the field, and with his dying words bade every one shift for himself ! The whole of Monday the city was in terror. Late in the afternoon, dispatches from the Earl of Essex himself, acknowledged the impression made on his horse, but that the conclusion was

prosperous. Yet, so far beyond their hopes went their fears, that the dispatches of the Earl were not credited. The Lord Hastings, entering the House with ghastly looks, had declared that he himself had witnessed the destruction of the army. His Lordship indeed had been among the foremost of the fugitives, and seemed scarcely to know how he had escaped. In the horror and consternation of eight-and-forty hours, every man paid and underwent a full penance and mortification for the hopes and insolence of three months before — sarcastically observes Clarendon.

At length two Members arrived from the army, and their statements being as favourably drawn up as affairs admitted, the House voted that their army had obtained a victory, and appointed a solemn thanksgiving. It was declared in Parliament, and it was announced in Guildhall. Still, many who were returning from the scene of action, spread the most contradictory accounts, some asserting that the two Members themselves had seen little or nothing of that horrible day's business. The King, immediately after the action, having taken Banbury, confirmed the more disastrous accounts, nor could his uninterrupted march to Oxford, while the Earl had retreated to Warwick, be denied. At length the Parliament committed every one to prison who reported that the King had the better in the field: an arbitrary measure, which increased the suspicions of the political sceptics of a victory which seemed to depend on the votes of the Commons.

The battle of Edge-hill was in truth neither a victory nor a defeat, but it was the first battle of the Civil Wars, the seed of six years of national affliction !

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MILITARY LIFE OF CHARLES THE FIRST.

MILITARY heroism excites the admiration of the world more than any other virtue. It seems to be the original sin of our nature to be more interested by action than by repose. Power which destroys, astonishes mankind more than power which perpetuates. A philosopher once inquired into the cause of that restlessness and disorder in man which he could not discover in any other animal. He might have recollected that no other animal is endowed with that proud reason which is doomed to be tormented by glory, and never satiated by self-love. As a Captain, the King is not considered to have been among the inferior Generals of his own country. He was unquestionably the bravest of his age. Our commanders in the civil war seem to have had little experience in their art, till the genius of Cromwell showed that he combated for victory. The fearlessness and intrepidity of the King have even extorted the applause of his bitterest enemies, so bewitching is personal courage! But his, too, was that nobler moral courage which could sustain defeat, unmoved by despair; a quality which does not always accompany the animal energy and dashing spirit of brutish heroes.

One of our most popular authors has conveyed to some readers an erroneous impression of Charles the First when amidst his army, in the well-known "*Memoirs of a Cavalier*." The animated narrative of this fiction is wrought with such dexterity, and the events are detailed with such precision, that the great Lord Chatham mistook it for an authentic history, recommending it as the best account of the civil wars. He was not a little mortified when that illusion was dissipated. More than once I have seen copious extracts from this

suppositious narrative given as authorities by grave writers of history.* It is one of those historical romances which are very like truth, and therefore the worse, as the most dangerous, for the likeness, for it is

“A false Duessa, seeming Lady faire!” †

“The Cavalier” pretends that he had “frequent discourses with his Majesty,” and on one occasion satisfactorily showed the King how the battle which he had lost might have been gained. From this presumed intimacy, we should have expected to have learnt something of the habits and character of Charles the First, when amidst his camp—in the hour of battle—and on his constant marches. These omissions were not forborne from any purpose which many have had of depreciating the personal character of Charles, for De Foe has vindicated the monarch from the reproaches of the public libels of the times, which denounce him for a tyrant reckless of the blood of his subjects: “The Cavalier” acknowledging that “He never saw any inclination in his Majesty to cruelty, or to act any thing not practised by men of honour in all nations.” On one occasion, the Cavalier had told us that “When he was in Germany with the King of Sweden, we used to see the King with the general

* De Foe’s “Cavalier” has been printed under four different titles, probably adapted to the different designs of the editors. One is called “The History of the Civil Wars in Germany, from 1630 to 1635; also genuine Memoirs of the Wars of England in the unhappy Reign of Charles the First. Written by a *Shropshire Gentleman, who personally served on the Royal side during the unhappy Contests of England.*”—Newark, 1732. The late Mr. John Nichols, whose bibliographical knowledge of English books was considerable, in his costly History of Leicestershire, was so fascinated by a provincial edition, and by the “Shropshire Gentleman who personally served,” that he has largely transcribed from this Romance for an authentic narrative of the siege of Leicester, without being aware that he was alloying his antiquarian metal with a modern brass.—Nichols’ Leicestershire, iii. app. 41. It is a curious fact, that a similar error to that of Lord Chatham’s happened to Jackson of Exeter, who had some claims to literary distinction, as well as to musical celebrity. He always considered that De Foe’s “History of the Plague” was written by a contemporary, from its minute details, and the many natural incidents so forcibly invented. Nor is this surprising, since a learned physician, I think Dr. Mead, writing on “the Plague,” refers to that extraordinary historical romance by the same writer. All this is highly honourable to the genius of De Foe, but by no means to historical romances, for the dangerous deception successfully practised even on enlightened men.

† Spenser.

officers every morning on horseback viewing his men, his artillery, his horses, and always something going forwards;” but that he had the least diversion in the English army, where, he proceeds, “The King was seldom seen among us, and seldom without courtiers and clergymen, parsons and bishops, always about him.” This happened when the English army was at York, on the first invasion of the Scots. That expedition, we have already shown, was a mere parade of war, and as Charles himself acknowledged, that army was never designed for fighting. The reader who views Charles once placed in this ridiculous attitude, and hears nothing farther of his conduct during these civil wars, at which our Cavalier assures us he was present, cannot avoid receiving a very ordinary impression of the military life of this monarch. Had De Foe known what we could tell him, that picturesque artist amidst his inventions had sketched a prominent figure of Charles during many years, unwearied, unsubdued by calamity, and wrestling with fate.

We have several addresses of the King to his army, or to the inhabitants of places whom he summoned to meet him. They are not formal orations. Having addressed the Somersetshire men, he concludes—“Your cheerfulness in this service I shall requite if it be in my power; if I live not to do it, I hope this young man, my son, your fellow-soldier in this expedition, will, to whom I shall particularly give it in charge.”* In pointing to the Prince who was by, and in uttering the language of the heart, “this young man, my son, and your fellow-soldier,” was an appeal to the social feelings of the multitude, which must have found a response in the breast of every man.

Sabran, the French resident, had several interviews with Charles the First, passing over to the King at different times from the metropolis. The Frenchman was little prepossessed in favour of the King; his “Instructions” had hinted to him that Charles had never returned “the affectionate offers” of France.

He is surprised to find that “The King is prodigal of his exertions, and astonishingly laborious. He is more frequently

on his horse than in his coach, from morning till night marching with his infantry. The soldiers seem conscious of all the cares and the wants of their King, satisfying themselves gaily with the little he can do for them, and marching with all their hearts (*marchant de cœur*), as it appears to me, to another battle, to which the troops of the Parliament, better armed, seem to be leading them. I have seen them all, and considered them well." In another passage, Sabran is more deeply affected by the conduct of Charles. "I can assure you that he is to my mind a King the most laborious, the most judicious, and the least rash (*empressé*) in such bad affairs, personally giving and directing all his orders, even to the least; never signing a paper without a strict consideration; and the King is as often on foot as on horseback at the head of his army. His Britannic Majesty desires peace, but from his knowledge of the contempt with which his inclination is received, he is bent on war. Although the King, in my opinion, will open the campaign with advantage rather than loss (this was in April, 1645), yet he has such inadequate resources, that one cannot hope for him long." Not two months afterwards, Fairfax, the new Commander-in-Chief, gave a total overthrow to the King's army, and the reverses of Charles fast followed.

At Naseby, where, as Clarendon so mournfully tells, "The King and the kingdom were lost," a sentiment, says Warburton, dictated by a generous despair, and as nobly expressed, fortune for ever deserted the royal standard. The self-possession and the dauntless intrepidity of the King in the hour of action, was on that day put to trial. Charles would have reconquered the lost battle. The King rode, encouraging with voice and hand the men, often exclaiming, "One charge more, and we recover the day!" Twice, Sabran notices, the King rallied the infantry, but suddenly the cavalry turned, and were all in flight. The infantry perceiving themselves abandoned, whole battalions flung down their arms. Charles, regardless of his person, was rushing into the midst of the enemy, when the Scotch Earl of Carneworth suddenly laid his hand on the bridle of the King's horse, exclaiming with two or three broad Scottish oaths, "Will you go upon your death in an instant?" From one who was present at this action, we learn that the King hardly

escaped by charging with his own troop of horse solely, through the body of the enemy.*

It is remarkable, that in this, the most important battle, where the parties met with equal desires and hopes, the action was the least sanguinary of all in the civil wars. The killed were few, and the prisoners very many. The number of standards taken astonished Sabran, who observed as the prisoners passed by his window, that among three thousand of Charles's infantry there were not more than two or three carts of the wounded, and not more than eight or ten cavaliers prisoners. This account is confirmed by Ludlow, who calculates the total of the prisoners at six thousand. "This victory," adds the Republican General, "was obtained with the loss of a very few on our side, and not above three or four hundred of the enemy."†

What then occasioned such a complete discomfiture on the side of the royalists? It is evident that a panic had seized on the cavalry. Clarendon is the only writer who has ventured to account for this extraordinary panic, and he does this by alluding to the trivial incident of the Earl of Carneworth suddenly turning round the King's horse by snatching the bridle! Instantly the word ran through the troops "to march to the right," which "led them from charging the enemy, turning their horses, all rode away upon the spur"—*Sauve qui se peut*.

* Iter Carolinum, Gutch's Miscellanea Curiosa, ii. 442.

† Hume has taken up some account of this battle, which differs from the present. "The slain on the side of the Parliament exceeded those on the side of the King. They lost a thousand men, he not above eight hundred." The accounts of the killed in battles are very suppositious; each party lessening their own and multiplying those of the enemy; but as all agree in the present case, to the immense crowd of prisoners, we may be certain it was occasioned by some uncommon accident.

As a specimen of the lying accounts which were bolstered up even by the Parliament to deceive the people, Josiah Ricraft, who has exerted his pen in commemorating "England's Champions" and "Truth's faithful Patriots," pretends to give an exact account of the loss incurred by both the King and the Parliament in these civil wars. He counts over the slain in every place and every action, and the total is, as he intended before he began to count, that the common soldiers slain on the King's side amount to 31,560, while the total on the Parliament's is only 2533. He seems not to have been aware that this very statement proves how greatly the King divided the common people with the Parliament, notwithstanding the immense resources they held in their hands, and that the King had little more than his name.

On a panic terror, even on an accident as inconsiderable as the one alleged by the noble historian, have doubtless turned the fortunes of battles; but in the present case it is evident that the imminent peril in which the King stood was equally participated by his cavalry, and the single cry to "march to the right," that is, to march away! was not unwillingly obeyed simultaneously by all. The astonishment of Sabran that there were only "eight or ten cavaliers" among the prisoners, implies that the panic-stricken cavalry and the infantry who laid down their arms were formed of raw recruits, or ordinary soldiery. The cavaliers, that is, the men of rank and honour, fell in their ranks, maintaining their gallantry on the ground which they covered when dead. Of three or four hundred killed of the Royalists, as Ludlow tells us, we learn from Clarendon that "there were above one hundred and fifty officers and gentlemen of prime quality dead upon the spot, whose memories ought to be preserved."

It is a curious fact that a great reverse had occurred in the state of the two armies during the Civil Wars. The spirit of loyalty was surrounded by illusions. The Royalists believed their cause to be the only lawful one; that the name of the King was itself "more than thirty thousand;" and that the people would fight for the Crown, as they expressed it, "though it hung but on a hawthorn hedge." Their deeds vouched their honour; but their confidence betrayed their presumption; presumption which is only hope run mad. They seemed not sensible that a part of the nation had become another people. It was not only that Sovereignty was contemned, but that new interests had risen in opposition to the old. Deprived of their estates, the Royalists acquired nothing by a fugitive victory; it was a blaze which extinguished itself. Careless, gay, and dissipated, the Royalists rarely acted in concert; they attacked but in hope. Vigilant to preserve their pay and their spoil, and for ever lost if they could not save themselves, the Parliamentarians combated in despair. The moral force of the parties became every year more unequal. There was also another cause of the unprosperous state of the Royalist army. From the difficulty which the King had found both in paying and subsisting his men, his levies were often raised suddenly, and necessarily were

now composed of raw undisciplined recruits. The commissariat, which the greatest captain of our times has described as the soul of an army, seems then to have been as unknown as the term. There was no want of men, had Charles the means to subsist them. Sir Henry Slingsby notices that having once collected three hundred men who flocked to his summons, having not the means of providing for them, he was compelled to disband, and send them back to their homes. They were ready to fight for the King, but they required also to be fed.

On the Parliament's side, under Cromwell and Fairfax, the troops had not only greatly improved in the strictness of their discipline, and the quality of the men, but they were now acting under the influence of a principle which worked in the field greater miracles than the whole military art. Under Cromwell his Parliamentarians were no longer as he described them to have been, "decayed serving-men, broken tapsters, and these without religion." That extraordinary man, who had long witnessed the noble sacrifices of the Cavaliers, now meditated to oppose the spirit of religion to the principle of honour. It is his own avowal in a speech to Parliament. We have sometimes smiled at his army halting to sing a psalm—it was as exciting as the Marseillaise hymn.* Cromwell was a vast genius, because he derived his greatness not merely from his deeds, but from a higher source,—from a principle which, in the present instance, unfolds the philosophy of a Montesquieu. With Cromwell's turn of mind, like another Mahomet, he might have founded a new religion. He prayed, and wept, and had all the unction of inspiration. He rarely disputed on doctrinal points, but he poured himself out on free-grace. Baxter, who well knew Cromwell, conveys a very lively notion of his art of oratory: "Of a sanguine complexion, naturally of such a vivacity, hilarity, and alacrity, as another man hath when he hath drunken a cup too much."† But the man who was not hardy enough to make himself king, dreading the pistols of a few of his brothers in arms, was too wary in his enthusiasm, acting with others, rather than of doing that in which he must have stood alone, unguarded by the sympathies of those who surrounded him.

The character of a commander is not only displayed in a

* See note at the end of the chapter.

† Baxter's Life, 57, fo.

victory, but in its vicissitudes, in the trying hour of his defeat, when the collectedness of his thoughts is to retrieve the past, and in the presence of mind when defection or open mutiny are to be repressed by courageous castigation. Charles, the retired Charles, adapted to adorn the interior of a palace by the arts he loved, and the seclusion he courted, now wearing out his robust frame in hard campaigns by night and day, even when lowest in fortune preserved the same unalterable spirit. It is certain that few have possessed such an entire self-control as this monarch; this was probably a constitutional virtue; it would be of a higher rank if we conceive it to have been the acquirement of his philosophy. Whatever it was, it originated, however, in no deficiency of sympathy. We may recollect the extraordinary manner in which he received, to him the most afflicting intelligence, the catastrophe of the Duke of Buckingham, which was secretly communicated to him while at chapel—he remained unmoved! He showed the same undisturbed magnanimity when standing in the tower of the wall of Chester, he saw his troops in a sally defeated, and his friend Lord Lichfield slain at a moment when such a loss was irretrievable. Sir Henry Slingsby, who was about the King, has noticed the imperturbable character of Charles. “Here,” says this honest memorialist, “I do wonder at the admirable temper of the King, whose constancy was such that no perils never so unavoidable could move him to astonishment, but that still he set the same face and settled countenance upon whatsoever adverse fortune befel him, and neither was he exalted by prosperity nor dejected in adversity, which was the more admirable in him, seeing he had no other to have recourse unto, but must bear the whole burden upon his own shoulders.”* Indeed the self-command of Charles the First finds hardly a parallel in the history of man. When this monarch received the fatal intelligence that the Scots had resolved to deliver him up to the English Parliament, he was engaged at chess; his companion, struck with amazement, stopped his play. The King desired him to proceed, preserved silence, and won the game! Such a revolution of fortune might have startled one of Plutarch’s heroes.

I shall now furnish an extraordinary instance of the King’s

* Memoirs of Sir Henry Slingsby, 82.

spirited and firm conduct in a mutiny which was not known to our historians. After the battle of Naseby, at Welbeck the King held one of the most important councils of war which occurred during his fugitive reign. Should he march for Scotland to join Montrose, or return to Oxford to attempt a treaty with the Parliament? The council were equally divided in their opinions; the King inclined to those who were for marching to Scotland. It was some time after, that one morning orders had actually been issued to rendezvous in Worksop Park, when an express arrived, announcing the defeat of Montrose, and the face of war in an instant changed!

The King retreated to Newark, as the nearest place of safety. At this moment Charles the First seemed at the lowest ebb of his fortunes. Bristol had most unexpectedly capitulated under Prince Rupert, by which the King suffered the immediate loss of many towns, and, shortly after, all the West of England. Lord Digby, too, had been just routed at Sherborne. Misfortune trod on the heels of misfortune. Factions and disagreements and personal jealousies, the usual consequences attendant on discomfited troops, were dividing into parties the fragments of the royal army.

The astonishing surrender of Bristol, on terms not honourable to the Prince, was hardly forgiven, after his assurance of keeping that city for four months. The King addressed two energetic letters to his nephews, which, in a view of his character, deserve our notice. The agony of his despair appears in a remarkable postscript to a letter the King wrote to Secretary Nicholas: "Tell my son that I shall less grieve to hear that he is knocked on the head, than that he should do so mean an action as is the rendering of Bristol Castle and Fort upon the terms it was."

That fatal blow reversed all his hopes; he calls it "the greatest trial of my constancy that hath yet befallen me;" the depth and bitterness of this feeling can only appear by the letter which the King addressed to Prince Rupert. I have transcribed it from the original in a private collection, preserving in this instance the peculiarity of the royal orthography. Charles had never been taught to spell his words, but wrote them down by the ear.*

* From the Autograph Collection of W. BENET, Esq., M.P. I have since found this letter in Clarendon, with the orthography modernised.

TO PRINCE RUPERT.

“NEPHEU,

HEREFORD, 14th Sept. 1645.

“Though the loss of Bristol be a great blow to me, yet your surrendring it as you did, is of so much affliction to me, that it makes me forget not only the consideration of that place, but is lykewaies the greatest tryall of my constancy that hath yet befallen me; for, what is to be done? After one, that is so neer me as you ar both in blood and frendship, submits himself to so meane an action (I give it the easiest terme) such, I have so much to say, that I will say no more of it, only least rashness of judgement be layed to my charge, I must remember you of your letter of the 12th of Aug. whereby you assured me (that if no mutiny hapned) you would keepe Bristol for fower monthes; did you keep it fower dayes? Was there any thing like mutiny? More questions might be asked, but now I confesse to little purpose. My conclusion is to desyre you to seek your subsistence (untill it shall please God to determine my condition) somewhere beyond seas, to which end I send you herewith a passe, and I pray God to make you sensible of your present condition, and give you means to redeme what you have lost: for I shall have no greater joy in a victory than a just occasion without blushing, to assure you of my being your loving oncle and most faithful friend,

“CHARLES R.”

A week had hardly elapsed ere the mortified feelings of Charles, somewhat subdued by sorrow, awakened his domestic affections for his other nephew Maurice. The youth of this Prince required exhortations for the future, and consolation for the past, but neither could he receive, save from the encouragement of his Sovereign and his relative. If we take both these remarkable letters together, they will display such tenderness for the younger Prince, and such a majestic correction of the elder, that perhaps on no occasion does the character of the man break out in a more trying hour. We view Charles in a light assuredly in which others have studied to avoid placing him. The letter to Prince Maurice I have transcribed from the original in the Harleian Collection.

TO PRINCE MAURICE.

"NEPHEW,

NEWTOUNE, 20th Sept. 1645.

"What through want of time or unwillingness to speak to you of so unpleasant a subject, I have not yet (which now I must supply) spoken to you freely of your brother Rupert's present condition: the truth is, that his unhandsome quitting the Castle and Fort of Bristol, hath inforced me to put him off those commands which he had in my army, and have sent him a pass to go beyond sea. Now though I could do no less than this, for which believe me, I have too much reason upon strict examination, yet I assure you that I am most confident that this great error of his, which indeed hath given me more grief than any misfortune since this damnable Rebellion, hath no way proceeded from his change of affection to me or my cause, but merely by having his judgment seduced by some (rotten-hearted*) villains making fair pretensions to him, and I am resolved so little to forget his former services, that whensoever it shall please God to enable me to look upon my friends like a King, he shall thank God for the pains he hath spent in my armies. So much for him, now for yourself. I know you to be so free from his present misfortune, that it no ways staggers me in that good opinion which I have ever had of you, and so long as you shall not be weary of your employments under me, I will give you all the encouragement and contentment that lies in my power; however, you shall always find me

"Your loving uncle and most assured friend,

"CHARLES R."†

It was after the reception of these letters, that Prince Rupert with his accustomed impetuosity proceeded towards the King, and reached Belvoir Castle with his brother and about two hundred of his officers. The King required him not to advance till farther orders. The next day, however, Rupert proceeded, and Sir Richard Willis, the Governor of Newark, one of the

* This in the original is an interlineation; the forcible expression was recollected by Charles; he had formerly heard it from the mobs, who on one occasion, we find, alluded to "rotten-hearted Lords." It was probably no unusual term at that day.

† Harleian MSS. 6988. 115.

Prince's party in that fugitive Court, now torn by the factions of the army, went out with a company of cavalry to meet the contumacious Prince, a ceremony which he had never paid to the King himself. Accompanied by this train, Rupert, regardless of any usual ceremony, came into the presence, and came, he said, to justify himself. The King spoke with cold reserve, occasionally addressed himself to Prince Maurice: rose early from supper, and retired, to close any farther intercourse. On the following day Rupert was allowed to make his defence, and after a day or two of debate, the Prince was absolved from any treason in the surrender of Bristol, but he was not cleared from the charge of indiscretion.

The Governor of Newark, Sir Richard Willis, who had sided with the Prince, was living on ill terms with the King's resident Commissioners, who had proved themselves zealous in their master's cause. To put an end to these feuds, the King appointed Lord Bellasis Governor of Newark, but previously had privately communicated his intention to Willis, and appointed him to be Captain of his Horse-guards in the place of the Earl of Lichfield, who had recently fallen before Chester. It was a command, says Clarendon, fit for any subject. Charles used the most gracious expressions, and without censuring the conduct of the Governor, observed it was easier to remove one person, than to reform the complainants. Willis seemed troubled, and desired to be excused from serving in a place of too great honour, ill adapted to his means. Willis added that his enemies would triumph at his expense, and the King promised to take care of his support, and insisted that no one could be considered as disgraced who was placed so near his person. When the King was at dinner, Sir Richard Willis, with both the Princes, Lord Gerrard, and twenty officers, entered into the presence-chamber. Willis, addressing the King, declared that he was dishonoured! Prince Rupert affirmed that Willis had been removed from his government for no fault but that of being his friend. Lord Gerrard asserted that the whole was a plot of Lord Digby, whom he would prove to be a traitor. At this the King rose in disorder from table, and would have had Sir Richard Willis withdraw with him to more privacy, but Willis insolently replied that "he had received a public injury,

and expected a public satisfaction." The King was startled at this hardihood, and indignantly commanded them all to depart from his presence, and to come no more into it. The looks and gestures of the King were unusually agitated, and the party themselves seemed at least confounded—if not repentant. I have here followed the narrative of Clarendon, who, however, has transcribed the whole from the pages of Sir Edward Walker, which had been written under the King's eye. Clarendon concludes his narrative thus. "They departed the room ashamed of what they had done, YET as soon as they came to the Governor's house, they sounded to horse, intending to be presently gone."

Here the narrative of Clarendon abruptly closes, though by that remarkable *yet*, it is evident that if they departed with "shame," they continued to be refractory when "they reached the Governor's house, and sounded to horse." Clarendon only farther tells us that this "unheard-of insolence quickly brought the Lords, who were absent, and all the gentlemen in the town to the King with expressions full of duty, and a very tender sense of the usage he had endured;" and we only discover by Sir Edward Walker's original narrative, that "in a consultation on what was to be done, it was resolved to let them go, and not to take any more notice of their madness." "This resolution," continues Walker, "proceeded rather from his Majesty's mercy than justice, for if he had pleased he might have punished them at his pleasure for this insolency, *all the foot, and most of the gentlemen in town expecting orders what to do.*" Why "all the foot?" Here is an extraordinary bustle among the troops and no adequate cause assigned.

It seems to me that Charles in this narrative, which he had himself corrected, as appears by his own hand-writing, purposely obscured a painful incident, which his feelings were too poignant to detail, and which his delicacy from being himself personally concerned, and the honour of his nephew involved in it, prevented him from perpetuating, though, in suppressing it, the narrative betrays "a tale half-told."

The incident, which is here given to illustrate the military character of Charles the First, now occurred. I have drawn it from the manuscript Memoirs of Lord Belasyse or Bellasis, written by his Secretary, Joshua Moore.

As soon as the parties had left the King, and reached the Governor's house, where they "sounded to horse," Prince Rupert with all his officers drew up their cavalry in the Market-place at Newark; the town was thrown into a state of mutiny. The Prince then accompanied by most of the officers waited on his Majesty with a declaration, that finding themselves no longer trusted, they desired to have passes granted to go beyond the seas. The King, with much surprise, but with more courage and scorn, told them that "The passes to leave his service should be granted, *not only to leave the kingdom, but never more to make use of their swords.*" I have transcribed the King's spirited and prompt reply from the manuscript. Charles, however, did not conclude by the mere severity of the sarcasm. On the return of these officers to their men, Charles called for his horse, and immediately marched with sword and pistols to the Market-place, having given orders to charge the Prince in case of any resistance from the mutineers. The King, sword in hand, advanced from the ranks, calling on the Prince—"Nephew! why are you thus in arms?"—"To defend ourselves against our enemies."—"I command you," said the King, "to march out immediately to Belvoir Castle, and stay there till the passes be sent you to go beyond the seas." The Prince submitted, and marched off his troops.*

This extraordinary adventure at the Market-place, it is evident, has been entirely passed over in the narrative sent down to us. How that affair was considered by the King, appears by "a petition of Prince Rupert and his Officers," wherein the subscribers observe, that "having met to make their several grievances known, we find we have drawn upon us some misconstruction by the *manner*, by reason your Majesty thought that appeared as a *mutiny*."† Charles observed, that "He would not christen it, but it looked very like one."‡

* Sloane MSS., 4162. Art. 16.

† It is preserved in Evelyn, ii. 109.

‡ This affair terminated in Prince Rupert "freely acknowledging his errors," and in the family quarrel the nephew was reconciled to the uncle.—Clarendon's State Papers, ii. 195. Willis was, however, never suffered to come again into the King's presence, and Lord Gerrard was the bearer of a challenge from this Ex-Governor to Lord Bellasis, which the King forbade his Lordship to accept.

The editor of Evelyn was sadly perplexed at the strange inconsistency in the account given of this affair by the various contemporary writers. Burton, in his

The military life of Charles the First exhibits a singular series of personal exertions, often in a state of miserable deprivation, hardly to be paralleled in the history of any other monarch or man. His painful marches, and his fugitive life, were a tribulation of nearly four laborious and afflicted years—and his two last were passed in the awful repose of his imprisonments. A curious record, the zealous labour of one who had been his daily attendant,* has been left us, wherein from the day he quitted Whitehall, to that of the King's transportation to Holmby, the marches, the retreats, and the battles, were registered by nights and miles. Many an affecting incident is cursorily noticed. A supper and a bed, or a dinner in the field, seem not always to have been had, as these are particularly specified among the happier days of these perpetual marches. The King had not always bread for his table, and one night has been recorded which had not the night's meal.

It was an extraordinary fate that a King of England, at the head of an army, was reduced at times to such shifts and miseries, that the story of Alfred with the good-wife was not a scene more ludicrous than Charles the First had sometimes to pass through; and that the satire of Voltaire of the assembled

History of the Civil Wars, declares Prince Rupert's party actually threw up their commissions, yet this "petition," which the editor found among Evelyn's papers, startles him, as it implies positively that their commissions were taken from them. I suspect this to be the fact by Sabran's notice, that as soon as the Prince had retreated to Oxford, the King sent his orders to arrest the Prince in his house, and commanded him to leave the kingdom. This circumstance originated a rumour that the Prince had been bribed by Parliament to surrender Bristol at the price of eight thousand Jacobuses, which were secured at Amsterdam. The editor of Evelyn refers to Sir Richard Bulstrode's Memoirs, and to Clarendon, where "the reader will find much amusement." The editor did not know, what he may now depend on, that Clarendon's account is a mere transcript of Sir Edward Walker's Narrative, and farther, that Bulstrode's is a mere transcript of Clarendon's!

* The *Iter Carolinum* in Gutch's *Miscellanea Curiosa*. Some of these entries may amuse the reader. "The King and his party sometimes lodged in a Bishop's palace, or at the seat of a lord, or a country gentleman, and at a merchant's abode, but not unusually at a Yeoman's house,"—and "a very poor man's house." "Dinner in the field" is an usual entry, but the melancholy one of "No dinner this day," is repeated for successive days. "Sunday no dinner, supper at Worcester; a cruel day." "This march lasted from six in the morning till midnight"—"a long march over the mountains"—"His Majesty lay in the field all night, in his coach, on Boconnock Down"—"The King had his meat and drink dressed at a poor widow's." Such was the life of Charles the First during several years.

monarchs who had not wherewithal to pay their quota for a scurvy supper, was actually realised in the history of Charles the First. When Charles with his tired troops was a fugitive among the mountains of Wales, Sir Henry Slingsby has told a simple narrative of this kind, which the *naïveté* of his own style will best represent. "When the King was at supper eating a pullet and a piece of cheese, the room without was full, but the men's stomachs were empty for want of meat. The good-wife troubled with the continual calling upon her for victuals, and having, it seems, but that one cheese, comes into the room where the King was, and very soberly asks if the King had done with the cheese, for that the gentlemen without desired it." Charles once complained that "His rebel subjects had not left him out of his Revenue enough to preserve him from starving." In the trial of Rosewell, a Dissenting minister, a curious circumstance was disclosed. When a lad, in travelling, he chanced to see King Charles the First in the fields, sitting with a few followers to a sorry dinner under a tree, and from the King's conduct on that occasion he received such deep impressions of the man, that he retained ever after an awful recollection of the monarch. A tree, indeed, was often the canopy of state under which the King gave audience and held councils.

Often the King rode hard through the night, and saw the break of day, which only recalled the wearied fugitive to the anxious cares of a retreat, or a pursuit. Once, late in the evening, the King summoned several gentlemen together, and after their conference he dismissed them to their beds with this pathetic address, "Gentlemen! go you and take your rest, for you have houses and homes, and beds to lodge in, and families to love and live with—but I have none! My horse is waiting for me to travel all this night, and return to the place whence I came." The King had long been like a hunted partridge, flitting from one ground to another—this is an affecting image given of his erratic and anxious courses. In his strange condition, destitute, not merely of the household wants of men, but of those still more poignant, the bereavement of his wife—his children—his friends—the suffering monarch once observed, "As God hath given me afflictions to exercise my patience, so hath he given me patience to bear my afflictions."

On the present subject, of the military life of Charles the First, we may notice the difficulty of communicating with the distant localities of his scattered followers, the messengers frequently passing through the quarters of the enemy. The modes contrived for conveying secret intelligence were as extraordinary as any recorded among the stratagems of war by the ancients. Bruno Ryves details the corporal persecution which a Dr. Cox, a Royalist, with a King's trumpeter who had waited on the doctor, endured from the Earl of Stamford at Exeter. Among other personal injuries, they were not only most narrowly searched, then stripped naked, and the fists of a sergeant-major crammed into their mouths, and even down their throats—but the Earl turned physician on this occasion, and forced the doctor and the trumpeter to swallow two, we may add, too powerful emetics, the Earl standing sentinel by the two bowls in expectation of getting at the secret intelligence, which it was imagined one of them had swallowed. Inhuman as this treatment appeared to Bruno Ryves, it is not improbable that the Earl of Stamford was well aware of this novel mode of conveying secret intelligence. In the manuscript memoirs already quoted, I discovered the fact. During the siege of Newark, the King neglected not to inform Lord Bellasis of his condition, and wrote with his own hand some of these short dispatches. The last of these, in the words of the manuscript, “was brought to his lordship in a man's belly, written in cyphers and put in lead, which the man swallowed lest he should be taken in attempting to pass the Scots' army.” Charles opens this very letter to Lord Bellasis in a style which evidently betrays the agitation of the royal writer.

“BELAYSE,

“If you discover the secret I now impart to you by *this extraordinary way of conveyance*, I wish you as ill, as you have had hitherto good fortune in my service—”

History seems to afford no parallel to the variable exigencies into which this monarch was thrown, abandoned by fortune more than by his friends. Among sovereigns, the life of Charles the First appears as singular, as its close was once to all the

world. Urgent emergencies, when the business depended on himself, were uniformly met by a firmness in action, or by a force of language, which equally prove the excess of injustice, which has depreciated his capacity, and that meanness which has calumniated, to fit the character of the monarch to a system of politics.

NOTE FOR PAGE 382.

OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ARMY, COMBINING MILITARY AND SPIRITUAL MOVEMENTS.

The peculiar feature of the civil war of Charles the First was the extraordinary mixture of religious fanaticism with the ordinary affairs of life. The cant of Cromwell in his addresses to the soldiers was not his own invention, when men

——— Fought like mad or drunk
For Dame Religion as for Punk.

The Parliamentary forces when in full march, would have offered many a group for Hogarth's pencil. The regiments on marching were chanting different psalms; once a party of Royalists having passed by another party at dusk, the latter breaking out into psalm-singing, it provoked a battle, from which the darkness had otherwise spared them. Their standards bore Scriptural mottos and devices; of these several are still preserved in the Dissenters' Library of Dr. Williams, in Redcross Street. Some of these bore, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" or, "As a Captain of the Lord am I now come." One standard bore "an arm painted, thrusting a bloody sword through a crown." They adopted Scriptural names; Cleaveland alludes to this by a stroke of humour, "With what face can they object to the King the bringing in of foreigners, when themselves entertain such an army of Hebrews. One of them beat up his drums clean through the Old Testament; we may learn the genealogy of our Saviour by the names in his regiment. The muster-man uses no other list but the first chapter of Matthew."

There are several publications intended for military service, penned by ministers. "The Soldier's Catechism, by Robert Ram, Minister, published by authority." Another is, "A Spiritual Knapsack for the Parliament's Soldiers, 1644." The most extraordinary of these specimens of the temper of the times is one entitled "Military and Spiritual Motions for Foot-Companies, with the Exercise of a single Company as they now ought to be taught, and no otherwise. By Captain Lazarus Haward, 1645."

Some innovations in the military discipline had been recently attempted; which Captain Lazarus asserts were only adapted to amuse the spectators, but were dangerous to the soldiers in service. He is desirous of rejecting these "whimsies" altogether, nor does the honest Captain appear sensible that he had a portentous one of his own. It was a project of drilling and exercising a company of infantry at the same time, by "a double motion of soul and body."—"This full and whole exercise of a foot-company, spiritual and temporal, may make us, like the Israelites, to go up as one man, with one heart and in one form, a soldier of that great Captain, Christ Jesus."

His scheme is to give the *word* of command to produce the military movement—and to every *letter* in that word he affixes some pithy and pious sentence to produce the accompanying spiritual one. He forms acrostics of

"To the Right About!"—"As You Were!"—as thus:—

T he Devil is let loose for a season to try the patience of God's church.
O ur Enemies, O Lord, are near to hurt us, but Thou art near to help
us.

T he sword never prevailed but Sin set an edge upon it.

H asten from the company of the wicked.

E very man shall sit under his own vine, nor hear any news or noises to
affright us.

R eligion made a stalking-horse for politics is odious.

I t is a grievous judgment upon a nation, when teachers sent for man's
salvation shall become means of their confusion, &c. &c. &c.

How the *spiritual motion* which depended on the *letters* could accompany the *military movement* which was given by the *word*, this driller of saints has not explained; but no doubt Captain Lazarus was admired for the ingenious impossibility of executing military movements, which, if his men at the same time respected their spiritual ones, must have equally perplexed "both their body and soul."

His Manual is still curious to a military antiquary, as giving a correct representation of "the full and whole exercise of a foot-company," and bearing also a very exact print of a foot-soldier in his accoutrements of the age of Charles the First.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

JUDGE JENKINS AND "THE LAW OF THE LAND."

IN times of political agitation, sincerity is a rare virtue ; for often has the spirit of party been its substitute, to hold men together in the same iron bond. This principle explains the apparent anomaly of persons acting in public with a body to whom they do not naturally cohere. Personal views, above all love for those with whom they are joined, or hostility against those they oppose, and even minuter accidents, have induced many characters who figure in our history to adopt a party with whose principles they did not sympathise. No unreasonable suspicions, therefore, have sometimes been raised, whether such persons were not more influenced by party motives, whatever that party may be, than by their private sentiments. Whoever joins a party, begins a race, and like men running down a steep hill, the point at which they would have stopped has long been passed by.

But when we discover men, whose force of character scorns every disguise, and rejects every compromising principle, and who at the cost of fortune, and even at the price of life, keep their unswerving rectitude, we are struck by this unpopular virtue of sincerity. In every political man it bears a charm. We admire it even in him whose feelings we may not participate, and to whose judgment we may not assent. We appreciate its generous nature, even in an enemy, and though this unpliant morality be intractable to the hand of the most subtle leader, still the man who adheres to his party though it be discomfited, and to his principles though they be exploded, evinces a force of character, which may well awe the more flexible and weaker dispositions. It is a giant-mind, disdaining every artifice to deceive us by feigning a sympathy it utterly abhors, and it stands before us, in the strength which has been the growth of its age, like some lofty Ilex spread into magnitude, and glorying in the same eternal verdure through all the changeful seasons.

The times of Charles the First formed the primitive state of modern political revolutions. The minds of men placed in the most conflicting opposition, amidst ambiguous and unsettled notions, experienced an equal conviction of the truth of their own different principles. It was a rough unbroken soil, the better, perhaps, adapted for the roots of that hardy virtue, political sincerity. The great actors in the reign of Charles the First were not always a knot of petty intriguers. There were some inflexible men individually exhibiting an unity of conduct and a decision of purpose. Such characters have not been properly estimated by historians; beatified by one party, they have been branded as fanatics by another, and the enthusiasm of their sincerity has been dusked by the opprobrium of bigotry. Their political sincerity casts a grandeur over their memories.

We may at times suspect the pure disinterested patriotism of Eliot, of Pym, and even of Hampden, busied as they were among the whole machinery of revolutions; but who will doubt the sincerity of the chivalric Arthur Lord Capel, who, issuing from his beloved privacy, when all around was despair, would only live to perish with his sovereign; or even of President Bradshaw, who on his death-bed solemnly avowed as an act of justice the condemnation to death of that sovereign? * Who suspects the monarchical devotion of Lord Falkland, the Earl of Derby, and the Marquis of Newcastle, or the anti-monarchical spirit of Milton, of Ludlow, and of him who desired no other epitaph than "Here lies Thomas Scot, who adjudged the late King to die?" All these men worshipped the cause which they had hallowed on their own hearths; sometimes, like Gideon, they had made an Ephod of their own—till "it became a snare to Gideon and his house." We must not judge of these men by the philosophical spirit of our own age; it had not yet arisen. Men must suffer before they can philosophise.

* I confess I have doubts of the character of this obscure talking serjeant, eminent only for one bold determined act, notwithstanding his death-bed declaration. His acceptance of the estates of Lord Cottington, amounting to 4000*l.* per annum, a great household to maintain his rank as Lord President, and other sources of emolument and offices, convey no favourable impressions of the purity of his patriotism. Whitelocke gives no advantageous view of his ability.—"In the Council of State, President Bradshaw spent much of their time in urging his *own long arguments*, which are inconvenient in state-matters." 380.

The wisdom of nations must be the bitter fruit of extinct follies and obsolete crimes.

A mighty Athlete, in the vast arena of the first English Revolution, was one of our greatest lawyers, whose moral intrepidity exceeded even his profound erudition in the laws of our Constitution. There was indeed a singularity in his remarkable actions, but they were not more eccentric than they were bold, original, and even great. Judge Jenkins takes no station in the page of our historians, yet he is a statue which should be placed in a niche.

During half a century had Judge Jenkins been the luminary of Gray's Inn. In his youth Lord Bacon had often consulted the papers of the hard student, and successively all the Attorneys-General had referred to this oracle of law. He met the Revolution much past his middle age, with confirmed legal habits, and the most perfect knowledge of that "*Lex Terræ*," the Law of the Land, which his stern portrait represents him firmly grasping in his hand.

Judge Jenkins had never been an obsequious courtier. A Welsh Judgeship had been forced upon him, of which the Judge, with all his frugality, found that every year he served, the expenses exceeded the salary. He has nobly appealed to all the Inns of Court to bear witness that he had never aimed at personal aggrandisement, well satisfied in his chamber to expound those laws on which he religiously meditated. "How far I have been from Ambition, my life past and your own knowledge of me can abundantly inform you. Many of you well know how I ever detested the Ship-Money and Monopolies; and that in the beginning of this Parliament, for opposing the excesses of one of the Bishops, I lay under three Excommunications, and the examination of seventy-seven articles in the High Commission Court." Surely our lantern at length shines on an honest man! This Judge would retrench the royal prerogative, and the power of the Church, when stretching themselves beyond the law, but when the King was to be stripped of his whole prerogative and the entire hierarchy was to fall, with the same resolution he vindicated the violated Law of England.*

* Arguing as an English lawyer, he maintained that much misunderstood law maxim, like so many others which are paradoxical in their words but not in their meaning, that "The King can do no wrong." "The reason is, that nothing can be done in this Commonwealth by the King's grant, or any other act of his, as to the

The eminent reputation of Judge Jenkins nearly rivalled the celebrity of Coke, whom, in alluding to the Parliament, he has called "Their Oracle!" we know not whether in jealousy or in anger! The name of Judge Jenkins possibly may not be inserted in a legal bibliography, for "the works of that grave and learned Lawyer Judge Jenkins, a prisoner in Newgate," consist of a microscopical volume, where, as if it were designed for a satire on all other law books, is compressed the erudition of a folio. They are all dated from the Tower or Newgate. Suggested by the occasions of the time, they first appeared in fugitive leaves, which were rapidly dispersed, and often gratuitously distributed among the people. By "the Law of the Land" they were thus instructed, that they were existing under no form of government; that there was no Parliament where there was no King; with many other confutations of "the erroneous positions of the Commons," and a variety of their acts of "treason." He dedicates his "Lex Terræ" to the Societies of the Inns of Court, and to all the Professors of the Law. His concise opinions, with an admirable frugality of words, are, however, luxuriant in their marginal references to Statutes and to Records, to Magna Charta, and to their own "Petition of Right;" while Bracton, and Plowden, and Coke, and even St. John, their own Solicitor-General, are the authorities which echo the solemn denunciations of Judge Jenkins. "Nothing is delivered for Law in my book but what the House of Commons have averred to be Law, in books of Law published by their commands, agreeable to the books of Law and Statutes of this Realm in all former times and ages."

This eminent lawyer was more active than gowns-men usually are. He was not only the great chamber-counsel of every one who opposed the Parliament; but this Welsh judge not only on his circuit imprisoned whomever he deemed to be rebels, but

subject's person, goods, lands, or liberties, but must first be according to established laws, which the judges are sworn to observe and deliver between the King and his people, impartially to rich and poor, high and low, and therefore the judges and the ministers of justice must be questioned and punished if the laws be violated, and no reflection to be made on the King." All this is very legal, but when the judges depended on the favour of the Crown for their seats, there is reason to believe that they would lean too far in favour of the prerogative. Judge Berkley was a remarkable instance.

in Lord Goring's army in Pembrokeshire was taken with his long rapier drawn, courageously leading the forlorn hope. This Judge was now singled out to be a victim, or a confederate, at his own choice, with the ruling party in the Commons. The authority of his name on all legal points would have consecrated even a public sanction.

A suit was instituted in the Court of Chancery against this learned Judge, of irreproachable integrity, for "a foul cheat and breach of trust, as some alleged." Thus the cautious White-locke enters it on the day, in his Diary. It was a vexatious suit merely got up to cast an imputation without the colour of a charge.* He refused to answer, not to decline, he said, the jurisdiction of Chancery, but to decline the power of the House of Commons to examine him. In the King's Bench he alike persisted in warning the people that the present Parliament was a mere delusion, for all they did was illegal and extra-judicial, and liable to be revoked. Once he was fined a thousand pounds, and at another time committed to Newgate for high-treason. No one could daunt the legal culprit. Miles Corbet insisting on his close confinement, the Judge, now himself placed at the bar, retorted, that "Some of them might be prisoners ere long themselves if they did not run away in time." The political prophet lived to verify his own predictions, and might have triumphantly appealed to the correctness of that judgment, which, at the time, passed for absurdity and inveterate obstinacy. Firm in his style, he was yet so moderate, that "the Reformers," as the judge calls them, everywhere declared that Judge Jenkins had made his "recantation." He published a keen and bitter retort, to refute the lie they had published.

At length, in February, 1648, the Judge, with another Royalist, one Sir Francis Butler, was brought to the bar of the Commons to be attainted.

Lenthal, the Speaker, addressed the prisoners, as two intolerable malignants and traitors to that honourable House, who now would proceed against them as men convicted of treason. The Speaker more particularly reproached the ancient Welsh Judge for his contumacious conduct, which had not passed unnoticed by

* Judge Jenkins has himself stated the case, and its secret history, in his little volume.

the House, in omitting to pay that obeisance to the chair, when placed at their bar, which was the greater fault in him, knowing as he pretended to be in the laws of the land. Judge Jenkins had refused to kneel as is usual before that honourable House.*

While the Speaker was addressing Judge Jenkins, the old man in a low voice requested his companion not to reply—"Let all the malice fall upon me, my years can better bear it." The Speaker having ended, Judge Jenkins asked whether they would now give him liberty to speak?

"Yes! so you be not very long."

"No! I will not trouble either myself or you with many words. Mr. Speaker! you said the House was offended at my behaviour in not making my obeisance to you when they brought me here, and this was the more wondered at, because I pretended to be knowing in the laws of the land. I answer, that I not only pretend to be, but am knowing in the laws of the land, having made them my study for these five-and-forty years, and it is because I am so, is the reason of my behaviour. As long as you had the King's arms engraven on your mace, and that your great seal was no counterfeit, and acting under his authority, I would have bowed in obedience to his writ, by which you were first called. But, Mr. Speaker, since you and this House have renounced your allegiance to your Sovereign, and are become a den of thieves, should I bow myself in this House of Rimmon, the Lord would not pardon me!"

The whole House were electrified—all rose in uproar and confusion! it was long ere order could be obtained, or their fury could exhaust itself. It seemed as if every member shrunk from a personal attack. The House voted the prisoners guilty of high treason, without any trial, and that they should suffer as in case of condemnation for treason. They called in the keeper of Newgate to learn the usual days of execution, which were Wednesdays and Fridays. The day to be appointed then became the subject of their debate.

At this critical moment, when it seemed to be out of all human chances to spare the life of

"This greatest Clerk but not the wisest Man,"

the facetious and dissolute Harry Martin, who had not yet

* Whitelocke, 293.

spoken, rose, not to dissent from the vote of the House, he observed, but he had something to say about the time of the execution: "Mr. Speaker,—Every one must believe that this old gentleman here is fully possessed in his head, resolved to die a martyr in his cause, for, otherwise, he would never have provoked the House by such biting expressions. If you execute him, you do precisely that which he hopes for, and his execution will have a great influence over the people, since he is condemned without a jury; I therefore move that we should suspend the day of execution, and in the meantime force him to live in spite of his teeth." The drollery of the motion put the House into better humour, and the State-prisoners were remanded.

The day after the re-commitment, a remarkable conversation took place between the old Welsh Judge and his fellow-prisoner, which clearly confirmed the sagacity of the witty Harry Martin.

The unfortunate companion of the Judge somewhat querulously asked if he had not been too hardy in his language to the House?

"Not at all!" replied this venerable Decius. "Rebellion has been so successful in the kingdom, and has gotten such a head that the weakness of many loyal men will be allured to compliance should not some vigorous and brave resistance be made in public, and to their very faces! This was the cause why I said such home things to them yesterday. And I am now so wrapped up in the thought of my execution, that I hope they will not long suspend the day, for I think that, like Samson, I shall destroy more Philistines on the day of my death than I have ever yet done all my life."

Curiosity was excited. It was evident that the old man had some scheme, difficult to comprehend, when he should be placed by the side of the gallows.

"I will tell you all that I intend to do and say at that time. First, I will eat much liquorish and gingerbread to strengthen my lungs, that I may extend my voice near and far. Multitudes no doubt will come to see the old Welsh Judge hanged. I shall go with venerable Bracton's book hung on my left shoulder, and the Statutes at large on my right. I will have the Bible, with a ribbon put round my neck, hanging on my breast. I will tell the people that I am brought there to die for being a traitor,

and, in the words of a dying man, I will tell them that I wish that all the traitors in the kingdom would come to my fate. But the House of Commons never thought me a traitor, else they would have tried me for such, in a legal manner by a jury, according to the customs of this kingdom for a thousand years. They have indeed debarred me from my birth-right—a trial by my peers, that is, a jury; but they knew that I am not guilty according to law. But since they will have me a traitor, right or wrong, I thought it was just to bring my counsellors with me, for they ought to be hanged as well as I, for they all along advised me in what I have done. Then shall I open Bracton to show them that the supreme power is in the King—the Statute-book to read the oath of allegiance—and the Bible to show them their duties.* All these were my civil counsellors, and they must be hanged with me! So when they shall see me die, affirming such things,” continued this romantic brother of the coif, “thousands will inquire into these matters, and having found all I told them to be true, they will come to loathe and detest the present tyranny.”

No day of execution so fondly dwelt on by the Welsh Judge was ever appointed, and the patriotic Royalist was defrauded of offering his country that extraordinary lesson, which his imagination had cherished in his reveries.

The policy of hanging an old Welsh Judge for stubbornness, and without a jury, was doubtful. The decisions of such a venerable member of the law, in truth, were fully valued by the House, and though they menaced him with death at the bar, they proffered him more than life, in the privacy of his cell. Several Members of the Committee visited Judge Jenkins in Newgate, and offered that “If he would acknowledge the power of the Parliament for lawful, they would not only take off the sequestrations from his estate, which was about 500*l.* per annum, but that they would settle a pension on him for life of 1000*l.* a year.” “Never can I own rebellion, however successful, to be lawful; I would rather, therefore, see your backs than your faces,” sternly replied the old Judge. The spokesman repeated the same offer, “If he would only suffer them to print that he acknowledged their power to be lawful.” Indignantly replied

* He repeated these doctrines, referring to the volume and the page.

the Judge, "I will connive at no such doings for all the money you have robbed the kingdom of; and should you impudently print such matter, I will sell my doublet and coat to buy pens, ink, and paper, to set forth the House of Commons in their proper colours."

Still seduction had not exhausted all its arts; they touched a finer nerve in his domestic feelings. "You have a wife and nine children, who all will starve if you refuse our offer; they make up ten pressing arguments for your compliance."

"What!" exclaimed the Judge, "did they desire you to press me in this matter?"

"I will not say they did," replied the Committee-man, "but I think they press you to it without speaking at all."

The old man's anger was kindled; he cried out, "Had my wife and children petitioned you in this matter, I would have looked on her as a whore, and them as bastards!" The honourable Committee of the House of Commons finally retreated.*

After this time Judge Jenkins was removed to various confinements, from castle to castle, and gaol to gaol. He suffered eleven years of durance, with the same constancy with which he persisted in expounding the laws of England. It is a curious fact that this Judge in prison furnished Lilburne with all the legal points which led to his famous triumph by jury, and stirred up that restless bold man to the prosecution of Cromwell,† yet it would seem that it was to Cromwell the Judge afterwards owed his freedom.‡ He lived to witness the Restoration, and this was that Judge Jenkins who on that surprising Revolution was expected by all men, and would himself have accepted the appointment of one of the Judges in Westminster Hall, as the sole but proud reward of a long life of arduous trials and triumphant inflexibility. Jenkins said that he was represented at

* These interesting conversations, with the romantic project of the Judge for the day of his execution, we find in a curious pamphlet. They were drawn "from the mouth and notes of Sir Francis Butler." It is entitled "True and Just Account of what was transacted in the Commons House at Westminster, Anno Dom. 1648, when that House voted David Jenkins, Esq., a Welsh Judge, and Sir Francis Butler, to be guilty of High Treason against themselves, without any Trial." 1719.

† Godwin's History of the Commonwealth, ii. 425.

‡ In the Gesta Britannorum of Sir George Wharton, I find this entry: "Jan. 14, 1649, Judge Jenkins, that constant sufferer, ordered his liberty, yet continues he still in Windsor Castle."

Court as superannuated and unfit for such a place, but Sir Phineas Pett, who knew him, describes the Judge then as a very acute man, of infinitely quicker parts than Judge Mallet, who was at that time made Lord Chief-Justice of England. There is reason to believe that another enemy to Jenkins, greater than his age, thwarted him at Court in not obtaining this judgeship. "So he might have been, would he have given money to the then Lord Chancellor," said honest Anthony Wood. It was for this casual stricture that the University of Oxford, at the instigation of Henry, the son of Lord Clarendon, heavily fined our great literary antiquary, for the pretended libel. The two statues of Charles the First and the Earl of Danby were raised at the entrance of the Physic Garden by the produce of this cruel fine. They stand in perpetual memory, that the passions of men may raise statues to suppress Truth, but ere the statues have mouldered away, Truth unexpectedly rises, in all her freshness and immortality.*

Judge Jenkins was the Cato of Lucan—

"Fortune chose the side of the Conquerors, but He, the Conquered."

Some may smile at a Judge Jenkins' tenaciousness of the laws of the land; at the nervous integrity which foiled a golden bribery, turning aside to enter into eleven years of durance, and deem, but as the dotage of a bewildered brain, the romantic dream of his execution, had it occurred. Yet whoever smile, must return to more solemn thoughts, when they discover in Judge Jenkins one of our greatest constitutional lawyers, and a patriot at Court or in prison. The eccentricity of Judge Jenkins, for wisdom and patriotism out of season are deemed eccentric, arose not from the singularity or caprice of a whimsical humorist like the crouching Noy, or the headstrong stubbornness which

* Anthony Wood declared that he was ready to prove what he had asserted by written and printed evidence. I find Wood in his own copy of the *Athenæ Oxonienses* altered the suppressed passage by rendering it much stronger: thus, "would he have given money to the then *corrupt* Lord Chancellor *Hyde*." Pepys' Diary, recently published, confirms the charge against Clarendon. The Hon. George Agar Ellis, on these authorities, has disserted on the corruption of this old statesman. It is mortifying to detect this tergiversation in such a moraliser as this great genius, but it is very instructive. Clarendon, after many years of melancholy abstinence from power and profit, often wanting the value of a dinner, when in office was a famished man. Whoever in haste would raise a fortune and found a family, will hardly escape the fate of Lord Clarendon.

drove on the honest and voluminous Prynne. Jenkins advanced no point of law which rested not on the custom of the realm, judicial records, and acts of Parliament. At a time when men appealed to the laws as they pleased, and rejected them as they willed, Judge Jenkins only knew the laws to obey them. Admirably has he said, "So long as men manage the laws, they will be broken more or less, as appears by the Story of every Age."

In truth, the opinions of Judge Jenkins were perfectly sane, in all his opposition to the Parliament as it was then constituted. The Parliament was at that time placed in a very anomalous position. Even Mrs. Macaulay has not attempted their defence on what she calls "the narrow bottom of constitutional forms." She confesses that "on the side of the Cavalier faction were in general *the forms of law*, on that of their opponents, magnanimity, justice, sense, and reason." This female advocate of the levellers, never alludes to the price which her heroes exacted for so many and such great virtues. That price was, all the wealth of the kingdom, and the incessant donations so reciprocally conferred, of all the estates of the Royalists.

Yet among these Levellers, or even among the Commonwealth-men, a more honourable class, was there one who surpassed in "magnanimity and justice" this venerable judge? In "sense and reason," that is, in compliance with the times, in floating down the stream, there were many indeed who were more dexterous than our old Welsh Judge. In lawless days, Judge Jenkins bore himself up rejoicing, and even dreaming at the abandonment of self, in the proud vindication of the *Lex Terræ*. A profound lawyer and an English patriot, endowed with that physical courage, rare among retired men, which asserts their own unchangeable nature by active heroism.*

* There is a singularly curious dialogue between Hugh Peters, the army chaplain, and "Free-born John" (Lilburne) in prison. Hugh Peters was the *mouton*, to use the French revolutionary style of former days, of Cromwell: we have already seen him in this character in the history of the Hothams.

Cromwell would not release "Free-born John" even after his triumphant trial by jury, when he was so gloriously acquitted. Peters visited him in the Tower, when the following dialogue took place.

Hugh Peters introduced himself as merely on a visit, without any other design than to see John.

John.—"I know you well enough. You are one of the setting-dogs of the Grandees of the army, who come with fair and plausible pretences to insinuate into

CHAPTER XXIX.

SECRET ANECDOTES OF THE YEARS 1644 AND 1645.

THE manuscript dispatches of the French Resident at London at a critical period are authentically written from week to week, and are precious, as the personal observations of a foreigner who was intimately acquainted with the busy actors of the time.

men when they have wronged them, and work out their designs when they are on a strait, and cover over the blots which they have made." Then John complained of the illegal seizing of him by soldiers, carrying him before that new erected thing called a Council of State, who committed him without an accuser, accusation, prosecution, or witness.

Peters, taking up a volume of Coke's Institutes, assured John that he was only gulled in reading or trusting to such books, for there were no laws in England.

John answered that he did believe him, for that his good masters, Cromwell, Fairfax, &c. had destroyed them all.

"Nay," quoth Hugh, "there never were any in England!"

John showed him the Petition of Right, asking "whether that were law?"

Peters had the impudence to deny it, and asked "what law was?"

John replied by that admirable definition of law in one of the Declarations of Parliament, which I have before quoted, as the composition of Pym: a passage which can never be read too often. "This," exclaimed John, "is a definition of law by the Parliament in their days of their primitive purity, before they had corrupted themselves with the Commonwealth money."

To this the comie Priest replied, "I tell you, for all this, there is no law in this nation but the sword and what it gives; neither was there any law or government in the world but what the sword gave."

"Then," replied honest John, "if six thieves meet three honest men and rob them, that act is righteous because they are the stronger party. And if there be no laws in England, and never were, then your masters are a pack of bloody rogues, who set the people on to murder one another for the preservation of their laws. I thought I had been safe when I made the known laws the rule of my actions, which you have all sworn to defend."

"Ay! but," retorted Hugh, "I will show that your safety lies not in the laws. Their minds may change, and then where are you?"

But John still persisted in blowing against the wind. "I cannot notice what is in their minds, but in their declarations—that they will maintain the laws of the land."

At this moment the new system was broached by Rouse and Goodwin, and even the philosopher Hobbes, that submission to the present power, was all that was necessary to constitute "the Laws of the Land."

As is usual with the French, the writer could not contrive to write down their names, but by trusting to his own Gallic ear. It required some ingenuity to discover in *Le Comte d'Orgueil*, the Earl of Argyle; in *Le Comte de la Dredayle*, Lord Lauderdale; *Milord Canouel*, Lord Kinnoul; Colonel *Guaiche*, Goring; and it required some time to unmask *Milord Ausbrick*, to detect Lord Uxbridge.

During the years 1644 and 1645 Monsieur Melchior de Sabran was the French Resident in England, under the administration of Cardinal Mazarine. The personage of this French Minister has not exhibited itself in our history, though two years of residence, and two folio volumes of his dispatches, attest his daily diligence, and also its inefficacy.

The fault was not in Monsieur Sabran, for in the technical style of modern French diplomacy, this luckless envoy was thrust into "a false position." Never in the vast manufactory of Legation has a forlorn workman more patiently and more piteously sate down to disentangle so ravelled a clue, never was thread more twisted, never spindle so twirled. All was perplexed! All was irretrievable! Monsieur Sabran so benevolent—so courteous—so tremulous with delicacy, would have been the friend of all—And every individual opposed him! "I am sent," sorrowfully he opens his negotiations, "to untie a knot which the English themselves acknowledge can only be dissolved as was the Gordian by Alexander." "I am destined," exclaims the baffled negotiator in his agony, "to the most delicate employment, and the most uneasy and untoward in result."

The situation of the French Resident was this. Sabran had been sent by Mazarine, in his public character, as a privileged Spy, to discover by his own observations the existing state of affairs between Charles and the Parliament, to review silently the military force of the King, and estimate the real influence of the Parliament over the people, and on the spot to contrive by his own judgment for those opportunities of a minute, which, Allegorists have revealed, require us to snatch Time by his solitary forelock.

Public affairs were still equiponderant. Sabran found that the forces of the Parliament, often raw levies, amounted to above 50,000 men, but then Charles had 36,000 good troops.

The King was yet formidable; and during this period, once Essex in Cornwall seemed lost, and once Waller at Cropredy-bridge was outwitted. The Royalists were flushed with their success at Newark and Pontefract. "God save the King!" (Vive le Roi!) was once echoed on the Thames, by a forced levy of men by Parliament, reluctantly going down to head-quarters. The sanguinary storming of Leicester had struck a terror among the Parliamentarians. Wales was offering men who only called for arms, and Ireland was deemed to be loyal. All these at times exhilarated the French Resident in his solitary cabinet. The reverses of the King had not yet opened on him, Fairfax and Cromwell were only on the point of appearing.

Mazarine and his administration, at bottom, were desirous of reinstating the English Sovereign with a limited power, not probably from any sympathy with the liberties of the English nation. In the "Instructions" of the French Resident, it is observed that "It is equitable to maintain the cause of the King of Great Britain, without, however, attempting to elevate his power so high, that from King he should become Lord and Monarch of England, for the Laws of that Country balancing the absolute power of their Monarchs, must be maintained in their entirety, to appease men's minds, and lull their troubles to rest." This probably was an ostensible argument which might safely be urged on both parties, but there are shadowings in diplomacy, and we detect a more secret hint to moderate the zeal of the discreet Negotiator, from gaining too many advantages for the King. Charles, "it is noted in the Instructions," has never corresponded with all our affectionate offers, ever inclining more to the Spaniard. Still, however graduated the scale of mediation the French Cabinet proposed, they were not disposed to side with the Parliament, as we gather from this prudential State-motive. "The conformity of Religion, and the disposition to form and maintain a *Republic* which is prevalent in the minds of the English and the Dutch, will unavoidably establish a very strict union between them, and it is for the benefit of these States, as well as for the good of France, that this should be traversed." Sabran is moreover particularly cautioned against "the Puritans," English, Scotch, or Irish; "for these persons nourishing a hatred of Royalty and all just

government, not only will attempt to pull down that of their King, but to ally themselves with the neighbouring Republics, and this it may be useful to impress on the mind of the King."

It was a critical difficulty with our forlorn Resident in pursuance of his Instructions, that he should not acknowledge the independence of the Parliament, separated from the Sovereign, which would have put an end to any intercourse with Charles. And on the other hand, he was not to appear to the Parliament as one at all too partial to the interests of the King, which might instantly have terminated his negotiations at London. But assuredly the invincible difficulty was, that our dexterous negotiator found himself equally disregarded by Charles, and by the Parliament; both alike avoided his proffered friendship, and looked on the French Resident with equal distrust. In a word, Sabran discovers that in all England there was not a more suspicious-looking person, in the whole corps diplomatique, than the luckless new-comer.

This soon appeared to our Resident. "That eternal suspicion of England, that France must be more gratified by its troubles, than by its quiet, is as great as ever. They judge of us by their own defects, and their own ill-will, and by the evil which they would have done us, rather than by any proofs of the bad designs of France, or of any deceptions practised contrary to the sincerity of the Queen and Cardinal Mazarine."*

Sabran had not been long in London ere a bitter "Discours" from "An English Gentleman" appeared on "French Charity." The kindness of France was ridiculed, because "this kindness was so excessive that it becomes incredible. What makes this dangerous neighbour in an instant turn into so kind a friend?" This pamphlet detailed evidence of a circumstance little known, which I have noticed in my preceding volume. It is what Sabran calls, and therefore does not deny, "*les pratiques secrettes de Blainville*," one of the former French Ambassadors.† Sabran somewhat consoles himself, though his too feeling antennæ once touched, shrink with all the sensitiveness of a snail's—that this

* I find by these dispatches that this famous Cardinal, at first, retained the name of Mazarini; afterwards, to disguise his Italian origin and to become a Frenchman, he gave his name a French termination.

† In the first volume of these Commentaries, p. 197.

production is the labour of some Spanish agent under the guise of "an English Gentleman."

The Parliament, as he had foreseen, would not receive him as a public Minister, unless he came prepared fully to recognise their independent power. He was therefore compelled to preserve his private character. This debarred all intercourse with a Member of the House of Commons, as a Member. Hollis and Vane regretted that they could not visit him without leave of Parliament. He freely communicated with the Peers, because the Lords, whether in or out of their House, always retain the same rank.

After some time had elapsed, during which our Resident had been actively employed, having taken more than one journey to Oxford, reviewed the army of Charles with his own eyes, and held an interview with the Monarch, the day arrived when Sabran was to be admitted to an audience with the Parliament. Previously he had sent a copy of his prepared Harangue to Count de Brienne, the Secretary of State. A paragraph in it, induced a remarkable observation—"Your speech to the Parliament is composed with great discretion. One thing only has astonished me. You exhort them not to suffer in the kingdom other religion than the one established. If this admit of explanation and excuse, namely, that this is meant to report to them what has been confided to you by the King, consider how the Spaniard will reproach us, while every Catholic will imagine that we have abandoned their protection. Soften this term, I pray you. It will be prudent ever to avoid the subject of religion. It will be said that we have no religion ourselves."

Sabran acknowledges that the offending exhortation had been inserted in consequence of a note received from Charles. The ticklish paragraph was expunged from the speech.

The Parliament had not yet disdained the ceremonials of Royalty, and Sabran was to be conducted to the House by the "Sieur Fleming," the Master of Ceremonies. The Parliament insisted that at his audience the French Resident should be uncovered. He replied, "I can only stand uncovered when I am in the King's presence." They insisted that the King's throne being there was the same as his Majesty's presence among them. They alleged that the English Resident at Paris was always

uncovered.—“True,” replied Sabran, “but it is before their Majesties, and here I see no King! I can only acknowledge royal Majesty in the person of the Monarch.” The discussion might have proved interminable—particularly as Sabran declared that he would not stand—but both parties being equally desirous of an audience, the Master of the Ceremonies—that Deity of Horace, who usually descends to adjust a fortunate catastrophe in political etiquette—suggested that mutual honours should be balanced. It was accorded that an arm-chair should be placed for the French Resident, who after his speech might cover. Sabran having addressed the House with his hat in hand, immediately clapped his beaver on a head whose pulsations might have required the arm-chair into which the Representative of his most Christian Majesty flung himself. We are apt to ridicule the mysteries of Court-etiquette, but the Ceremonial constitutes conventional signs—an alphabet of honours, and in that intelligible style, individuals have asserted their independence, and nations have kept their state. Sabran had politically disputed the present *punctilio*. The Representative of France would not have himself held too cheap, and his allusion to the absence of the English Monarch, was in furtherance of the grand design of uniting the separated Parliament with the Sovereign.*

Count de Brienne, the Secretary of State, who had more than once visited England, had wide views of the state of the nation. In June, 1644, he penetrated into the Revolution of that day to its extent, then but in the birth and labour of time. He writes, “The King of England is pressed hard by persons who will not cease till they have stricken down his authority. The Puritans

* A passage in Clarendon shows that the Parliament were yet excessively tenacious of the punctilios of etiquette. When the King sent the Duke of Richmond and the Earl of Southampton with a message for a treaty, “the Houses did not presently agree upon the manner of their reception, how they should deliver their message.” The Scottish commissioners were to join the two Houses in the Painted Chamber, “sitting on one side of the table;” the royal messengers at the upper end, where there was a seat provided for them; all the rest being bare, and expecting that they would be so too, for though the Lords used to be covered whilst the Commons were bare, yet the Commons would not be bare before the Scotch commissioners, and so none were covered. But as soon as the two Lords came thither they covered, to the trouble of the others, but being presently to speak they were quickly forced from that eye-sore.—Clarendon, v. 28.

are incapable of any moderation, and I am persuaded that the great of the kingdom (*les grands du Royaume*) will fall from their pre-eminence, and if the royal authority shall no longer subsist, then a Republic will be formed, such as will consort with the religion of the Puritans. I mean to say, that not only the people will possess the power, but the most insolent will be the only ones in consideration. The remedy of these evils, without falling into another, which would be the establishment of an absolute *Seigneurie*, would be to accommodate matters—but what difficulties start up! If the sword is to decide the question, the danger is equally great; the conqueror will assume all his advantages.”

This statesman assuredly had taken the most comprehensive view. He saw distinctly what hovered in the distance—from principles he had deduced consequences; his fears, or his sagacity amounted to prediction.

It is however curious to observe that the Prime Minister of France, Cardinal Mazarine, who perhaps did not much care to disorder his Epicurean enjoyments, by busying himself with the troubles of England, had formed a very contracted notion of the great events whose proximity might have alarmed a more active minister. Mazarine only twice wrote to Sabran. One of these cabinet dispatches was curt. “Pray let me know exactly what pictures, statues, or furniture can be procured of the late Duke of Buckingham.” In 1645 the Cardinal’s deepest policy advanced no farther than in telling Sabran “to impress on both the Parliament and the King, that they are only shedding their own blood and wasting their own wealth, and that at last they must come to some agreement—this was unavoidable.” The Italian-Frenchman had no idea that their affairs could only be finally terminated by coming to no agreement at all. He foresaw no Revolution of the nature which was opening before him; a Revolution which had evidently disturbed the imagination of Count de Brienne.

In these dispatches we discover several secret conferences, and circumstances partially known in our history are more completely disclosed. The distracted councils of Charles appear, when Sabran, spy all over, opened letters confided to him, by the great stateswoman, the ambiguous Countess of Carlisle, who

expedites letters from her brother Percy, a devoted Loyalist. "My Lord Percy, brother to the Earl of Northumberland, has sent three or four notes to the Queen of Great Britain, or rather to Mr. Jermyn, which were delivered to me by the Countess of Carlisle, his sister. I opened one of these, which sufficiently betrays the schism of those who are about the King, and that the Queen, or rather those who are with her, have not the same sentiments of those who govern his Majesty, her husband." This is one, among many other proofs, that Charles did not servilely act under the influence of the Queen, as he is perpetually represented to have done. Her opinions, or rather those of her party, he frequently opposed, and on some trying occasions it is known that he acted in opposition to their suggestions.

At a secret conference at the house of the Countess of Carlisle, Sabran, by appointment, met with Lord Holland, Hollis, and the Earl of Essex, all inclined to the Presbyterian party, and enjoying, at that moment, the highest reputation with the Commons. They were willing that the French Resident should mediate between the King and the Parliament.

They assured Sabran that it was a *sine quâ non* condition, that the alliance with the Scotch should be preserved. Those of the Higher House, and many of the Lower, who would maintain Royalty against those persons who of late were seizing on the whole authority of Parliament to extinguish Royalty, (the Independents, the army, in a word our Jacobins,) unless they were seconded by the Scotch, would not venture to act. They wished me, adds Sabran, to persuade his Majesty that the Scotch may be depended on, although they confessed that the King could not accept such hard terms, but if he promised to take them into consideration, till in some future conference at more peaceful times with both parties—what was deemed most reasonable might be accepted, and in the meanwhile his Majesty should declare that he would consent to put aside the bishops, and reduce the ecclesiastical government to ministers—to an uniform Puritanic system.

To this Sabran replied—"You then would have his Majesty renounce his religion; this you will find difficult, and more so, by holding the knife to his throat without giving him any

assurance that his affairs shall be re-established, and his authority restored. To me, the matter is wholly indifferent, believing neither in one religion nor the other; but it is this very circumstance which enables me to think more freely, and less passionately to distinguish that reason by which one of the parties should more legitimately remain in his own. After I shall have held a consultation with the Scottish gentlemen, I will then consent to dispatch my Secretary to the King. But should I now do this, those in Parliament whom you tell me are so potent, so violent, and so suspicious, would imagine that I am only acting for the King, which would greatly prejudice my neutrality.

“All this I said,” proceeds the dexterous negotiator in his dispatch to the secretary, “to persuade them that I had nothing to write to the King but what was agreeable to them, and also to get time to learn whether I should do it, or in doing it, what advice I should offer the King. Besides, in this manner I shall get sought after by them, and dive into the real divisions so prevalent among them all.

“It would be quite ridiculous to make me the author, that the King of England, who is of a religion which still retains some ceremonies, should be brought into one which believes nothing, the enemy of every thing which reminds one of God and of sovereignty, and common with that of our Huguenots. Nevertheless, I shall charge myself with their commissions to detect their designs, and enter into negotiations if advisable. They would take the King by surprise, and lose himself, his children, and his crown. But how can his Majesty, who has printed a public profession of the Protestant religion, attach himself to the Puritan? It would not afford a reasonable peace.”

This conference with these great personages of the English Presbyterian party does not elsewhere appear. It is curious to detect the bad faith of secret political intrigue, to botch what cannot hold together. In the present instance we discover that the party, perfectly aware that Charles would not accede to the establishment of a National Kirk in England, suggest the mean artifice of an apparent compliance, by “the promise to take the subject into consideration.” In the future proposed conference

between the parties, it seemed left to the King, who should decide "what was most reasonable." But while they thus seemed to leave a door open for escape, they would have first entrapped the King by extorting his temporary consent "to put aside the Bishops" and institute the Church government by "Ministers." It is evident that this consent once publicly granted, "what was most reasonable" would never afterwards have admitted of a discussion. Monsieur de Sabran probably comprehended the whole dark manœuvre. At all events, that "ter Catholicus," thorough-grained as he was, on that day must have crossed himself all the way on his return home, and washed his hands of them in an ewer of *eau bénite*, for surely on that day Monsieur displayed what his friend the secretary would deem *une politique fine et cachée*.

We are informed by Sabran that "In a conversation with the Chancellor of Scotland and his adjunct, I told him that the Parliament believed that the Scots, displeased with the refusal of his Majesty to change the form of his religion, would be glad to avenge themselves, provided that the royalty should in some shape be maintained in the person of a descendant. It is thought, I told them, that they would not mind the weakness of age in the young Prince, for now they talk of the little Duke of Gloucester to authorise this change in the Government. For an unity of persons is necessary for the administration of affairs, whether it be for the Duke of a Republic, or a *Chef-général*, as in the Prince of Orange; but all this was the visible ruin of the sovereign authority, for the purpose of their remaining free, and enjoying the revenues of the King and the Church, and once masters, subject the Crown wholly to the form of the new Government." Sabran here took a French statesman's view, considering the restoration of the Monarchy as a first object, this argument could not have had much force with them. He proceeds, "They replied that they wished for a King, and for King Charles, but they looked and spoke very confusedly when I assured them that the King really wished for peace, but would no longer ask for one, dreading a contemptuous refusal after all that I had done. I had left the King in the best disposition for peace, but more willing to consent to one than to seek it."

Sabran conveys a notion of the secret motives of the Scotch

in their transactions with the King and the Parliament, which I have not elsewhere found. He considers them merely as a mercenary soldiery, like the Swiss, often at a loss how to act with the conflicting parties to secure their stipends. Theirs was a war for the purse.

He writes, "Though the Scotch are considered to be more reasonable, it is only from an opinion that they would not consent absolutely to the extinction of Royalty, dreading to become at last a province of England, but not from any other cause, for they still persist with the English in the first resolutions, unconvinced that these go entirely to the destruction of the Royal authority. The truth is, that they are blinded by an opinion that the heavy subsidies now due to them, amounting to more than all the wealth of their country, which by various treaties, the King of England and the Parliament agreed to pay them for their levies of men, as well as the sums which the Parliament have since promised for their present movements, would all be in jeopardy should the Parliament not remain obstinate, and interest itself to extinguish these debts. It is on this pretext that the present Parliament has secured the Scotch on its side, and bewilders their reason, which in them is not so refined as to perceive that the protraction of the war, though it will increase their claims, by the general inconvenience which it occasions, will postpone the payments, or possibly annihilate at once all their claims."

This was a profound reflection, and may be said to have been verified by the subsequent events, notwithstanding that by a strange accident, and by the most dishonourable of all public acts, the Scots posted away with their bag. They had to endure the slights of the predominating party,* who treated with contempt even their idolised Covenant. When the unexpected incident of the King taking refuge in the Scottish camp occurred, it altered the face of affairs—the game was then in their hands.

* Sabran affords a curious anecdote of the day, which shows how the Scots were regarded by the Independents. "The Scottish Deputies, sore at the suspicions and at the affront they had received in having their letters opened, complained to the committee. The younger Vane rose and insolently reproached them for having little contributed to the war, and the service of the Parliament; but what was more certain, they had drawn from England great sums, and had always taken too much care of themselves."

At Topcliffe House the Covenanters huckstered for the person of their Sovereign, the bargain was struck—it was for ready money, and the rest in promissory notes. The treachery exceeds the treason, and Charles was delivered up into the hands of his personal enemies. The Covenanters having sold all they had which the English would buy, for themselves for some time had been of no value, in returning homewards, left a canting recommendation that their purchasers should be careful of “the Lord’s Anointed!” Well might the French Secretary of State, when alluding to a proposed bribery for the Chancellor of Scotland, assign as one reason that his Lordship would not be offended, — “*parcequ’il est Ecossois qui vaut autant à dire qu’intéressé.*”—The poverty of Scotland at that time is but a poor plea for this dereliction of Honour and of Morality; but these were the Covenanters of that brave and shrewd people! The Scottish nation have redeemed this abjectness of spirit, and this gross avarice, even by the most romantic sensibility. The immolation of their persons, the forfeiture of their lands, and a perpetual exile from their beloved mountains and valleys, were as fatally, as unworthily bestowed on the race of the very monarch whom they had betrayed, with an infamy which has passed through the world. What a history is this of the Stuarts! of their devoted Enemies, and their devoted Friends!

An event in France now occurred which the Secretary of State imagined might produce a sinister effect in England.

One of the Parliaments of France had recently ventured to present “A Remonstrance” to the French monarch, for which four of the members were cast into prison, and the rest submitted. The Secretary of State, intimately acquainted with the feelings of the English people, is anxious that the Resident should explain to them that “a French Parliament is only a Court of Magistrates, who are solely to administer the laws. It is not an English Parliament, to which they will compare it.” Sabran in reply observes, “They have not failed here to reflect on the equivocal term of Parliament, asserting that it is to this point the King of Great Britain would reduce their own. They express their surprise at the punishment of the refractory members. They will not acknowledge the difference of the nature and quality of the two Parliaments. I tell them that the

English Parliament conjointly with their King makes the laws, which being settled by their common consent, neither he nor they can violate them; but that our Parliament consisted merely of a body of Law-officers from whom the King solely requires the administration of justice, invested as they are with no other power than what they derive from the King's grant. Our King himself is above the Law, and in the spirit of Equity the royal authority can alter the Law."

At this distant day, it is important to observe, that it was these very French Parliaments which kindled the first sparks on the altar of civil freedom in France. This company of Magistrates had often resisted the arbitrary decrees of Richelieu; under the administration of Mazarine, they caught a new spirit, and in their close imitation of the political scenes which had passed in our country, they composed "Remonstrances" to the French monarch. The Frondeurs of Cardinal de Retz was even an attempt at a Revolution, but the people being neither invited nor conducted, took little interest in the discontents of a few Grandees, and the Aristocratic Insurrection concluded by a surprising reverse of the personal interests of the parties. It was the comedy of a Revolution, and the only disturbance it occasioned was, that the Cardinal took a short journey, and one of the noble Insurrectionists married his niece. All was silence, pride, and servitude under the splendid reign of Louis the Fourteenth. The French Parliaments under his successor often raised their voice, and were sometimes suspended, and sometimes exiled. Humiliated by the Court, they rose in the popular regard. The eloquence of these advocates of civil freedom was echoed in the land, and men got by rote whole passages of their addresses or apologies. The benevolent Louis the Sixteenth, ever desirous of his people's welfare, reinstated the Parliaments which his predecessor had interrupted. The grateful people rejoiced, and found the first Champions of the rights of Citizens among the magistrates and advocates composing their Parliaments. Our neighbours, in the first sober hours of their revolutions, have often appealed to those of England; they have even servilely fallen into our errors. The reaction of public opinion among the two influential nations in Europe will inevitably operate on the political state of the Continent;

and should each accept from the other, what may be found of public good in either, the neighbours will cease to be rivals. May we indulge the hope that the future historian shall chronicle that astonishing event which has never yet happened—of two great neighbouring nations, without jealousies, without envy, and without fear?

Our Resident was fully convinced that a powerful party in the Parliament was intent to abolish monarchy. But as this faction had not yet openly declared their designs, it became an anxious subject of inquiry not only how to remove Charles the First, but to avoid a dissension with the monarchists and the Scots, by transferring the regal authority to another branch of the royal blood. The Prince Palatine, the nephew of Charles, a very humble pensioner of the Parliament, was considered by some as a pliant creature, who would accept the crown on any prescribed terms. This Prince, who was of a mean character, on a pretext to solicit farther charity from the Parliament, pleading for the mere necessities of his family, was now in London, and his mother, the Queen of Bohemia, and himself, both of whom had, observes Sabran, never been on good terms with their Majesties of England, would be glad to repair the loss of their Palatinate. Should this plan fail, Sabran continues, the Parliament doubt not that the Scots would be contented to fix the royalty on the little Duke of Gloucester, who is not above four years old, and who, having him in their hands, would be brought up in their own way, and submit the government to a perpetual Parliament. The French Secretary and the Resident alike concluded, that if the Parliament transferred the crown to a stranger, as some proposed, or a junior branch of the family, it would only be reviving the domestic feuds of York and Lancaster. Brienne adds, "Their history for future ages will be as full of tragical deeds as that of the past."

I have given this extract for more than one reason. It is impossible in discovering these critical difficulties in settling the monarchy, not to detect parallel circumstances which are not so strange to ourselves. History is a perpetual detection of the circumscribed sphere of all human actions, and the repetition of all human events.

We learn here, on unquestionable authority, from the inter-

views between Sabran and the King, that Charles the First was so earnest to settle a peace, that the French Resident deemed it advisable to keep back the communication of the King's proposals, as giving the Parliament too great an advantage over him, in discovering his facility and his submission. In truth, the prevalent faction in the Commons wanted not peace; they had in view a far different object than participating that power and authority which they had usurped. And this appears by what Sabran particularly notices. "The Parliament have concealed from the people the King's desire of an accommodation, and suppress, as well as they can, a knowledge of the royal letter sent by a herald, passing off the trumpet as coming for an exchange of prisoners."

The French Resident and the Secretary of State had long suffered from a mutual infusion of reciprocal terrors, and in December, 1644, they imagined themselves to be two Jeremiahs. The singular project of "the Self-denying Ordinance" was now first broached; that marvellous expedient of the Independents, who, under the popular pretext that the Members of both Houses should "give up all their time to their country's service without reward or gratuity," and to secure their uninterrupted service in Parliament, and, as Cromwell said, "to vindicate the Parliament from all partiality to their own Members, it should be unlawful for any Member of either House to hold any office in the army, or any place in the State." This political manœuvre was opened by the elder Vane, who was made to resign the Treasurership of the Navy, and by Cromwell offering his commission of Lieutenant-General. The real object was not only to gull the people, but to eject at one blow all moderate men, and particularly their present noble commanders, while they new-modelled the army with their own more thorough-paced creatures. It is known how Cromwell offered to lay down his military command, and how he contrived to be petitioned to retain it, and by his absence from the House, while at the head of his troops, avoided any risk of being reminded of his patriotic offer—What Mouse would bell the Cat?

"All power," exclaimed the agitated Resident, "is now fast going to the House of Commons and the people: the design, no longer admitting of dissimulation, of abolishing the monarch

and monarchy, the peers and their dignity, and thus will they spread among their neighbours all that fury which looks for support from all of their religion. We have already come in for our share of the evil, for the Swedes have now sent a Deputy." (France had long been alarmed at secret intrigues with Sweden.) "This novel alliance even the Dutch in their prudence abhor, and foresee the peril in which themselves stand, as well as from the monstrous power which this Parliament assumes, whose aliment, henceforth, must be flames and blood."

On the arrival of this Swedish "Deputy," as Sabran calls this Envoy, the French Resident held a secret conference with the Hollanders, who appear to have been as jealous of this new political union, in which they contemplated a powerful rival, as Sabran was alarmed at the loss of this ancient ally of France, at the union of all the Protestant powers, and above all at the example now openly held out to the Huguenots of France by their dangerous neighbour. The Dutch seem to have been only terrified at the loss of trade, and the indifferent footing they were on with the Parliament, who treated them with disdain, suspecting a mediation from the Prince of Orange from his family alliance with the King.

The irreconcilable breach between the Earl of Manchester and Cromwell, was the preliminary to the introduction of the famous self-denying ordinance. The recriminations between these two great personages openly occurred in the House; they are noticed by Clarendon. Cromwell had accused the Earl of Manchester of betraying the Parliament, by checking his pursuit when the King retreated from Newbury. The Earl, in assigning some extraordinary reasons for this apparent ill-conduct, disclosed a remarkable communication made by Cromwell to him. Cromwell told the Earl, "*My Lord, if you will stick firm to honest men, you shall find yourself at the head of an army that shall give the law to King and Parliament.*" "This discourse," proceeded his Lordship, "had made great impression in him, for he knew the Lieutenant-General to be a man of very deep designs, and therefore he was the more careful to preserve an army which he yet thought was very faithful to the Parliament."

The brief report which Sabran sends to his Cabinet of this memorable clash, has probably preserved an expression of

Cromwell more explicit than we find in Clarendon. "The Earl of Manchester is accused of not having willingly fought the royal army, and of having said that it ought not to be done, for that this had been the real cause of the resources and the strength which his Majesty had acquired. Cromwell, on the other hand, is accused of having said that '*he hoped to see the day when there should not be a King nor a Peer in England.*' This speech is most important, for it is really the point they drive at." Sabran seems here to have preserved the unguarded language of Cromwell. It is evident that the intimation which Cromwell gave to the Earl, as we find it in Clarendon, was thrown out in the warmth of confidence: the tone was that of invitation. When the arch-plotter discovered that the Earl started at the seduction, and possibly an involuntary gesture might have betrayed Manchester to the scrutinising and watchful eye of him who was apt in reading men's thoughts, Cromwell raised his tone to defiance and menace; and at that moment revealed an important secret hitherto closely confined to his own party. Sabran describes the agitation at the moment of this occurrence: "The Lords, understanding that the other House were discussing the accusation against Cromwell, wherein they took so deep an interest, they were desirous of hearing Cromwell, and of being informed of the whole matter; but the Commons kicked (*s'est cabrée*)—declaring that the Higher House must not know of any proceedings of the Lower till they were concluded, and then only by their messenger." The truth is, this moment was a critical trial of the strength of both factions. The peace-party, who already dreaded the fierceness of Cromwell, were desirous of having the matter thoroughly investigated; but the Cromwellites (we may now give the Independents that title), Clarendon observes, put all obstructions in the way, and rather chose to lose the advantage they had against the Earl, than to have some unavoidable discoveries they were not yet ready to produce.

Alluding to the self-denying ordinance, Sabran proceeds—"This is the most cunning artifice the Commons have yet practised, to fill all offices with popular persons, and manifest to the Londoners that the war would have finished, and liberty had been secured, had Manchester fought. In this way this House gets credit with the people, and, by the power which it confers

on them, will have the entire command of all offices civil and military." Sabran had not penetrated into the deeper designs of new-modelling the army with Cromwellites. He observes, however, that they have already begun a new Government, by calling themselves "The States" (Les Etats). In the hurried change through the whole fabric of the Constitution, many absurd proceedings occurred which at the instant they were not aware of. Among these was this new title to the English Government. A long debate ensued when they sent out the fleet, to decide what it should be called, and at last resolved on "The States' fleet." Cromwell coming to the House at the close, smiled, and facetiously asked the Speaker, "Whether they had got another *Hogen Mogen*?" It is remarkable of Cromwell that he often turned off the most solemn matters with a jocular air, as he did at the moment of signing the death-warrant of Charles. It was the art of getting over difficulties by diverting attention from them.

Lord Herbert, son of the Earl of Pembroke, told Sabran that such was the intolerable oppression of the men who had now the power in their own hands, having gained over the people to their side by their pretended disinterestedness, that they conceal their secret designs, and every day grow more violent and absolute. The brother of the Earl of Argyle, who served the Parliament in Scotland, assured him that the Parliament had taken their final resolution. They held the mediation of foreign powers as too partial for the King of England, and particularly that of France. They would not endure those who were about the King. On this Sabran makes this extraordinary observation: "*Un secours d'Etrangers seroit incompatible avec les Anglois, et ne peut être propre que pour conquerir cet Etat, à quoy une Croisade seroit mieux employée qu'en Barbarie, tant je prevois extrêmes leurs fins.*" The embarrassments of European Cabinets have been mutual on those parallel events which have succeeded each other in the modern history of England and France. It would have dismayed the working brain of Sabran, could he have imagined that his "Crusade" was ever to be conducted into his own capital.

The Independents surely meditated to open their rule by a reign of terror. Suddenly we see sanguinary executions fast

following on one another. The State-prisoners who had been long left in durance, and seemed to have been forgotten, are hurried to their fate. The Irish Lord Maquire in vain pleaded his privilege, petitioning to be beheaded, and was, with an Irish gentleman, hanged at Tyburn. Sir Alexander Carew, who had remarkably expressed himself against the Earl of Strafford, now himself felt the sharpness of that axe for which he had so vehemently called. The two Hothams, father and son, though opposed to each other, expiated their political tergiversations. The venerable Archbishop Laud, after a confinement of four years, was dragged forth to leave his old bones on the scaffold,—an inhuman triumph which Sabran forcibly describes. This ancient Archbishop was thrown as prey or garbage, the fee of the hounds, to satiate the Scots. “C’est pour donner *curée* aux Ecossois que l’on a aujourd’hui condamné à mort le viel Archevêque de Canterbury, et les deux Seigneurs d’Irlande.” In all respects the Independents were the Jacobins of France; and the Levellers, the worsers of the worse, openly declared that “the kingdom was theirs by conquest,” and proposed “a free election” by universal suffrage, for not only freeholders but all men living, even beggars should have a vote in choosing their representatives, servants only were excepted.* There are crimes and follies which we vainly flatter ourselves can never be repeated.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE TWO FRENCH RESIDENTS.

MINISTERS of State, in the removal of their Ambassadors or the choice of their temporary Envoys, act on the principle of those who call in a second physician whose practice is diametrically the reverse of the first. The ineffective system of his predecessor having suffered the disorder to increase, the other earnestly proceeds with his own; and though neither save the patient, who is dissolving in his own weakness, his intractable

* Clarendon's State-papers, ii. xl. I imagine that the votes of “the Beggars” could only have been a satirical rumour.

state, which may evince the despair, does not necessarily prove the unskilfulness of his physicians.

Such was the case with Cardinal Mazarine, when he dispatched Sabran as the French "Resident" at London during the years 1644 and 1645, and having recalled him supplied his place by Monsieur De Montreuil in 1646.

For two years had Sabran been busied in England, and yet so entirely ineffective were his operations, that I never could trace his name standing in connection with the King or the Parliament. Accident alone brought the bulky tomes of his inedited negotiations under my inspection. This state of singular obscurity for a public Minister, was not however occasioned by any torpid listlessness in the Envoy himself, nor from any deficient sympathy amidst the awful scenes which were rising around him. On the contrary, Sabran was a close observer of every event, a listener to much secret intelligence; very subdulous in intrigues, and on an intimate footing with the leading personages of the day. We must look for some cause which may satisfactorily account for the extraordinary circumstances of an Envoy being nullified during two complete years of incessant activity.

There is great truth in the reflection of Clarendon, which he has expressed with the accustomed vigour of his conceptions, that "the unexpected calamity which befell this Kingdom was not ingrateful to its neighbours on all sides, who were willing to see it weakened and chastised by its own strokes." I shall confirm this observation by a manuscript letter which I found among the Conway Papers, which exhibits a genuine representation of the nation, and the feelings of our European neighbours, at the opening of our civil dissensions, and more particularly of the French nation. It contains passages which might be imagined to be written in our own times.

"MR. RAN DOMVILLE TO LORD CONWAY.

"PARIS, *Sept.* 21, 1640.

"SINCE Paris hath begun to entertain itself with the affairs of England, it seems to have shut out all other news to make room for this. All sides seem to be well pleased in our misfortunes; those that sit at the helm, add boldness to their

designs, having buried their fears and doubts in the distractions of that State. The Catholics despair not to find a way opened to their cause by these confusions, and those of the Religion (the Huguenots or the foreign Protestants and Presbyterians) hope to reap an advancement of their discipline. As in the beginning all forms, how contrary soever, took their matter from a general confusion, so from the present troubles the most inconsistent interests seem to borrow their support and hope. Neither is France free from all inward troubles; she hath so long wrestled with an enemy that in some parts she hath cast herself into a fever. The French fleet at this time gives the law to the Mediterranean and braves the Spaniard in his own ports.

“The desolation which is found all over the kingdom of Naples much defames the Spanish Government, and with no small injury to the rule of Princes, gives too great a reputation to that of Commonwealths.”

We discover at this early period, that in the fall of monarchies, men imagined that they should find relief under Republican Governments. Man flies to the extremes of the circumference of the circle which Nature has drawn around him, till he settles in quiet at the centre, being removed at equal distances from despotism and from anarchy.

We have already had occasion to show that Richelieu, long provoked by former aggressions of England, and latterly refused that co-partnership in European power, with which the wily Cardinal had tempted the English monarch, had vindictively proceeded, with the hoarded hatreds of many years. His intrigues had blown into a flame the embers of insurrection in Scotland, and he had even thrown off the mask, when the French Ambassador kept up no unfriendly intercourse with the English Parliament. Clarendon denounces “the Great Cardinal” for “the haughtiness of his own nature and immoderate appetite of revenge, under the disguise of being jealous of the honour of his master.” The noble historian did not know that this profound Statesman lived to regret some of his measures, for his confidential Secretary has informed us, that matters had gone farther than the Cardinal had designed, or than he desired.

Mazarine, the pupil of Richelieu, inherited all the advantages which the more vigorous genius of his great master had created. The character of this minister is finely touched by the most refined judge of all statesmen. "This Cardinal," says Clarendon, "was a man rather of different than contrary parts from his predecessor ; and fitter to build upon the foundations which he had laid, than to have laid those foundations, and to cultivate by artifice, dexterity, and dissimulation, in which his nature and parts excelled, what the other had begun with great resolution and vigour, and even gone through with invincible constancy and courage."

The Italian epicurean, not instigated by the passions of the native Frenchman, bore no personal animosity to Charles or to the English nation. Adopting, however, the system of the Cabinet of the Louvre, Mazarine moderately entered into its designs. This minister was no otherwise delighted by the troubles of England than as they kept the nation from forming any active alliance with the Spaniard, intent as he was in prosecuting the war with the rival powers of France. "The Cardinal," says Clarendon, "did not yet think the King's condition low enough, and rather desired by administering little and ordinary supplies, to enable him to continue the struggle, than to see him victorious over his enemies."

The whole of "the negotiations" or the dispatches of Sabran confirm this observation, as likewise his first cautious instructions, which were to serve the Envoy as the basis of his negotiations. Sabran was sent to England, doubtless to communicate whatever he could learn, and to discriminate with his own eyes. But with any other power he appears never to have been invested. He could not by any positive act of his own do that, by which either party could be benefited. He was not to compromise himself in his intercourse with the Parliament lest the King might find occasion to be jealous, and he was to play the same part with the King, that the Parliament might not suspect him of any predilection for royalty. A more neutralised being could not have been contrived by the mechanism of politics. It happened, however, that Sabran became so frequently alarmed, that he felt his situation desperately irksome, and the human puppet at times, in the exercise of his faculties, seemed ready to burst his secret pulleys.

When Sabran was told that a moderate supply in money from France would be of essential service to the King, both for his own subsistence and to enable him to open the campaign with an army of sufficient force to approach the capital, Sabran warily regretted that France had no monies to spare in her present position! He offered arms, but Charles observed that those already received from France were found to be utterly worthless! He suggested the aid of foreign volunteers, Charles refused to receive any foreign soldiers, observing that men were not wanted, but the means of subsisting them. Charles having expressed his satisfaction on the arrival of the Queen in France for the honours she had received, which had made a deep impression on the minds of the Londoners, suggested that the fear of France might bring the Parliament to reasonable conditions, and should France propose such, provided she was cautious not to incur a suspicion that she acted from any sinister motive, it would be the only means to terminate his affairs. This too was Sabran's own opinion, but he only replied by "acquainting the King with the present state of our affairs through Europe." No attempt at mediation was made, except the under plot of an intrigue carried on with the Scots to separate them from the Parliament of England, and to play one against another with the King between the two! In a word, after two years of *espionage* and *persiflage*, Sabran, who from the first was a suspected person by both parties, never improved in their confidence. He was actually worn out by his inefficient neutrality, and assisting neither, he left them to themselves, and they apparently left the French Resident to his own contemplations. This Envoy was appointed to do nothing, and after many hard trials with both parties, succeeded in that difficult employment.

When the fate of Charles, after the disastrous battle of Naseby, seemed fast approaching on him, and the Parliament assumed "the supreme dominion," Mazarine started from his slumbers of neutrality, more alarmed at the appearance of a monstrous novel Commonwealth rising up in Europe, than touched by the ancient jealousy of the former greatness of the Crown of England. The French Minister now dispatched another Envoy in earnest, to save the sinking Monarch. Monsieur Montreuil was sent, as Clarendon observes, "with

some formal address to the Parliament, but intentionally to negotiate between the King and the Scots." Montreuil came better provided than Sabran, to acquire the full confidence of the parties to whom he chiefly addressed himself. The Queen Regent of France, or Mazarine, had invested the new Envoy with ample authority to treat with the Scots, and Henrietta had solemnly impressed on Charles the decision of France to serve him.

The new Envoy proceeded without dissimulation in all his communications with the King. He felt a personal regard for the monarch, whom he earnestly sought to extricate from one of his most trying situations. At this critical moment Charles was meditating his escape from Oxford, but agitated by doubts and by despair, he knew not whither to fly, nor what measures to pursue. Montreuil, unlike Sabran, soon obtained all the confidence of Charles, for he was acting with an honourable sincerity. This, however, did not alter the situation of Charles. Montreuil was zealous to accomplish the object of his mission, but he had come on an erroneous principle, and had to encounter a difficulty which no human power could overcome, since religion itself, as well as monarchy, according to the notions and the feelings of Charles, were to form the dark and self-sacrifice. The Queen had signed a sort of engagement with a subtle Scotch agent, Sir Robert Murray, that the King should consent to the establishment of the Presbyterian government in England; Jermyn and Culpepper at Paris had confirmed the proposal, and pressed it on the King as his last resource.

This immolation of an heretical Episcopacy in favour of another heretical Church-government, was a change perfectly indifferent to a Roman Catholic Queen, as was Henrietta; to the thoughtless Jermyn, the silken creature of a court; and to Culpepper, a military man, shrewd and bold in his measures, but who Charles declared knew nothing of "Religion." To them all it appeared a simple concession, by which the powerless monarch might secure his throne.

Charles, alluding to the paper signed by the Queen, observed to Montreuil that it was void, for "the Queen, his dear consort, in the particular of the Church was a little mistaken, by her not so full knowledge of the constitution of the English govern-

ment." He freely consented to allow the Presbyterian government in Scotland, "but if the Scots will never declare for me unless I should make such concessions for the destruction of monarchy, by the grace of God I never will do it." Charles said, "That their doctrine is anti-monarchical, I bolted out of Mr. Henderson." Charles used a more forcible argument when he observed, that should he consent to the terms the Scots prescribed, he would only be securing that party which in England had become the weakest in the State, and would only exasperate the Independents, whose ascendancy already appeared, both against them and himself.

The candour of Montreuil is admirable. Having stated his argument to Charles in favour of the Scots, he fairly concludes, "This time your Majesty will think me quite Scotified, but I believe you will do me the honour not to think ill of me for representing affairs without any disguise, which we do only to intelligent monarchs :'" (*Aux Rois bien sçavants.*) On another occasion this honest negotiator addressed the reverse arguments, those which Charles himself had supplied him with, to bring the Scots to terms. Montreuil now reminded them that their great enemy, the Independents, were of late far more powerful than they. "I showed them that they ought to feel but little interest in establishing their Church government in England, and for ruling over the consciences of their neighbours, compared with the more pressing necessity of preserving their lives, their property, and their liberty, all which they would lose whenever they abandoned your Majesty." To the frank negotiator Charles replied as frankly. His decision was invariable, but with a gracefulness not always accompanying his clear and business-like style, he adds, "To answer your freedom with the like, I plainly tell you that already you have from me all that I can do, and you may believe me that no necessity shall compel me to do that which I have refused to do at the desire of two Queens, either of them having power enough to make me do what is possible, *sans marchander*. In a word, you have all that my shop can afford, it is your part to make the best bargain you may," alluding to the Presbyterian party at London.

Montreuil, with a generous zeal to accomplish this perplexed negotiation, finding the Scots Commissioners at London and

the King alike unalterable, determined on journeying himself to the Scottish army at Newark, taking the King at Oxford in his way. He resolved to try whether the heads of the army were as intractable as their party at Westminster. Montreuil discovered that the Scottish officers were more moderate in their councils, and not unwilling to listen to any expedient which might serve them to recede from the rigour of their demands. The honest Negotiator was sanguine that he should now accommodate the more difficult points. The Scots were gratified to learn that it was the King's design to come among them. The difficulty was now to contrive a method for this extraordinary removal, so that they should not offend their masters—the English Parliament. They proposed sending a body of cavalry to Harborough, a place which the King could safely reach, and when he met those troops, as it were accidentally, he should declare that he was proceeding to Scotland, and command their attendance. By this subterfuge the Scots had warily planned to avoid the appearance of having invited the King, their object being to show that the King had voluntarily taken refuge with their army.

On April the 1st, Montreuil, to give assurance to the King, drew up an Engagement expressive of their earnest desire to receive their natural Sovereign, and to offer him every personal security.* It is curious to observe the shifts to which all parties are put to botch an insincere, or a difficult treaty. Montreuil who could not extract from the Scots any but a verbal agreement, had drawn up one with his own hand, to satisfy the impatient King, who was still counting the hours for his escape from Oxford; and though not one of the party would venture to subscribe the Engagement, pleading the critical position in which their friends stood with the powerful Independents at London, yet they pledge their oaths with Montreuil, that his signature shall be as valid as if it bore the names of those who never signed it!

The encouragement the King had received from Montreuil hastened his decision for this famous transportation of himself. Impatient to pass over to the Scots, Charles deemed it, however, prudent to ascertain the promised arrival of their cavalry.

* This document may be found in Clarendon, v. 387.

The King sent for Dr. Hudson, whom he called his "plain-dealing Chaplain." This Dr. Hudson was one of those rare energetic characters, who seem born to wrestle with the Fate they cannot conquer. This remarkable person was a devoted Royalist, who had never forsaken the fortunes of his Master, and had always opened his mind with the most unrestrained freedom when others would not, or dared not. But his practice was not restricted to the studies of Divinity, he had greatly distinguished himself in the Field, and for his hardy activity held the office of Scout-Master-General in the North, and by this means was well conversant with the bad roads and cross-cuts, which were the annoyance of our ancestors, more particularly when a secret journey was to be contrived.

The King desired Dr. Hudson to prepare for a journey, without, however, informing him of his destination. The Doctor, however, knew it. The King expressed his astonishment, declaring that he had confided the secret only to Prince Rupert and the Duke of Richmond. The Duke of Richmond had been weak enough to trust the secret to the Duchess, and she to her Maid, and the Maid had communicated it to the Doctor, and however silent the last receiver of the secret intelligence might have been, there was already a rumour afloat at Oxford.

On April 8th, Dr. Hudson posted to Harborough, and there neither found Montreuil nor the Scottish cavalry. He pushed on to Southwell, where Montreuil lodged, who appeared disconcerted at his appearance, perplexed in his opinions, and very ill-pleased with the Scots. On the 10th of April, Hudson returned to the King, with a very discouraging prospect, and gloomily presaged that the Scots were designing to make a bargain with the King's person.*

Clarendon will now supply that part of the narrative which the noble writer drew from the actual correspondence of Montreuil with the King and Secretary Nicholas.† "Many days had not passed after the sending that express" (the express

* Manuscript account of the King's escape, by Dr. Stukeley.—Cole's MSS. xiv. Though Harborough was only a distance of forty miles from Oxford, it is remarked that it was in "a bad season and bad roads." A morning ride of forty miles was then an expedition in roads without turnpikes.

† We have the interesting correspondence of the French resident from two sources, the Clarendon, and also the Thurloe State-papers.

which carried the Engagement written by Montreuil and assented to by the Scots) "when he found such chagrin* and tergiversation in some of those he had treated with, one man denying what he had said to himself, and another disclaiming the having given such a man authority to say that from him, which the other still avowed he had done, that Montreuil thought himself obliged with all speed to advertise his Majesty of the foul change, and to dissuade him from venturing his person in the power of such men; but the express who carried that letter was taken prisoner, and though he escaped and preserved his letter, he could not proceed in his journey." Had this letter reached Charles, Montreuil imagined it would have deterred him from venturing his person with the Scots, but an alteration again occurred, which induced the King to keep to his resolution, having no other resource left him.

The honest mediator, probably after Doctor Hudson had returned to the King, indignantly remonstrated with these equivocating Scots. He insisted that they were insulting the honour of his own Sovereign by their perpetual prevarications, since France stood forth to guarantee whatever the King of England should engage to perform. When Montreuil raised his tone, he again brought them back to their old protestations and a renewal of their former scheme, but the conditions were made somewhat harder. A place was again appointed mid-way between Newark and Harborough. Montreuil opened his inmost thoughts to the King and Secretary Nicholas. He himself had lost all confidence in the parties.

The ardent negotiator, out-wearied and baffled by these political jugglers, subsides into prudential counsels and chilling warnings. He complains that the Scots contrive every obstacle to prevent him from positively advising the King not to quit Oxford, at the same time that they proceeded irresolutely, as if

* Cole, who in his Manuscript has quoted this passage from Clarendon, writes "Chicane," so it ought to be read in Clarendon instead of "*Chagrine*." As Cole was a mere matter-of-fact man, one would suppose that he did not venture on so ingenious a reading without some authority. The sense and the truth would not suffer by its adoption. I looked eagerly into the last accurate and uncastrated edition of Clarendon, where the Rev. Dr. Bandinel has closely watched the autograph of Clarendon himself, even to a syllable; but the conjecture of Cole has only its own merit, being unwarranted by the original Manuscript.

they cared not to assist his escape. Their motives were complex, and their proceedings were contradictory. The truth is, the Scots were earnest enough that Charles should be in their camp, but the difficulty was, to induce the King to come voluntarily to them, and to conceal any advances on their part. They avoided doing any act on their side, or to venture their signature to any treaty which might implicate them with their pay-masters, the English House of Commons, or, as they subtly stated it, "should they break with the English Parliament, it would deprive them of means to preserve the King."

Montreuil thus closes one of his dispatches: "I will say no more but this, that his Majesty and you know the Scots better than I do; I have not taken upon me the boldness to give any counsel to his Majesty, yet if he hath any other refuge or means to make better conditions, I think he ought not to accept of these." His confidence did not improve. A day or two after, he says, "They tell me that they will do more than can be expressed; but let not his Majesty hope for any more than I send him word of, that he may not be deceived; for certainly the enterprise is full of danger!" And far more than the honest negotiator ever imagined!

We shall see that shortly after the arrival of Charles, Montreuil was not even allowed to confer with the King. The negotiation of the French Resident, who was an honest man than his master the Cardinal designed him to be, ended most unhappily. Montreuil protested against their perfidy, but he could not conceal from himself that he had totally failed in his mission, and, to avoid the daily insults of the Scots, he and Ashburnham, the confidential companion of the King, flew to Paris, where the late Resident in vain attempted to rouse the indignation of the Cardinal for the honour of France.

The failure of this negotiation cast Mazarine into one of those critical dilemmas from which a sole Minister, as was the Cardinal in France, only extricates himself by the sacrifice of a victim. "No unusual hard-heartedness in such chief Ministers," says Clarendon. Had Montreuil been permitted to publish the history of this important transaction, he had probably cleared himself of the imputations cast on his disastrous negotiation; his integrity would not have been suspected for his too sanguine

reliance on his first interviews with the Scottish officers, nor on the anomalous document where his own signature was to testify for others what they themselves refused to attest.

In this secret mission the Cardinal at first appears to have been prevailed on by the solicitations of the two Queens to mediate between Charles and the Scots. The project harmonised with the State-policy, but since the negotiation had concluded with a disaster, by placing the King in the imprisonment of a Scottish camp, Mazarine, who consulted his ease as often as the policy of the State, cared not to listen to the cries of a baffled negotiator. Desirous of silently wiping off the indignity which his luckless agent asserted had been offered to the Crown of France; anxious, too, to conceal from the English Parliament how deeply France had engaged herself in this secret intrigue with the Scots, and equally dreading lest Montreuil's "plain unvarnished tale" should irritate the Scottish chiefs by its exposition, the Minister condemned the luckless envoy to silence, forbade his appearance at Court, and afterwards exiled him from Paris. Clarendon, who has commemorated his fate, adds that Montreuil "died of grief of mind." What is more certain in the history of this French Resident, Clarendon seems not to have known. The discarded official man went over to the Opposition party, accepting the Secretaryship of the Prince of Conti. And when that Prince, the Duke of Longueville, and the great Condé were imprisoned at Vincennes, Montreuil became their active correspondent, and their secret counsellor. When these Princes obtained their liberty, his death prevented the recompense of his able services; but as this happened five years after Montreuil's unlucky mission to the Scots, it seems more probable that instead of "dying of grief of mind" from that incident, the discarded Envoy experienced no little satisfaction at mortifying "the hard-hearted Minister" by his firm and even triumphant opposition.

After these two French Residents, Believre, the French Ambassador, took up with his fine needle the dropped stitch of this net-work; proceeding on the same principle, threading the Parliament against the King, and the King against the Parliament. The policy of the Cabinet of the Louvre was never designed by Mazarine to be of any essential service to England. And so we discover the conclusion by a passage in one of Lord

Clarendon's letters: "I am glad the French Ambassador hath disgusted the King, if he be enough disgusted. The truth is, the cheats and the villany of that nation is so gross that I cannot think of it with patience, neither can the King ever prosper till he abhors them perfectly, and trusts none who trust them."

Such is the nature of ministerial offices and Machiavelian politics! But this system, however reprobated by Clarendon, has not been peculiar to the French Cabinet; the English have had their share in this short-sighted policy. Nations, or rather Ministers, have sought in the domestic feuds of a neighbouring nation, a false and hollow prosperity for themselves; unable to build up their own strength by their own wisdom, they often deceive themselves by imagining they acquire stability in proportion to the weakness of their neighbours.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FLIGHT FROM OXFORD TO THE SCOTTISH CAMP.

At Oxford, early in 1646, Charles was driven to his last resource. The King had passed through a dismal and disastrous winter. Day after day his garrisons had vanished, his scattered troops were defeated, or disbanded. He was no longer the commander of an army, while the armies of the Parliament multiplied around him. The King, sanguine as he was often in his worse fortunes, could not disguise from himself the ruin which was now hastening on him.

Fairfax and the other Parliamentary Generals were gradually drawing around their armies, and his beloved Oxford, which had long been the resort of the most eminent personages of the nation, and was consecrated by those treasures of literature which had often attracted his thoughts at intervals of quiet, was shortly to be begirt by an implacable enemy.

Pressed still harder than by the Parliament's armies, by their unconditional "propositions," and by the solicitation of his confidential advisers at Paris to accept them, they strained his religious conscience on the rack, and all seemed to be

lost, but the feeble Honour, which he would not yield but with his life.

There was no wisdom amidst distracted counsels, and no confidence among the hopeless. On one side they pressed the King to stay at Oxford, and surrender on honourable terms ; for since the vote of the Independents in the Commons had passed, that he should never reign more, they only contemplated in the private flight of the King inevitable calamity ; but Ashburnham, who was usually of the King's mind, was willing to perish in flight, rather than to surrender at discretion.

Every hour seemed more urgent than the last, and Charles was to decide on his instant course. Cast into many a reverie of desperate resolves, once Charles offered to two eminent commanders, that if they would give their word to conduct him to the Parliament, he would trust himself to their hands ; but they refused to engage themselves by so perilous a favour. Thrice had he solicited a personal conference at Westminster, but the Parliament, who were daily expecting the circumvallation of Oxford, and had driven their game into a strong toil, had only replied by "an insulting silence," "an answer, answerless," as Elizabeth once curtly expressed herself to the Commons. The truth is, that even in this last reduced state of the King, his enemies dreaded "the royal presence" more than they had done his armies.* That romantic fancy which on more than one occasion had broken out, was still clinging about his mind. It was his favourite plan to venture himself in disguise, and unexpectedly appear at London. Perhaps not without some reasonable hopes, Charles imagined that by an uncommon mark of generous confidence he should secure his protection from a grateful city.† It has been said that to end this conflict of

* Dr. Lingard, x. 334, who has drawn a correct outline of the proceedings of Charles at this critical moment. The Parliament were so greatly alarmed at the idea of the King coming even privately to London, that they published an ordinance to imprison the sovereign should he be found within their limits.

† I say "reasonable hopes," for May, the parliamentary historian, furnished a curious statement of public opinion in the capital about this time, which evidently marks its vacillation, and the increasing influence of the royal "Malignants" over their conquerors. Alluding to the dissensions between the Presbyterians and the Independents, the historian tells us, "The Malignants were ready to join with either side, that they might ruin both. For they themselves, though disarmed, were now

his head and his heart, his conscience tempted even by his friends, and his future proceedings distracted by adverse councils, Charles meditated by throwing himself out of Oxford, with four or five thousand men, to perish in the field, and thus exhibit in that Aceldama the woful spectacle of a signal immolation.*

At this moment the feelings of Charles were wrought up to their highest tension; and it may serve as an extraordinary evidence of the visionary turn of his mind, and the awful superstition of his soul, that Charles entertained some wayward fancy that should he ever re-possess his throne, he would perform a public penance for the sin, as it seemed to him, which lay heavy on his soul,—the death-warrant of his great Minister. At this moment he wrote down a secret vow, solemnly offered to God, of his future resolutions to restore to the Church all the Cathedral and other Ecclesiastical lands formerly held by the Crown, and now, as he conceived, appropriated by sacrilegious hands. This singular document, the effusion of some melancholy and feverish hour, when pressed for farther concessions for the establishment of the Presbyterian Government in England, was buried under ground for security, during thirteen years, by Archbishop Sheldon.†

The language of Charles the First was often prompted by the most profound emotions, and at this awful crisis, we detect the extreme agitation of the monarch. Among other projects of the moment, his confidant, Ashburnham, was attempting to treat with the Independents, through the medium of the younger

become the greatest number, especially by the inconstancy of many men, either upon particular grievances or an account of the burden of taxations. A great number of the citizens of London, not of the meanest, had revolted from their former principles, insomuch that the inhabitants of that city, all the King's garrisons having been by Fairfax's bloodless victories emptied into it, came to be in such a condition of strength, as that the Parliament, without the Army's help, could not safely sit there."—May's Breviary of the History of the Parliament, p. 122.

* I derive this fact from a manuscript of Dr. Stukeley's "Account of the Escape of King Charles," among the Cole MSS., vol. xlv. 372. Such desperate decisions seem to be indicated in a letter to Montreuil, on Charles's design to fly to the Scots. "Exeter is to-morrow to be given up, so that I must expect to be blocked up here within very few days, which rather than be, I am resolved to run any hazard to come to you."—Clarendon State Papers, ii. 221.

† A transcript, attested by several eminent persons, was formerly among the collection of autographs of the late Mr. Upcott.

Vane.* The pretended principle of this faction, as it allowed to all men liberty of conscience, was more favourable to Charles than the principles of the Presbyterians, which restricted the faith of mankind to their Papistical synods and their Israelitish excommunications. One of these dispatches to Vane was written by the King. We may feel the agony of his cry!—"Be very confident that all things shall be performed according to my promise. By all that is good I conjure you to dispatch that courtesy for me with all speed, or it will be too late; I shall perish before I receive the fruits of it. I may not tell you my necessities, but if it were necessary so to do, I am sure you would lay all other considerations aside, and fulfil my desires. This is all; trust me, I will repay the favour to the full. I have done. If I have not an answer within four days, I shall be necessitated to find some other expedient. God direct you! I have discharged my duty."

The favour so earnestly implored was to admit the King to come to London, with a security of his person, observing that "the wealth of the nation is already exhausted, and the sufferings of the people so great, that they are no longer to be supported. This is reason; 'tis not to cast a bone among you!"†

Even at this moment, so humiliated in his own regard, so humble in his supplication, and anticipating the calamity preparing for him, Charles, amidst his unparalleled adversity, was borne up by the majesty which suffered, but knew to suffer. No monarch has written in so impassioned a style, for no monarch has found himself in a similar position, and few kings, even few men, have experienced such exalted emotions, and closed a long life of trial with the greatness with which he had borne it.

It is a beautiful reflection of Hume on this occasion, that "As the dread of ills is commonly more oppressive than their real presence, perhaps in no period of his life was he more justly the subject of compassion;" and he adds, with great truth of

* Dr. Lingard affords us an ingenious conjecture on this extraordinary correspondence with this popular leader, who had evidently listened to the King, and indulged the intercourse with a view to keep "the royal bird" in his net till the great fowlers, his friends Fairfax and Cromwell, could get down to the toils. They were bringing up their armies from Cornwall to Oxford.—x. 338.

† Clarendon State Papers, ii. 526.

discrimination, "His vigour of mind, which though, it sometimes failed him in acting, never deserted him in his sufferings, was what alone supported him."

The truth of this statement is farther displayed in the warmth of the noble declaration which at this hour of awful suspense Charles wrote to Lord Digby. Even at this critical moment, he was still flattering himself with the delusion of accomplishing a design which finally became his ruin. So prone was the helpless monarch to exemplify his favourite motto, which he frequently wrote in his books, *Dum Spiro Spero*.

"Since my last to you by Colonel Butler, misfortunes have so multiplied upon me that I have been forced to send this (to say no more) but strange message to London, yet whatever comes of me, I must not forget my friends wherever they are.

"I am endeavouring to get to London, so that the conditions may be such as a gentleman may own, and that the Rebels may acknowledge me King; being not without hope that I shall be able so to draw either the Presbyterians or Independents to side with me for extirpating one or the other, that I shall be really King again.

"Howsoever, I desire you to assure all my friends, that if I cannot live as King, I shall die like a gentleman, without doing that which may make honest men blush for me.

"OXFORD, 26 March, 1646."*

This was no unusual style with Charles; this circumstance is alluded to by Clarendon in writing to Culpepper. "How often have you and I heard him say, that if he could not live a King he would die a gentleman; let him wear that princely apothegm next his heart; and he will yet be happy in this world, and I am sure he will be as glorious to posterity."

When Charles decided on leaving Oxford, accompanied by Dr. Hudson and Ashburnham, he was irresolute where to direct his flight. Whether to venture on to London and seek a personal reconciliation with his Parliament, or to get by sea into Scotland to join Montrose, or repair to the Scottish camp before Newark, casting himself on their protection? Such

* Carte's Life of the Duke of Ormond, iii. Appendix, No. 433.

important movements were to depend on any intelligence which he might procure on the road !

Dr. Hudson had an old pass for a captain, who was to go to London about his composition. In a scarlet cloak the Doctor represented the military bearer. At midnight the King came with the Duke of Richmond to Ashburnham's apartment. The scissors were then applied to the King's tresses, and Charles's love-lock, which was never more to float on the left side, and to clip that peaked beard which adorns the royal portrait. At two in the morning Hudson went to the Governor, Sir Thomas Glemham, who brought the keys. The clock struck three as they went over Magdalen-bridge. They passed the port which opens on the London road, where the Governor received his orders from the King, not to suffer any port to be opened for five days. The Governor took his leave with a "Farewell, Harry !" for to that name Charles was now to answer, as Ashburnham's servant, wearing a Montero cap, and carrying a cloak-bag.

Hudson and Ashburnham rode with pistols. They met several troopers ; a party of horse inquired to whom they belonged ? "To the honourable House of Commons," was the answer. One of Ireton's men joined them on their way to Slough, and observing the Doctor, or the Captain, repeatedly give money to the soldiers, asked the King, as the servant, whether his master was one of the Lords of Parliament ? The King replied "No ! my master is one of the Lower House."

They baited at an inn at Hillingdon, a village near Uxbridge. Here several hours were passed in debating on their future course ; London or northward ? They looked over "the News-books," from whence they gathered no comfort. They found that the Parliament had already notice of the King's escape, and on a prevalent rumour both at Oxford and at London that the King was actually in London, the Parliament betrayed their alarm by publishing an ordinance, by beat of drum and sound of trumpet, that whoever should harbour the King should forfeit their whole estate.*

Those who pretend that the cares and necessities of a King are not to be regarded as of more consideration, nor should

* Whitelocke, 208.

more excite our sympathy than those of "a peasant," as one has recently expressed it,* or of any other individual, seem to be little conversant with human nature. The decision of a monarch may be a catastrophe in the history of a nation, and the emotions of a conscientious prince may be commensurate with the greatness of the contemplated object. Was there no difference in the magnitude of the feelings of Alfred in his distresses, and his reveries, for re-conquering his kingdom, when he took refuge in the cot of the husbandman, than that peasant would have experienced had he been expelled his own hut? We might as well conclude, by a false analogy, an equal sympathy is excited when some obscure skiff perishes, as when a noble ship of war, with all its complement of men, and its many associations of glory, sinks in the ocean.

Opposite and unsettled were now the musings of Charles. Should he venture to hasten to those who had already pronounced his fate? Could the Sovereign in his person restore peace to his people, whom four long years of devastating civil war had afflicted with all its miseries? The idea was glorious, the emotion was sublime! Charles was still balancing in his mind to dare this desperate attempt—but what he had seen in "the News-books" had revealed without disguise the temper of those whom he would vainly have conciliated. In agony the King tore himself away from his favourite scheme, and his abandoned capital, and with his two faithful followers, pursued their road northward, uncertain of their destination.

Their way was beset with dangers. They passed through fourteen garrisons of their enemies. They frequently met with soldiers, whose inquiries as yet were satisfied with a few shillings thrown to them; but trivial incidents will alarm the fugitive. Once they were hard pursued by a drunken squire galloping after them. They now heard that it was known that the King had quitted Oxford in the disguise of a servant, and it became necessary to change his appearance to that of a clergyman. The barber who trimmed the King expressed his astonishment at the rough clipping of his beard, from the hasty inexpert

* Mr. John Towill Rutt, in his notes on Burton's Parliamentary Diary, ii. 320, to whom I would do ample justice as a most intelligent annotator. His observation applies to the *murder* of Charles, which makes it the more cruel, unphilosophical, and unjust.

scissors of Ashburnham, and he seemed too curious in his inquiry after the dishonour of his craft.

The King and Ashburnham were left at Downham, in Norfolk, while Dr. Hudson was dispatched to Montreuil for information. The French Resident declared the King had no choice left but to put himself into the hands of the Scots, whose commissioners again confirmed their former verbal agreement to the full, though they still refused to subscribe any paper. The Doctor, who had all along suspected the intentions of the Scots, since their former failure of sending the promised cavalry to Harborough, now offered, with his accustomed courage, to go himself to London and ascertain if the King would be honourably received. Montreuil pronounced the scheme absolutely fatal.

On Hudson's return the King resolved to repair to the Scots. He had left Oxford on the 26th of April, and arrived on the 5th of May where Montreuil resided. After dinner the King passed to Kelham-bridge, the head-quarters of General Leven. Discovering himself to the Scottish General, Leven raised his hands in amazement, and expressed the most alarming surprise. He lodged the King at Kelham House for his security, secure as in a prison, and gave him a guard of honour, who also served as a sentinel over the royal captive.

The Scots had obtained the secret object they wished, through the honourable confidence of Montreuil in their verbal, but solemn assurances, and having signed no terms, and sent no troops to receive the King, they had eluded every appearance of being implicated in this important movement. This affair was conducted with such caution and secrecy by the commissioners at the Scotch quarter, who had held an intercourse with Montreuil, that it appeared uncertain whether the Scots under General Leven were at all co-partners with their commissioners. The cards were shuffled, and they were now free to play their game to perfection. It was a see-saw between the Scotch commissioners at London, who had first settled the treaty, and the Scotch commissioners at the army, verbally confirming what Montreuil required on the faith of France. It was, however, pretended by the Scottish lords, that they had not been privy to conditions agreed at London, or unauthenticated by any

document, as if in a transaction of this vital nature the parties had not freely communicated. When Charles discovered the extraordinary duplicity which had been practised, he demanded "How he came to be invited thither, and whether Lesley was not to have met him with a troop of cavalry?" Montreuil justified what he had so often informed the King, from themselves, to their faces; they could not deny these charges, but with ingenious effrontery they acknowledged "that it was all very true, for they approved of his Majesty's confidence in them, and honouring their army with his residence as the place where he intended to settle a peace;" which peace, the Earl of Lothian informed his Majesty, was to accept their Covenant, and subscribe whatever had been required!* On the subsequent day of the King's arrival, Lesley, the Scotch General, addressed a letter to the committee of both kingdoms, giving this strange account: "The King came into our army yesterday in so private a way, that after we had made search for him upon the surmises of some persons, who pretended to know his face, yet we could not find him out in sundry houses. And we believe your lordships will think it was matter of much astonishment to us, seeing we did not expect he would have come in any place under our power."—Notwithstanding the treaty which had been for some time carried on by the Scotch commissioners?—"We conceived it not fit to inquire into the causes that persuaded him to come hither, but to endeavour that his being here might be improved to the best advantage for promoting the work of uniformity, for settling religion and righteousness."†

How "they improved it to the best advantage" we shall see, as well as their own tariff of their "Religion and Righteousness."

From the recently published Narrative of Ashburnham, I am inclined to conclude, that this favourite companion of Charles delivered what was not distant from the truth, when he observed, "The Money due from the Parliament to the Scots, was the design of divers in their army inviting his Majesty to them, and proved to be the price of his delivery to the Parliament."‡

* Ashburnham's Narrative, 76.

† Rushworth, vi. 268.

‡ Ashburnham's Narrative, 87.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE KING IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CAMP.

THE possession of the person of the King by the Scots inflamed the keenest jealousies on the side of the English Parliament. The minority in the Commons was now becoming the more powerful part. They had got the helm of the vessel into their hands, which, as was observed, though it be one of the least pieces of timber in the ship, yet turns the whole body at the Statesman's will. Cromwell and his party in 1646, as Whitelocke informs us, were carrying on their designs with much privacy and subtlety. It is equally curious and instructive, to place together in juxtaposition, the scattered atoms of intelligence which we gather from contemporaries, unconnected with each other, indicative of the same period, and alluding to the same circumstance. Ludlow, the honest Republican General, confirms Whitelocke's suggestion. At this time, the public and magnificent funeral of the Earl of Essex had been procured by the Presbyterian party, and excited the envy and indignation of the Army-party and the Commonwealth-men. Ludlow writes, "I observed that another party was not idle." This appeared in a remarkable conversation in which Cromwell tampered with Ludlow, clearly showing that even at this period, in 1646, that extraordinary man was contemplating the annihilation of a Parliament, and the erection, doubtless, of himself as a Chief, under the modest assumption of General.* These depositions from such opposite quarters, accord with Clarendon's correct statement. "The Presbyterian party in the Houses did what they pleased, and were thought to govern all: the Independents craftily letting them enjoy that confidence of their power and interest till they had dismissed their friends the Scots out of the kingdom."†

* Ludlow's *Memoirs*, i. 160. Cromwell, with dramatic art, first touched the filial nerve of Ludlow by an allusion to his late father, a stern Commonwealth-man. "If thy father were alive, he would let some of them have what they deserve." And shortly after, "These men will never leave till the army pull them out by the ears." 163.

† Clarendon, v. 421.

The Army-party, that is, the Levellers, and the party of the Commonwealth-men, were those who were most uneasy at the disposal of the King's person by the Presbyterians. We learn this secret from General Ludlow. As soon as it was known that the King had gone to the Scottish army, "the House of Commons, deeming it unreasonable that the Scots' army being in their pay should assume the authority to dispose of the King, otherwise than by their orders, sent to demand the person of the King, resolving farther that the King should be conducted to the Castle of Warwick.*" They had decided to imprison the King at once, which afterwards cost them so much artifice and trouble to effect. An army of observation, consisting of cavalry, closely watched the movements of the Scots, and a vote of the House for continuing the payment of the army during the subsequent six months, intimated an intelligible decision to their refractory Allies.

It was only a fortnight after the King's arrival in the Scottish camp in May, that the Parliament voted that "This kingdom had no farther need of the army of their brethren the Scots in this kingdom," and a grant of one hundred thousand pounds was made for the Scots, provided that "They advanced into Scotland." The notice which the Scots took of their dismissal was excessively mild. They declared that "They came into England out of affection, and not in a mercenary way, willing to return home, and want of pay shall be no hindrance thereunto."†

The vote of dismission was, however, renewed, July 6th, with a severe animadversion. The Parliament declared that they had no more need of the Scots' army, which they desired to withdraw out of the kingdom, "which is no longer able to bear them;" alluding to their heavy contributions, their free quarters, and other considerable grievances which had ground down the people, and almost depopulated the northern counties. The Scots, with a happy forgetfulness of their recent magnanimous profession of their indifference to "want of pay," now sent in a demand for five hundred thousand pounds.

Certainly in the lexicon of political morality, the term gratitude will not be found. The instant an ally becomes useless

* Ludlow's Memoirs, i. 152.

† Whitelocke, 211—219.

we discover that he is onerous. We now view the Parliament prescribing their commands, and not soliciting the aid of "their brethren" of Scotland, formerly their "dear brethren." Their position had altered. The English Parliament had extinguished the forces of Charles, who now, by his own hand, had voluntarily surrendered every town he possessed. Sole Sovereigns of the kingdom, the Parliament, elate in conquest, had their numerous armies at liberty to expel an invader; and their novel and undisguised boldness was prompted by the union of Authority with Power. The Scots, on the contrary, who had formerly made their Paymasters court them, now awed by the armies of England, in their turn were become the solicitors. They had affected not to be considered as "Mercenaries," but in reality, they had a stake depending which made all Scotland serious, a stake which it were hopeless to fight for, and could only be obtained by craft and treaty.

The secret of the great change of conduct in the Parliament and the Scots is revealed by a single observation of Whitelocke: "The Houses now saw the advantages of keeping up their army, as that which the more inclined the Scots to come to this offer,"—that is, of delivering up all their garrisons in England on the auditing and paying their arrears. But they dealt in rounder sums than their arrears. Those who had professed that they were "not Mercenaries" and indifferent to "the want of pay," at first had talked of two millions, and the royal pledge they held in their hands they deemed to be an ample security.

The King's durance at Newcastle lasted nine months, and the negotiation for the royal person was a deliberate act, for it passed through a gradual process. The adjusting the sums the Scots claimed, combined with the disposal of the King's person, were affairs of extreme delicacy. At first the Scots were resolute that "they neither would nor could compel the King to return to the Parliament." They had then some hope of seeing a King in Israel, and converting Charles to their Covenant. At the close of the year 1646, the Scottish Commissioners quitted London, but in what humour they left their old Masters we may gather from an extraordinary circumstance. When it was moved in the Commons, to vote the thanks of the House to the Scottish Lords, for *civilities and good offices*, the Independent

faction carried an amendment to strike out the three last words! The exalted characters which Parliament were wont to bestow on the Scotch Commissioners on every occasion, were now sunk into the coldest phraseology of political etiquette. It is clear that the Scots had not yet had their accounts passed.

At Edinburgh, however, they were probably impatient to conclude the difficult negotiation. The Scots pressed their Covenant on the King, sure he would never subscribe to it; but they who had so long cried out against forcing their own consciences, allowed no such tenderness to others. The King demanded of the Scotch Commissioners at Newcastle, whether if he went to Scotland he should be there with honour, freedom, and safety? To this they returned no answer, which perhaps was sufficiently explicit.*

On the 16th of January, 1647, it was debated in the Scottish Parliament, what should be done with his Majesty's person? Burnet tells us that the Parliament at Edinburgh were all inclined to deliver the King to the English Parliament, but it is probable that Whitelocke more correctly informs us, that to the Scottish honour, it was carried but by two votes for the King not coming to Scotland.† On this occasion the Hamiltons were cast into a state of desperate affliction according to their opposite characters. The Duke was all melancholy and despair, the Earl of Lanerick breathed fury and rage.‡ They witnessed the open defection, or the designed absence, of their friends. The Earl of Lanerick's emphatic abjuration has come down to us, "As God shall have mercy on my soul at the great day, I would choose rather to have my head struck off at the Market-Cross of Edinburgh than give my consent to this vote!" He groaned in declaring that "it was the blackest Saturday that ever Scotland saw!" alluding to a great eclipse which happened many years before, and from which that day

* Whitelocke, 239, under the date 22nd January. The accuracy of this sort of dates is difficult to ascertain. We cannot always be certain whether this statesman, in his most useful Diary, journalised his intelligence the day the circumstance occurred, or only the day on which he learnt it. It is evident that when Charles put this important question, either the Scottish Parliament had not yet declared their decision, or Charles had not yet heard of it.

† Memoirs of the Hamiltons, 311. Whitelocke, 240.

‡ Memoirs of the Hamiltons, 307.

on which the Parliament had met was called "the black Saturday." The Hamiltons, who kept up an active correspondence with the most secret sources of intelligence at London, with a political second-sight contemplated on the scene which was about to open in England. Burnet positively states that "the designs of the Independents against the King's person and Monarchy had been faithfully discovered to the Scotch by some of their Commissioners at London." This was two years before that event which was to startle Europe occurred! The Hamiltons seem to have had a juster conception of the intentions of that party by whose talons the Sovereign was now to be grasped, than had the King himself.

Hume has noticed a curious circumstance. The Scotch Parliament, ashamed of the infamy of this extraordinary transaction, had afterwards absolutely voted for the protection and liberty of the King; but the General Assembly decreed, that as Charles had refused the Covenant, it became not the Godly to concern themselves about his fortunes. A public fast and a double sermon were ordered in the morning, "according to our custom at St. Andrew's before the execution," as the Earl of Lanerick observed. The rest of the day was to be employed in taking a final resolution. But it is evident that the resolution had been taken before the fast and the sermons: it was, as usual, a mockery of Heaven to give a religious solemnity to a predetermined design. The Parliament, in decency, were now compelled to retract their generous vote. We see that the land of Papistry is not the only land where a nation may be priest-ridden.

The truth seems that the Scottish accounts were now on the point of being passed. It was bruited at London that the Scots had discovered, that "should they receive his Majesty, it would be contrary to their engagements with England." A Scotchman, slave at once to his worldly interest and his Israelitish Covenant, when it was supposed that the Duke of Hamilton was concerned in planning the escape of the King, earnestly wrote to his Grace not to concur in any such design; "The King getting out of their hands would ruin all;"—that is, we presume, the four hundred thousand pounds—"and that since God had hardened the King's heart not to serve him according

to the Covenant, this Pharaoh himself ought no longer to be served." *

On the 25th of January the Scottish declaration arrived at London, which communicated to both Houses that "as the King has often declared his desires to be near his Parliament of England, they had fixed on Holmby to conclude the bargain, provided that the money was forthcoming." This fortunate recollection on the side of the Scots of the King's repeated desire to be near his Parliament was sudden, but it served for a colourable plea.

The waggons dragged the heavy freight to Topcliffe House, and the Scots gave "their Acquittances." After chaffering through many months, though they had allowed a heavy discount for their two millions, reducing it to less than a fourth, they had on the whole driven a hard bargain with a niggardly Parliament, who had at first tried to foist them by a single hundred. The Parliament could only have been obstinate from sheer envy of their former "dear brethren!" for to this levy of money no "honest man" contributed a single penny. The Parliamentary Arithmetic at this moment was simple. Noy imagined that he had found "a bottomless purse" in his Ship-money, and was mistaken. The Parliaments, however, had on every emergency this bottomless purse in the sale of the Church lands, Bishops' rents, Sequestrations, and compoundings for the Estates of that half of the Nation, the Delinquents.

The Parliament of Scotland, on the due receipt of their silver, and the acceptance of a bill for the remainder, at one year's date, sent "their Resolution to their General to deliver the King to the Commissioners of England, but to be careful to stipulate for 'the safety of his person!'" The stipulation cost a penful of ink to balance the sum of four hundred thousand pounds.

Charles said that "He was bought and sold," and the witty Republican Harry Martin objected to the stipulation for "the safety of the person of the King," for that "the King had broken the peace, and why should the Parliament be bound for his safety?" At that moment was the future Regicide uneasy lest the treaty with the Scots should be inviolable?

* *Memoirs of the Hamiltons*, 307. "So high-flown were men at that time," observes Burnet.

This sale and purchase of Royalty seems not to have surprised Charles, who, from the day he arrived at the Scottish Camp, discovered that he was in the condition of a prisoner, accompanying the movements of an army which he could not command. The extraordinary anecdote related of him on this occasion confirms the idea that he had hoped for no better fate. The King was playing at chess when he received the letter giving the first account of the Scots having decided to surrender him to the English Parliament. The intelligence so little disconcerted him that he finished, and won the game without interruption, and those who had observed him reading the letter could not detect by any alteration in his countenance, or manner, the importance of that communication. The truth appears to be that he was at that very time meditating his escape from Newcastle by sea, but as usual he knew not whither. A disguise had even been put on, and the backstairs had been descended, when Charles apprehending that he could not pass undiscovered through all the Guards, with his accustomed romantic feeling, dreaded the disgrace and indecency, as he imagined, to which he exposed his person, altered his resolution and returned to his imprisonment.*

From the 4th of May 1646, to February 1647, lasted the duration of Charles in the Scottish Camp. During these nine months the King experienced another civil war, in the opinions of his confidential advisers. His military career had closed, the arena of political intrigue was narrowed, and the single object of discussion was the abrogation of the Liturgy and the Episcopacy, and the establishment, on their ruins, of the Covenant, and the Presbytery in England.

If Scotland had vindicated her national right to erect that Kirk establishment, which she had erst received from Knox, on the principle that the majority of the people were Presbyterian, by the very same principle had she lost all right to obtrude her Presbytery on an Episcopal nation. It was evidently an act of tyrannical usurpation on the side of the Covenanters—and so far as regards the policy of the English Government, we may sympathise with the hard fate of Charles, who as an English monarch had to reject this Scottish yoke.

Unhappily with Charles the First, these waters of bitterness

* *Memoirs of the Hamiltons*, 307.

welled from two distinct sources. The one comprised his political independence, for he would not be a mere titular King, and the other involved his religious conscience, for Episcopacy with him, as much as Presbytery with the Covenanters, was a Divine Institution. The abolition of the Church of England, as this Church has been emphatically distinguished, was to him more terrible than death: when as the last act of his despair, he consented to a temporary suspension of the Episcopal order, in the agony of his spirit, tears fell from the monarch's eyes.

His English confidential advisers now at Paris, the Queen, Jermyn, and Culpepper, and the various Ambassadors and the Residents of France, were incessantly pressing on Charles the wisdom of yielding up Episcopacy. The Parisian party dispatched Davenant to the King. The poet, as reckless on the subject as his confederates, had probably pleased his fancy, that his elocution, his philosophical spirit, and his poetical vein, might give a close to the interminable discussion on the Church of England and the Presbytery of the Kirk, with the facility with which he was composing the stanzas in his own "Gondibert." Courteous as was Charles to poets, the monarch was serious and severe before the bard, who, quitting his rhymes, mingled theology with diplomacy.—"To part with the Church," observed the wit, "was the advice of all his friends."—"What friends?" asked the King.—"The Lord Jermyn."—"He does not understand any thing of the Church!"—"The Lord Culpepper was of the same mind."—"Culpepper has no religion!" The wit, now engaged on a topic which probably he had little considered, and cared less about, ventured to assign his own ingenious reasons, and spoke slightly of the Church. The pious but indignant monarch, reproaching the trembling poet in terms of unusual reprehension, commanded the witling never more to presume to come into his presence.*

We should neither consider Charles the First according to the notions of our own times, nor of those who, even in his day, blamed the King for the stiffness of his opinions. Inasmuch as the dissensions on Church government turned simply on a mode of worship, was the King to have a conscience less tender for his Church, than that which his opponents asserted their own to be

* Clarendon, v. 412.

for their Kirk? "Such religious zeal prevailed on both sides, and had reduced to an unhappy and distracted condition the King and people," observes our historical philosopher. These topics are now unworthy to occupy a philosophical mind, and have been long consigned to the clashings of obscure Sectarians. But what we may admire is the magnanimity of Charles, if not the generous temper, in never forsaking for his own ease, even for his crown, the declining and ancient religious institution of his people. Now, a captive in the Presbyterian camp, in his solitary distresses he poured forth an energetic remonstrance to the Parisian party, and still resisted that unconditional submission which two deputations from the Parliament had prescribed to a vanquished monarch. In this agony of his spirit, to work on it more deeply, it had been insinuated by Davenant, that if the King did not concede the great point in agitation, the Queen had decided to retire to a monastery. On this, the King, in reply to Jermyn and Culpepper, stated his own case with remarkable energy, and touched on his more private griefs with the most refined delicacy and with the deepest emotion:—

"I find myself condemned by all my best friends of such a high destructive and unheard-of kind of wilfulness, that I am thought to stand single in my opinion, and to be ignorant of both my main foundations, to wit, conscience and policy. But must I be called single, because some are frightened out of, or others dare not avow, these opinions? And who causes me to be condemned but those who either take courage and moral honesty for conscience, or those who were never rightly grounded in religion according to the Church of England. As for the two Queens (Anne of Austria and Henrietta) and Cardinal, I should blame them if they did not give out sentence against me, considering the false information of those who believe themselves to be, but are not, true English Protestants; nor do understand the inseparable mischiefs which the Presbyterian doctrine brings along with it to a kingdom. (He alludes to their anti-monarchical principles.) Wherefore, instruct yourselves better, recant and undeceive those whom you have misinformed. Davenant has threatened me of 351 (the Queen) retiring to a monastery. I say no more of it—my heart is too big—the rest being fitter for your thoughts than my expression. In another way I have

mentioned this to 351 (the Queen), my grief being the only thing I desire to conceal from her, with which I am as full now as I can be without bursting. Neither anger nor grief shall make me forget my friendship to you." *

When Charles passed over to the Scottish camp, he repeated a former promise that, in regard to Church government, he would be very willing to be instructed concerning the Presbyterian, to content them in any thing not against his conscience.† The Scots sent to Charles their veteran polemic, Alexander Henderson. That famous disputation, which, however, was carried on by an exchange of papers, opened at the close of May, and was not terminated in the midst of July, for labouring on a fresh reply to the last received from the King, the polemic of the Kirk was compelled to give it up either in despair or vexation of spirit, and, retiring to Edinburgh, died in August.

It is averred by the Prelatical party that the old man died heart-broken. Clarendon mystifies the tale, "being *so far* convinced and converted, that he had a very deep sense of the mischief he had himself been the author of." The degree of "conviction and conversion," in the graduated scale of polemical theology, which is assigned by Clarendon's "*so far*," might form a curious enigma. It is probable that the Presbyter left Newcastle in despair of converting the King to the Covenant. The reputation of the whole affair remained with the King, unaided by his clergy or his books. It seems more certain that neither had convinced the other. When great Polemics happen to die after an indigestible disputation, it has been usual to imagine that they sank into the grave under an immedicable logomachy. But the Scottish biographers assure us that "he was worn out with fatigue and travel." "The fatigue" probably of the opponent and the respondent, for "the travel" from London to Newcastle and thence to Edinburgh was much shorter. All the heat and weariness of an interminable disputation about the primitive origin of Bishops or of Presbyters, carried on through a sultry season, might in its exacerbation end in a tympany with a grey-haired Polemic.

The King and his Scots parted from one another with regret. Charles received the English Commissioners with cheerfulness.

* Clarendon State Papers, ii. 270.

† Ibid. ii. 220.

They kissed hands, and the King in good humour rallied the Earl of Pembroke at his advanced age for performing "a wintery journey with such youthful companions." The Commissioners waited on the King with the accustomed state. The Presbyterian party in Parliament had voted fifty pounds *per diem* for the royal maintenance, and conducted the King to one of his Palaces, instead of the imprisonment of Warwick Castle, as the Independents had at first proposed. The people flocked wherever the King appeared, many falling on their knees before him to receive the royal touch, from the superstition of that day. Some with tears, some with acclamations, some with fervent prayers, saluted the monarch, who was pleased that the troops did not disturb these grateful salutations. On his arrival at Holmby House, in Northamptonshire, not distant from Althorpe, the King found that ancient and favourite palace, built by the Lord Chancellor Hatton, who called it "the last and greatest monument of his youth,"* fully prepared for his reception, and many country gentlemen with joyful countenances awaiting to receive their sovereign, returning after several years of such well-known affliction. The presence of this sovereign usually excited the loyalty of the people.† Charles did not appear to be less a sovereign than in happier days, nor was the stately mansion of Holmby darkened by the gloom, or restricted by the impassable circuit of a prison. Appearances were more flattering than the reality!

* It was one of the miserable effects of the Civil War, that this ancient mansion at Holmby, as well as others at Oatlands, Richmond, Theobalds, &c. were pulled down to raise money to satisfy the arrears of some regiments of the army. They all did not raise so much as any one of those royal residences had cost when built, and they were among the architectural curiosities and ornaments of the nation.

† In the eyes of that sturdy Commonwealth-man Ludlow, the image of fallen majesty could excite no generous emotion. He expresses his surprise at this zealous affection of the people, who, he says, "notwithstanding that he (Charles) was beaten out of the field," by the honours paid him, concluded he must "certainly be in the right, though he was guilty of the blood of many thousands." Charles is thus reproached as a sanguinary man, which assuredly he never was; nor is it just to charge the King *only* with inflicting the miseries of a civil war, in which, short of life, which he never shrank from risking, the King had participated of the miseries more than any individual in his dominions.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ARMY.

THE gardens of Holmby House, and the neighbouring bowling-green of Althorpe, to which the King was allowed to resort, to one of his strict sobriety offered healthful recreations. The intervals, according to his custom, whenever he resumed his tranquil habits, were devoted to settled hours for writing and study, to his favourite chess-board, and to conversation in his walks, accompanied by a single companion. The commissioners never obtruding themselves in their *surveillance*, still treated their captive as their King.

The monarch, whose retired character had formerly communicated such a cold formality to his manners, had long mingled with his brothers in adversity. Already the day had arrived

“Whate’er they felt, to feel, and know himself a Man!”

Much had he suffered, and in his approaching captivities much remained to be endured. His familiar graciousness charmed his attendants; it recovered the aged and eccentric Earl of Pembroke from a fit of sickness, by the King’s pleasantry and personal attentions, and it melted away the Republican fierceness of a Commonwealth-man by one of the smallest gifts which the magical hand of royalty ever converted into a bribe to corrupt the weakness of human nature.*

* General Ludlow, a sincere Republican with narrow views, ascribes the apostasy of Major-General Brown, one of the commissioners, to a cause which suits not the gravity of history. “Col. Brown the Woodmonger, being nominated to be a commissioner, who sat behind me in the House, assured me that he would ever be true to us. And truly I then believed him, having met him at the beginning of the war in Smithfield buying horses for the Parliament, and served them successfully. But when the King found out the ambitious temper of the wretched man, and cast some slight favours upon him, *giving him a pair of silk stockings with his own hand*, his low and abject original and education became so prevalent in him, as to transform him into an agent or spy for the King.”—Ludlow’s Memoirs, i. 154. This “pair of silk stockings” kept the Colonel loyal all his life, and procured him a Baronetcy at the Restoration. It was by his personal intercourse with the monarch, that “the Woodmonger’s” attachment rose, from his admiration of the true dignity and the magnanimous fortitude of the man: a circumstance which frequently occurred in the many years of the adversities of this King.

Amidst this apparent calm, during a period of about four months, the rigour of the imprisonment was, however, felt; his confidential friends were dismissed, and his chaplains denied admittance. Two Presbyterian divines were baffled by the evasive civility of the King, in their attempts at saying grace, and converting the Episcopalian monarch to the covenant of Israel.

The calm the royal prisoner enjoyed was not participated by his subjects. A crisis was pressing to its birth of time, and Charles was only allowed his present tranquillity till the struggle of two gigantic parties had decided whose prisoner the King was.

It will be sufficient here to remind the reader, that the Parliament for some time past had quailed under "the Egyptian slavery," as Denzil Holles calls it, of the Army. The Army, indeed, applied the identical expression to the Parliament. The Presbyterian faction consisted in great part of persons who had grown rich on the spoils of the country. They had shown themselves but indiscreet managers of the heavy assessments, and other sources of revenue drawn from the public purse. Cromwell observed that "he was as fit to rule as Holles;" and his faction, the Independents, or the Army, though inferior in number, but more powerful in reality, had portioned out among themselves the most lucrative places, and dispensed the most prodigal donations. Thus the younger had deeply encroached on the elder faction. The Presbyterian Clement Walker sourly exclaims, "that our Princes have become thieves was heretofore our complaint, but now we must invert it, and cry that our thieves are become Princes!"*

* We may turn to Denzil Holles' *Memoirs*, 132, for a statement of the plunder of the public money by the Independents; and we may farther pursue our researches in Clement Walker's *History of Independency*, Part I. 143 and 167. Our Red or Black Book becomes White in comparison. The Independents monopolised all the great offices, divided the taxes, and gave daily to one another for pretended services, arrears, and losses, great sums of money. Some secret anecdotes of these spoliations are recorded by Clement Walker. Holles gives full rein to his lively resentment. "They charge us with having a great power upon the treasure of the kingdom, disposing of the public money, enriching ourselves, and would embroil the land in a new war, that we might not be called to an account. Oh, the impudence! They know that themselves only meddled in money matters, well licking their fingers, for they know they shared and divided among themselves all the fat of

The Army originally raised for the preservation of the Parliament, having accomplished that design, was now without an object. Among other improvident acts of the Parliament, the Army was always left with heavy arrears, which were to be drawn from each county, and which ground down the miserable people. An uncertain pay was usually extorted from the terrors of the civil government, or like marauders, the soldiers lived at free quarters. The Parliament reasonably declared that they would be governed by known laws, and not by the arbitrary will of military despots. Their secret wish was now to disband their victorious army; and for this purpose, having bribed away their allies the Scots, and thus apparently settled the peace of the kingdom, there remained, as it seemed to them, no farther excuse for the maintenance of this onerous body. And for a prelude, a plea, and an expedient, they urged the immediate necessity of dispatching troops to Ireland, thus to scatter, and to break that force, which they could not dissolve.*

The Presbyterian faction was now to meet its fate in the creative genius of Cromwell. By a series of the most refined intrigues, by the most exquisite dissimulation practised both with the King and the Parliament, and by the most daring *coups d'état* which stand in the records of history, Cromwell was raising the Army to be the sovereign or supreme power in the nation. That artful man and great genius has been described by Hume. "Though one visor fell off, another still remained to cover his natural countenance. Where delay was requisite, he could employ the most indefatigable patience; where celerity was necessary, he flew to a decision." The simple artifice of Cromwell was to belong to all parties till he had raised one for himself. Bound to no single principle whatever, the future Protector, as his ambition opened on him, raced with whatever principle or whatever party was prevalent at the

the land, the treasure, the offices, the King's revenue, the revenue of the Church, the estates of so great a part of the nobility and gentry, whom they had made delinquents. And we, not one of us, had anything to do in all this!" Was this tone either that of self-congratulation or self-regret?

* Mrs. Macaulay, the vehement advocate for the Independents or the Levellers, states the case. "They were to be transported to the wasted inhospitable country of Ireland, where their masters, the Parliament, might starve or relieve them at pleasure."—iv. 284.

moment, at once in the House a Presbyterian, in the Army an Independent, and with the King a Royalist. It was observed that he was always the first to oppose a change, but when he could not control it, he was the first to drive it furiously on.

An extraordinary invention in the military system, which required the daring conception of a profound conspirator, was now displayed by Cromwell. The new-modelling the Army, called the Self-denying Ordinance, had already preceded this last master-stroke, and had answered a former design; it was a congenial invention. There was now instituted in the Army itself a mimetic government of the two Houses. A Parliament was elected among the military themselves: the Upper House of the Army consisted of a Supreme Council of Officers; for the Lower, every regiment furnished two representatives drawn from the common soldiery, *Ex facie populi*, says Holles. The common soldier, however, assumed a new rank, for he would no longer be called "common" but "private soldier." * These representatives called Adjutors, as Ludlow names them, from their conduct became soon known by the more expressive variation of Agitators.† I do not hesitate to believe that Cromwell, conjointly with his son-in-law Ireton, whose powerful pen drew up the papers of the Army, were the secret movers of this novel military revolution. It was not only fully credited by contemporaries, but we learn from Baxter, the history of a former acquaintance of his, closely connected with this formidable body. This person, from a humble station, became Captain Berry, and at length rose to be one of the Lords of the Protector, though to finish his story at once, at the Restoration he dropped back into his original obscurity, and earned his

* This assumption of individual independence in opposition to their public engagements is noticed by Ludlow. "The chief officers pretended to keep the *private soldiers*, for they would no longer be called *common soldiers*."—i. 166. The technical term *privates* for common soldiers seems to have been retained, from the present obscure circumstance: it is not, however, to be found in any of our Dictionaries.

† Mr. Godwin says, "their office being to *aid* the regular Council of War, or to *agitate* such questions as the interest of the army required to have considered." This explanation seems peculiar to this able writer. But it gives too fair a face to the monster. What sort of *agitation* might be expected from these senators, "the privates," is pretty obvious. Lord Chesterfield justly observed that "the Army which fought for the Nation under Charles the First, fought against it for Cromwell."

livelihood as a gardener. This Berry was a crony of Cromwell, and the actual President of the Agitators.*

Here then was a Kingdom within a Kingdom, where one could not subsist with the other. This anomalous establishment astonished their adversaries; it had risen like a sudden exhalation. The soldiers at a distance from the capital appeared as their own workmen, while their absent masters in Parliament seemed engaged in opposition to their scheme. Nothing was done in the Army but what had been planned and ordered by the officers at London. Cromwell, however, lay concealed by his mysterious conduct, though not unsuspected. On one occasion, he hastened down to the Army and quieted the turbulent, and on his return it was declared that this Saviour of his country merited the public honour of a statue. Still some members were suspicious, and one day not seeing him in his place, the House moved to have him sent for. He had not yet deserted them, and he appeared, to renew his protestations. On that very evening he stole away, and in the morning was in the midst of the matured revolution of the Army, in defiance of all the execrations which he had heaped on his own head, and of that solemn assurance by which he had pledged himself that the Army would go with a word to any part of the world the Parliament would choose to command!

The two Houses in the Army, these new Rulers, took the Government into their own hands, censuring the orders and votes of Parliament, and issuing their own warrants. The observation of Hume is remarkable — "The Army in their

* Baxter's folio Life, 51. In that enormous compilation, entitled "Memoirs of the Protector Oliver Cromwell, by Oliver Cromwell, Esq.," I trace nothing but an abridgment in a lawyer's summary of the most obvious documents of our history, uncorrected by any discernment, and unenlightened by any original researches. On one occasion, however, the compiler ventures to deny that Cromwell had any influence over the agitators. His erroneous notion is founded on their mutiny, which Cromwell quelled by courageously seizing on some, and shooting another at the head of the regiment. Our compiler even asserts the improbability of Cromwell's supposed influence over Fairfax! And so little was this compiler practised in the historical researches of this period, that he actually ascribes to the Earl of Strafford that manuscript found in the King's cabinet, entitled "Propositions for bridling-in Parliament, &c.," from the Earl's name being appended to it in Ludlow's Appendix. On such spurious evidence he condemns Strafford to the block! He ought to have known that it was a very unfair *ruse* of the party. I have given the history of this manuscript, which made such a noise at the time, in Vol. I.

usurpations on the Parliament copied exactly the model which the Parliament had set them in their recent usurpations on the Crown." And to this we must add, that those tumultuary petitions and mobs, by which the Parliament had driven the Sovereign from the capital, when they were brought to act against the Parliament themselves, as they now were, forced the Parliament to fly from their seats, and to throw themselves into the merciful arms of the Army.*

Perhaps it has not been remarked that the great political actions of Cromwell were repeated *coups d'état*; some of the greatest which History records, with some minor ones, turning on the same principle. Familiar as we are with the memorable "Purge" of Colonel Pride, which hastened on the trial of the King, we appear not to recollect that these greater "Purges" were four times repeated. "Purge" was the term which was now in vogue, and in practice. When Ireton at one time renewed his protestations to the King that he and his father-in-law would stand to all their promises, however the Parliament opposed them; he employed this new-fashioned phraseology, declaring that "They would purge and purge and never cease purging the Houses till they had made them of such a temper as would do his Majesty's business."†

* The Parliament had long been worried, probably from not regulating the pay of their army, who seem at times to have connected "the Liberty of the Nation" with the state of their own arrears. A petition or a mutiny was sure to send down waggon-loads of silver, "for a fortnight," or "a six weeks' pay," or "one month's pay more added to the two months' pay formerly voted." When the Commons were still farther pushed, they emitted an ordinance "to pay them out of the produce of the sale of the Bishops' lands." Still the army, without discipline, would live "at free quarters," till Fairfax—for all passed under the General's name, who in his Memoirs acknowledges that the army used it officially without his privity—awfully informed the Houses that "they must make provision for constant pay." Then followed "An Indemnity of the Soldiers for all things done by Sea or Land during the late Wars." It came to wearing paper cockades, with the motto "England's Liberties and Soldiers' Rights." The army was a lion, to be gorged when it roared.

† Dr. Lingard, with an excess of delicacy, softens the term to "Purifications;" but this lustral water conveys a very erroneous impression. The act was of too violent a nature to be thus gently sprinkled over. The term was rife at that day. It is often used in manuscript letters as well as in publications. A History of England that omits the term altogether, is wanting in the complete history. That part of the House which remained, consisting of about fifty members, was also as offensively called "The Rump," and by its sanguinary proscriptions received an

The first of these *coups d'état* had been "The Self-denying Ordinance," as it was most saintly styled, by which Cromwell ejected the great Parliamentary Generals, though it was contrived that the principle on which they were deprived of their seats, which included Cromwell himself, should not reach him, and was afterwards constantly violated by all the members of his military faction. By this stratagem he had new-modelled the army with his more active spirits. Baxter gives a good idea of his new plan: "When the brunt of the war was over, he looked not so much at the valour of the men as their opinions." The second "Purge" was in frightening away, by the menace of a violent sequestration, the eleven Presbyterian leaders, alleging to the House their own precedent in the case of Strafford and Laud, to get rid at once of these eleven Straffords and Lauds! The third "Purge" was that of Colonel Pride, a low and military bravo, who did not know the members personally whom he was to arrest, till the Lord Grey of Groby, and the Door-keeper standing by him, looked over the list the Colonel held, and pointed out the marked members as they entered the House.*

epithet which rendered it disgusting to the imagination. The taste of our ancestors was gross to us, but very strong to them. An historian must sometimes be susceptible of considerable bad taste, if he would reflect in his pages an image of the age and the persons he writes about.

* This fortunate adventurer, from a drayman, it is said, rose to be a brewer, then a Colonel, a Baronet, and finally one of Cromwell's lords. He was nicknamed "Cromwell's Dray-horse," and Ludlow says was knighted by a faggot stick, probably in one of Cromwell's convivial fits. It is said he was remunerated for this act by a grant of the Queen's Manor-house, park, and lands at Holmby, and immediately cut down the woods; he had besides an Abbey, with 3000*l.* a year, allowed him at an easy rate of purchase. It is curious that this Pride was the main cause that Oliver never dared to crown himself. The Protector had always a terrible awe of the army. He had tampered with the officers repeatedly, but could not overcome their prejudices or their envy.

The compiler of the *Memoirs of the Protector Cromwell* thinks he was not concerned in this remarkable expulsion of the members, which he ascribes to Ireton and the Agitators, in the absence of Cromwell, who, from accident or design, had only returned to London the day after the business. But we must recollect that Cromwell and Ireton, father and son, had always a partnership in political affairs; assuredly they held a strict correspondence, which, should it exist, would be curious in the history of this period. Cromwell did not hesitate to approve of the measure; and the true author seems to be indicated, when we find that he had long before contemplated it. Cromwell told Ludlow, when they were together in the House, and the Presbyterian party out-voted them, that "These fellows will never be quiet till they are pulled out by the ears!" And what is still more to the purpose,

The fourth memorable "purgation" was, when at a single stroke Cromwell seized on the whole House of Commons, Speaker and mace! Charles had fatally raised the spirit of a party only for demanding the arrest of five members, to be put on their trial for words alleged to be treasonable. So vast is the difference between a weak government adopting strong measures, and the great genius who acquires secret power before he exerts open authority.*

The Army, conscious of their power, decided to assume their authority; the Parliament, resolved to preserve their authority, found themselves defenceless. They acted precisely as the King had acted. They adopted strong measures in their convulsive debility. To the eternal disgrace of Parliaments, the Lords and Commons were compelled to expunge the declaration entered on their journals that the petition of the Army was seditious.† The Army commanded the Parliament to do and undo, to vote and unvote. At last the march of the Army towards the capital, cast the whole city into utter consternation. They dreamed of the plunder of the coming soldiery. A committee of safety sate up all night, the Houses met on a Sunday, but not wholly relying on the double sermon of their chaplain, Mr. Marshall, the Presbyterian City, lamenting the absence of their Scottish allies, now too distant to invoke, prepared for a new civil war, and the cry was now to be the King and Parliament, against the King and People! for the Army announced that they were for the people, and the Parliament for themselves. The effect of their terrors was ludicrous. The Commons, to clear themselves of the odium which their severe exactions and "their tyrannies," adds Mrs. Macaulay, "had provoked, passed a second Self-denying

Cromwell, who had a rendezvous of his regiment at Hyde Park, resolved to put this scheme in execution, had his party in the House not carried their point, on the following day. This anticipation of the more famous "Purge" is noticed by Major Huntington, who was then in the post of the Lieutenant-General.

* Dr. Lingard has anticipated a remark which I had long made, justly observing, "The men who had so clamorously appealed to the privileges of Parliament when the King demanded the five members, were silent when a similar demand was made by twelve thousand men in arms," x. 379. There seem to be no abstract principles of justice among politicians, though they are usually avowed in the opening paragraphs of every protocol by the Secretary of State.

† Whitelocke, 253, who adds, "Here the Parliament began to surrender themselves and their power into the hands of their own army."

Ordinance, that no member should receive any profit of any office; that all they received should be repaid, for the use of the Commonwealth, to the Committee of Accounts, and that, waiving their privilege, which the citizens had often petitioned against, all the members should for the future be liable to pay their own debts!"* When the distracted citizens learned that men were fast enlisting for the Parliament, the word was "Live and die! Live and die!" As the Army approached, it was changed to "Treat! Treat!"† The agents of the agitators, seducers or seduced, were both in the Parliament and the City. The famous Major-General Skippon, the pride of the City Military, had accepted the gift of a thousand pounds to encourage him to hasten to Ireland, but, after several recent visits to the Army-quarters, was now willing to stay at home. Himself a Presbyterian, he stood up, as Gravity personified, with a doleful countenance, a voice of lamentation, the rueful prelude to evil intelligence, and the proclamation of a national fast. In no short speech he declared that he found that "the Army was a formed body, which would be upon them before they were aware!" The Major-General, during his recent visits to the Army, had never before warned the timid Presbyterian senate of Hannibal *ad portas*. And their chaplain, Marshall, now dashed them, as he fearfully told of "the children of Anak," armed giants.‡

While these affairs were in progress, Cromwell and his able co-adjutor, his son-in-law Ireton, were projecting a private plot of their own. They were ingratiating themselves into the royal favour. They reproached the Presbyterian Parliament with placing the sovereign under undue restraint, depriving him of all communication with his friends, while the intolerant faction was forcing the royal conscience. All these pleas found a ready response in the breast of the King.

* Macaulay, iv. 302.

† Ludlow, i.

‡ Holles' Memoirs, 105. His warm language is ingenuous. "Instead of a generous resistance, vindicating the honours of the Parliament, and preserving a poor people from being enslaved to a rebellious army, they delivered up themselves and kingdom, prostitute all to the lust of heady and violent men, and suffer Mr. Cromwell to saddle, ride, switch, and spur them at his pleasure. For we instantly fell as low as dirt, vote the common soldier his full pay, &c.; and what is worst, expunge our declaration against the mutinous petition, and cry *Peccavimus*, to save us a whipping; but all would not do!"

Charles entered Holmby House in February, and in April, an officer in the name of the Army conveyed a petition to the King, to desire him to be guarded by them at the head of the Army, "who would restore him to his honour, crown, and dignity." Charles in return expressed his aversion "to engage his poor people in another war," but assured them that whenever restored to his throne he would "auspiciously look on their loyal intentions."* The intercourse thus opened paved the way for that bold enterprise which occurred on the 4th of June. The petition had served to inspire the King with some confidence in the army-leaders, who well knew Charles's dislike of the Presbyterian party.

One afternoon, as the King was at bowls on the green of Althorpe, the Commissioners who accompanied him were surprised at the appearance of an unknown soldier wearing the uniform of Fairfax's regiment. The attention of the stranger to what was passing, and his curiosity respecting the persons about him, was remarked, and he seemed more of a spy than a spectator. Colonel Greaves, who had the command of the small garrison at Holmby, inquired of the soldier, whence he came, and what was passing in the Army; and to encourage him to converse bade him not be afraid. The soldier bluntly replied that "he was not afraid of him, nor of any man in the kingdom." He spoke with a tone of authority which startled the Colonel, and he inveighed against the Parliament, observing in the cant of that day, "how much below the light of Nature these men live when they will not do good unto those that do good unto them, who had preserved the heads of some men in the Parliament." There was a Scotch Lord, the Earl of Dumferling, on whom the soldier was casting no kindly look, who listened to invective against his friends. A rumour had already circulated that a numerous body of cavalry was in the neighbourhood; the Colonel inquired of the stranger "Whether he had heard of them?" "I have done more than hear of them, for I saw them yesterday within thirty miles of Holmby." A whisper circulated and an alarm spread at this ominous personage,—the King suddenly quitted his bowls,—the guards at Holmby House were doubled, all promising to

* Clarendon State Papers, ii. 365.

stand by their Colonel. The Earl of Dumferling posted to the Parliament with the news, that the King was carried away against his will. This Scotch Earl was glad afterwards to escape out of England.*

A numerous body of cavalry drew up before the house.— Asked who commanded? they answered, “All commanded!” The stranger who had recently roused their suspicions came forwards, announcing himself as Cornet Joyce. This Cornet was one of Cromwell’s elect spirits. Though erst but a shrewd tailor-man, the Agitator, with a huge pistol and the bigger words of authority, had shaken off all the suavity of the craft. Joyce pretended to the Commissioners that he had come for the protection of the King, as they were informed of a design to steal him away, which was the very design he was himself executing. He was allowed to set his guards, and was promised shortly to receive the orders of the Commissioners. The Presbyterian Colonel took flight.

At ten at night again the cavalry and the Cornet suddenly appeared. The Agitator demanded to speak with the King. “From whom?” was inquired by the officers of Holmby. “From myself!” he curtly replied. At this they laughed. “It’s no laughing matter,” proceeded Joyce. They advised him to draw off his men, and in the morning speak to the Commissioners; “I came not hither to be advised by you, nor have I any business with the Commissioners: my errand is with the King; and speak with him I must, and will presently.”

During this parley the soldiers within were conferring with those without. Commanded to stand to their arms, they on the contrary flung open the gates, shaking hands with the newcomers from the Army.

The Cornet, on his entrance, appears to have held a long conversation with the Commissioners, for he complains that “they held him in discourse till the King was asleep in his bed.” He does not tell us, what we get from Herbert, that after this conversation, he placed sentinels at their apartments. Mounting the back-stairs, Joyce reached the King’s chamber, and “rudely,” or authoritatively knocked at the door. The Grooms of the Bed-chamber appeared and discovered their man

* Whitelocke, 254.

in a true military posture, well-armed, and presenting a cocked pistol. They asked if the Commissioners approved of this intrusion? Joyce bluntly answered "No! for he had ordered a guard to be set at their chamber-doors, and that he had his orders from those who feared them not." The noise of the Grooms resisting the Cornet's entrance awoke the King, who rang his silver bell, and refused to admit the uncourtly visitor till the morning, according to Herbert.

It is probable, however, that a midnight interview did take place between the King and the Cornet. The Agitator Joyce had been well tutored, and was himself an apt pupil. Blunt but shrewd, he had a part to play; he entered with his hat in one hand, and a pistol in the other, and opened his business by a decent apology for having disturbed the King out of his sleep. "No matter," replied Charles, "if you mean me no hurt. You may take away my life if you will, having the sword in your hands." Joyce solemnly assured the King that he came to protect his person. Charles stipulated for two great points—that his conscience should not be forced, and that his friends should have access to him. "It is not our principle," the Independent observed, "to force any man's conscience, much less that of our sovereign." All was courteously conceded. This extraordinary interview was closed by the King. "I will willingly go along with you, if the soldiery will confirm what you have promised," and gave his word to be ready by six the next morning. It is evident, that Cornet Joyce had not only allayed any fears which the King might have reasonably entertained, but had positively succeeded in persuading him that the Army was friendly to his wishes.*

However ambiguous might seem the midnight apparition of the "Arch-agitator Joyce," so Fairfax designates the Cornet, he had perfectly succeeded in flattering the hopes of Charles. So strongly persuaded was the King that the Army was devoted to him, that when Fairfax, who was never concerned in a plot, except as the innocent and pliant instrument of those who knew how to plot, shortly afterwards offered to see the King returned back in safety to Holmby, Charles not only positively refused, but significantly told the General-in-Chief, on taking leave of him,

* See the note at the end of the Chapter.

"Sir, I have as good interest in the Army as you!" Fairfax was thunderstruck at this delusion, for the General well knew of what materials the supreme Council of Officers was composed, and he declared that it gave him more grief and vexation than all the troubles and fatigues which he had met with during the whole war. "I now plainly saw the broken reed he leaned on," says Fairfax, in his Memorials.

What had passed in the midnight interview was to be publicly repeated for the King's satisfaction before the troopers of Joyce. The morning came, and Charles was seen on the steps of the gate, where Joyce with a detachment of fifty picked men drew up into the inner court of the House. The characteristic parts of a comic dialogue have been preserved, although there are variations.

The King demanded of the Cornet what commission he had to secure his person? Joyce replied, "The soldiery of the Army."—"That was no lawful authority," objected the King—"Have you nothing in writing from Sir Thomas Fairfax?" The Cornet prayed his Majesty would not ask him such questions. "I pray, Mr. Joyce, deal ingenuously with me, and tell me what commission you have?"—"Here is my commission!" exclaimed the Arch-agitator. "Where?" said the King. "Behind me!" cried the Cornet, pointing to his troopers. The King, smiling, observed "that he had never before read such a commission; but it was fairly written as any he had seen in his life,* a company of as handsome, proper gentlemen as I have seen a long while. But what if I refuse to go with you? I hope you would not force your King. You must satisfy me that I

* When words spoken are afterwards only repeated by recollection, they pass through wonderful changes. It is quite impossible to ascertain the precise words of Charles on this occasion, though the sense has not been lost. Herbert gives them thus: "His instructions were in fair characters, legible without spelling." There is a prettiness in this turn, which might have been given by Herbert at his leisurely reminiscences, but not quite suitable to a spontaneous dialogue. Echard, Hume, and Macaulay were probably pleased with it. Warwick gives it plainly: "Believe me your instructions are written in very fair characters." But Whitelocke, in his attempt to chronicle the words, has, lawyer-like, flourished. "'His Majesty saw their commission!' said Joyce. His Majesty replied, that 'It had the fairest frontispiece of any that he ever saw, being five hundred proper men on horseback.'" A cumbrous frontispiece at all events; but a commission has no frontispiece! The taste of Charles, we may be certain, was chaster than the spurious fancy of a rhetorical lawyer!

may be used with honour and respect, that I may not be forced in any thing against my conscience or honour; though I hope that my resolution is so fixed that no force can cause me to do a base thing. You are masters of my body, my soul is above your reach." The troopers confirmed their assent by their acclamations. Joyce courteously requested the King to choose the place of his removal, and the distance he intended to ride that day. The King, smiling, observed, "I can ride as far as you, or any man there," saluting the company.

The officers of Holmby and the Commissioners protested against the King's removal, calling on the troopers to maintain the authority of Parliament, and it was put to them, whether they agreed to what Cornet Joyce had said and done? With one voice they cried out, "All! all!" Major Brown observed, that it was not the first time that he had been at the head of a party, and that scarce two in the company, although they cried "All! all!" knew what had passed. "Let all," he continued, raising his voice, "who are willing the King should stay with the Commissioners of Parliament now speak." All the troopers exclaimed, "None! none!" "Then," said the Major, "I have done!" The soldiers replied, "We understand well enough what we do!"

On the astonishing seizure of the sovereign, Fairfax instantly dispatched two regiments of cavalry to attend the King back to Holmby. Charles positively refused to return. On the following day Fairfax, Cromwell, Ireton, and other officers, had a singular interview with the King in the garden of Sir John Cutts, at Childerley. Fairfax solemnly protested that he was not privy to this strange act, nor did he know the movers. "Unless you hang up Joyce, I will not believe what you say," observed Charles. The General-in-Chief soon discovered among his officers that the Cornet would never be brought to a court-martial. Joyce offered to appeal to a general rendezvous of the Army, adding, "And if three, or even four parts of the Army did not approve of my proceedings, I will be content to be hanged at the head of my regiment." The King observed, "You must have had the countenance of great persons, for you could not of yourself have ventured on this treason."

Charles, however, was evidently on no ill terms with the

Cornet, for he added—"I pardon the treason now I have come, if you convey me as you promised to Newmarket."

Fairfax, in a private interview with Charles, made a sincere offer of his services, but the sanguine monarch was already entrapped. It was on this occasion that, on Fairfax taking leave of the King, Charles betrayed that fatal confidence in the Army which was his final ruin. The Cornet himself had so insidiously ingratiated himself into the King's favour, that afterwards, when Charles remained at Newmarket, where he seemed cheerful, and daily recreated himself at tennis, it is remarkable that he sent a messenger to the Army at St. Albans, desiring the company of the shrewd Agitator.* So deeply taken was the helpless yet sanguine monarch by the cajoleries of a cunning but spirited fellow.

This seizure of the person of the King by the Army was long a mystery to contemporaries, and it was so alike to the General-in-Chief and to the King himself. We have seen that soon after Charles's confinement at Holmby, the King held a secret intercourse with some officers. Secret it must have been to have eluded the notice of the Parliamentary Commissioners, and it was of a nature to induce his sanguine temper to imagine that the army-leaders were desirous of uniting with him against those, whose principles they knew were as opposite to his views as to their own. When the Presbyterian Parliament designed the King's removal to the metropolis, the audacious *coup d'état*, of carrying off the King, that the Army might remain masters of the sovereign, was the invention of Lieutenant-General Cromwell and Ireton, and not communicated even to the General-in-Chief Fairfax. On the 30th of May, at a meeting held at Cromwell's house, the plan was arranged,† and with the

* Rushworth, vi. 578. Possibly Charles acted from policy as a means to get intelligence, or the rumour, though preserved by Rushworth, might not be true, but adopted advisedly. Clarendon must have been surprised at this intelligence of the secretary of Fairfax, for his Lordship expresses himself quite contrarily. "The King found himself at Newmarket attended by greater troops and superior officers, so that he was presently freed from any subjection to Mr. Joyce, which was no small satisfaction to him." Such opposite accounts are hard to reconcile; if one party has stated a fact, the other has given us his own feelings as a fact.

† Holles has stated the day of the meeting.—96. When the Cornet was told that the General was displeased with him for bringing the King from Holmby, he

prompt sagacity of that great adept in human nature, four or five hundred troopers were confided to one of those decided characters who were his elect spirits on all secret expeditions. Cornet Joyce at first had the whole credit of the hardy enterprise, Cromwell protesting that it was without his concurrence, and taking such caution never to appear in the transaction, that the King's friends at London ascribed to Cromwell the sending of the two regiments of cavalry, under his kinsman Colonel Whalley, for the immediate protection of the King, to see him safely returned to Holmby, which really was done by the order of Fairfax.*

We may now develop the true situation of Charles. When the armed Agitator, at midnight, authoritatively called for entrance into the King's chamber, so formidable an apparition might have reasonably alarmed the King, unapprised as he was of any such visitor. No personal fears were, however, indicated by Charles, who, on the contrary, was gratified by the courteousness of the language of the soldier, while he stood uncovered in the presence of his sovereign. The ensuing dialogue in the morning, before the troopers, seems to have been really designed, to extract from the Cornet under whose orders he acted. Charles had flattered himself that the party had been sent by Fairfax, on whose honour he reposed, and whose station as Commander-in-Chief would have been a pledge of the sanction of the Army. But though the mystery was not cleared up by the impenetrable Cornet, yet he took his orders from the King in the choice of the place of his removal, and Charles in his mind was satisfied that it was an act of the Army, whom at this moment he counted on as his friends. Charles was so far from entertaining any fears on this audacious attempt on his person, while the Commissioners and his own gentlemen were cast into sadness, and even terror, that Herbert tells us, "the King was the merriest of the company, having it seems a confidence in the Army, especially from some of the greatest there, as it was imagined." This indicates some late secret intercourse with the Army, of which we know but little, and it is subsequently confirmed by Charles's positive refusal to return to Holmby.

answered that Lieutenant-General Cromwell had given him orders at London to do all that he had done.

* Sir John Berkley's Memoirs, Echard, 638.

We only trace the secret intercourse of Charles with the Army by a single document, accidentally preserved among the Clarendon State-papers, but we shall see that the King soon had his own agents amidst them. At the critical moment of its march to the capital, we discover that the King had his active spy in Dean Barwick. This divine, as was usual in that day, when the clergy of the Anglican church were hunted in the streets, was disguised in a lay habit, and wore a sword. He had mixed with the Army in that expedition, for the purpose of acquainting himself with the feelings of the soldiery, and his report was so favourable, that Charles was convinced that the Army was with him. The Army, indeed, had given him entire liberty to communicate with his friends, and when the grateful intelligence was conveyed to Paris, Sir Edward Ford, a royalist, though the brother-in-law of Ireton, was dispatched to England more deeply to interest his relative; while Sir John Berkley and Ashburnham, the more confidential agents of Charles, hastened, as Ashburnham expresses it, "with their instructions in some things which were not proper for his Majesty to appear in."

NOTE.

I encountered great trouble in more than one respect in pursuing our narrative. Herbert, one of the King's Grooms of the Bed-chamber, who, though at first little known to the King, and appointed by the Presbyterian party, became most faithfully attached to his person, asserts that "The King would not rise nor speak with Joyce till the morning, and though the Cornet huffed, he retired that night." This is in direct contradiction to "The true and impartial Narrative" sent forth by the Army, evidently to cajole the Parliament or the People.* The style of this deposition indicates its illiterate original. The use of the pronoun personal unskilfully interspersed in "The Narrative," betrays the writer to have been the hero of the thimble himself. "The Narrative" details this midnight interview:—"All this being spoken at eleven at night, and the King gave his word to be ready by six the next morning to hear the soldiers confirm what I had promised." How are we to account for this discrepancy with the narrative of the veracious Herbert? Writing at a distant

* Rushworth, vi. 515.

day, and not having, as he has regretted, his former notes at hand, it is yet strange that so remarkable an incident should have escaped his recollections while he substituted one quite the reverse. Was the Narrative of Joyce made up to be palatable to his masters? and to persuade the world that, after having heard him, the King had really consented to accompany him? which we shall find Charles certainly had. Dr. Lingard has judiciously credited what is called "the true Narrative" given by Joyce: "Charles signified his consent, on the condition that what then passed between them in private should be repeated in public." Mrs. Macaulay adopts Herbert's account: "On the King's peremptorily refusing to rise and speak with Joyce, he had the complacency to desist till morning." "The true Narrative" is very confused, and probably more is delivered than actually occurred, from the policy of treating the Commissioners and the Parliament with a degree of studied respect the Army did not feel. The account of Clarendon materially differs from that of Herbert: "His Majesty rose out of his bed, and, half-dressed, caused the door to be opened, which he knew otherwise would be quickly broken open; they who waited in the chamber being persons of whom he had little knowledge and less confidence. Joyce and two or three more came into the chamber with their hats off and pistols in their hands." Clarendon then adds that the King insisted on calling some of the Commissioners, who quickly came to his chamber, and he adds part of the dialogue with Joyce. Now, however natural the manner by which the King is here described, yet the suggestion that "he had little knowledge and less confidence of the persons who waited in the chamber," is not accurate, for Charles had both, and Herbert tells us that they (the four Grooms, himself being one) "were resolved to sacrifice their lives rather than give Joyce admittance." Monsieur Guizot gives the midnight conversation with the King held by Joyce "in the presence of the Commissioners," which ill agrees with what Joyce told Herbert, that they were secured by a guard in their chambers. The truth is, that "The true and impartial Narrative" is at times a jumble. It says, "Some of the Commissioners held the Cornet in discourse about half an hour until the King was asleep in his bed, yet notwithstanding the said Cornet could not be contented till he had spoken with the King, and therefore offered the Commissioners to go with them, with as much gentleness and tenderness as he could." "The true and impartial Narrative" farther tells, "Though the King told Cornet Joyce before the Commissioners he was unwilling to go with us, yet such reasons might be produced that might prevail with him; and afterwards (that is, after the King had listened to his reasons) the King did protest that nothing should stay him, but he would go whether the Commissioners would yea or no." This confirms the statement of Clarendon, that the King had the Commissioners

called that night, since Charles resolved to depart with Joyce early in the morning, after having heard "his reasons." That so important an incident should have been entirely passed over by Herbert, and that he should have so inaccurately related that Joyce had not been admitted into the King's presence that night, is a striking evidence of the fallibility of our after-recollections at a period of life too distant from the occurrence. Such are the difficulties which happen in ascertaining the accuracy of certain events which are sometimes transmitted to us in vague or in contradictory narratives; or in narratives which, having been concocted with a latent purpose, to serve a temporary object, interpolate circumstances which did not actually occur, or mis-state those which did.

In "The true and impartial Narrative," which is evidently made up from the accounts of Cornet Joyce, and at times evidently in his own words, I have no doubt that many after-thoughts were interwoven, that it might serve as an organ for publishing the notions and views of the Army-faction; and the studied manner in which the Commissioners and the Parliament itself are noticed in this suspicious document, discovers its policy. But even in statements fictitious in some respects, the sagacity of an historian may unravel some truths.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE KING'S PROGRESS WITH THE ARMY.

As the King followed the movements of the troops, journeying under the escort of the military, from the officers to the privates, it seemed as if they were the attendants on his royal person, rather than the guards of a State-prisoner. Several of the officers, according to Ludlow, "became converted by the splendour of his Majesty," and adds the Commonwealth-man, seemingly with disdain, "Sir Robert Pye, a Colonel in the Army, as his Equerry, rode bare-headed before him, when the King rode abroad."

The removals, by easy marches, were arranged to enable the King to lodge at the mansions of the nobility, who vied in the pride of their reception of the sovereign. As we pursue the King's marches from place to place on his way to Newmarket, and afterwards to his Palace of Hampton Court, we discover that even to this day tradition has preserved in those mansions

which still exist, some memorial of his residence—something which was said or done—the chamber where he slept is still to be shown.

Wherever Charles appeared, all seemed to congratulate themselves on beholding once more that afflicted monarch, whom an interval of years had estranged from their sight—and of whose troubles they had heard so much and so often, that some seemed to forget their own in the remembrance of those of their magnanimous Prince. Some contemplated on him with the deepest sympathies, others were filled with the most awful thoughts. The friends of the King were freely admitted, and loyalty seemed no longer treason. The University sent forth their Masters and Fellows with a *Vivat Rex!* The gentry and the people from the neighbouring counties thronged about the Presence-chamber when the King dined and supped. There was a joyfulness in their acclamations. The King was never reminded of his captivity, and as he moved with the regiments which guarded him, the journey resembled one of his former royal progresses.

Charles, from the depths of misery, had long been a stranger to the peaceful state of a Court in the resort of his Nobles, the gratulations of many voices, and the prayers of the people listened to by his own ear. The feelings were reciprocal. He conversed with cheerfulness, and his courteous looks returned the affection which he believed he had excited. Hume has very beautifully painted the subdued monarch—"His manner, which was not in itself popular nor gracious, now appeared amiable, from its great meekness and equality." The King held long and secret conferences with the General, the Lieutenant-General, and the Commissary-General, Fairfax, Cromwell, and Ireton; and what passed between these eminent personages, on which the fate of the nation was to revolve, was of a nature to inspire this unhappy Prince with a confidence too sanguine, and with a self-flattery to which he was too prone.

But we must now leave this outward lustre of things to penetrate into the obscure and the hidden. Mighty interests were now operating one against the other. But uncertain and unrevealed for us must remain many secret intrigues; sudden changes in the condition of the parties; causes and motives

which have never been assigned, though their important results are manifest; ambiguous proceedings and dubious matters, and many which were never told, buried in the hearts of subtle men, who governed themselves by other maxims than the rest of the world.

The struggle between the Presbyterian and the Army Factions, threw the King into the most critical dilemma which he had experienced throughout his disastrous life. Both parties, who were now courting his support, he considered alike his enemies. The one rigorously insisting on their Covenant, and the abolition of Episcopacy, which was tantamount with Charles to force his conscience and in part to abjure his religion; the other would make him sovereign by raising him on their shields, and an English monarch was to hold the tenure of sovereignty, by the will and at the pleasure of the soldiery. He had now but a choice of evils; yet his Throne might be recovered by the predominant party, and to either of these parties, his person, at this precise moment, constituted authority and power. That party which the King adopted would be reinforced by every Royalist in the kingdom, who, though now an unarmed and sequestered class, at the King's word would form a body at least as numerous as themselves.

When the Agitators of the Army, to the astonishment of the country, by a *coup d'état* had seized on the person of the sovereign, it was the eager desire of the Army to accommodate affairs with Charles, and that quickly. Their chief officers were commissioned to treat with the King for his restoration. The Agitators were not statesmen who foresaw difficulties from the very nature of complicated interests, or had any delicacy for the feelings of other men to linger on in negotiations. Brute force respects not even human nature, and while it exists there are no difficulties! * Even a single week seemed a delay,

* I need not allude any more to their "Purges." But it is characteristic of this sort of men, to record what one of their favourite agitators, Colonel Rainsborough, delivered on a critical occasion. When Sir John Berkley inquired of the party, that "should they offer the King's proposals to the Parliament, and they should refuse them, what would they do then? They replied, They would not tell me! When I appeared not fully satisfied with this reply, Rainsborough spoke out in these words, 'If they will not agree, we will make them,' to which the whole company assented." So that, in fact, asking the agreement of the Parliament was in the

for the struggle about to take place was momentous. The Presbyterian Parliament were still ostensibly the governing power, and the Scots not only sympathised with fraternal feelings, but would, not reluctantly, have returned once more to their old pay-masters. On the other side, the Army had not yet struck their final blow, and a junction between the Presbyterians, the Scots, and the Royalists, was yet formidable. It is unquestionable that at this moment,—for in a short month were to be compressed the revolutions of a whole age,—the Army had want of the King; even that very party in it which finally would concede the royal victim no terms whatever, and would only terminate its design by a sanguinary proscription.

Cromwell and Ireton governed the Council of War absolutely, but the ruling power in the Army now lay among the Agitators. The General, Fairfax, had little influence with either. The Agitators had become masters of their masters. The phases of political interests are more inconstant than the caprices of moody beauty, or the treacherous mockeries of fickle fortune.

It is a remarkable circumstance that this very party, who afterwards are recognised in our history as the Levellers, and who condemned their sovereign to the block, were at this moment suspicious that Cromwell was not sincerely disposed in favour of the King, and they even offered to Sir John Berkley, that should Cromwell be found false to his engagements, “they would set him right either against, or with his will.”

But Berkley had no reason to suspect the duplicity of Cromwell. It was indeed necessary that Cromwell and his party should remove those prejudices against themselves which their novel professions demanded. Cromwell was a perfect plain-dealer with the secret emissary of the King. He seemed to speak with his heart on his lips. He declared that “Whatever the world might judge of us, we shall be found no seekers for ourselves, farther than to live as subjects ought to do, and to preserve their consciences. Men could not enjoy their lives and estates quietly without the King had his rights.” And for an earnest of their honest intentions, Charles was not to be pressed on those delicate points which those forcers of

form adopted by the beggar-bandit in *Gil Blas*, to petition respectfully, brandishing a cudgel.

conscience, the obdurate Presbyterians, even more obstinate than the King, so inflexibly urged. Toleration was the plausible pretext of Independency, and plain-speaking the whole art of diplomacy with the blunt negotiator of the Agitators.

Cromwell, whose feelings, however coarse, were always vehement as the eagerness of his genius, at this moment seemed to have received a new baptism of loyalty. Returning from one of his visits to the King, he told Berkley that "He had lately seen the tenderest sight that ever his eyes beheld, which was the interview between the King and his children, and wept plentifully at the remembrance of it, saying, 'that never man was so abused as himself, in his sinister opinion of the King, who he thought was the uprightest and most conscientious man of his three kingdoms.'" And concluded, that "God would be pleased to look upon him according to the sincerity of his heart towards his Majesty." As it is well known that Cromwell was a master of all the passions, this gush of plentiful tears might be a very diplomatic act; but Cromwell, in the privacy of life, was susceptible of the domestic affections. That chord in the human heart might now have been struck. Yet who will assert that this versatile being acted with sincerity at a certain period, and with perfidy at another? * Was that mysterious man,

* The tears of Cromwell seem to have been very constitutional, and must have produced a marvellous contrast on his rough-featured and heavy countenance, his warty cheek, and his red nose. The tale which one of the officers told of Cromwell hardly allows us to think, as I have done in the text, that there was any sympathy in his heart. Cromwell once holding the King's hand between his own, and while he made his promises, washing it with his tears, on coming out asked an officer whether he had not acted his part well! "Were you not in earnest?"—"Not in the least," Cromwell replied. Barron in his defence relates this anecdote. If it be true, Cromwell did not play the hypocrite so well. He could gain nothing by the gratuitous avowal but the detestation of the man who heard it. I believe, however, in "the tears of Cromwell" washing the royal hand he held, but I much doubt the idle confession of the gross imposture. On this subject of "the tears of Cromwell," I will add a proof of this great man's extreme susceptibility, and on an occasion which was free from all political artifice. This characteristic anecdote I found in a manuscript collection of Dr. Sampson's "Day-book," where every anecdote is verified by the name of the communicator.

Mr. Byfield, a clergyman, and Sir John Evelyn had a difference about the repairs of a church,—Cromwell interposed and made them friends. Evelyn complained that Byfield had made personal reflections on him in his sermons, which the other protested had never been in his mind. Cromwell, turning to Evelyn, said, "I doubt there is something amiss; the word of God is penetrative and finds you out; search

at any time, single-minded, whose excited genius was watchful of all occasions, and who more than other men was the creature of circumstances which he knew to master, not by opposing but by yielding to them? To serve ably the strongest party was his simple policy; hence his decision at a moment of crisis when he found the Army too strong to manage, that "if they were not of his opinion, he would go over to theirs."

We may trace the history of the mind of Charles from his first interview with Cromwell and Ireton, to the night he took his flight from Hampton Court.

On his deportation from Holmby, June 4th, the King confirmed his hopes by the courteous attendance of the General, and Cromwell, with Ireton usually by his side. Fairfax, unsuspecting and honest, was always their unconscious instrument even to the last hour of Charles's life, but was never of their cabal, the more secret intercourse we obtain from the two confidential agents of the King.* It was noticed at first that both Cromwell and Ireton kept on the reserve when in the presence, nor did they then offer to kiss hands. Cromwell, however, as an earnest of his intentions, restored the King to his chaplains and to his friends. He had been long deprived of both by the Presbyterians, and Charles was now gratified by recognising the old faces of faithful servants, and communicating with many devoted adherents.

After several removals, at Caversham, July 3rd, a month after his seizure, we discover Charles losing his confidence, and troubled respecting the designs of the Army. It was here that Sir Philip Warwick had a short interview with the King. By all he could perceive, either from himself or any other, the King was very apprehensive in what hands he was, but was cautious not to betray this painful doubt.† And it was at this place,

your ways!" He speaks so pathetically, with plenty of tears, that all present fell a weeping also—the parties shook hands and embraced. Cromwell then asked Evelyn what the repairs of the church would cost?—200*l*. Calling for his secretary Malyn, he desired him to pay 100*l*. to Sir John Evelyn towards the repairs. "And now, Sir," said Cromwell, "I hope you'll raise the other hundred."—From Mr. Howe. Sloane MSS. 4460.

* See Note on BERKLEY and ASHBURNHAM at the end of this chapter.

† Sir Philip Warwick's Memoirs, 301.

where the King remained five days, that Sir John Berkley tells us, that "His Majesty discovered not only to me, but to every one he conversed with, a total diffidence of all the Army, from the backwardness of the officers to treat of receiving any favour or advantage of his Majesty."* But when Ashburnham arrived from France, about a fortnight after, he found Charles under the care of Colonel Whalley, one of Cromwell's intimates, perfectly satisfied with his new and dangerous friends. When Whalley required the pledge of Ashburnham's honour that he should not be privy to any escape of the King, Charles also voluntarily engaged himself on the same terms. "So confident," adds Ashburnham, "his Majesty then was that their behaviour towards him would be such as he should never have occasion to desert them."† We detect here a great alteration in the King's opinions, which in this story of human nature it were desirable to have supplied.‡ On the 20th of July Ashburnham arrived at Woburn, where he found the treaty begun by Sir John Berkley was proceeding with Cromwell and Ireton, with proffers of honours and emoluments for themselves "to the utmost of their expectations," and including their friends. During the space of twenty days this negotiation seemed to be not without hopes of success.

It is marvellous to observe how public rumour has often anti-

* Mr. Brodie, in his zeal to defend Cromwell and the officers against Major Huntington's accusation, alleges this passage of Sir John Berkley as a decisive proof that "they showed a backwardness in accepting favours from the King." This was true at a certain period; but a fortnight after the scene changed. Mr. Brodie, indeed, could not know this, since we owe the discovery to the recent publication of Ashburnham's Narrative, which confirms the accounts of Major Huntington. Secret history performs miracles in favour of truth.

† Ashburnham's Narrative, published by the late Earl of Ashburnham, p. 89.

‡ We receive no light from the delightful details of Herbert, the faithful Groom of the Bed-chamber, who was never admitted into any secret conferences. While he has correctly preserved the recollections of the King's movements, he appears, in the antechamber, to have had no insight into the intrigues carrying on in the interior. In all these removals he sees nothing to describe but the mansions, the gardens, the waterworks of the noble owners, and the loyal emotion of the people. Major Huntington, an officer in the regiment of Cromwell, and who finally threw up his commission, and bore an extraordinary testimony, which he offered to verify on oath, exposing the ambition and the avowed Machiavelian principles of his great commander, passes over the present period, and begins his narrative about the close of July. We know, however, that much had passed between the Major and the King; for Berkley informs us he was the only officer Charles trusted.

anticipated the most secret transactions, and assigned motives to men, though at the time of the rumour, the transaction had not yet occurred, and the motives of the person were yet dormant. The fears of jealous men are prophetic. The Army was now so jealous of Cromwell and their officers, that at this very moment, when Charles was at Caversham, despairing of having any personal influence with the officers, the General found it necessary thus early in addressing Parliament, to clear them of reports that "they were upon some underhand contract or bargain with the King,—thence occasion is taken to slander our integrity, and endeavour a misunderstanding betwixt the Parliament and the Army."* This letter is dated July 8th. "The contract or bargain" had yet no existence whatever, so that the rumour was totally unfounded, though the result turned out as it had been anticipated.

Throughout the whole of the present important transactions, most difficult, very variable and vital in their result, we may discover a painful vacillation of opinions in Charles, but not of conduct. He had adopted for his first principle, which he reiterated without reserve, that neither party could stand without him. This was also the opinion of others. At this moment there could be no communication between the King and his minister Clarendon, now the emigrant of Jersey, yet their opinions were the same.

Clarendon thought, perhaps truly enough, that the Army was as odious to the people, as the Presbyterians and the Royalists ever were. "And to believe," he writes, "that they can govern long by the power of the sword, is ridiculous. Their only security can be in the faith and protection of the King. Sure they have as much or more need of the King, than he of them."† The constitutional lawyer and the mere cabinet-minister had yet no conception of military dominion.

This opinion which the King had already formed, was farther impressed by his renewed intercourse with the Presbyterian party, and with Lord Lauderdale, the Chief Commissioner of the Scots, who already were preparing to arm for the Covenant, which the Independents held in scorn.‡ At this

* Rushworth, vi. 610.

† Clarendon State Papers, ii.

‡ Clarendon seems to have had very confined notions of the power of the sword !

moment the Presbyterian Parliament and the Scots affected to condemn a mutinous soldiery, and had a perfect confidence in their own Presbyterian General Fairfax. The opinion seemed still farther confirmed by the importunity of Cromwell and Ireton to conclude the treaty of the army with the King. They had submitted to modify it till the terms appeared reasonable,* for as yet the military had not subdued the ostensible government. The scales trembled, and Charles imagined that his hand held the casting-weight.

The result of the principle which Charles had now adopted proved fatal, for it occasioned him to reject both the proposals of the Army and of the Parliament. Half-measures, temporising till in despair he reverted to his own principles, was one of the political errors of Charles the First, when pressed into extraordinary dilemmas. In momentous difficulties, it is only genius which calculates, or audacity which risks, that strikes out a fortunate decision ; for we call that fortunate to which none at the moment could apply the epithet.

It was during these negotiations that the last removal of the King had been to Hampton Court, where Charles was allowed to maintain his state in all the lustre of a court. The nobility crowded to the presence-chamber, his servants retained their offices, and during these Halcyon days, as Herbert calls them—

We see it in the manner in which the army rid itself of this Scotch Peer, whom one day they would not suffer to take leave of his Majesty. "The soldiers bursting into the bed-chamber of the Scotch Lord, ordered him to depart instantly."—Lingard, x. 386.

* "So much so," says Baron Maseres, "that had not the King been one of the most intractable and injudicious men that ever lived, he must have cheerfully consented to."—Preface to Tracts, xxiv. So also Mr. Brodie : "Never had the misguided monarch a better opportunity to recover his throne," iv. 104. I do not apologise for the insincerity of Charles in the present transaction ; it was excruciating. But had Charles's principles hung loosely about him, he would have accepted the easy terms offered by the Army—he might have been the imperator of the soldiers ! It is not philosophical to decide on the character of Charles the First of 1630, by that phantom of Charles the First of 1830, which many raise up in their own minds. Stronger heads than Charles might have been distracted in this choice of evils. Who was the stronger party, had not yet been shown. But the Army, the Baron himself acknowledges, stood in a very exceptionable light. They had done an irregular and unjustifiable act in the assumption of that power which appertained solely to the Parliament. Surely Charles had reason to dread that the Crown, which had been bestowed by the violence of an army, would not long exercise its independent authority.

Herbert, whose elegant tastes and travelled mind loved to linger amidst scenes of splendour and tranquillity, imagined that his royal master was once more happy, for the King conversed with those he wished, hunted and rode as he pleased, and frequently saw his children. A long and cruel estrangement had more deeply endeared them to his forlorn spirit.*

NOTE ON BERKLEY AND ASHBURNHAM.

The Memoirs of Sir JOHN BERKLEY, and the publication of "the Narrative" of ASHBURNHAM, light us in some of these dark passages of our History. These Memoirs are written by persons of a different cast of mind, and though actuated by the same zeal, unfortunately tormented by mutual jealousies, and taking different views.

Sir JOHN BERKLEY, afterwards Lord Berkley, came to the King recommended by the party at Paris, and notwithstanding his defence of the City of Exeter, was not much known to Charles, who appears to have placed little confidence in the ability or the judgment of this gentleman. Berkley, too, has the misfortune of having had an intimate friend in a man of genius, Lord Clarendon, who, among his superior faculties, exercised with great satisfaction to himself the bitterest and most cutting sarcasm. Of his friend, whom he flatters in his correspondence, he tells in his History, that "the officers were well acquainted with his talent, and knew his foible, that by flattering and commending, they might govern him;" and that "there was no danger of any deep design from his contrivance." Clarendon, who tells us that "Sir John had a friend at that Court," (the party at Paris with the Queen,) "who loved him better than any body else did," closes by observing, that when Sir John offered his services for England, "they were very willing that he should make the experiment, for he that loved him best was very willing to be without him." The Memoir of Sir John, which is confined to a narrative of the present critical transaction, is clear and lively, and carries evidence of promptness and ability in his difficult diplomacy, which places him in a far more advantageous light than he appears in the disguise of the satiric

* When the King intreated to have his children restored to him, the rigid Presbyterian Parliament informed him that "they could take as much care at London, both of their bodies and souls, as could be done at Oxford." One would imagine that when they voted this resolution, there could not have been a single father in the whole House of Commons!

pen of Clarendon. Sir John more than once checked the imprudence of the King, but he modestly acknowledges that "his councils were the worse for coming from himself."

ASHBURNHAM was a more courtly gentleman, affecting refinement in little things. He could not bring himself to talk "with such senseless fellows as the agitators," having been always, he said, "bred in the best company." He left them to the active Sir John, addressing himself entirely to Cromwell and Ireton. He was fond of an expression of his own mintage, which not the entreaty of four good judges could persuade him to alter, though its impolicy was certain. Yet it was the conceit of the thing, not its felicity, which fascinated his over-weening littleness; for he himself was a feeble writer, with great mediocrity of talent. He was the favourite of Charles, from whom he imbibed all his opinions; the most dangerous of counsellors possible, for he never dissented: when Charles advised with him, if he imagined that he had the benefit of two opinions, he was fatally mistaken. The voice of Ashburnham was only a reverberation. His devotion to the Church and the King was entire. All the favours and emoluments Charles had to bestow were conferred on Ashburnham.

His fidelity, and his mediocrity of character, secured the attachment of Charles, who rarely evinced the smallest discernment in the character of those who were about him. Those who are curious in their physiognomical speculations, may examine a beautiful three-quarters print of Ashburnham, in the narrative published by the late Lord Ashburnham, his spirited editor and descendant. We trace in the features of the confidential friend of Charles the First, the courtly air and quietness of character which betrays a feminine weakness, and its total incapacity for that energy and intellectual courage which the critical position into which he was cast so peremptorily required.

I suspect that there was some truth in this insinuation of Berkley, "I had more than once observed, that though Mr. Ashburnham was willing enough to appropriate employments of honour and profit, yet he was contented to communicate those of danger unto his friends."

In both these works I have frequently lamented the uncertainty of their dates. The want of dates in authentic narratives throws into a provoking confusion the circumstances related, or the conversations reported. In the discovery of historical truth, dates are vital things. I have sometimes recovered a date by the public event alluded to, or the place where the circumstance occurred. I drew up an itinerary of the removals of Charles after his deportation from Holmby, and was thus enabled to fix the time by the place. But when private incidents are thrown together as they rose in the recollections of the narrators, we are liable to misplace them. Even

in authentic accounts of the same circumstances, we are startled when we discover one party omitting what another has made an essential part of the narrative. In the two accounts we have of the rendezvous of the Army at Ware, both are from unquestionable sources; in the one from the General himself to the Parliament, the name of Cromwell does not appear, while in the other from General Ludlow, the whole affair of putting down the military is ascribed to Cromwell, but no mention whatever is made of Fairfax, as if he had been absent. We cannot doubt the veracity of these accounts: their difference only consists in omissions, not in contradictions. This last observation is judiciously made by Baron Maseres.

This negligence of dates in authentic writers of memoirs of their own times, has often proved fatal to their veracity, or cast a suspicion over accounts, which otherwise had not occurred. Could it be conceived, that the day when Charles the First escaped from Hampton Court, no slight event in the history of Clarendon, the date was so utterly lost to the recollection of the historian, that instead of fixing it on "the 11th of November," it stands in the original manuscript "about the beginning of September!"

Major Huntington, in the curious paper of his "Reasons for laying down his Commission" under Cromwell, positively states that the King was continually solicited by Cromwell and Ireton with proffers of all things, when Charles was at Caversham. In his former account to Dugdale, he said it was Newmarket, nearly a month anterior, and so much the more erroneous. I have clearly shown, by the undoubted evidence of Warwick and Berkley, while Charles was at Caversham, no offer of the kind could have been made, from the total diffidence he had of the Army. A fortnight after—but not at Caversham, where he remained only five days—when under the guard of Colonel Whalley, a relation of Cromwell, such offers were undoubtedly made. These inaccuracies committed in writing at a distant day, are not only excusable, but are perhaps unavoidable. The historian must, however, examine the most authentic narrations with more care than has been always practised; like a sagacious and cautious lawyer, he must pinch the tenderer parts of his brief, to be certain of what is sound in it.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CROMWELL AND CHARLES THE FIRST AT HAMPTON COURT.

THIS history of human nature is an intellectual exercise which leads to many certain truths and many devious researches, and will not allow us with indolent acquiescence to take matters in the gross. We should not confide to the narrative repeated from a former one, or decide on the conduct of the individual as it was usually actuated through life, but as it may have been influenced by a present motive. In the anatomy of the passions—in the shades of character of the human being whose story has interested the world, it would be unskilful to conclude that the hypocrite is never to be separated from his hypocrisy. Personal interests there are of a deep and trying nature, strong enough to secure even the integrity of the faithless, and to induce the dissembler to cast away his disguise.

Cromwell, mysterious being as he was, there is no reason to suspect of having practised his accustomed dissimulation in his *first* intercourse with the King.

If, while the fate of the Army and the Parliament were yet to be decided, and the agitators were pressing for the King's acceptance of their treaty, Cromwell secured to himself, by means of this negotiation, the highest honours and emoluments of the State, at that moment his ambition could not pass beyond. The future Protector, the enthusiast of supreme dominion, could not, even in thought, have grasped at the sceptre. Vast as was the creative genius of this man, it had not yet winged itself beyond the limits of possibility.

Ireton, his son-in-law, was indeed of a severe temper: a man of law and a soldier, and one with whom his sword was as logical as his pen. His republican spirit was not liable to those sudden meltings of Cromwell, effervescing themselves into bursts of loyalty. But Ireton had made a common cause with his father, and was equally importunate and accommodating to terminate the treaty with the King. Ireton was the penman, the treaty lay in his own closet, and he never hesitated to moderate the

proposals of the Army at the suggestion of Berkley. The most solemn protestations were repeatedly renewed that they were ready to sacrifice their lives to emancipate the King, enslaved by a vile intolerant party. "If I am an honest man," observed Cromwell to Ashburnham, "I have said enough of the sincerity of my intentions; if I am not, nothing is enough!"—"We should be the veriest knaves that ever lived," said Ireton, "if we made not good what we have promised, because the King, by his not declaring against us, had given us great advantage against our adversaries." During twenty days these eminent men appeared reconciled to accept the magnificent offers.

It was on the 2nd of August that the King rejected the proposals of the Army. At a conference with the officers, he delivered himself in the most unguarded language. "You cannot be without me; you will fall to ruin if I do not sustain you!" Thus the captive monarch betrayed the fatal conviction of his own independent power. At that moment "his Majesty seemed very much erected," as Berkley expresses it. The fact was, that three days before, on the 30th of July, the City had boldly declared against the Army. At the language of the King, Ireton, and even Berkley, were surprised—the officers who appeared to wish well to the agreement looked on with wonder. One of them, Colonel Rainsborough, a furious agitator, stole away in the midst of the conference, and, posting to the Army, carrying off the King's words on his lips, with considerable additions, spread a flame through the indignant ranks. A whisper from Berkley had reminded Charles of his imprudence, and as the conference was closing, the King attempted to soften the harshness of his rejection, as Berkley tells us, "with great power of language and behaviour." Ireton, with keen discernment, had once before observed, "Sir, you have an intention to be the arbitrator between the Parliament and us, and we mean to be so between you and the Parliament." There was always a pungency in the Republican Ireton's retorts on the King. When Charles observed to him, "I shall play my game as well as I can," Ireton replied, "If your Majesty have a game to play, you must give us the liberty to play ours."

The Army was now on the point of making an important movement. It was yet to be a secret to the world, but Crom-

well knew that before two days should elapse the Army would be masters of London. Still he courted the King, still he deemed his name an army of itself. But now a single hour was a crisis. He dispatched an express to implore the King, that if he could not bring himself to yield to the treaty, yet a conciliatory letter to the General, expressive of his satisfaction with the Army, would at this moment secure those wavering and inconstant spirits for whom they could not answer. On a former occasion it had been announced that the temper of the Army had altered more than once; and Cromwell would often say, alluding to the chief Levellers, that "they were a giddy-headed party, and that there was no trust nor truth in them."

On the arrival of Cromwell's express, a letter was instantly prepared. But Charles hesitated till it had passed through three or four debates. That single day was lost! Berkley and Ashburnham were the bearers; messengers on the road met them to urge their speed; they reach Sion House, and are struck with amazement. They could obtain no interview with Cromwell nor Ireton. A mighty event had frustrated the design of the royal letter. The Speakers of both the Houses with many of their members had taken refuge in the Army. The soldiers were on their march to the City.

The event of that march was probably to be the measure of their adoption or their abandonment of the King. The Agitators, already indisposed by the King's tardy acceptance of their treaty, were now regardless of his fate. The conciliatory letter to the General had been intended to show that the King was with them. Had the Army encountered a force greater than their own, or even a strong opposition, as there was an appearance of great resistance, for men were enlisted and commanders were appointed, in that extreme case they would have placed the King at their head, and would have invited the whole Royalist party. Such was the plotting and bold policy of Cromwell.*

* Ashburnham's Narrative recently published, 93. This writer is so vague that he has not noticed the incident of "the Letter," and evidently confused it with a different object. He acquaints us of Berkley's and his bad reception on their arrival at Sion House "with his Majesty's answer." What answer? According to his Narrative, it was "his Majesty's consent to their proposals," *i. e.* the proposals of the Army by Cromwell and Ireton. He says that these, after having been under

This last revolution after so many others, was described at the time, with as much truth as ridicule, in a pseudonymous letter of Secretary Nicholas. "All things are in England in very great confusion. As the King called a Parliament he could not rule, and afterwards the Parliament raised an Army it could not rule, so the Army have made Agitators they cannot rule, and the Agitators are setting up the people whom they will be as unable to rule."*

Notwithstanding this triumph of the military, the Army marching through London on the 7th of August, the officers still declared that "They would keep to their engagement with the King." Probably this was a mere act of policy, for we do not hear that the treaty was renewed by them, nor solicited by the King, who secretly presaged "nothing but mischief from this vast increase of their authority."†

The King was now at Stoke, but desirous to be removed to one of his own houses. Ashburnham, in communicating with Cromwell and Ireton, was struck by their altered tone and repulsive air. "They told me, with very severe countenances, that he should go if he pleased to Oatlands." What they added explains their "very severe countenances." They informed Ashburnham that the King had sided with the Parliament by encouraging the Royalists to unite with them, and farther, that

the care of some of his Majesty's Counsel at Law, &c., "On the very day it was finished the army marched." Writing at a distant day, Ashburnham seems entirely to have forgotten that "the King's answer," which he and Berkley carried to the Army, was "the letter to the General." As for "the King's consent to their proposals," Charles never consented to them. His lawyers and divines called together on this occasion had only discussed them, and stated their objections; as Berkley acutely observed, "They easily answered the proposals both in point of law and reason. But we had to do with what was stronger." It is evident that Ashburnham has sadly erred in supposing the King ever consented to the treaty, and totally forgotten the incident of "the Letter," which was the real and only object of their post-haste expedition to Sion House.

* Clarendon State Papers, ii. Jo. Wilcocks was the pseudonymous signature which concealed the honest old secretary. I shall quote a writer unusual in his historical researches—the facetious Tom Brown. The confused state of these revolutionary affairs is equally well described by a fact the Wit has recorded. The Cavaliers in the beginning of the troubles used to trump up the 12th of the Romans on the Parliament—the Parliament trumped it up on the Army when they would not disband—the Army back again on the Parliament when they disputed their orders. Never was poor Chapter so unmercifully tossed to and fro again and again!

—Tom Brown's Works, iv. 14.

† Ashburnham's Narrative, 93.

at this instant he had a treaty with the Scots. They held the evidence in their own hands, by his and the Queen's letters. This was a thunder-clap! Ashburnham defied them to produce their pretended evidence, offering that if they did he would willingly consent that the King should never be restored by their means. No such letters appear to have been produced. The King went to Oatlands on the 14th of August.

This detection of the double manœuvres of the distressed and irresolute monarch, so early in August, embarrasses our narrative. Ashburnham has fixed the time by naming the place where it occurred, but by some confusion in his reminiscences he seems to have ante-dated this material circumstance. Were Ashburnham correct in his statement, the subsequent conduct of Cromwell at Hampton Court, during his early intercourse with the King, would exhibit a scene of unimaginable and gratuitous perfidy. Clarendon places the expostulation of Cromwell at a later and more probable period. Dr. Lingard, following Clarendon, says that Cromwell acquainted Ashburnham of "the incurable duplicity of his master," and fixes the time not early in August, but late in October. This at once removes the discrepancy. With Cromwell it is easy to conceive that he was earnestly sincere through September, hypocritical in October, and openly hostile in November. This is nothing surprising in the history of a man who the Parliament declared merited a statue for quelling the tumults of the Army, and not many months after, at the head of that Army, expelled that Parliament.

The King went to Hampton Court on the 24th of August, where he resided during three months, in the full state of royalty and almost of liberty. His great and devoted friends had even leave for a restricted period to pass over from the continent, where they had now retreated, to visit their sovereign. Among these were the heads of powerful parties, with whom were concerted their future plans; they were not hopeless, but hapless. It is evident that Cromwell was desirous of coalescing with the Royalists by the freedom he allowed of their access to Charles.

At first Cromwell himself was more assiduous than ever in his attendance on the King, with whom he held long conferences,

and walked together in the galleries and the gardens of the Palace. Many of the officers appear to have been gained over in their personal intercourse with Charles. The King might still be the fountain of honour and the dispenser of favours. Even the citizens flocked to Hampton Court as they had formerly been accustomed, when their sovereign returned from a progress. It was the general opinion up to the middle of September, that the influence of Cromwell would settle the restoration of the King.

While this scene of comparative peace and tranquillity deluded the people, the wayward spirits of the Army had engendered a new faction—a faction avowing its indomitable hostility to every other party in the State. Our political parties usually step forth with enviable titles, but how happens it that they are more generally known to posterity by the nick-names conferred on them by their enemies? It is because the name they assume denotes their professions, and the name they receive marks their acts. The “Independents” had described their principle in their name, and veiled their turbulence in the mildness of toleration, or, as the bigoted Presbyterian Clement Walker says, “to establish that chimera, liberty of conscience.”* From these Commonwealth-men sprung a specious sect, first obscurely known as “Rationalists,”—an early indication of the straggling “March of Intellect.” Whatever they insisted to have done in the State and the Church was a reason, “until they be convinced with better.” Better and worse they had, till their fluctuating doctrines took all the monstrous shapes of anarchy. The age of Charles the First was the age of Sectarianism, and no human arguments availed with “a godly race” appealing to the Sacred Scriptures for their Acts of Parliament, and who, whenever they came to a decision, fasted and prayed, to make Heaven justify their follies and their crimes. Every age has its character, which is derived from the circumstances of the period, but the principle by which men are actuated has ever been the same. Such vague and disturbed notions of civil liberty were more palpable when these “Rationalists” were denominated “The Levellers.”† Then was comprehended the nature of their

* History of Independency, Part I. 31.

† “The Levellers are miscalled,” says the warm Presbyterian Clement Walker, “for they only endeavoured to level the exorbitant usurpations of the Council of

chimerical republics, every man choosing to live in one of his own. Then appeared their barbarous independence, and their ceaseless innovations. All the vain hopes of the eternal restlessness of man, placed amidst the corruptions of human institutions, and the conflicting interests of society itself.

The greater peril into which a nation is cast is when the varied land-marks of society are violently removed; then the demagogue shows his towering head, the reckless adventurer grasps at the universal spoil, and the orator invokes liberty, with a heart vowed to the wretched slavery of flattering the passions of the people.*

From the Rationalists and the Levellers sprung up a race who have received no title, but may be designated by one, not long after hardly earned—the regicides! bands of tyrannicides, each a Brutus, who abhorred all kings as being *de genere bestiarum rapacium*, as one of them said. These were not men who would have acted like that Roman senator, who, when the multitude in tumult vociferated to know who had killed their lord and master Caligula, and called for his punishment, from an eminence whence he could be heard by all, exclaimed with a voice loud as his lofty spirit, “I wish I had killed him.” Astonishment stilled the populace—they paused to think—and the tumult ceased. The king-killers of England were not invested

State and Council of Officers, and it was Cromwell who falsely christened them.”—History of Independency, Part II. 168.

Mrs. Hutchinson, in her admirable Memoirs of her Colonel, however, describes a wider circumference of their operations. They were “a sort of public-spirited men who stood up in the Parliament and the Army, declaring against the factions and the partiality that was in these days practised, by which great men were privileged to those things which meaner men were punished for.” She adds, for she wrote in the spirit of truth, “As all virtues are mediums, and have their extremes, there rose up after in that name a people who endeavoured the levelling of all estates and qualities.” 288. 4to.

* I was struck by the unguarded description, as I presume it is, by a friend of the late Benjamin Constant in his eulogy on this Patriot. “M. Constant was in the utmost degree jealous of his popularity; he lost all energy when he saw it sinking; and the man who had disdained the favour and the gifts of sovereigns could not bear up against the slightest popular disgrace.” This is a miserable history of a man of genius, however moderate, solely solicitous of a hurrah! and three cheers of the mob! and never, on any opportunity, of that wisdom and rectitude which might happen to be unpopular. The vilest parasite of a court is not a more contemptible being than that other servile courtier of the people. The people at least require as often to be enlightened as flattered.—*Times*, December 18th, 1830.

with the romantic grandeur of the Roman tyrannicides ; the assassins among them were ordinary assassins, and the more solemn had English notions of legalizing, or passing under the forms of legality, even an illegal act.

The authority of kings and the rights of the people had been often discussed during the Civil Wars. That the people were sovereign, or that the origin of all just power is in the people, was an abstract axiom in political science, which was now raised to oppose that principle of the divinity of monarchical power which inculcated passive obedience, from the highest authority to which Christian Europe could appeal. The novel principle was developed in the celebrated tract of Buchanan.* The Scottish Republican had warded off by his apologetical and subtilising Commentary the Jewish and Evangelical politics.† But Buchanan advanced beyond the mere illustration of an obscure and vague position, by maintaining that evil kings, like other criminals, may be brought to judgment, by those mightier sovereigns, their own people. Were there no societies of men,

* *De Jure Regni apud Scotos.*

† In this dialogue the Interlocutor urges the precept of passive obedience from St. Paul in his Epistle to Titus, ch. iii. And to show how strong was the precept, he observes what Princes St. Paul recommended to the prayers of the Church, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, for his Epistles are almost contemporary with them. Buchanan apologizes for St. Paul ; his command was but for a time, the Church being then in its infancy, and it was also to remove that odium which was attached to the Christians, that they refused all obedience to magistracy. Some of the primitive Christians had imprudently imagined that it was unworthy of those who were made free by the Son of God to lie under the power of any man. But St. Paul has given his reason for their obedience ; it was not for the King's safety, but that the Church might live in peace and quietness. This passage enraged John Knox, who has furiously declaimed against this passage of St. Paul. He should have considered that St. Paul was writing to men of different nations, few rich or able to govern, most but recently emancipated, tradesmen, servants, and all private persons. Now that Christians are kings, Paul would not write at this day as he wrote to the multitude. He maintains that monarchs may be brought to judgment, and it would be a false inference to conclude the thing was unlawful because it is not to be found in Scripture. There is, however, a passage in Peter, 1st, chap. ii. 13, which positively inculcates passive obedience and admits of no gloss, though volumes have been written on St. Paul's "divine right," and St. Peter's "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man."

The Covenanters alleged about ten passages from Scripture in favour of king-killing and revolting against them, but on the side of passive obedience to kings the express texts are more numerous. Both sides explain or evade. Both converted the Scriptures into a nose of wax.

there would be no kings, for kings are appointed for the good of the people, therefore the people are better than the king. It follows, that whenever a king is called to judgment, it is the lesser power which appears before the greater.

But what is the sovereignty of the people? Is it like the equality of mankind, only an Utopian babble? Is it a contradiction in terms? How is the servant to be the master? or the governed to be the governors? Where are we to find this sovereignty among the many or the few? Has history or human nature ever shown a government composed of the people, vacillating with their passions and their interests, eager to establish and eager to pull down? This would be a government composed of self-destroying principles. Buchanan sees what a people can do, but he does not see what they will do. "When shall we hope for that happiness where the whole people agree with that which is right?" demands the interlocutor in the dialogue. Buchanan responds, "That indeed is scarce to be hoped for, and to expect it is needless, for no law could be made and no magistrate be created which would not find some to object to the law or to oppose the man. It is sufficient," he concludes, "that the laws are useful, and the magistrate be of good repute." This speculative politician surely has left the obscure origin of government much where he found it, and Buchanan seems to have been casting his net into the sea to catch a whale. The principle more particularly his own, is that kings may be put on their trial, but the sovereignty of the people, which is to exercise this right with him, has no other medium to manifest its authority than by the violence of the Tribunes of the Roman people and the Ephori of the Lacedæmonians. I cannot discover in this famous work of Buchanan any notion of a Representative Government, which at least seems the most rational of all human institutions.

Yet never let us forget that even a Representative Government is liable to many peculiar abuses, and all popular assemblies are a conflict of terrible passions. Truth is the celestial visitant of the few, and not of the many. The sovereignty of the people becomes as ambiguous a principle as any assumed by absolute power. Our Rumpers, perplexed by the sovereignty of the people, which, when they had assumed, they did not know what

to make of, separated the power from the authority. They declared that "the supreme power is in the people, but the supreme authority is in the Commons, their representatives." A false assumption, which, like all fallacies, was designed to veil evil designs. Who were these proclaimers of the liberties of England? The Sovereign, the Peers, and two-thirds of the Commons had been purged, and purged, and purged away, till nothing remained but the fraction of a House, and a minority of its members. The great truth is, that no government can exist unless it be invested with paramount power to keep every other down. The passions and the sufferings of mankind in an eternal struggle where to lodge the seat of supreme authority, have rendered them alike the victims of a limited monarchy which corrupts their selfishness, an arbitrary despotism which degrades the animal by exacting unconditional submission, and an anarchical democracy which erects the vain and the daring into so many potentates, maddening the land by factions which can only be destroyed by other factions. The happiness of a people often vanishes in their eternal cry after liberty,—it is the despotism of the multitude which shall always terminate by the despotism of the single person. When the laws are once violated, man becomes the tyrant or the slave of his neighbour.

A letter about this time gives an extraordinary account of the excitement among the Levellers, "who stick not in the Army to say the Kingdom is theirs by conquest, and if the arrears go on still unpaid it will be theirs by purchase." To dissolve the Parliament they insisted on a free Election, but we are startled when we find that they voted to extend the Elective franchise to all classes, not only to freeholders but to beggars, who were to have a vote for Knights and Burgesses! Servants only were excepted.* Those Levellers, whom I have denominated the Regicides, were fully convinced that the life of the sovereign was a continued obstacle to their wild Democracy. It is now they meditated on the extraordinary project of some public act in the form of public justice on the doomed monarch, to exhibit to all the world a justification of the People. The idea was now rife, and was not even disapproved by some who had

* Clarendon State Papers, ii. xl. App. One can hardly imagine this universal reform of Parliament! Universal suffrage!

not yet the taste of blood. Cornet Joyce, who had had no slight personal intercourse with the King, was desirous that the King should be brought to trial, "Not," said he, "that I would have one hair of his head to suffer, but that the people might not bear the blame of the war." Those who imagined the trial, dreamed also of the condemnation. Even the pistol, the poniard, or poison, should the greater novelty not be obtainable, were decided on. They railed against their officers whom they witnessed mingled with the throng of Cavaliers at Hampton Court, as their betrayers. "Free-born John Lilburne," as he called himself, that giant of pamphleteers, whose ever-restless pen never wearied, threw amidst the Army now lying at Putney, a hand-grenado, which burst on the head of Cromwell, entitled "Putney Projects." Cromwell latterly assured Ashburnham that his life was not secure in his quarters, and on this pretext desired him to refrain from open visits, without, however, interrupting their private communications. Nor did Cromwell neglect to convey information whenever he could carry a point among the Agitators in favour of the King. "So many shows and expressions of realities they intermingled with their discourse," Ashburnham with great simplicity remarks.

Berkley also discovered that Cromwell was somewhat capitious. Expostulating with him for having betrayed a State-secret, Cromwell told him that Lady Carlisle (for her Ladyship again steps forth amid the busy scene) had affirmed that Sir John had informed her that Cromwell was to be created Earl of Essex and Captain of the King's Guards. Other rumours spread that Ireton was to be Lord Lieutenant of Ireland for life. Such reports were fatal, while the Agitators promulgated that the Army and the people were to be sacrificed by their Lieutenant-General and their Commissary-General to their private ambition.

Berkley assures us that he had all along cautiously avoided the springes and the snares of that paragon of States-women, not to give umbrage to the Army. It was only after repeated messages conveyed by the voice and smiles of Lady Newport, that he was at last caught by the great Sempronia. Sir John, however, on visiting her Ladyship, enjoyed little of her company, for he had not long entered her haunted chamber, ere an Agitator made his ominous appearance, sent, as Sir John reasonably

concludes, to neutralize their conversation, which ended in ordinary topics. Whether the expostulation of Cromwell were but a feint, to warn off Sir John from the unhallowed precinct of that perturbed spirit—the Presbyterian Lady; or whether her Ladyship had maliciously surmised the fact, though Berkley denies the communication in the present instance, we know for certain that her Ladyship's informant had furnished no ungrounded report.*

Of the nature of the communications which the two eminent persons now held with the King, we may form some notion by the acknowledgment which Ireton confidentially made to his friend Colonel Hutchinson, long after all interests had ceased to deceive the hearer. "He gave us words, and we paid him in his own coin, when we found that he had no real intention to the people's good, but to prevail by our factions to regain by art what he had lost in fight." In September the confidence of Charles appears to have weakened, and he seems to have entertained doubts of the sincerity of the parties.

Major Huntington, an officer in Cromwell's own regiment, was the confidential messenger from his Colonel to the King, and became zealously attached to the unfortunate monarch. When Charles was preparing his refusal to the proposals of the Parliament, he was desirous of consulting Cromwell before he sent in his answer. Taking the Major apart, the King earnestly inquired "whether he considered Cromwell remained the same in heart as by his tongue he had so frequently expressed him-

* Mr. Brodie, anxious to clear Cromwell of having ever been seduced by the promises held out to him, refers to Berkley as "informing us that the story of the Earldom was an invention."—Brodie, iv. 106. But since Mr. Brodie has written we have the positive evidence of Ashburnham, which I have before noticed, of the nature of the offers to Cromwell and Ireton, "to their utmost expectations." We have also a letter from Clarendon to Berkley, which approves of such offers having been made.—Clarendon State Papers, ii. 379. "The whole kingdom knows," says the warm Clement Walker, "Cromwell and Ireton to be apparently guilty of truckling with the King."—History of Ind. i. 35. And I think Cromwell himself has made the confession, on the day he finally joined with the army, acknowledging "that the glories of the world had so dazzled his eyes, that he could not discern clearly the great works the Lord was doing, but that he now desired the prayers of the saints, that God would be pleased to forgive him *his self-seeking*." To me this is an evident allusion to what passed, as Ashburnham says, "for the space of twenty days, not without some hopes of success," and is an ample confirmation of the view which I have taken.

self?" The Major was staggered at the sudden and solemn question, and comprehending all its importance, requested to give his answer on the following day.

The Major that night hastened to Cromwell's quarters, and early in the morning broke in on Cromwell, whom he found in his bed. Raising up his colonel in his night-gown, and apologising for the unseasonable disturbance, he acquainted him with the urgency of the business. On this Cromwell, striking his hand on his breast, solemnly asseverated that he "would do whatever he had promised to restore the King, imprecating Heaven that neither himself, nor his wife nor children might ever prosper, if he failed in his word, for that he would stand by the King were there but ten men left to stick to him." The Major, aware of what was passing in the Army, and with something like suspicion in his mind, was still so cautious as to condition with Cromwell, that should any thing happen to hinder his intentions, he would give the King timely warning, that he might elude the danger. This is remarkable, for Cromwell held this promise sacred.

Charles, like Huntington, reposed on the honour of Cromwell. The King's answer to the Parliament was submitted by the Major to the perusal of Cromwell and Ireton "privately in a garden-house at Putney," with liberty to add or alter. The object was to obtain a personal treaty, and they promised their support in the House. On the 13th of September the King's answer was received by the Parliament, and it raised a flame in the House—and we are told that not among the least vehement were found Cromwell and Ireton! The astonished monarch sent to inquire of Cromwell the reason of this extraordinary conduct. The ingenuity of the answer was only equalled by its perfidy. Cromwell alleged that "What he had done was merely to sound the depths of those virulent humours of the Presbyterian party whom he knew to be no friends to his Majesty." Cromwell, indeed, whatever he might have designed, lived in dread of the jealousies of the Army, and a public support of the King's measures might have confirmed their tales of his intrigues.*

* It is a curious instance how imperfectly some are acquainted with parts of the very transaction in which they are engaged, or cease to deliver themselves accurately

From this moment, however, Cromwell never again appeared at Hampton Court.

The masks, if they had worn any, must have suddenly dropped from their faces. The unhappy and baffled Ashburnham seems to have been at a loss how to proceed with such reluctant and suspicious negotiators, and seems not to have been aware that a negotiation may be considered as concluded when the negotiators are so coy as never to confer. The forlorn emissary of Charles went about circuitously among the officers to learn the resolutions of the two great men! He picked up from Colonel Rich some astounding gossip, in which Cromwell had enlarged "how this kingdom would be in a happy condition if the Government were settled as that in Holland." This alarming intelligence Ashburnham hastened to communicate to the King, urging, however, the absolute necessity of keeping up an appearance of friendly correspondence with these powerful men. Charles seemed troubled and absorbed in thought. He assured Ashburnham that he did not partake of his surprise, for that he had of late some secret hints in his mind that they never designed any other service to him than to advance their own, which lay some other way than by his restoration. Ashburnham took his final instructions to sound them once more. He found that all future negotiations would be useless.

The intention of Cromwell and Ireton now cease to be equivocal. This remarkable change may be ascribed to the peremptory resolutions of the new faction in the Army. The two great leaders were themselves in terror at the monster they had themselves nursed. It was a novel predominance in the State. There is reason, however, to believe that a more private motive also prevailed with Cromwell and Ireton. A letter is said to have been intercepted, the tenor of which, whatever it was,

at a distant day. Sir John Berkley says, that "both Cromwell and Ireton, with Vane, and all their friends, seconded with great resolution the desire of his Majesty (for a personal treaty), but the more it was urged by Cromwell, the more it was rejected by the rest, who looked on them as their betrayers." How are we to accord this discrepancy with the narrative of Huntington? We must infer Cromwell's opposition from the apologetical answer he returned to the King. The recent narrative of Ashburnham confirms Huntington's account, that from this moment "Cromwell and Ireton withdrew themselves by degrees from their wonted discourses of his Majesty's recovery."—Ashburnham's Narrative, 98.

put an end to their scheme of any coalition with the King. The history of this intercepted letter we reserve for the following chapter, as an investigation sufficiently curious.

The communication of Cromwell, Ireton, and Whalley with the King continued in appearance so late as *the end of October*, for their ladies went to Court, and Ashburnham, taking Mrs. Cromwell by the hand, introduced her to his Majesty, and the whole family party were entertained. *Very early in November* we find that an impeachment of the Army against Cromwell was in agitation, and, a week later, Ireton opposes Rainsborough at a council of war. The furious Leveller intimated that the Army would not make any farther addresses to the King. Ireton protested against this violation of reason and justice, abruptly left the Council, and refused to return.* To so late a period as *the 8th of November*, Cromwell and Ireton still persisted in the appearance of friendly dispositions. This mysterious conduct may be ascribed to their peculiar situation; they were wrestling with the new Faction, with whom as yet they had not joined.

Within the space of a week the King observed a sudden alteration in the civility of the soldiers, and that the guards were doubled. Charles desired Ashburnham to find some excuse to withdraw his parole, as the King did himself, on the plea that his friends had been dismissed, and his honour suspected, for that "his word was to be his guard." He sent word to the General that he could pledge his word no longer, and that the General should look to him as well as he could. Legge, of all his own attendants, was alone suffered to remain. Letters and notes were conveyed to Charles which confirmed certain rumours of his personal danger. The spirit of the Levellers was now under the influence of such political saints as Hugh Peters, their chaplain and buffoon, men whom the warm Clement Walker designates as "the journeymen-priests." An anonymous letter which Charles left on the table on his flight, and which had come from a quarter well known to Charles, informed him of the resolution of some agitators "to take his life away." Dell and Peters, two of their preachers, offered to bear them company, and had often said to them that "his Majesty is but as a dead

* See the curious extracts of letters of the day, in Clarendon's State Papers, ii. App. xl.

dog.”* The King was cast into terror and perplexity. Cromwell obtained intelligence of a plot concerted by the Levellers to send a strong detachment of their own party to seize on the King. He instantly wrote to Colonel Whalley, his relative, who had the custody of the King, to give him timely warning, declaring that he himself could no longer be responsible for the King’s safety. Whalley immediately confided the pressing communication to the King.

At the close of the evening of the 12th of November, Charles escaped from Hampton Court, accompanied by Legge, and met Ashburnham and Berkley by appointment, and the next account heard of the King was that he remained in safety and in the custody of Hammond, the Governor of the Isle of Wight, another confidential friend of Cromwell.

This is one of the most mysterious incidents in this history. Contemporaries and historians have decided that the King, from the day of his deportation from Holmby to his escape to the Isle of Wight, was throughout the dupe of Cromwell.

Hollis and Ludlow consider the flight as a stratagem of Cromwell’s, who having cast Charles into the terror of assassination, had probably indicated his flight, concerting with his creature Whalley to connive at the escape of the King. The absurd account Whalley gave of his measures on its discovery, and no obstacles having impeded the Royal fugitive, give some suspicion.† Charles was advised to go to the Isle of Wight, where Cromwell had beforehand provided him with a gaoler in Colonel Hammond, who had been sent out as Governor only a few weeks before, so that the King was made to act the whole as from himself, and fly into the cage.

* This was no false information. Hugh Peters was a true Regicide. Evelyn, in his Diary, “heard Peters incite the rebel powers met in the painted-chamber to destroy his Majesty.” I am afraid Hugh Peters never forgave Charles for absolutely forbidding him to preach before him, a circumstance which he has indignantly noticed.

† Whalley tells of his “sending parties of horse everywhere, both night and day, searching over Ashburnham’s house which he found empty,” and the King’s lodge, where he might be sure the King was not. This huddled narrative was not read in the House, as Hammond’s letter arrived at the same time with certain information. Peck thinks that Rushworth did not publish it, because it contained some things not to the advantage of Cromwell and Whalley. If so, it is only one among many suppressions of the kind by Rushworth.

Two material objections are opposed to this account. First, the alarm of assassination was real, being confirmed to Charles from sources on which he could depend. Secondly, Hammond was so totally unprepared to receive the King, that the very idea threw him into a fright, and it was long before he could decide how to act. Assuredly the Governor of the Isle of Wight at this time was not of the confederacy with Cromwell and Whalley.

On the obscure motive of the flight of the King to the Isle of Wight, the Royalists assigned a very different cause. The companion of his flight, Ashburnham, either by delusion or perfidy, was an instrument of Cromwell, and this devoted friend of the King was calumniated for having betrayed his Master, and vilified, like another Judas, for "a great sum of money."* They could not by any other way conceive what could have induced Charles on his escape to trust himself with one of the Army, with whom he had had no intercourse and could have no confidence. The truth is, Charles never had designed blindly to trust himself in any Governor's hands, and instantly foresaw all the mischief which his inexpert but honest agents had occasioned. Clarendon, in his narrative, has spoken dubiously, and perhaps with unfriendliness of the conduct of Ashburnham, so that the stain on his character seemed indelible. Yet Clarendon confesses that he had read both the manuscript narratives of Berkley and Ashburnham, but either he had forgotten their contents, or could not recur to them. He held them both much too cheap. The Editor of Evelyn is not the only historical inquirer who has observed that "Ashburnham was suspected with great appearance of truth of having misled the King either through treachery or folly."† Even Hume had said that Ashburnham imprudently, if not treacherously, brought Hammond to the King. Père d'Orleans, whose elegant work on the Revolutions of England was composed under the eye of James the Second, and who has often profited by information drawn from that authentic source, at this particular period is startled

* It was reported that Ashburnham received forty thousand pounds from the Army. A clerk of the Exchequer affirmed that he had paid him twenty thousand pounds! and we are assured, on being applied to, "repented for that sin." A striking instance of popular lies!

† Evelyn's Diary, ii. 117.

at this mysterious accusation. "How is it possible," he exclaims, "to suspect of treachery the two devoted friends of the King?" Yet how was the Père to account for Charles being entrapped in the Isle? In straining on its tenter-hooks his historical curiosity, he cries in its agony, "*Cromwell par des ressorts qu'on ne voit pas l'avoit fait conduire à l'isle de Wight.*" But in a calmer period he more sagaciously concludes, "*Je laisse à éclaircir ce point à ceux qui auront la-dessus des lumières que je n'ai pas.*"*

But the critical difficulty still remains: what motive could Cromwell have in his anxious care of the King's life, and to what purpose did he let loose his prisoner only to place him in a more distant confinement? The enigma seems only to have been solved by the philosopher Hobbes, who with some advantage as a contemporary, but more by his profound views, has struck out of the most reasonable statement of affairs the most ingenious result.

Hobbes accounts for the sincerity of Cromwell in his first professions of restoring the King—it was a reserve against the Parliament kept in his pocket, but which at length he had no more need of. The King became an impediment to him, a trouble in the Army, and to have let him fall into the hands of the Presbyterians had put a stop to the hopes of Cromwell. To murder Charles privately would have made the Lieutenant-General, under whose superintendence he was placed, odious, and it ought to be added, that Cromwell was not a man of blood, nor would the death of the King have furthered his designs. There was nothing better for his purpose than to suffer the King to escape, from a spot where he was placed too near the Parliament, and too accessible to the Scotch intriguers, and go wherever he pleased beyond sea.†

The flight of the King was an expedient of Cromwell to get rid of him altogether. There was a party who had decided on assassination, but some of the cooler heads in the Army were of opinion that their policy was to keep the imprisoned father alive, by which means they prevented the son from any pretension to the Crown. Cromwell ventured beyond this—he

* Père d'Orleans' *Revolutions d'Angleterre*, liv. ix. 69. 4to.

† Behemoth, 234.

considered that the extirpation of the King would relieve the embarrassments of all parties, convinced that on the Continent no fraternal monarch would assist the English sovereign, who had ceased to be a member of the European family of political cabinets.

This view clears up this mysterious transaction. Charles was lured out of his prison at Hampton Court, but with no intention to be imprisoned in the Isle of Wight. When the King sallied forth he had fixed on no place, and was so far from trusting the Governor of the Isle of Wight, which Charles would not have hesitated to have done, had he followed any previous advice of Cromwell—that he sent forwards his unfortunate agents to negotiate with the Governor, and considered himself as lost when they brought Hammond with them. The unexpected result of the King being in the custody of Hammond, disappointed the plotting head of Cromwell—for Charles in the Isle of Wight was more powerful than at Hampton Court, since he there carried on with more security his communications, and obtained—the constant object of his wishes,—a personal treaty. Nothing less than another *coup d'état* from the Army Regicides was required to close the fate of the monarch.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

OF THE LETTER SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN INTERCEPTED BY CROMWELL AND IRETON.

AN intercepted letter is supposed to have decided Cromwell and Ireton to abandon the King. Rumours and stories from the most opposite quarters, pretending to disclose its contents, refute themselves by their contradictory intelligence, and show how every one seems at liberty in a secret history to invent what they choose. The existence of a document which may possibly have existed now becomes problematical.

Cromwell, in his expostulation with Ashburnham, furnishes one account. He affirmed, that by this letter to the Queen, they had discovered that Charles had commanded all his party to side with the Parliament, and likewise that he had at that

instant a treaty with the Scots. Herbert gives a rumour that the great officers, or, as the Presbyterians now began to call them, the Grandees of the Army, had carried on their design to restore the King till, by violating a seal, and opening a letter from the Queen, they obtained intelligence of the Duke of Hamilton's preparations in Scotland, but this, Herbert observes, did not occur till about a year afterwards—however, it is clear that such a correspondence might have discovered "the preparations" long ere that important event. In their subsequent interview with the King, the officers put the question, and the King concealed the intelligence. On this evidence of his duplicity they decided that he was no longer to be trusted.

There are also two extraordinary narratives. The first may be familiar to the reader, for it has formed the subject of a picture and an engraving. Lord Orrery, when Lord Broghill, was on terms of intimacy with Cromwell and Ireton, and riding out together, the conversation falling on the King's death, Cromwell observed, that "If the King had followed his own judgment, and had been attended by none but trusty servants, he had fooled them all." They were jogging on, all in good humour, when Lord Orrery ventured to inquire, that since they had really designed to close with the King, what had occurred which prevented it? Cromwell unreservedly satisfied his Lordship's curiosity. "When the Scots and the Presbyterians began to be more powerful than ourselves, and were likely to agree with him, and leave us in the lurch, we offered far more reasonable conditions. A letter came from one of our spies, who was of the King's bed-chamber, acquainting us that our doom was decreed that day, in a letter to the Queen, sewed in the skirts of a saddle, and the bearer would arrive about ten at night at the Blue Boar in Holborn. The messenger himself knew nothing of the letter in the saddle, but some in Dover did." Our two great men, disguised as troopers, went, placing a sentinel at the wicket to warn them of the approach of their man. With drawn swords taking him aside, they told him their orders were to search all persons at the inn, but as he seemed an honest man, they would only look at his saddle. They took it into a stall, unripped the skirts, and found the letter. In this letter, as Cromwell stated, the King acquainted

the Queen, that being courted by both factions, who bid the fairest should have him, but he imagined that he should incline to the Scots rather than to the Army.

And was this all? It paid them very ill for their unripping the saddle! The letter must have contained a great deal more than Cromwell is made to say, to colour their sudden desertion. Here was no proof of treachery nor duplicity in the King's determination, in his critical position, to prefer the better terms. They were well assured of that before they went to the Blue Boar.*

That nothing, however, should be wanting to complete the history of this intercepted letter, the wonderful part appears to have been conveyed to us. Pope and Richardson, the son of the artist, conversing about this letter, which Richardson said he had read or heard of, Lord Bolingbroke gave them some curious intelligence. Lord Oxford, Harley the second Earl, the son of the Lord Treasurer, had told him that he had seen and had in his hand an original letter of Charles the First, wrote to the Queen, in reply to her reproach for "having made those villains (Cromwell and Ireton) too great concessions." The King replied, that "she should leave him to manage, for that he should know in due time how to deal with the rogues, who, instead of a silken garter, should be fitted with an hempen cord." It is added that they waited for this answer which they intercepted accordingly, and it determined his fate. This letter Lord Oxford said he had offered five hundred pounds for.†

Here unquestionably were treachery and duplicity more than enough to warrant any defection. But how happened it that Cromwell, telling the story to Lord Orrery, should have omitted

* I have often been surprised at the popularity of this story, for I never could trace it beyond Carte's *Life of the Duke of Ormond*, ii. 12, where one would have imagined it would have remained locked up in those three folios. The chaplain of Lord Orrery had been told it by his patron, and possibly forgot the best of the tale. Carte extracted it from this chaplain's manuscript memoirs. However, I have since found it preserved in Hume's notes.

† Richardsoniana, 132. The writer observes that "Lord Bolingbroke, Lord Marchmont, and Mr. Pope, all believed that the story which I had heard or read to this purpose, had its origin no higher than the story of Lord Oxford." So little did all these literary men know of the secret history of the eventful half century which had only just closed.

such a blazing evidence in his favour? We only know the anecdote through the chaplain of Lord Orrery writing a slight memoir of his lordship; and it is possible, that though he had it from his lordship, he may have sadly marred it,—most unskilfully dropping the pith and zest of his pointless tale. But the authenticity of the extraordinary letter seen by Lord Oxford presents some startling objections. Had the possessor of this letter been of any consideration, his name had probably appeared to satisfy a curious inquirer. If the person were obscure, his romantic tenderness for the King's reputation is not credible, in rejecting a seductive five hundred pounds for a letter which had no other than that historical value which a collector attached to it. As the sum is printed in ciphers, we may suppose there is a supernumerary one; and yet fifty pounds for an obsolete letter, which makes the offer more reasonable, does not bring down the obstinate refusal to tolerable credibility.

The most fatal objection of all still remains. It is not in the nature of human possibilities that Charles should ever have consigned to paper such a vulgar and villanous artifice. This entire dereliction of every moral and honourable principle is so repulsively incompatible with the scrupulous and rigid notions of honour of the man, who on one occasion would not escape from his imprisonment till he had first formally withdrawn the pledge of his parole, and on another, when Lord Lanerick, with a large body of his friends, had contrived to surround him and his guards, intreating him to fly with them, he, that his honour might rest inviolate, voluntarily returned to his prison-house. The project is even impracticable, since, as we are here told, Cromwell was to be "the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland for life, without account, with an army which knew no head but the Lieutenant." The Suzerain of Ireland!

How are we to decide on this intercepted letter so frequently noticed, and of which every account differs in its particulars? That a letter, whose tenor was unfavourable to the views of Cromwell and his colleague, and even indicated to them at the time by some spy of the King's bed-chamber, had been intercepted, is very probable. Baron Maseres, a most candid judge, however, can find no evidence of such a letter, and gives no credence to the popular story; and Hume declares, that "the

story of this intercepted letter stands on no manner of foundation." All these various rumours of an intercepted letter look much like a clumsy expedient of the party to save their own honour at the cost of the honour of Charles.

I can place no reliance on what the second Earl of Oxford stated in a conversation with Lord Bolingbroke. He was an intemperate person, with the weakest judgment. I have looked over his own papers.* Lord Bolingbroke might have farced his well-told story, for the relish of Pope and Richardson, and have lardooned leanness. "The silken garter and the hempen cord" is very antithetical, and too much in the florid manner of Bolingbroke to suit Charles's unstudied style.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SINGULAR NEGOTIATION OF BERKLEY AND ASHBURNHAM WITH THE GOVERNOR OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

CHARLES, impatient to quit a place where he hourly dreaded assassination, and where he had just learned that Rainsborough had resolved to destroy him, appointed the attendance of his companions at Thames Ditton. Shutting himself up in his chamber, and desiring to be free from any interruption, having letters to write, at dusk he called for a light. His unusual absence from evening prayers, and his prolonged delay of the supper-time, alarmed the Commissioners. They rapped at his chamber-door, and were only answered by the solitary whine of the King's greyhound.† Entering, and finding his Majesty's cloak thrown on the floor, the first idea which occurred to them

* In some memoranda of this Earl's writing, he asserts that the Duke of Marlborough was so completely illiterate that he could not spell and hardly write. But the writing and the orthography of the Duke were flowing and correct. As an instance of the Duke's utter illiterateness, Lord Bolingbroke told him, that when Barnes the Greek Professor came to offer to dedicate his Anacreon to the Duke for twenty pounds, the Duke inquired "Who she was? He remembered something about Creon in one of Dryden's plays, but nothing about this Anna." I suspect Lord Bolingbroke must have delighted to play off his malicious wit on this second Earl of Oxford, who has duly registered a number of these ridiculous fictions.

† The Moderate Intelligence, from Nov. 11th to Nov. 18, 1647.

was, as they tell us, "that somewhat had been attempted on his person." So rife was the rumour of the projected assassination !

Letters which Charles had left on his table removed their fears. One was an anonymous communication which had driven the King to flight. Three letters were written by the King himself. One addressed to the Houses of Parliament, contains this remarkable passage. "I call God to witness with what patience I have endured a tedious restraint, which, so long as I had any hopes that this sort of my suffering might conduce to the peace of my kingdoms, I did willingly undergo ; but now finding by too certain proofs that this my continued patience, would not only turn to my personal ruin, but likewise be of much more prejudice to the public good, I thought I was bound, as well by natural as political obligations, to seek my safety by *retiring myself for some time from the public view both of my friends and enemies.*" And the King concludes this dignified address—"Let me be heard with freedom, honour, and safety, and I shall *instantly break through this cloud of retirement*, and show myself to be PATER PATRIÆ."* It is extraordinary that with this clear evidence before them, historians should have imagined that Charles was betrayed by Cromwell, or by Ashburnham, to hasten to Hammond. This was written the very day of his departure, and it distinctly shows that Charles was hurrying into a fanciful project of his own, in unison with his melancholy mind, a romantic concealment from all the world, without having provided even a single chance of some abiding spot !

One letter was addressed to Colonel Whalley, expressive of the royal thanks for his attentive services while the King remained in his custody ; the other was for Lord Montague, desiring that a certain picture in the King's apartment should be restored to its owner, the Duke of Richmond ; and in a post-script, Charles earnestly recommended to his care the favourite greyhound, which he voluntarily left behind. Charles was much attached to these mute but affectionate domestics ; in solitude the heart needs something to be kind to. Charles appears to have discriminated between his dogs more acutely than among

* The letter to the Parliament is preserved in Rushworth, vii. 871. The other letters are from the periodical publications of the times.

some of his courtiers. Once when Gipsev his greyhound was scratching at the door of his chamber, he desired Sir Philip Warwick to let the hound in. "I have perceived," said Warwick to the King, "that you love a greyhound better than a spaniel." "Yes," replied Charles, "for they equally love their masters, and yet do not flatter them so much."

All these letters were published. The Levellers ridiculed the care of a picture, and the sympathy for a dog. The Royalists exulted in contemplating in the monarch the ideal of a gentleman. These letters not only vouched for the collectedness of his mind, and that the King did not fly with unmanly trepidation, but they saw true dignity in leaving his thanks to the agitator Whalley, who had behaved himself well, and something amiable in his recollection of the picture, and his anxiety for his domestic friend the greyhound.

The flights and the imprisonments of Charles the First were like those of no other monarch. They often took the romantic turn of his character.

It was a dark tempestuous night in November when Charles issued from Hampton Court by a private door into the Park, opened without difficulty, unguarded by a sentinel. This looks like the connivance of Whalley to facilitate the King's escape. Crossing the Thames, Charles passed over to Ditton, where his companions were waiting with horses. The King undertook to be their guide through the Forest, more familiar with the paths than any of the party, but their track was soon lost in the darkness.

It appeared to Berkley that the King had fixed on no particular place of destination. Charles now complained of the Scotch Lords, who, having offered their services to aid his escape, had on the following day retracted them, by raising obstacles with hints of the Covenant. The King was shaping his way towards Southampton. On descending a hill, Charles proposed that they should lead their horses, and confer together. Berkley supposed that the King then decided for the Isle of Wight, for he observes, "and that for the first time for aught that I could then discover."

The King had probably settled on no particular place in preference to another—his flight had been sudden. He had

originally designed for Jersey, and still had hopes to procure some vessel. A ship was now mentioned, but there had been no time to prepare one. There were, however, reasons to induce Charles to direct his wanderings to the Isle of Wight, which were unknown to Berkley. Ashburnham, a day or two before, had suggested the Isle of Wight for its contiguity to the sea,—for having few or no soldiers,—for the loyalty of its few inhabitants,—for Sir John Oglander's house there offering a safe retreat, and, moreover, from a favourable impression made on him by Hammond, the Governor, though his personal knowledge was slight. Ashburnham had recently met Hammond, who declared that he was retiring to his government to be out of the way of the Army, who he had discovered had resolved to break all promises with the King, and he would never bring himself to join with such perfidious deeds. Lady Isabella Thynne had also spoken of Hammond to Ashburnham. The Stateswomen were always to be consulted. This is the simple mystery of Charles's flying to the Isle of Wight, which has occasioned so many misconceptions, erroneous statements, and unjust surmises of the artful plotting of Cromwell, of Ashburnham's incredible perfidy, and of Charles's having so imprudently run into the trap which had been set for him.

Charles, within twenty miles of the island, felt some prudent misgivings. He was hastening to cast himself into the hands of the Governor, without having ascertained his dispositions. Hammond, indeed, was not unknown to the King; he was the nephew of his favourite chaplain, and had himself formerly kissed hands, but he had long been a Colonel in the Parliamentary army.

The King warily dispatched Berkley and Ashburnham to sound Hammond, while with Colonel Legge he retired to Titchfield, the residence of the Earl of Southampton. They were to show the Governor the copies of the letters from Cromwell and an anonymous person, and to tell him that the King designed to fly not from the Army but from assassins, and had chosen to confide in Hammond, not only as one of good extraction, but one who, though engaged against him in war, had never carried any animosity to his person, to which he was informed Hammond bore no aversion. He asked for protection for himself and his servants,

or, if he could not grant this, they should be left to themselves. Berkley tells us that, foreseeing the possibility of their arrest, and "with the image of the gallows very perfectly before him," he requested the King, that should they delay their return beyond a reasonable time, that he should think no more of them, but secure his own escape. Charles thanked him for the caution. It evidently inferred that Berkley had no idea of betraying to Hammond the place of Charles's concealment. The King in all appearances was to be at Hampton Court, waiting the answer of his envoys.

If the embassy were hazardous, it was still more difficult. If we trust to the recriminatory narratives, it would be hard to decide who was the most indiscreet negotiator.

It is extraordinary that Ashburnham, who had some personal knowledge of Hammond, instead of addressing him direct, should have deputed Berkley, who was a stranger to the Governor, and whom they now met, going from Carisbrooke Castle to Newport. Sir John at once startled the Governor by asking him "who he thought was near him?" and then telling him "Even good King Charles, who was come from Hampton Court for fear of being privately murdered." "This was a very unskilful entrance into our business," observes Ashburnham. Berkley himself tells us simply that "he delivered the King's message word for word;" but it is probable that Ashburnham's account is right, by an expression in Hammond's letter to the Parliament, that "Sir John in a short discourse told him that the King was near." We shall not attempt to reconcile a couple of discordant narrations drawn up by the parties to throw blame on each other, yet, be it observed, with great tenderness, often offering excuses for their mutual indiscretions.

What occurred is more certain than what was said. The abruptness of this overwhelming intelligence raised up the most conflicting emotions in the breast of the Governor. His consternation betrayed itself visibly—a sudden paleness spread over his countenance, and he was thrown into such a state of trepidation that with difficulty he kept his seat on his horse. The paroxysm came and went for a considerable time. Hammond, who had so cautiously avoided to take any part in the Army-measures against the King, now perceived at once how his

feelings and his honour must be risked on the stake. Paramount to all other feelings was his high responsibility as a military Governor.

With as much sincerity as *naïveté*, the distracted Colonel passionately exclaimed, "Oh, gentlemen! you have undone me by bringing the King into the Island! if you have brought him—if you have not, pray let him not come—for what between my duty to his Majesty, and my gratitude for this fresh obligation of his confidence on the one hand, and the observance of my trust to the Army on the other, I shall be confounded!"

There was no trick, no deception in these first disturbed emotions of Colonel Hammond. His case was that of many honourable men, as we have already shown, whose sympathy for a monarch, after the tribulations of many years of adversity, had not less force with them than their principles of patriotism.

Hammond was the very character which was most likely to fall a victim, as he did, to such cruel embarrassments, where he could not act on one side without injury to the other. Hammond was a man of honour, and some gracious favours once received from the King were not obliterated in forgetfulness, but he was also a Colonel in the service of the Parliament. He had retired from the violence of the Agitators, but he was closely attached to Cromwell, by whose mediation he had married a daughter of Hampden. The Colonel had two uncles, one a distinguished officer in the Civil Wars, and whose zeal, abounding zeal, at length classed him among the Regicides; the other uncle was the favourite chaplain of Charles, a divine whose loyalty and piety vied with each other. A mind not endowed with any original vigour, when there happens a schism in the political principles of a family, influenced alike by both parties to him equally endeared, becomes pliant and irresolute, and is thrown into a state of passiveness. The Parliamentary uncle, who had made Hammond a military man, and might have converted him into a Regicide, had found some of the work of his hands undone by the uncle, the celebrated divine, who had awed by his Scripture "Paraphrases" and those "Commentaries" which are still famous. The result of such an incessant action and counter-action with our Colonel, was that of holding him in an equi-ponderancy between the Parliament and the King. From the

moment of that burst of his feelings on his receiving the first intelligence of the proximity of Charles, to the end of his subsequent vacillating conduct towards the monarch, when he was himself cast into a prison, as suspected of loyalty, we may say of Hammond, that he was truly the nephew of two uncles.

As the Colonel gradually recovered his senses, the business assumed a more tangible shape. Hammond looked more steadily on the novel position in which, in spite of himself, he now stood. He invited them to dinner and a conference, in which he professed his inclination to serve the King. They could not prevail on him to agree to a definite condition of that aid and protection which they required. After a long debate, Hammond pledged himself to perform whatever should be expected from "a person of honour and honesty." Ashburnham seized on the vague indefinite offer, and said "He would ask no more!" so eager was this inefficient negotiator to conclude what he had not had even the courage to begin.

A curious circumstance occurred when Hammond desired that one of them should remain in the Castle with him while the other went to the King. Berkley declares "He embraced the motion most readily, and immediately went over the bridge into the Castle, though I had the image of the gallows very perfectly before me;" and sarcastically adds, "Mr. Ashburnham went, I believe, with a better heart to horse." Hammond had proposed that Ashburnham should remain, as a more precious pledge than Berkley; the reason Ashburnham alleges for preferring the imprisonment of Berkley to his own is simple—that he thought himself more useful to his Majesty. However, it seems that he dropped this part of the adventure in the account he rendered to the King, and that Berkley took care to supply that omission, to convince the King that he was in earnest, and had exposed his life to vouch for it. It was probably alluding to this and to other circumstances, that induced Charles at a distant day to observe on the adventure of the Isle of Wight, and the strange conduct of Ashburnham, that "He did not believe that he was unfaithful to him, but that he thought that he wanted courage at that time, who he never knew wanted it before."

The affair terminated unexpectedly. Hammond decided to

wait on the King in person. Berkley was recalled as he was entering the Castle, and remained astonished at Ashburnham's consent to take the Governor without apprising the King and obtaining his approval. Ashburnham considered that it was now useless to refuse Hammond, who, had they departed without him, would have sent his spies. On taking boat at Cowes Castle, Hammond called on the Captain to accompany him, and once proposed to be accompanied by a file of soldiers.* Berkley opposed the supernumerary Captain, but Ashburnham observed, that "They were but two, whom they could easily secure." Berkley replied, "You will undoubtedly surprise the King;" Mr. Ashburnham said nothing but "I'll warrant you"—"And so you shall," said I, "for you know the King much better than I do; but I will not see him before you satisfy his Majesty concerning your proceedings. Well! He would take that upon him."

When the four arrived at Titchfield House, Ashburnham alone went to the King to acquaint him of the extraordinary visitor waiting below whom he had conducted to him. Whatever the fear of Berkley had suggested, did not exceed the reality of the scene which occurred. Charles started in agony, striking his breast, and exclaiming, "What, have you brought Hammond with you? Oh, Jack! you have undone me! for I am by this means made fast from stirring,—the Governor will keep me prisoner." There is reason to suspect that the King for a moment actually thought himself betrayed. I infer this, both from the extraordinary look and language with which he received Ashburnham, and from the monstrous resolution Ashburnham was induced to take on this occasion; in utter despair, Charles spoke "with a very severe and reserved countenance, the first of that kind to me." "With the saddest heart that certainly ever man had," Ashburnham proposed "an expedient" for his fatal error. The King now told him that he had sent to Hampton for a vessel, but how could he now be cleared of the Governor? Ashburnham replied that his coming had made any other way more practicable than if he had stayed behind; and when the King pressed to know how? the feeble and heart-

* Dr. Lingard has mentioned this "file," but it is evident, by what afterwards occurred, that Hammond was solely accompanied by the captain of the castle.

broken Ashburnham decided to dispatch the Governor and the Captain!

Ashburnham describes the King, on hearing this monstrous "expedient," as "walking some few times in the room and weighing what I had proposed to him." Surely Charles not for a moment could "weigh" in his mind the assassination of two innocent men. It could only have been the delirium of despair in the feeble mind of the weeping Ashburnham which could have suggested such an unjustifiable deed. Long afterwards some were so rash as to censure this unfortunate gentleman for not dispatching the Governor without acquainting the King with it, aware as he was of the King's great tenderness of blood. It is curious to observe a humane man apologise for not committing a horrid murder in cold blood!

Berkley has described this remarkable scene as he received it at the time from Ashburnham himself, and it seems more intelligible. "Mr. Ashburnham replied to the King, that if he mistrusted Hammond he would undertake to secure him." His Majesty said, "I understand you well enough, but the world would not excuse me. Should I follow that counsel, it would be believed that Hammond had ventured his life for me, and that I had unworthily taken it from him. It is too late to think of any thing but going through the way you have forced upon me, and so leave the issue to God!" Mr. Ashburnham having no more to reply, wept bitterly.

The Governor of the Isle of Wight being introduced to the King, renewed his protestations with more warmth than he had done to the two inefficient negotiators. The King, however, desired Hammond to remember that "He was to be judge of what was honourable and honest." This was the best terms the King could make, and which, if a prisoner, were no terms at all. Charles was conducted by Hammond to this island, with the purest intentions, to use his own words, "to preserve with his own life the King's person from any horrid attempt on it"—to accommodate that rude residence "to his quality," for which he appealed to the aid of Parliament.* Hammond was

* The expense of his Majesty's household was in consequence debated in Parliament: a committee was to report the state of the King's expenses, what it would amount to above 50*l.* per diem. This sum, with no court to maintain, seems curious.—Rushworth, vii. 878.

now the nephew of his uncle the divine; and in placing the King in the security of Carisbrooke Castle, neither of them anticipated that it was to be the gloomy imprisonment of eight tedious months.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IMPRISONMENT AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

CHARLES seemed to rejoice in his new abode. Unexpectedly in a corner of the kingdom he had found that loyalty had not grown obsolete. The men, women, and children of the Isle of Wight—"this poor well-affected people," as Berkley describes them—were in their innocent ignorance so attached to his royal person, that some, shortly after, when an old retired captain beat a drum to liberate their Sovereign, ran after the drum, and were amazed to witness their solitary hero hanged and quartered. The twelve old men who formed the garrison of the Castle, and had passed their military lives under a Royalist General, at the sight of the King renovated their superannuated loyalty. Even the Governor himself clung to his loyal sensibilities, and was still the nephew of his uncle the divine. He held "fervent private conferences" with Ashburnham. Hammond, connected with the superior officers, abhorred the Agitators, or the Anarchists; in that disposition he was at least immutable. He now earnestly desired that the King should send one of his three friends to the General with encouraging letters, while he himself wrote confidentially to Cromwell and Ireton, to conjure them, by their engagement, their interest, and their conscience, to close with the reasonable offers of the King, and no longer expose themselves "to the fantastic giddiness of the Agitators."

At this moment a great event occurred. The Terrorists themselves had become terrified; the Agitators had ceased to agitate. The prompt resolution of Cromwell at a critical moment saved himself and the State. By his usual preventive policy of *espionage* he got into the secrets of the Levellers. It is said that Cromwell's life was at stake, and that the Agitators had threatened to make him pay with his head the forfeit of his

intrigues with Charles.* An impeachment was actually preparing, and it is mentioned, that "if on that day Cromwell did not make himself powerful to secure his head, he must follow his predecessor Hotham."† On such a momentous incident the fate of Cromwell depended! The flight of the King had disconcerted the plans of the Agitators which they had designed to carry into execution at Hampton Court. They met to mutiny. Unexpectedly they beheld among themselves the Lieutenant-General himself. Cromwell asked some questions and received insolent answers, on which, as Clarendon describes the action, with "a marvellous vivacity," he knocked two or three of them on the head with his own hand, charged the rest with his troops, took a number of prisoners, hanged some, and tried others.

These formed but the forlorn-hope of the mutineers. The heads of this party were still the same determined spirits powerful in the Army. To remain their masters, Cromwell and Ireton submitted. Cromwell became one of themselves to make them become Cromwellians.

Berkley was commissioned to bear the letters of the King and of the Governor, which with some apprehension of the event he cheerfully did, much to the satisfaction, as he insinuates, of Ashburnham and Legge. His reception is dramatically told.

Hastening to the General's quarters, whom he found at a meeting of the officers, after long waiting, an inattention not usually shown to a royal messenger, he was called in. The General, looking on him with a severe countenance, in his cold and graceless manner, only said that they were the Parliament's Army, to whom they would send the King's letter. Looking round for his acquaintance among the officers, Cromwell and Ireton slightly bowed with altered countenances, such as they had never shown before. They took an opportunity of showing Berkley, Hammond's letter, with a bitter disdainful smile. He saw that that was no place for him, and hurried to his lodgings. There he waited, and was surprised that no one called on him. In the evening he sent his servant to light upon some of his acquaintance. A general officer whispered in the servant's ear

* Dr. Lingard, x. 398.

† This appears by an article of intelligence, and the names of the secretary for furnishing articles, with that of the drawer-up of the collected materials, are mentioned.—Clarendon State Papers, App. ii. xl. and xli.

that he would meet his master at midnight in a close behind his inn.

In this stolen and solemn midnight interview, at the strange spot of the appointment, Berkley learned all which he dreaded to learn. "I told you," said this ominous sprite, who seems to have been Watson, Cromwell's scout-master—"that we who were zealous for the engagement with the King would discover if we were cozened. We mistrusted Cromwell and Ireton, as I informed you. I come now to tell you that we mistrust neither, but know them, and all of us, to be the archest villains in the world; for we are resolved to destroy the King and his posterity. Ireton proposed that you should be sent prisoner to the Tower, and that none should speak to you upon pain of death, and I do hazard my life now by doing it. It is intended to send eight hundred of the most disaffected of the Army to secure the King's person, which we believe not at present to be so—then to bring him to trial, I dare think no farther! If the King can escape, let him do it!" This change in the conduct of the superior officers, which seemed to surprise Berkley and his secret communicant, could only be ascribed, as it appeared to them, for they knew not of any intercepted letter of the King's, to the state of the Army itself. Had the superior officers refused to unite with the Army, two-thirds had resolved to divide from them. Hugh Peters, the Chaplain of the Army who wore a sword, and asserted that the sword contained all the laws of the realm, was a fit negotiator for Cromwell. With the accustomed dexterity of his versatile genius, Cromwell observed, "If we cannot bring the Army to our sense, we must go to theirs;" acknowledging, as he did on a former occasion, that "the glories of the world had so dazzled his eyes, that he could not discern clearly the great works the Lord was doing."

Berkley sent off immediate dispatches by his cousin; it informed the Governor of the doubtful state of the Army, and communicated to the King, in cipher, the particulars of the secret conference. In the morning he sent Cornet Cooke to Cromwell to inform him that he had letters and instructions from the King. Cromwell told this secret messenger that he durst not see Berkley, it being very dangerous for both. He assured him, however, that he would serve his Majesty as long

as he could do without his ruin, but desired that it should not be expected that he should perish for his sake. From this deceptive style, although it appears to have been assumed to carry on a delusion, for by what had just been revealed to Berkley the trial of the King had been definitively resolved on by the coalition of the parties, yet there is reason to believe that Cromwell in his mind hesitated about the King's trial; that monstrous injustice to Charles he yet shrunk from. Burnet assures us that Ireton was the person that drove it on, and that Cromwell was all the while in some suspense about it. The manner in which Cromwell signed the death-warrant fully indicates how he considered that "deed without a name."

During the first six weeks of Charles's abode at the Isle of Wight, where he arrived on the 11th of November, his old servants were restored to him, and, on the whole, Hammond was still courteous. On the 21st of December, the Parliament, then under the influence of the Army faction, resolved on their four dethroning Bills, without the concurrence of their old allies, the Scotch Commissioners, who as firmly resolved to protest against the injustice of the Parliament, or rather their malignant enemies, the Independents. It became a post-race with the parties who should first reach the King. The Commissioners of Scotland arrived a whole day before the Commissioners of the Lords and Commons,* who were mortified at discovering that they had been anticipated, which they were in more respects than one. The King during that day had closed in with a secret treaty,† a treaty which had been long in agitation with the Scots. The urgency of the present moment alone induced both the parties to mutual and vague concessions.

* Secret Transactions in relation to King Charles the First, by Sir John Bowring, 87.

† Clarendon tells us that it was so secret that they cased the treaty in lead, and buried it in a garden in the island, whence they subsequently extracted it. This is one of the inadvertencies of this great historian, who often wrote without his authorities on his desk, and often trusted to his reminiscences. It appears by Ashburnham's Narrative, that, alarmed at the treaty being found in the King's possession, he had advised Charles to provide for its instant security. It was sent to Ashburnham, who "closed the papers in lead, and left them in Sir George Berkley's house," probably buried in the garden. The difference is not material from the history of Clarendon, but it is clear that the historian was not always exact. Inadvertencies of this kind have been lately more severely animadverted on than they required.

The Scotch Commissioners had also taken hold of that opportunity to confirm to the unhappy monarch the decision of his enemies to leave him to languish in perpetual imprisonment, or to destroy him publicly by a trial, or by more silent and private means.

Charles refused his assent to the four Bills which the Parliament insisted on for their own security, without offering any for his, protesting that "neither the desire of being freed from his tedious and irksome condition of life, which he had so long suffered, nor the apprehension of something worse, should ever prevail with him to consent to any Act until the Peace was concluded," and previous to a personal treaty, which he had often demanded. The fate of Charles seemed still more evident when, on the 10th of January, 1648, the vote of non-addresses passed the House. They had now decided to settle the kingdom without the King, as subsequently they did without the Lords, and finally without the Commons. These great events were violently precipitated on each other. They terminated by condemning Charles to a closer imprisonment, and severing him from all intercourse, as was imagined, with his many devoted friends.

When the Commissioners left Charles after his refusal of the four propositions, Hammond instantly dismissed all the King's servants, and doubled his guards. Hammond, however he felt himself bound by "his honour and honesty" to the King, and which, had those excellent qualities depended on himself, he would have willingly maintained, was, by his situation and close connexions, in correspondence with the Army faction. The vacillating Hammond was now the nephew of his uncle, the Parliamentary Colonel! The unfortunate monarch could only feel the indignity he endured from the military man, who, in truth, was only acting in submission to the orders of his superiors. The honour of the soldier is involved in his passive obedience. The zeal of Hammond seemed criminal to Charles, who at length declared that "the Governor was as great a rogue as any." Weak minds, placed in the most trying situations, indulge a vehemence of zeal to nerve themselves against their natural repugnance, as some drink to intoxication to arm themselves with a blind and insensible courage.

Hammond now raised the courteous tone of his voice into

insolence and reprimand, and the personal respect to Charles changed even to a brutal assault.

This curious circumstance in the conduct of the Governor of the Isle of Wight has been revealed to us by some morsels of secret history. As in these volumes, the materials which enter into the history of human nature are not their least valuable portions, some may be gratified to find the very conversation which at first occurred between Charles and Hammond, on the sudden dismissal of his attendants. It is a dramatic piece full of natural touches, and characteristic of Charles the First.

THE KING.—“Why do you use me thus? Where are your orders for it? Was it the Spirit that moved you to it?”

Hammond remained silent. His orders were as yet secret. At length he laid the change of his proceedings to the King's unsatisfactory answer to the Commissioners.

THE KING.—“Did you not engage your honour, you would take no advantage from thence against me?” The King had returned his answer to the Commissioners sealed, but they had insisted that it should be delivered to them open, on which Charles required their promise, that after reading his answer, it should not make any alteration in his present state. The Governor had been present with the Commissioners and was therefore included with the party.

HAMMOND.—“I said nothing.”

THE KING.—“You are an equivocating gentleman. Will you allow me any chaplain? You pretend for liberty of conscience, shall I have none?”

HAMMOND.—“I cannot allow you any chaplain.”

THE KING.—“You use me neither like a gentleman, nor a Christian.”

HAMMOND.—“I'll speak with you when you are in better temper.”

THE KING.—“I have slept well to-night.”

HAMMOND.—“I have used you very civilly.”

THE KING.—“Why do you not so now then?”

HAMMOND.—“Sir, you are too high.”

THE KING.—“My shoemaker's fault then; my shoes are of the same last, &c. (twice or thrice repeated.) Shall I have liberty to go about and take the air?”

HAMMOND.—“No! I cannot grant it.”

The King then charged him with his allegiance, and told him that he must answer this. Hammond wept.* Charles was then meditating another flight.

Two months afterwards Hammond's official severity emboldened him beyond his nature. At two in the morning he entered the King's chamber. Charles suspecting some treachery, hastily rose, and slipped on his gown. Hammond had searched the King's cabinet, but not finding the Scotch treaty, which he looked for, proceeded to ransack the King's pockets. Charles resisted, and struck him, and, as was reported, the blow was returned. The King then took his papers out of his pocket, and thrust them into the flames. It was a scuffle.

Here we discover Charles the First in a rigid and desolate imprisonment subjected to injury and insult. At that moment, however, the influence of the name of the Sovereign of England remained in the world from whence he had been expelled. Friends devoted by their affections to his service, were nightly hovering on the sea-shores, and watchful about the castle, holding an invisible intercourse with the lonely captive, who could not command a single messenger; and who, in the solitude of his chamber, as he himself said, in pointing to the singular person who at that time was passing in the street, found in “that old little crumpling man the best companion he had for three months together, who made his fires in Carisbrooke Castle.”

Charles, in his various captivities, kept up a surprising secret intercourse with his active friends, no ordinary evidence of the strong personal attachments which this unhappy Prince had inspired in his adversities, when destitute of means to bribe the sordid or to flatter the ambitious. He was rarely deserted or betrayed,† a circumstance which did not attend him in the days

* Clarendon State Papers, xlv. Appendix.

† Some underlings made advantages of their knowledge of the secret transactions, and some of the correspondence, of Charles the First, and probably served both parties at the same time for double pay. Witherings, of the Post-office, and one Lowe, a merchant, during the King's imprisonment at Carisbrooke Castle, were of this description of secret agents. Such persons are evidently alluded to by Clarendon. “Many who did undertake to perform these offices did not make good what they promised, which makes it plain they were permitted to get credit, that they

of his royalty. In every one of his imprisonments, however close, his communication with his faithful friends was scarcely ever interrupted. After the Civil Wars his perilous condition, sometimes disguised by the splendour of a court, but oftener passed in the gloom of his grated windows, was not ill-suited to his romantic mind, as his perpetual conferences and answers to Treaties of Peace were adapted to his logical head, and his proneness to discussion. His own ingenuity in suggesting inventions in his prison, and the patient devotion of his friends in waiting for fit opportunities, or in contriving extraordinary incidents and guileless stratagems, were equally common. Often has a dropped hanging, a crevice in the wall, a hiding-place in the chamber where a paper could be deposited, carried on a correspondence with the mute person who did not dare to converse with the royal prisoner, to whom he hardly ventured to direct a silent look, or a significant gesture.* Ladies have lodged in the neighbourhood week after week, or disguised in some humble character, would insinuate themselves into the acquaintance of the domestics of the castle. Sometimes a good-natured sentinel might be bribed; but Mary, the assistant of

might the more usefully betray.”—v. 553. Firebrace, in one of his notes to the King, observes, “you keep intelligence with somebody that betrays you, for there is a letter of yours sent to the Governor (of the Isle of Wight) from Derby House.” On which Charles answers, “It is possible that the rogue Witherings hath discovered those I superscribe to my wife, and hath sent one of my letters to the committee. Enquire and see if I have not guessed right. Do not send that letter of mine for my wife to the post-house, but either to Doctor Fraiser or my Lady Carlisle, with a caution not to trust the post-masters.” Of Lowe, the merchant, the King observes, “If any does betray me, it must be O. (Lowe), yet he bragged to me, in his last letter that he furnished the Duke of York with a hundred and fifty pounds for his journey, but the truth is that N., for whose fidelity I will answer, (Mrs. Whorwood) doth suspect him, and in the last packet hath given me warning of him. Do not dishearten him, get what money you can of him, but do not trust him. It was not I that acquainted him with the greater business, for I found his name at the joint letter you sent me, before ever I imagined he knew of any such thing. I never wrote anything of moment to him, but only made use of him for conveyance of letters and sending me news. Be as confident of my discretion as honesty; for I can justly brag that yet neither man nor woman ever suffered by my tongue or pen for any secret that I have been trusted withall.”

* Charles says in one of his secret daily notes to one of his faithful attendants, Firebrace, “I hope this day at dinner you understood my looks; for the soldier I told you of, whose looks I like, was then there in a white nightcap, and as I thought you took notice of him, I hope to find something from you when I come in from walking.”

Lady Wheeler, the King's laundress, was a more accessible person. Many who had been placed about the King by the Parliament, though strangers to Charles, soon formed a deep personal attachment to this interesting monarch. The celebrated Harrington, a Republican in principle, was so forcibly affected by the ability and dignity of the King, that he was removed from his attendance. Herbert, who seems to have adored the man in the monarch, was a Presbyterian; and one Osborne, who assisted the King in his attempt to escape, had been fixed as a spy near his person, under the ostensible title of his Gentleman Usher. His office was to hold the King's glove during his dinner. In the fingers of the glove he slid a note bearing the offer of his devoted services, and an uninterrupted correspondence passed by means of the King's glove.

Colonel Bosville appears to have transformed himself into a variety of personages. Sometimes a countryman, a mariner, or a mendicant surprised the King when he rode out on a bridge, or in a narrow lane. At the startling obtrusion of the stranger, Charles was always prompt in hiding the note slipped into his hand under the low obeisance which had concealed it. This Colonel had several times been committed for these treasonable manœuvres, but he excelled in the singular art of escaping from his gaolers. The warders who guarded the King's apartment, were ordered by Hammond to lay their beds close to the doors, by which means no doors could be opened without removing their beds. Even this annoyance could not baffle the persevering ingenuity of one of the King's secret friends, Mr., afterwards, Sir Henry Firebrace. Though at London, Firebrace contrived to get an appointment at the Castle, and offering one of the warders to supply his place, while the warder indulged an hour at supper, the secret friend, sliding open the door of the King's apartment, delivered a packet of letters. In these occasional visits, when danger was apprehended from having the door open while they conversed, a chink in the wainscot was perforated, behind the hanging; on the approach of any one the aperture was covered by its noiseless fall. Leaning to, and listening at this small aperture, did Charles the First concert measures for his projected escape,

and through this crevice received and delivered many an important dispatch.*

There are more than fifty notes or letters of a secret correspondence which the King kept up with Sir William Hopkins, a resident at the Isle of Wight.† They chiefly relate to an escape which was planning for the royal prisoner, at the time he was allowed an intercourse with some persons in the island. They display the King's personal character in a new light. Many affecting circumstances, arising out of the peculiarity of his distresses, reveal this man of sorrows; but the prompt sagacity of the King, and the perspicuity of the style in a correspondence which must have often been written in haste, are proofs of the ability of Charles the First, an ability which has always been greatly under-rated.

Charles alludes to some females who were active in his service. "I pray you commend my service to all my feminine friends, and tell 47 that I hope she believes that I never recommended 57 in earnest to her; but it was merely to have by her means sometimes the conversation of such honest persons as herself, and truly for that end she shall do well, not to put him in despair."

Often absent and perplexed with cares, Charles at times appeared as if neglectful of, or inattentive to his friends. On one of these occasions, the King made this amiable apology, "The friend you sent me this day gave me a chiding, and yet I will not complain, for there was more justice than malice in it. It was because I did not look kind enough on 49 on Thursday last, at your house; for the truth is, that I had so many things that day in my head that I wonder not though every one thought that I looked doggedly on them; wherefore I desire you to assure 49 from me, that no sour looks was intended for him, but all kindness." Even minute precautions and singular contrivances were necessary in the course

* Several notes which passed between the King and Firebrace were preserved by the family. They interest us by the striking contrast of the persons with their situations. In one Charles says, "If you can, let me speak with you this night at the Chink."

† This curious correspondence was given to Wagstaffe by a descendant of the family, and is preserved in the Appendix to Wagstaffe's "Vindication of Charles the First."

of this secret correspondence. We may smile when we find the King writing—"I have got pretty stores of wafers; when I want I shall take the freedom to send to you for some. When you find me seal with wax, you may know it is after supper."

By Mr. Cresset's ingenuity, through his intimacy with the Earl of Pembroke, and without his Lordship's privity, if not against his will, that nobleman, who was a considerable personage with the Parliament, was converted into an useful instrument of intelligence to the King. Cresset obtained from him passports for certain London pedlars to traffic with the army, and these pedlars were all Royalists, who slid under their wares notes and letters, or even took verbal messages, which they honestly delivered by stealth in the King's quarters, when he was immured in Oxford. Royston, the loyal bookseller, contrived a singular mode of conveyance of letters. Women-hawkers of pamphlets travelled on foot, and were ordered to loiter at certain appointed places till they had delivered to them packages of books; in the bindings of those which bore a secret mark, letters were sewed. Dean Barwick, one of the ablest of secret agents, observed that none of his packets had been intercepted, which he ascribes to his choice not only of faithful messengers, but of such as were in very humble circumstances, the less conspicuous persons rarely attracting suspicion. Eminent persons betrayed themselves by their own splendour; their principles were usually known, as happened to the Lady D'Aubigny, who carried the King's Commission of Array twisted in the curls of her hair, which proved fatal to some.

But danger and fatigue were endured as willingly as ingenuity and artifice were practised. During the dark nights of three winter months did Ashburnham and two other gentleman wait on the sea-shore, keeping a boat in readiness to aid Charles's escape. By such humble expedients, and often such perilous enterprises, the King was enabled to maintain a general correspondence, rarely interrupted, with the Royalists in various counties, the Scottish Commissioners at Edinburgh, the Queen at Paris, and even with the young Duke of York, at St. James's. Dr. Lingard has forcibly expressed his admiration of this singular and undaunted perseverance both in the royal captive and his

friends. Such was the ingenuity of the King ! so generous the devotion of those who sought to serve him ! *

The altered conduct of Hammond had not been unperceived by the King before the arrival of the Commissioners, and the Scots were repeating those rumours which had reached him from other quarters, of something more to be dreaded than the roughness of his State-gaoler. Sometimes, in his musings, the impassioned thoughts of his Queen, from whom he had been estranged so many years, seem to have overcome his wearied existence. Once Charles had resolved, after his arrival in the Isle of Wight, to abandon his dominions and to fly to his Queen. Henrietta had dispatched a French vessel to Southampton, by the advice of Ashburnham, who had prepared all things for the departure, of which there was no difficulty while Charles was allowed the use of his horse. The King joyfully ran to the window to see how the wind stood by the vane ; it was fair ! He hastily drew on his boots. On leaving his apartment, once more he looked on the vane, and in consternation beheld the vane had suddenly veered, standing at a contrary point, where it fixed for six days together ! The vessel could not stir. Meanwhile the Commissioners had arrived, and his closer confinement followed.

There was a fatality even in the trivial incidents of the life of this unfortunate monarch. Charles afterwards attempted a more hazardous flight from his imprisonment, and his friends were waiting in different parts about the Castle to receive him. It is a popular notion that where the head can pass, the body may ; and Charles, through the bars of his window, having tried the one, seemed certain of the other. At the moment the attempt was made, his breast and shoulders were fixed between the bars. The struggle was an agony, and he heavily groaned, which he who stood beneath to receive him, saw and heard.†

• Lingard, x. 405.

† In the interesting notes which passed between the King and Firebrace are many particulars of this baffled attempt. Charles was aware of whatever he required. "The narrowness of the window was the only impediment of my escape, and therefore some instrument must be had to remove that bar, which I believe is not hard to get ; for I have seen many, and so portable, that a man might put them in his pocket : I think it is called the Endless Screw, or the Great Force." "I have now made a perfect trial, and find it impossible to be done, for my body is much too thick for the breadth of the window, so that unless the middle bar be taken away I cannot get through. It is absolutely impossible to do anything

CHAPTER XXXIX.

TREATY AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

DOOMED to the oblivion of a State-imprisonment, we are surprised at the sympathies which Charles the First excited through the nation. Was ever tyrant beloved even in his prison? Was ever a vanquished monarch dreaded by his conquerors? I know of no Prince whose captivity bears any resemblance to that of Charles the First. Few, indeed, of such Princes have possessed his virtues, fewer his abilities, and none have equalled his perfect equanimity in the variableness of his fortunes. The force of character, which we consider as the great feature in the mind of Charles the First, was never more apparent than during the transactions at Carisbrooke Castle. After the failure of the treaty at the Isle of Wight, he delivered his sentiments to Sir Philip Warwick, by this striking allusion to his desperate situation: "I am like a Captain who had defended a place well, and his superiors not being able to relieve him, he had leave to surrender it. But though they cannot relieve me in the time I demand it, I will hold it out till I make some stone in this building my tombstone." Thus felt, thus acted, and thus suffered his unconquered mind in his great persecutions. But his conduct was not less admirable towards the petty malignity which would fain have disturbed his inherent dignity. His personal deprivations were not inconsiderable at Carisbrooke Castle. They did not afford him wine of a good quality, and he preferred "the better brewage made by himself of sack and water; nay," added the King, "whilst I have been here among them, they kept me for two months under a want of linen, which, though I took notice of, I scorned to give them the pleasure to tell them of it."

to-morrow at night; but I command you heartily and particularly to thank in my name A. (Mr. Francis Cresset,) C. (Colonel Legge,) F. (Mr. Dowcett,) Z. (Sir Edward Worsley,) and him who stayed for me beyond the works, for their hearty and industrious endeavours in this my service, the which I shall always remember, being likewise confident that they will not faint in so good a work."

Charles was now a king without kingly power, but not without kingly influence. His hereditary station swayed the predilections of the people, and the majesty of his "grey discrowned head" was not viewed without "superstition," as Godwin expresses the emotions of the multitude in that religious age. But the monarch in his afflictions was beloved, sometimes to adoration, by those who were near him, for his personal virtues; and his personal sufferings looked themselves like virtues by the silence of his noble unrepining nature. The chivalric spirits of the loftiest characters of England kindled at his name; they flew from their retreats to rejoin their brothers; they found no captivity in the bars and grates of the prison,—their battle had been as a pilgrimage,—their cell was as a hermitage; they bared their breasts with the joy of courageous men who disdain an ungenerous enemy, when selected as victims for a barbarous sacrifice.* These men, actuated by the principle of honour, could only own as their sovereign their captive monarch. The consolatory idea of a king subdued and chastised by fortune, and who had appealed to his people as the father of his country, was their idol-image, the Lares of their hearths! All the errors of his calamitous years were almost forgotten under the new tyranny of men whose obscurity was undistinguished by any illustrious acts, though famed in a wide scene of universal spoliation for dexterously transferring the wealth and the honours of one part of the nation to another,†—mean and fugitive men,

* Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle, shot, or rather murdered, against all law, says Warburton. The affecting scene of these two heroic friends is finely painted by Clarendon. Some suspicion that they were condemned from personal motives, has thrown a dark shade over the reputation of Fairfax.

† It cost the dispensers of Parliamentary donations nothing but a vote to recompense their own friends. The trustees for the sale of Bishops' lands were security to the soldiers for their arrears. If the estate of one of their sufferers had been injured by fire or other losses, it was usually made good out of his neighbour's estate, if he were "a Malignant." They voted 5000*l.* to the executors of Hampden out of the receipts at Goldsmiths' Hall, of the impositions levied on "Delinquents." Lord Brooke's posthumous child received 5000*l.* out of Lady Auckland's estate. 5000*l.* for Ireland out of the Earl of Worcester's lands. Captain Yarrington was rewarded with 500*l.* to be raised out of the estate of Sir Henry Lingen, and 3000*l.* for Colonel Lilburne out of Lord Coventry's estate.

I could give some idea of the iniquitous proceedings of those sequestrators, who were called "the Country Committees," from a curious document of the nefarious modes pursued by those I denominate "the mean and fugitive persons." Little villains in great offices!

who solely existed in their unlicensed freedom by the artifice of the most indirect and crooked policy, creatures of their military leaders! The captive of Carisbrooke Castle was still awfully remembered by the people. He dwelt in their thoughts, and sometimes in their hearts. He had long ceased to be an object of their fear, and in their despair he had now mingled with their last hopes. Pressed by monthly contributions for the arrears of the soldiery, and vexed by taxations disguised under forms and names unheard of, even the Ship-money seemed but a light grievance. The labourers of the harvest had found no gleanings at the evening-hour. The giddy multitude in the capital burst into a commotion, and called for "God and the King!" The spontaneous cry was re-echoed by the populace of distant cities. The Royal standard was unfurled in Wales, the Kentish men flocked to the trumpet of Goring, the men of Essex had the sad glory of suffering the last in the miseries of our Civil War by the memorable siege of Colchester. The fleet revolted to the Prince. The cloud of an army gathered in the North, where the English Royalists here and there were awaiting for the army of Scotland led by the Duke of Hamilton. The Cavaliers appeared in almost every county of England, all rose in opposite directions, too distant to communicate, too early to be joined by the tardy, too late to unite with the dispersed.

These various actions had called away from their seat of power in Westminster the chief commanders of the army, and in the absence of their authority and their complicate intrigues, the Presbyterian party had gradually recovered their former predominance. The late exiled members had returned to their seats, and Holles, the great orator of the Presbyterians, once more resumed his preponderance. The Independents, without their chiefs, lurked in a minority. On the 30th of June the vote for non-addresses was annulled. The Parliament had recovered their freedom. But it was not long ere the scene shifted. The army of Scotland had dissolved as rapidly as it had been hastily levied; Colchester surrendered, the last hope of the Royalists, and the dissolute but spirited Goring, the chivalric Capel, and the inefficient Hamilton were imprisoned in Windsor Castle, and remained only to lament together the useless efforts of ill-concerted plans and precipitated

engagements. Still Cromwell was yet not free to return from his conquests in the north, and his absence left the Presbyterians an open field. A personal treaty with the King was now voted. Sir Henry Vane the son, the head of the Independents, had shrewdly consented to become a commissioner to a treaty which he felt he could not successfully oppose, till a greater genius than his own should arrive; but he had dexterously contrived to delay it, by cavils and doubts and discussions. Forty days were fixed on for the negotiation of this treaty, and which were afterwards even enlarged. The length of time allowed was considered to be an indulgence by those who wished well to the peace; and those who did not, cared not how long it lasted.

This important news was instantly conveyed to Charles, by one Sir John Bowring, an active agent, if we may trust to his own account, which was long afterwards addressed to Charles the Second, evidently for the purpose of recommending himself. It is remarkable that by Sir John Bowring's own account, the King is continually regretting that he had not followed Sir John's advice, and was now determined, as this knight says, "to be ruled by him in whatsoever he shall advise me in this treaty"—which, however, as we shall find, the King certainly was not! The singular political foresight of this knight on every event which he records is so wonderful, that we may suspect him to have been one of those great predictors who enjoy the advantage of prophecy, after the events have been realised. The counsel and the counsellor are equally notable.

Bowring after first looking at the door, and requesting to know if any one hearkened, addressed the King, "'Sir, this treaty is not obtained of any intention your Majesty can possibly make your peace by it, but is designed only of purpose to get your Majesty liberty to go away, and to have friends to help you.' But, looking the King in the face, I found his Majesty's countenance to alter very much, and to grow pale as I spake. Whereupon I immediately apprehended his Majesty disliked my advice of getting away." It was indeed a melancholy omen for the results of the expected treaty.

Bowring proceeds with his garrulous narrative. "If your Majesty does think you can make your more certain peace by treating than by going away, then I beg of your Majesty to

make your concessions in one declaration and in one day. I will tell your Majesty how you may do it, and how much the Parliament will abate your Majesty upon any one article more or less, as well as if your Majesty should treat out your forty days—if I mistake in any one tittle of any one article, I will give your Majesty my life, I know and understand your Majesty's business so well, and therefore I beg your Majesty to do it at one instant of time by one declaration. Forty days was only a trick of Cromwell's party in the House, who would have given your Majesty for forty days, forty months, when they found they could not prevent the treaty. They hoped your Majesty will debate all the time, wherein they will use all persons and parties to persuade you. In which time Cromwell may have returned to London with his army, and so advance his own party in frustrating the present peace and treaty."

Whether this Bobadil of a politician expressly said all this to Charles, we only know from himself; but his notion that the length of time allowed for the conclusion of the treaty was a political stratagem of Cromwell's party is confirmed by Clarendon, and it was not without reason that Bowring warned the King of his fatal proneness to discussion and debate, at this momentous conjuncture. This conviction was as strongly felt by the Presbyterian party, conscious that they were holding their seats by a very uncertain tenure, for the return of Cromwell, as they had justly anticipated, would eject them. But the protraction of the treaty was the policy of Charles, to obtain points which he never could carry.

Charles pledged his word not to leave the island pending the negotiation, and was allowed to quit the gloomy castle, and to select the most convenient house, which was that belonging to a private gentleman, in the small town of Newport, for his accommodation during the time of the treaty. He soon, however, discovered that though they had removed the sentinels from his door, they trusted so little to his word, that a troop of horse was ever hovering about him when he was abroad.* Though of late his hopes one after the other were vanishing, and the treaty, about to be entered, afforded no promise, he had resolved, as he had formerly done, on ample concessions.

* Ashmole's MSS. 800. Art. xxxvi. This was written by Charles himself.

Charles came to surrender even his rights—but his honour and his religion, as he understood them to be, he could never yield, but with his life.

The friends and attendants of the King once more rejoined their old master. A Lord High Chamberlain, Gentlemen of the Bed-chamber, Grooms of the Bed-chamber, Pages of the Back-stairs, the Royal Chaplains, and his Secretaries, all hastened and took their places in the small house at Newport, and the delusive scenery of a Court on a sudden seemed to have crowded round the lone man, as in a pleasant dream.

A State, too, was erected. Under a canopy was a seat ascended by steps, at the end of the most spacious apartment in a house of narrow extent. Those who remembered their former meeting at Hampton Court, were struck by the singular contrast, and above all by the aspect of the monarch whom they now beheld under that State. After eight months of rigid confinement and protracted anxieties, the exterior changes of his person deeply affected his friends, perhaps even his enemies, pathetically exclaims Hume. His constitution was unbroken, his intellectual faculties were unusually vivid and vigorous, his cold manners, though still majestic, had softened their severity, and there was a cheerfulness in his voice and his replies which betrayed no dejection of spirits; but Charles could not conceal the visible traces of those silent griefs, which neither his deep religious resignation nor his native magnanimity could disperse. Since his servants had been commanded away, the King would never suffer any attention to be given to his person; his beard remained untrimmed, his dishevelled tresses hung in disorder, and his very dress was faded and worn. It was imagined, that a premature old age of sorrows had turned his hair almost entirely grey. It was evident that the King had condemned the person whom so many scorned to utter negligence, and that he seemed to consider his whole existence to be little more than an act of penance.

As the King had frequently demanded a personal treaty, the Commissioners had decided that it should be strictly so, and would not admit either peer or doctor to enter into the debates. Charles was therefore compelled to encounter singly a host of subtle diplomacy, and, what was worse, another of the Rabbins

of "the Assembly of Divines." The Commissioners sate round the board, but the Lords, the Gentlemen, and the Divines on the King's side, stood silently about, or at the back of his chair. When the King desired to put a question, or when any of his friends would offer a suggestion, he retired into a private apartment, and it sometimes happened, as Sir Philip Warwick, one of the secretaries, tells us, that when the King hesitated to reply, "one of us penmen who stood at his chair would pray him from the Lords to do so." This was all the prompting Charles received through a wearying disputation of more than fifty days.

In the whole course of the varied career this monarch had passed, from the throne to the field of battle, and thence to the castle-prison, never had Charles the First displayed a temper so undisturbed, never had he appeared in truer majesty, and never had developed his logical faculties more to admiration than during the whole of this trying treaty. They met every morning at nine, and resumed their sittings in the afternoon. The King made minutes of what he intended to speak, and from these notes addressed the parties. Charles seemed passionless. Age had matured the strength of wisdom, and adversity had chastened the severity of his manners. Philosophy, in the large sense of the age which had not yet arrived, was as little known to the monarch as to the assembly of Divines. Two of these, on Charles's tenacity in favour of Episcopacy, for their last argument, had solemnly warned the King that "He would surely be damned!"

When Charles pressed the weight of his Coronation Oath, which bound him to the maintenance of the Church of England, the Lawyer Glyn used a subtle and extraordinary argument, the morality of which seems more relaxed than the political expediency. Glyn observed that his Majesty might with a good conscience give way to the abolition of Episcopacy, since a clause in the Coronation Oath says, that "he will maintain the *customs of the Land*;" of which an essential one is, to make "*new laws for the public good*." A refined quibble! but the lawyer's sophism could not soothe the tortured conscience of Charles the First, who felt no conviction that Presbytery was an order of ministers more blessed for the public good than the hierarchy. They were debating whether any real distinction existed between

them, whether the one included the other? and whether the whole was not a verbal controversy, a distinction without a difference?

The King's felicitous illustration of the nature of this Treaty, in which he could not get one counter-proposition of his own conceded, may be once more repeated. "Consider, Mr. Buckley, if you call this a Treaty, whether it be not like the fray in the comedy, where the man comes out and says, there has been a fray and no fray, and being asked how that could be? Why, says he, there hath been three blows given, and I had them all." The Parliamentary Commissioners were as deeply struck by this protracted and extraordinary trial of the King's powers as were any of his friends. The Earl of Salisbury told Warwick, "The King is wonderfully improved." "No, my Lord," was the reply, "it is your Lordship who has too late discerned what he always was."

Sir Edward Walker has preserved a curious fact. The man most hostile to the King, that strange compound of genius and fanaticism, the younger Vane,—acknowledged to him that they had been much deceived in the character of the King, whom they had considered as a weak man, but now, he added, that we find him to be a person of great parts and abilities, we must the more consider our own security, for he is only the more dangerous.* At the latter end of the treaty, when Charles perceived it could never be effectual, he turned somewhat melancholy. Charles was dictating to Sir Philip Warwick aside at a window, when he suddenly stopped and said, "I wish I had consulted nobody but myself; for then, as where in honour or conscience I could not have complied, I could have early been positive; for with Job I would willinglier have chosen misery than sin." On which Charles shed tears; "the biggest drops that I ever saw fall from an eye; but recollecting himself, he turned presently his head away, for he was loth it should be discerned." These were not the only tears shed by the King at the treaty of the Isle of Wight. The Secretary Oudart has commemorated in his Diary, that "This afternoon his Majesty heard several draughts of an answer upon the proposition for Religion: disliked all: and was in a great perplexity

* Sir Edward Walker, 319.

about the point of abolishing Episcopacy, even to shedding of tears." What tyrant ever before shed tears? Charles's situation was at this moment alarmingly critical; he had received certain intelligence that he was to be carried away to a closer prison, or to be assassinated. He was meditating another flight. With these thoughts in his mind, one day he wrote down at the Treaty House these two verses,

"A Coward's still unsafe, but Courage knows
No other Foe but him who doth oppose." *

But the great ability and the diligence of Charles were not wholly restricted to the labours of this great assembly on the present occasion. After every day's tedious conferences, every night at eight o'clock, when not engaged in writing private letters, Charles with his two secretaries was employed in arranging the notes taken that day, accompanying them by his arguments, and dictating a dispatch which was sent to the Prince, to inform him of the present, and to instruct him for the future. We possess this extraordinary testimony of the zealous attention to the duties of the monarch and the father. In the confinement of Carisbrooke Castle, his literary leisure had drunk more deeply of the fountains of our literature; the volumes he there perused, and the authors whom he cherished, the good taste of Herbert has noted down. The genial influence of uninterrupted studies appears in the compression of his thoughts and the elevation of his style. Neither Warwick, a loose weak writer, nor Oudart, a foreigner, though long domiciliated here by his former patron, Sir Henry Wotton, could possibly have terminated a single period of this authentic production of Charles the First.†

* Oudart's Diary, Peck's Desid. Cur. Liber. x.

† Clarendon, in his History, has given some extracts from these dispatches; "The Journal," as Charles himself calls it, is among the Clarendon State Papers, ii. 425, 444, 445. Dr. Lingard has justly acknowledged that "the best account of the treaty is that composed *by order of the King himself*, for the use of the Prince of Wales," x. 424. But from this we must necessarily infer that these, like other State Papers, were composed by another writer than the King. Charles has been already robbed of what was his own in the "Icon Basilike." In this Journal, who but the King himself could infuse the paternal feeling, and the deep personal emotion? When will historians learn to feel and to pause amidst their researches, and not conceive that every document opened to them is to be looked on only as a State-paper?

The subjects which are involved in the Articles of this Treaty have ceased to interest the posterity of Charles the First, but the acute discussion, the elevated style, the solemn counsels this unhappy monarch sent to a son, who afterwards proved unworthy of such a father, remain to illustrate his personal history.

Charles has moralised on his own history: "We would willingly forget in how high a degree some subjects have been disloyal, but never had Prince a testimony in others of more loyalty than we had. And however for their and our punishment, God blessed not some of their endeavours, surely more misguided persons were at least reduced to their loyalty than is almost in story to be exemplified. Subjects by this may learn how dangerous the neglect of seasonable duty is, and that men cannot fix when they please, what they unnecessarily shake.

"By what hath been said, you see how long we have laboured in the search of peace. Do not you be disheartened to tread in the same steps. Use all worthy ways to restore yourself to your right, but prefer the way of peace. Show the greatness of your mind, if God bless you, rather to conquer your enemies by pardoning than punishing; and let us comfort you with that which is our own comfort, that though affliction may make us pass under the censures of men, yet we look upon it so, as if it procure not for us a deliverance, it will to you a blessing. If you saw how unmanly and unchristianly the implacable disposition is in our ill-willers, you would avoid that spirit. Censure us not for having parted with so much of our own rights; the price is great, but the commodity was security to us, peace to our people. And we were confident *another Parliament would remember how useful a King's power is to a People's liberty.* Of how much we divested ourself that we and they might meet once again in a due Parliamentary way to agree *the bounds for Prince and People!* And in this give belief to our experience, never to affect more greatness or prerogative than that which is really and intrinsically for the good of subjects, not satisfaction of favourites. And if you thus use it, you will never want means to be a Father to all, and a bountiful Prince to any you would extraordinarily be gracious unto. You may perceive all men entrust their treasure when it returns them interest; and if Princes, like the sea, receive and repay all the fresh streams the rivers entrust with them, they

will not grudge, but pride themselves to make them up an ocean. These considerations may make you as great a Prince as your father is now a low one, and your State may be so much the more established as mine hath been shaken. For our subjects have learned, we dare say, that victories over their Princes are but triumphs over themselves, and so will be unwilling to hearken to changes hereafter. The English nation are a sober people, however at present infatuated.

“We know not but this may be the last time we may speak to you or the world publicly. We are sensible into what hands we are fallen, and yet (we bless God), we have those inward refreshments the malice of our enemies cannot perturb. *We have learned to busy ourself in retiring into ourself*, and therefore can the better digest what befalls.

“You are the son of our love. If God restore you to your rights upon hard conditions, whatever you promise, keep. These men, who have forced laws which they are bound to observe, will find their triumphs full of troubles. Do not think any thing in this world worth the obtaining by foul or unjust means.”

Such was the labour of the evening-hours of Charles the First after the mental fatigue of each day's conference, and which was never designed for the public eye, as the King has himself observed. He who has read these Commentaries will more clearly comprehend the importance of this development, for such it is, of the character of the captive of Carisbrooke Castle; that character only changed by new acquirements, or was modified by protracted adversities and meditating experience. The finest passages in the “Icon Basilike” do not exceed many similar ethical reflections in these evening effusions to his son.

CHAPTER XL.

HAMMOND.

SOMETIMES the days seemed tranquil as they glided away, while Charles was resigned to his books and the bowling-green of Carisbrooke Castle; but this tranquillity of his spirits was often interrupted by the terror of assassination. The King told Sir John Bowring, "I have had a sad time of it ever since the two Houses have imprisoned me in this Castle, expecting every hour when I should be murdered." The old rumours were still afloat in the Army that the King was to be brought to a public trial, nor was the result veiled in mystery. Ere the treaty had closed, secret intelligence, written in a well-known hand, had been conveyed to Charles, of a design which had been communicated to Cromwell of disposing of the King's person.* The time allotted to the treaty having expired, the Commissioners hasten back to the Parliament. Charles bade them a sad farewell. Though calm in his address, yet there was a tenderness in the tones that drew tears, at least from those who had attended on his person. The Commissioners were differently affected. Those who saw in the fast approach of the Army towards the capital the ruin of their party, returned with fearful hearts; while the party of Vane, who had witnessed, during the protracted treaty, all the hopes of the Royalists annihilated, were hurrying in triumph and joy to meet Cromwell and the other sovereigns of the Kingdom. Charles, alluding in his own mind to the ominous warnings he continued to receive, became the melancholy predictor of his own fate. "My Lords," he said, "I believe we shall scarce see each other again. But God's will be done! I have made my peace with Him, and shall undergo without fear whatever He may suffer men to do to me."†

It was a few days ere the Commissioners had departed, that one morning a breathless messenger demanded an immediate interview with the King. Sir Philip Killegrew, at the risk of

* Wagstaffe's Appendix to his Vindication of Charles the First.

† Evelyn's Memoirs, Appendix, ii. 127.

his freedom or his fortune, had stolen away from Windsor, the head-quarters of the Army, to impart to the King the fatal intelligence that the Army had resolved in council to carry him out of the Isle of Wight by force, bring the King to London, try him for his life, and murder him publicly. Charles hesitated to credit his friendly intelligencer. "I must confess," said the King, "that Sir Thomas Fairfax is a greater soldier than I am; yet I think he will find it a hard matter to bring me to London by force, having agreed with my two Houses, and in cold blood to cut off my head in the city of London."* Sir Philip Killegrew bowed his obeisance, but prayed the King to make his escape, and declaring that he himself expected nothing less "than to go to prison or to pot" for having made the communication, hurried back to Windsor. Killegrew had only anticipated by a few days the large Remonstrance of the Army which had been agreed on in their Council of War.

From every quarter at home the friends of Charles were urgent for him to leave the Island, while there remained a possibility of escape. One day, as Bowring was reiterating his offers of aid, and kneeling to entreat Charles to fly, the King, "taking his handkerchief to wipe his eyes," as the tears dropped from them, declared that he was utterly destitute. "I have borrowed all I can already, and cannot stir from this place." Bowring adds an extraordinary narrative of bringing the King four hundred pounds in gold, in both of his pockets, on the following day, for which he received the honour of knighthood.

Hume and other historians have described the reluctance of Charles to attempt to recover his liberty at this critical moment from the inviolability in which he held his parole; not that it required any subtilty of casuistry to show that no promise to the Parliament was binding, since they could no longer protect his person from the violence menaced by others, to whom he was bound by no engagement. Bowring hints at another cause which decided Charles not to leave the Isle of Wight. The King showed him a letter which he had just received from "a friend beyond seas,—you guess from whence it comes," the King added,—"who had advised him not to quit the Island, that the Army would not hurt a hair of his head." "This

* Bowring's Memorial, 150.

friend beyond the seas," and the reason alleged, were both of so delicate a character, that Bowring would not trust them to his paper, but he offers to reveal them privately to Charles the Second, to whom he addressed his Memoir. It is remarkable that the same mysterious allusion occurs in Clarendon. The passage requires attention from a remarkable interpolation, which was designed for a particular purpose. "*Before the Treaty* the King was inclined to make his escape, thinking any liberty preferable to the restraint he had endured. But he did receive some discouragement from pursuing that purpose, which both diverted him from it, and gave him great trouble of mind. 'It cannot be imagined how wonderfully fearful some persons in France were that he should have made his escape, and the dread they had of his coming.'"

Here is a very remarkable instance of the danger incurred by interpolation. The Editors of Clarendon imagined that the honour of Charles was involved in any attempt at escape by violating his parole, which was to hold good till twenty days had elapsed *after* the treaty. Finding in the manuscript a confession that the King had really designed to fly, they foisted in the text these words, "*Before the Treaty.*" This unwarrantable contrivance was intended to fence off any accusations which might impugn the King's honour, by the violation of his pledge. Reject the interpolation, and then we shall obtain a veritable statement, unknown to any of our historians, and which I am able to substantiate by an original document which seems not to have been known to the noble historian himself.

It is certain, that ere the treaty was concluded, pressed on all sides by his domestic friends, and continually warned of the desperate designs on his person, Charles had decided on another flight. To the peril to which his life was exposed by the conspirators, he evidently alludes in his parting address to the Commissioners, "I am fully informed of the whole carriage of the plot against me and mine." A vessel had even been prepared for the King's flight. Bowring, whose interest lay in the Navy, had not only an intercourse with the Vice-Admiral lying off the coast, but had offered to bring up a ship to a retired spot, to convey the King to Jersey. We know, too, from another

quarter, that Charles was in correspondence with Sir William Hopkins, who there commanded a ship. Why Charles did not proceed in executing this plan, can only be accounted for by the mysterious allusion to "that friend beyond seas," as Bowring designates that person, and from whom, as Clarendon observes, Charles "received some discouragement from pursuing that purpose, which both diverted him from it, and gave him great trouble of mind."

The singular document which I have mentioned, I found in the Ashmolean Library at Oxford. Charles having decided to effect his escape from the Island, even *before the Treaty was concluded*, with the same decorum he had formerly quitted Hampton Court, drew up a paper containing his reasons, addressed not only "to the Lords and Gentlemen," but "To all my People." As this paper remains inedited, the curious reader will find it preserved in an Appendix to the present volume.

The Rémonstrance of the Army, of which Killegrew had anticipated the report, was presented to the House on the 20th of November. The treaty ended on the 27th, and the Army advanced towards London on the 30th. The King was forcibly carried from the Isle of Wight on the 1st of December. On the 5th, in despair, the Presbyterian party voted that "the King's concessions were satisfactory." On the following day, the 6th, the famous Purge of Colonel Pride imprisoned and secluded the Presbyterian Members, and Cromwell arrived in London, with what he called "Providence and Necessity," his inexorable allies, ready to sanctify any deed.

During these rapid events, Hammond had become from his situation, having the guard of the King's person, a more important personage than his real character would have made him. The Parliament suspected the integrity of Hammond, for which, however, they had no reason, as Charles observed that "the Governor had grown as great a rogue as the rest," alluding to more than one attempt at searching his papers. Yet Hammond was not so wholly "the rogue" as Charles conceived. The Parliament, aware that Hammond's connections lay with Cromwell and Ireton, and the Army faction, were not at their ease respecting his integrity, and they would have been less so,

had they known the extraordinary correspondence which now occurred between these two eminent persons and the Governor of the Isle of Wight.

Hammond received two remarkable letters from Ireton and Cromwell, the one dated 23rd and the other the 25th of November, a few days preparatory to their great *coup d'état*.

"Dear Robin," as in the familiarity of friendship both style Hammond, Ireton assured of "the tenderness that we have (in the Army) towards him." He would remove "the ground of his scruples." Robin considered that he held the King "as a servant under trust" for the Parliament. This Ireton does not deny, and proceeds, "The Lord forbid that I should tempt thee." But asks Ireton, Who put him in the trust? The Parliament merely as a form, or the Army in effect? Who made him Governor? Was he such from any affection of that sort or generation of men, which now through accident bear the sway and name? or rather of those whose judgment and affections are most opposite to them? It was for public ends the Governor had received his trust, and Ireton appealed to his conscience to whom he owed his faith. He hoped that he would not give himself up to the delusion of an air of honour, and mere form or shadow of faithfulness, to the neglect of the reality or substance. God had better endued Robin with truth and judgment in the inner parts. The subtle Ireton thus worked at "the grounds of his scruples," and the serpent at the ear of Eve had never whispered more seductive treason. The effusions of Cromwell were more voluminous; they flow with all the unction of his "Experiences," and all the demonstrations of his "Providences." He sympathises with the complaints of Hammond of "his sad and heavy burthen." Hammond maintained that "God hath appointed authorities among the nations;" he had been taught this by his uncle the Divine; and that "the authority resides in England in the Parliament," this had been inculcated by his uncle the Parliamentary Colonel. Cromwell puts up his prayer after his sermon, that Dear Robin "would not swerve, nor lose any glorious opportunity the Lord puts into his hand."*

The deliverance of the King's person to the Army, was the

* Letters between Colonel Robert Hammond, Cromwell, Ireton, &c., 1764.

object of the writers with the Governor of the Isle of Wight. The conscience of Hammond was pure. The whole of Hammond's life, from the moment Charles entered the island, offers a singular exhibition of an honest man embarrassed by opposite principles. In the present great temptation, even his powerful friends had not succeeded to induce him to act as they desired, but they verified what this unhappy man had from his spontaneous emotions exclaimed at his first meeting with Berkley and Ashburnham.—They perplexed him. When these subtle men had ascertained that their friend could not be their creature, they conjured him away from his Government, and after suffering an imprisonment, Colonel Hammond got shelved.

CHAPTER XLI.

HURST BLOCK-HOUSE, AND WINDSOR CASTLE.

THE King still remained at Newport, amidst these constant alarms. One day, as Charles sate at dinner, there came a tall man, "with his spanner and scarf," and therefore supposed to be an officer of the Army, but whom no one knew. The stranger placed himself fronting the King, fixing his eyes on him. The silence of this unknown, and his "funereal" * countenance, were ominous; there was a deep melancholy in his looks, but his confidential manner marked him as "one of the ill-spirits of the Army." The King in vain secretly inquired after the mysterious man. Bowring got him away by an invitation to dinner. The stranger inquired for Hammond the Governor; and in the style of the evil spirit, coming for the human being whose soul was to be surrendered in the final hour of perdition, he declared "I am come for Hammond this night!" When it was hinted that the Governor would hardly quit his quarters—the demon, raising his voice, exclaimed, "I'll warrant ye he goes with me this night! for Hammond is my prisoner!" Bowring, terrified, stole away to prepare the King for some sudden

* "The funereal air" of this officer is noticed in the Narrative of the Siege of Colchester.

change. When Hammond entered, the stranger did not know his person till he had declared himself. "I am commanded to bring you a prisoner to Windsor."—"What force have you in the Island?" said Hammond.—"Myself only!" sternly replied the stranger.—"It is my choice," said Hammond.—"You had better obey my orders," menaced the authoritative voice.

This stranger was Colonel Isaac Ewer, whose name appears in the death-warrant of Charles the First. He accomplished his mission; for though the King protested against Hammond's quitting the Island, and Hammond promised to return on the following day, on his arrival at Windsor the Governor was confined. Such was the mysterious influence of the Army, which could hold a governor amidst his own troops in such subjection as instantly to submit himself to their single messenger. It might, however, not have been unknown to him that two regiments were arriving at Southampton, from whence Colonel Ewer had passed over, that he might take a closer inspection of his more noble prisoner about to be; "*Moritura Puella!*" as the Poet exclaimed when the maiden's foot was on the snake.

This was the prelude of carrying off the King. In the evening a servant of Charles was called out by a disguised person, who having desired him to acquaint the King that the Army would seize on him that night, abruptly withdrew. As yet no one knew of the arrival of any soldiers in the Island. That evening Mr. Firebrace had orders to wait on the King for a packet at eight o'clock, when he discovered soldiers with pistols about the house where the King lodged. He alarmed the King, who desired him to calm his fears; "Hammond's deputies may put a treble guard on me." "It were better to commit yourself to the seas than to these men," rejoined Firebrace, offering a boat and a faithful guide, both ready. Charles said, "He had passed his word to Hammond." He retired to seal his letters. It was now reported that two thousand foot were drawn about Carisbrooke Castle. The Lords and gentlemen urge the King to attempt his escape. Charles resumed his accustomed mode of reasoning. "A successful attempt was next to an impossibility, and if the Army seized on him, they would preserve him for their own sakes." A debate was held. The Earl of Lindsay observed, "All will not steer by such

rules of policy. Your Majesty's escape from Hampton Court was your best security." After a pause, the King positively declared, "They have promised me, and I will not break first." So bidding them a good night, he said he would retire to his rest. "Which," said one, "I fear will not be long."

At break of day, on a loud knocking at the King's outer door, the Duke of Richmond, demanding what it meant, was informed that some gentlemen of the Army were desirous of speaking with the King. They rushed into the chamber, and abruptly told the King that they had orders to remove him.

"From whom?" asked the King.—"From the Army!"—"To what place?"—"The Castle!"—"To what Castle?"—"To the Castle!"—"The Castle is no Castle. I am prepared for any Castle, but tell me the name."—"Hurst Castle."—"Indeed! you could not have named a worse!"

The King was hurried into a coach. Major Rolfe,—an officer who had been accused of tampering with the Clerk of the Kitchen to dispatch the King by poison,—with his hat on, insolently and uninvited, was stepping into the coach, when Charles, placing his foot before the door, courageously pushed away the armed ruffian—"Go you out! We have not yet come to that!" and called in Herbert and Harrington, his Grooms of the Bed-chamber. Rolfe, repulsed and mortified amidst his own troop, mounted the King's led horse, and rode by the coach-side, reviling the King. Charles betrayed no discomposure, and already knowing whither he was going, amused himself with the conjectures of his gentlemen. Charles had certainly a delight in perilous adventures; he seems rather to have taken a pleasure in such romantic incidents, than to have feared them.

Hurst Castle was in reality a Block-house, in a desolate spot projecting into the sea, and united to the mainland by a narrow neck of sand covered with stones and pebbles, and washed on both sides by the waves. The Captain at the Block-house appeared a suitable accompaniment to this drear abode. He was one of the lowest of the Army faction; and his figure was that of a bandit. His grim aspect, his stern looks, his wild shaggy locks and black beard, a heavy partisan in his hand, and a huge basket-hilted sword at his side, betrayed a man designed

for mischief. He vapoured and thundered ! the King's attendants were alarmed ; but at the reprimand of the Lieutenant-Colonel, it turned out that the Captain of the Block-house had only blustered to assume an importance equal to the pride which he could not conceal, that his base hands should hold the King of England as his prisoner !

Every thing here was dismal, the apartments, the air, and the fort. The stony walk was but a few paces broad, yet in length two miles ;—the uninterrupted view of the opposite Isle of Wight, and the ships of all dimensions daily under sail, formed the solitary amusement of the King. It was here that Harrington, having been deeply affected by the King's conduct and ability during the treaty, had expressed his admiration of Charles with such fervour, that his conversation having been reported, the philosopher was instantly dismissed from his attendance on the King. Charles deeply resented this, for he was sensible of the fine genius of Harrington, with whom he delighted to converse on the freedom under a Monarchy, and the freedom under a Common-wealth,—the model, probably, of Harrington's own political romance, the "*Oceana* !"

Herbert remained the solitary and the faithful servant of Charles ; but as he observes, *in motu trepidationis*. Three weeks had now elapsed. Charles had of late received some dark intimations respecting certain officers, and more than ever felt the horror of an ignoble termination of his life. This sequestered spot, jutting out amidst the ocean, and almost severed from the land, seemed to have been selected for some dreadful deed ; and every new commander appeared to the King as the person designed to be his executioner.

It was in the stillness of midnight, that Charles was startled by the rattling fall of the draw-bridge and the tramp of horses. The King rose, and Herbert stole out to learn his Master's fate. Major Harrison had arrived ! The King seemed troubled, desired to be dressed, and retired to his prayers. Herbert noticed his unusual concern, and could not avoid shedding tears. Charles told him, "I am not afraid, but do not you know that this is the man who intended to assassinate me, as by letter I was informed, during the late Treaty ? This is a place fit for such a purpose."

It was for some time difficult to obtain the secret of Major Harrison's midnight expedition. The King was agreeably surprised to learn that he was only to be removed to Windsor; to quit the most dismal castle in England for the one in which he most delighted.

The King, on leaving Hurst Castle, mounted his horse. At Winchester, notwithstanding the times, observes Herbert, the city, the clergy, and the gentry flocked to welcome their unhappy Sovereign. On the road, the King fixed his eyes earnestly on Major Harrison, who, somewhat abashed, fell back among his troops. Charles declared that he looked like a soldier, and that his aspect was good; so that he doubted if he had not been misrepresented. "I have some judgment in faces," said the King, "for oftentimes the spirit and disposition may be discerned in the countenance; yet in that we may be deceived." The royal physiognomist was more candid than Lavater; and in the present case had vainly flattered himself with having found a Royalist in a Republican.

It was observed that the King had not for a long time been so cheerful—a transitory happiness seemed to come over him; the visions of the antique regal castle flattered his imagination with a change of fortune. He was escaping as it seemed to him, from dreary solitudes, dark treacheries, and petty insolence. His companions caught, for a moment, the exhilaration of his spirits; but still wondered, says Herbert, "considering his condition." At supper, in a crowded room of the Army-officers and people who came to view the King, Charles beckoned to Major Harrison, who approached with due respect; the King took him aside at a window for half an hour, and among other things told him of the information concerning him, which rendered him an enemy in the worst sense to his person. The Major vindicated himself, and repeated what he had said, that "The Law was equally obliging to great and small, and that Justice had no respect to persons." The tone and manner of Harrison, whom Mrs. Macaulay calls "an honest fanatic," were as explicit as the axiom he had uttered! and Charles, detecting his physiognomical blunder, ceased any farther communication.

In the delights of Windsor Castle, Charles appeared to have lost in forgetfulness the tribulations of many years. It had

been long since in repose he had viewed Nature. He had his liberty to walk where he pleased within the Castle. He loved to linger on the lengthened terrace, to gaze on the spires of learned Eton—to pursue the winding Thames—and dwell on the pleasant hills and valleys, spotted with villages, and adorned with many a villa. The scene only wanted his children and his consort, to perfect the passing hour of his fugitive happiness.

At Windsor Castle the King and his party were not yet convinced that the Court of Judicature, which now began to be rumoured, was any thing more than an unsubstantial pageant. The case was unprecedented. The profoundest politician might be allowed to doubt the possibility of that public act, which was called national, yet in which the nation took no part, and which was sanctioned as Parliamentary, though at the time there was, in truth, no Parliament. I read in the Manuscript Journal of the Earl of Leicester, that while the King was at Windsor, he gave orders for saving the seeds of some Spanish melons, which he would have set at the Queen's house at Wimbledon. On this little incident, combined with more important ones, the noble diarist concludes, that "he hangs still upon the twig,"—it was then the state of the drowning man.

The true comment on this expression of Lord Leicester's, who was himself somewhat of a Parliamentarian, may be collected from the *intelligence* daily dispatched from Windsor, and published to prepare the public for the great and approaching event. These privileged spies express astonishment at the King's unaltered habits and careless endurance of his persecutions. "The King," they say, "continues indifferent merry;" "yet," adds another, "not without fear and apprehension of danger from *new faces*." In fact, Charles always doubted of an open tribunal of justice; that scheme seemed preposterous. It was not a trial which he dreaded; he always conceived he should suffer a private death. One of these intelligencers says, "He makes the business talked on of questioning of him a jest." The following extract is a curious specimen of the malignity of these revolutionary scribes, as vulgar as were most of their patrons.

"The King is *cunningly merry* for the most part, though he hears of the Parliament's proceeding against him. He asked who came from

London, how his young Princess did? He was answered she was very melancholy. The King replied, 'And well she may be so, when she hears what death her old father is coming unto.' We find his discourse of late *very effeminate, and talking much of women*, which he is sure for the most part to bring in at the end of every subject. On telling him that the Parliament intended to proceed in justice against him, he answered, *most simply and tyrannically*, 'Who can question me for my life?' " *

This is a curious example of party writing from the Government paper of a vile Government. Here are as many lies as lines. When Charles alluded to that

"Child of Misery, baptised in tears,"

who pined away in melancholy at the age of fifteen years in that Castle where her father had suffered a long durance, and where she shortly after found her vault, how could Charles call himself "her old father?" He died in the prime of life. How was it possible that he should talk at Windsor of "the death her father was coming to," when he was convinced that "no one could question him for his life?" Why were all these lies raised? It was an artifice of the wretched scribe, who forged the words he puts in the King's mouth, to prepare the public mind for the meditated catastrophe. Could it be believed that Charles's "discourse of late so effeminate," and "talking of women," was his domestic tenderness? the voice of the father and the husband? the excruciating feelings for his hapless daughter and his exiled Queen, who at this time was soliciting the Parliament for a safe conduct to approach once more the unhappiest of men and of monarchs? In truth, the novel barbarism of the age had already thrown back society into its rudest element.

After a short month the King with regret was compelled to quit Windsor Castle. It was in the court-yard, passing by the keep, that occurred the extraordinary meeting, permitted but for a minute—a single minute—deeply implored and hardly conceded,—that the Duke of Hamilton, who remained a prisoner at the Castle, cast himself on his knees before the King:—"My

* The Moderate, impartially communicating Martial Affairs to the Kingdom of England; January 9 to 16, 1649. The writer was Gilbert Mabbott, or Mabbold, the new licenser!—in this first year of "Freedom restored!"

dear Master!" was all he could say. "I have, indeed," replied Charles, "been a dear master to you!" Both parted to go to the same fate.

The King was removed to the Palace of St. James's. Hitherto the King had been served with the usual ceremonies of State. He dined in the Presence-chamber; the Carver, the Sewer, the Cup-bearer, and the Gentleman-usher officiated; the cup was presented on the knee, and the *Say* was given out.* At St. James's Charles first endured the petty indignity from the wretched faction, who ordered that all regal ceremonies should be abolished, and that the accustomed respect to his Majesty at his meals should be forborne. Soldiers now were his rough attendants, and brought in the dishes uncovered. The King felt the degradation, ate little, and in private. "Is there any thing more contemptible than a despised Prince?" said Charles to his faithful Thomas Herbert.

The story of Charles the First's imprisonment at Holmby and at Hampton Court; his long confinement at Carisbrooke Castle; his immurement at the dismal Block-house of Hurst; his return to regal Windsor; and his final removal to St. James's and Whitehall, open a series of pathetic scenes which the inventions of a Shakspeare could hardly surpass in dramatic effect or noble pathos—scenes, however, which "the Malignants" of party have affected to pass by as ordinary incidents, throwing a veil over that grandeur of mind which their brutalised spirits could never wear down to their own level.

So truly did Charles say of himself, "We have learned to busy ourself in retiring into ourself, and therefore the better digest what befalls."

* The *Say* is an abbreviation of *Assay*, or trial; the ceremony of tasting the King's food when presented.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE TRIAL AND THE DECAPITATION.

THE Commons voted themselves "the Supreme Authority of the Nation," and whatever they declared to be law was law, without the consent of the King and the Peers. Shortly after, when they had rid themselves of the Sovereign, they voted the Lords "to be dangerous and useless." Harry Marten, as reckless in his wit as in his life, with the same tolerant good-humour which he had evinced on a former occasion with Judge Jenkins, proposed an amendment in favour of the Lords that "they were useless but not dangerous." By this felicitous humour this Commonwealth-man had often relieved the Royalists in their most critical circumstances, and, though a regicide, his life was afterwards spared by the grateful mediation of the numerous friends whom his facetious genius had so timely served.

An ardent critic has recently said of the trial of Charles the First, that "He was arraigned, sentenced, and executed in the face of heaven and earth." This is the poetry of the fiction! In what manner the erection of "the High Court of Justice," a court never before heard of, stood in connexion with "Heaven and Earth," a plainer narrative may suffice to expose.

A judicial trial of the Sovereign, I have shown, was the favourite scheme of the Army-faction, contemplated at a much earlier period than our historians have traced, at least two years before it occurred.* It was often dropped and resumed. When

* This important fact I have alluded to at page 449. See Baillie's Letters, ii. 209. May, 1646. "I abhor to think of it, what they speak of execution." p. 213. In June he writes, alluding to the King, "Had it not been that he foresaw he was ready to be taken at Oxford, and either to have been executed, which is the mind of too many here, or to be clapped up in perpetual prison, he had never come near us." Again, at p. 225, in August of the same year: "The secretaries are the extremely malicious enemies of the blinded Prince, burning for the day to cast him and all his posterity out of England." Baillie was himself an honest intolerant Presbyterian, and Charles the First, with him, was "the blinded Prince," because he could not as an English monarch, and in conscience as a religionist, subscribe the covenant of the Kirk of Scotland!

Charles had closed with the treaty of Newport, the struggle became momentous between the two great factions. The Army advanced on London. On December 1st, 1648, they carried off the King to Hurst Castle. On the 5th the House sate through the whole night, and after a fierce debate, in the morning they carried the question that the King's concessions were satisfactory for a settlement. The Army-faction seemed mastered. What then happens?

One of themselves has told us. "The Parliament has fallen into such factions and divisions, that any one who usually attended and observed the business of the House, could, after a debate upon any question, easily number the votes that would be on each side, before the question was put." This curious circumstance had never been gravely recorded by the present historiographer, had his friends not constituted the forlorn minority. It was therefore "a resolution," so Ludlow expresses it, that the minority should be changed into a majority. It was "resolved by three of the Members of the House and three of the officers of the Army, who withdrew into a private room to consider of the best means." In truth there were nor best nor worst! When "the Tyrant" Charles had required that five Members should be put on their trial, that abrupt arrest of their persons—that feeble *coup d'état* went far to lose him his throne. The present six "Tyrants" in "a private room" had the list of the whole House placed before them in luxuriance, to pick and choose. "We went over the names of all the Members, one by one, giving the truest characters we could of their inclinations, wherein I presume we were not mistaken in many."—No matter! the hour presses, and the business is not nice! "The Army being ordered"—(by whom? apparently by the six "tyrants" in the "private room")—"to be drawn up the next morning, with guards placed in Westminster Hall, the Court of Requests, and the Lobby"—(on what business?) "that none might be permitted to pass into the House but such as had continued faithful to the public interest!" By this mode, "the minority" of "the public interest" triumphed over "the majority." Such is the honest history of Colonel Pride's famed "Purge," delivered by their own authentic historian.*

* Ludlow, i. 233.

This *coup d'état* was struck on December 6th, the very next day after their discomfiture in the House. On January the 4th the Commons invested themselves with "the Supreme Authority," and on the 9th the High Court of Justice to try the King was proclaimed.

Such is the simple story of the High Court of Justice on "the face of the Earth;" for their acts in "the face of Heaven" we must look to their chaplain and buffoon Hugh Peters. He himself tells us that the fate of the King too deeply affected the public mind. "The public interest" out of the House was so far from an agreement with "the public interest" in it, that the members of the High Court of Justice sate in pretended fasts, and at state sermons, acted by their gesticulator and comedian in the pulpit. They were edified and diverted by many a drolling tale, a gibe and a quip, or an ecstasy kneeling or weeping, now hiding his head, now clapping his hands for a new revelation.—All for "the Red Coats!" "Moses was now to lead the people out of Egyptian bondage! but how? that was not yet revealed to me!" Shrugging his shoulders, covering his eyes with his hands, burying his head in the cushion, resounding laughter polluted the choir of St. Margaret's Chapel. The grotesque seer starting up suddenly, cried out, "Now I have it by Revelation! This Army must root up monarchy, not only here, but in France, and other kingdoms round about—this is to bring you out of Egypt!" But it seems that there were "foolish citizens in our Jerusalem, who for a little trading and profit would have Christ crucified (pointing to the red coats crowding on the pulpit-stairs), and that great Barabbas of Windsor released." It was before Cromwell, and Bradshaw, the Lord President of the novel Court, on the Sunday preceding the execution on the Tuesday, that the High Priest of the Revolution took for his text, "Bind your kings with chains, and your nobles with fetters of iron." It delighted them to hear of "the Rabble of Princes," and Cromwell was observed to laugh.

Hugh Peters is a name covered with odium; the moral habits of this carnal prophet have been so frequently aspersed by the royalists, that had Hugh Peters not made his own confessions, we could never have formed any correct notion of the vile and ridiculous man himself. In this political history of human

nature, he serves greatly to instruct us. He was one of those characters who are engendered in the excitement of a Revolutionary period, persons easily tempted to go all lengths with a triumphant party, and contribute to more mischief than they would of themselves incline to.

This merry-Andrew in the pulpit, and this advocate for the sword in law, was at bottom a grave and earnest divine, neither wanting in learning nor in ability. By the deposition of a servant at his trial, it appears that he was usually "melancholy sick." Originally an exile from his non-conformity, under the severe administration of Laud, he had passed over into New England, and on his return home, after fourteen years of absence, found the nation plunged in civil war. His patrons were the Parliamentary Generals. Minister, messenger, and minion of the Army, in his political fanaticism he maintained that all government depended on the sword.* Yet this reckless being in his cell, awaiting his trial, could consider, as he tells us, that "A good government is where men may be as good as they can, and not so bad as they would." He grew wealthy under his masters, who bestowed on him an estate, loaded him with frequent donations, one of which was Laud's library; and his conscience, now the fatal tree was in his contemplation, was troubled about some parts of Lord Craven's estate, of which he had evidently shared in the pillage with the infamous Lord Grey, whom he says, "as I had time," (for in truth Peters was too busy to sermonise in private,) "I ever advised against that spirit of levelling then stirring." He who lives on rapine is usually improvident. Peters "lived in debt, for what I had, others shared in." He would ascribe to himself the splendour of generosity, while he conceals the vulgar prodigality of the mean adventurer. This was one of the men appointed to be the Reformers of the law. In his tract "Good Work for a Good Magistrate, or a Short Cut to Great Quiet," he proposed the extirpation of the whole system of our laws, and recommended that the records in the Tower should be burnt as the monuments of tyranny. For this suggestion he craves pardon, as his project appears to have given offence; his only design in law was for "case, expedition and cheapness;" but he owns,

* See note in page 405 for his dialogue with Lilburne.

“When I was called about mending laws, I confess I might as well have been spared.” He asserted on his trial that he had done many good offices to the royalists when he was in power, and wore a ring which Goring had given him for having saved his life. But when he wrote in his Confessions, before his trial had come on, that “He never had a hand in contriving or acting the death of the king, as I am scandalised,” he seems to have thought that his memorable sermon on “the Barabbas of Windsor” and its text had been utterly forgotten. He had declared that the Commonwealth would never be at peace till they got rid of the three L’s, Lords, Levites, and Lawyers. In the hour of contrition he wrote in prison, “A dying father’s last legacy to an only child,” his daughter. Then he mourned that “ever he had been popular, and known better to others than to myself.” When the cruel death which he was to suffer approached, then he cried that “life was sweet, and death was terrible.” Thus is a man two men! a wide interval separates the highflyer Hugh Peters at the Army, and the Hugh Peters, as he himself expresses it, “shortly going where time shall be no more, nor cock nor clock distinguish hours!”

When this pageant of the High Court of Justice assembled, it was discovered that, in reality, two-thirds of the members had been drawn out of the Army. There were some adventurers who looked not for their fortunes by their sword, but by their compliance. And there were a few, “the honest fanatics,” as Mrs. Macaulay designates Major Harrison, who subscribed the death-warrant of Charles the First, on motives and principles by which they would have expounded the Apocalypse, and by which they calculated the approach of the Millennium, or demonstrated the Anti-Christ of Rome.

When the Commissioners were preparing for the trial of the King, they debated whether they should have in Court both a sword and a mace; for this huddled government, not having yet had time to order a Commonwealth-mace, the one in use bore the royal arms. There was something antithetical in the present process of displaying the regal authority in the moment of the abolition of monarchy. They resolved to have both, the sword alone looking too terrible.

They had been more diligent in fixing in full view the newly-

manufactured arms of the Commonwealth of England, bearing this inscription, suggested by the witty and dissolute Henry Marten. "The first year of Freedom by God's blessing RESTORED 1648." This singular expression *Restored* he used on another occasion. In drawing up the Remonstrance of the Army, which changed the Monarchy into a Commonwealth, this Sheridan of his day, had said "RESTORED to its ancient government of Commonwealth." A member rose to reprimand, and to wonder at the impudence of Harry Marten, asserting the antiquity of Commonwealth, of which he had never before heard. The wit rejoined by a whimsical illustration of the propriety of the term, and the peculiar condition of the man who had now heard it for the first time. "There was," said Harry, "a text which had often troubled his spirit concerning the man who was blind from his mother's womb, but at length whose sight was *restored* to the sight which he should have had." The witticism was keen, though almost as abstruse as the antiquity of an English Commonwealth.*

Charles, on his entrance before the tribunal which had now usurped the supreme authority of the State, beheld Cromwell and Harry Marten sitting on each side of this escutcheon, and might have read, by that "hand-writing on the wall," how his days were numbered, and that he had already outlived the monarchy.

* I found this anecdote in the Aubrey Papers at the Ashmolean Museum. It may receive some elucidation from a passage in the trial of the great Regicide, Thomas Scott. This party maintained that the English Government originally consisted of the Commons, which Scott urged as a plea for his defence in having obeyed the Parliament, consisting solely of the Commons. The Court having observed to Scott that he could not give one instance that ever the House of Commons did assume the King's authority, the prisoner replied, "I can many, where there was nothing but a House of Commons!" The Court.—"When was that?" Scott.—"In the Saxons' time." This, no doubt, puzzled the Court, as it has many a more profound antiquary than either the Court or Scott himself. The Court, however, were not to be baffled; they had not sufficient erudition to contradict the assertion,—they waived the argument. Court.—"You do not come to any time within six hundred years, you speak of times wherein things were obscure." The late David Williams, in the days of revolutionary Reforms, printed a diagram of the English Constitution, wherein the rude times of Alfred were shown to the eye as its perfection. According to such theories, the Anti-monarchists would throw back a nation in the highest state of civilisation to barbarous periods when the people were often slaves attached to the soil. This, then, was to be the Constitution "*restored* to its ancient government of Commonwealth!"

Amidst all their public insolence to the King, the feeling was still novel and awkward among them in their familiar approach to his person. The Commonwealth's new macebearer, overcome by the awfulness of conducting Charles to the bar, excessively trembled, and could scarcely support the mace, or hold up the bar to admit the King to his chair within it.

There was in the common people at large a deep veneration for the royal person. Their weeping eyes witnessed his long afflictions; the misfortunes and the grievances of the early part of the reign of this hapless prince hardly lived in their recollections. They had more recently listened to tales of his gallantry in the field, and of his magnanimous spirit in his prisons. Admitted into his presence, all were struck by the gravity and stateliness of him, whom nature and habit alike formed for sovereignty. While the prevailing faction, small but terrible, for it lay among the officers, was proclaiming Charles the First "A Tyrant!" the generous nature of the uncontaminated many was ever betraying itself, not only by a mournful silence, but often by a spontaneous burst of "God save the King!" Hume has beautifully touched this part of the story. "The King was softened at this moving scene, and expressed his gratitude for their dutiful affection." An unfortunate monarch, in the depth of his misery, could find brothers among the people. These were no hirelings, for Charles's party was now silenced, dispersed, or in terror, suffered to exist only by their inactivity or their concealment.

The personal respect for the King was felt in every class. Some of the soldiers alone were compelled, by two or three of their commanders, to raise a forced shout or obtrude an insult. When the King was rowed to Westminster, a great concourse of boats collected; the soldiers, commanded by Major Harrison, were covered, but the watermen insisted on rowing the King bare-headed. Colonel Tomlinson, although his party had passed their sentence on the King as a Traitor, would conduct the King to the scaffold with hat in hand. Even the unknown executioners deemed it advisable to wear masks. As for the High Court themselves, they seem to have sat in terror. They ordered the vaults to be searched, they barred and locked themselves in at every entrance, they set guards on the leads and

other places that had windows, and all back-doors. Ten companies of foot were constantly on guard; the people were beat back by the soldiers. The famed broad-brimmed hat, beneath which their Lord President scowled on the hapless monarch, was cased with iron. These self-styled representatives of the people were carrying on a cause in the name of the people; but how happened it that the counsel for the plaintiffs appear to have been most fearful of the plaintiffs themselves?

Charles the First, on his trial, at no time found his presence of mind fail, nor the firmness of his pulse, nor the aptness of his language. From early life he had a defective utterance, but at his trial, the intensity of his feelings carried on his voice without faltering. The King had resolved not to acknowledge by any salute the present High Court, and for this purpose would not uncover. They had anticipated this resolution, for this minute circumstance was actually debated among them. It was ordered, that "in case the Prisoner shall in language or carriage towards the Court be contemptuous, &c., it is left to the Lord President to admonish, or to command the taking away of the Prisoner; but, as to the Prisoner's taking off his hat, the Court will not insist upon it this day." Nor, indeed, did they on any one day of the trial. An expression of public contempt for the Royal presence was yet so much of a novelty, that even these Commissioners, who had dared to try him for his life, did not venture once to offer him a public indignity, notwithstanding that the more violent of the faction reduced his designation to "The Man." Bradshaw, though he never addressed the King by the style of royalty, and spoke to Charles as to an ordinary prisoner, often applied the title of "Sir!" which was as freely bestowed by the King, the only equality which could exist between them. The state of his Royalty though dimmed, was not yet lost. Bradshaw, a Serjeant of obscure reputation, suddenly elevated into the office of the Chief Magistrate of the Land, affected an equality of pomp with Royalty itself; yet as the same preparations had been allowed the King, it betrayed in these novices in the arts of degrading the person of the Sovereign, the involuntary concession of a tribute to public opinion. The King at the bar was still the King. Charles never suffered himself to be hurried; he took his chair with stateliness, he sat down

leisurely, or looked about him with curiosity, often with many an inquiring glance. A paper of the day describes the King. "With a quick eye and nimble gesture he turned himself oftentimes about, casting an eye not only on those who were on each side of the Court, but even on the spectators in the midst of the Hall." Was there yet a lingering hope in that firm though subdued spirit, for the appearance of some unknown friend? Or did Charles imagine that the very person of Majesty might create anew expiring loyalty? Four noblemen, it is said, had indeed offered themselves to be tried for the imputed crimes of their Royal Master. They declared that they had concurred by their counsels, and alone should be deemed guilty. Honour and patriotism emulated each other in that proffered immolation. But from the Court before him the King could receive no generous sympathy. The Solicitor for the People, a very poor, but not unskilful lawyer, and who a few days before the Trial had never had any expectation of the office, with his two Republican Counsel, one of whom was the Dutchman, Dorislaus, were only separated from the King by a slight partition, and the soldiers surrounding the Court filled the intermediate passage between the King and the people. Charles the First was there as if he had stood alone in the universe. Once a solitary voice reminded him that there was in that Court one who recognised the King, and proclaimed who was the traitor; but that voice was a female's! *

Charles carried a cane, or in the style of the day, "a staff." When Cooke, the Solicitor, was delivering himself with insolence, the King two or three times gently touched his shoulder. While the charge was being read, the King rose again to look around, and resumed his seat with a stern look, but at the passage where he was accused of being "a tyrant, a traitor," &c., he scornfully laughed in the face of the Court. A remarkable circumstance occurred. As the King was leaning on his cane the head broke off

* It is well known who this lady was. When the charge against the King was made, in the name of the Commons and People of England, a lady exclaimed with a loud voice, "It was a lie! not a quarter of the people! Oliver Cromwell is a rogue and a traitor!" The lady was masked. Colonel Axtell ordered his musketeers to present their muskets to the box and fire on the woman, using an opprobrious term. This produced a dreadful silence. The lady retired. The evidence of Sir Purbeck Temple ascertains that it was the Lady Fairfax.

on a sudden, and rolled on the ground. This seemed for a moment to affect the King, as it did many who saw or heard of it. This momentary surprise did not, however, derange his ideas. Not that Charles did not partake of the prevalent superstitions of omens at this time; he afterwards confessed to Bishop Juxon that "it really made a great impression on him." It has been supposed that this was a malicious contrivance of Hugh Peters, who was then "the King's gaoler," and who had "artificially tampered upon his staff," for the purpose of throwing a sudden dismay into the mind of the King. In an age when our sages still expounded omens and chronicled their dreams, a mischance so timed before the eyes of the public was no inconsiderable one. If it were a trick, it was the triumph of a little villain, or the disgrace of a great one. It was, however, with that headless cane, that in retiring from the bar Charles pointed to the sword lying on the table, and scornfully said, "I do not fear that." But Charles had to endure the insolence of the vile, and it is said he smiled when some soldiers spat in his face, and a lady of rank, who was already infamous by her loose conduct, fiercely exulted in the same honour. The prostitute could rival the bully of her faction.

The trial of the King, its chief points and the arguments, have been conveyed to the reader in our popular histories, but too many *traits* are lost in those summaries. Bradshaw assumes that "the supreme jurisdiction lies with the Commons of England;" the King insists that "the House of Commons was never a Court of Judicature." The words of "The Tyrant" may still be quoted for their simplicity and their force. "If power without law may make laws, may alter the fundamental laws of the kingdom, I do not know what subject he is in England that can be sure of his life, or any thing that he calls his own." Bradshaw would not allow the King to dispute the authority of this self-elected court, insisting on his submission to it. Charles admirably replied to the "Serjeant"—"Sir, by your favour, I do not know the forms of law. I do know law and reason, though I am no lawyer professed. I know as much law as any gentleman in England, and therefore, under your favour, I do plead for the liberties of the people of England more than you do." Bradshaw, pressed hard by the King's argument, who

said "I require that I do give in my *reasons* why I do not answer," with rude insolence replied, "Sir, 'tis not for prisoners to require!" The indignant monarch for a moment gave way to his natural hastiness of temper—"Prisoner, Sir! I am not an ordinary prisoner!" But if Charles by an instantaneous emotion lost his temper, the Lord President lost his presence of mind or command of language, for when the King said, "Show me that jurisdiction where *reason is not to be heard?*" the Serjeant unwittingly replied, "Sir! we show it you here, the Commons of England."*

On the last day there was a more subdued spirit on the King. He now perceived that no argument would avail. He would not acknowledge their authority, but he did not deny their *power*. We will listen to the King, "Sir! I know it is in vain for me to dispute; I am no sceptic, for to deny the power you have; I know that you have power enough!—Sir! I must confess I think it would have been for the kingdom's peace if you would have taken the pains to have shown the lawfulness of your power." Charles now condescended almost to implore for a little delay of a day or two, to be heard by the Lords and Commons, to avoid a hasty judgment. When the King declared "I have nothing more to say, but I shall desire that this may be entered what I have said," the vulgar triumph of the pert and petulant lawyer seems barbarously marked in the retort—"The Court then, Sir, hath something to say unto you, which although I know will be very unacceptable, yet, notwithstanding, they are resolved to discharge their duty." The scarlet gown worn on this day had already pronounced sentence to the eyes of all present, but the wounded pride it concealed betrayed itself when Bradshaw told the King, "Sir! you have not owned us as *a Court*, and you look upon us as *a sort of people met together.*"

While the sentence of death was pronouncing, the King was observed to smile, and then to lift his eyes in silently appealing to Heaven. After the condemnation this extraordinary dialogue ensued.

* These "reasons," which the King was not suffered to deliver, and which, if he had, would have been to no purpose, he, as was his laborious custom, left behind him in writing. He has even noted down when he was interrupted in speaking, adding, "Against reason I was hindered to show my reasons."

The King addressed Bradshaw. "Will you hear me a word, Sir?"

BRADSHAW.—"Sir, you are not to be heard after the sentence."

THE KING.—"No, Sir!"

BRADSHAW.—"No, Sir! by your favour, Sir! Guard! withdraw your prisoner!"

KING.—"I may speak after the sentence, by your favour, Sir! I may speak after sentence, EVER!—By your favour, Hold! The sentence, Sir! I say Sir—I do—I am not suffered to speak—expect what justice other people will have!"

Violently hurried from the Bar, in the broken words and the struggle of contemned Majesty, we still mark the unalterable fortitude of Charles the First. He commanded while he implored. In the dramas of Shakspeare is there a touch more natural than Charles's EVER! In this tragical agitation, we catch from the last words which fell from his lips, a prediction of political wisdom. Hume, in one of those inimitable passages his fine genius often cast, has exquisitely touched the picture of Charles the First at these moments. "His soul, without effort or affectation, seemed only to remain in the situation familiar to it, and to look down with contempt on all the efforts of human malice and iniquity."

Dragged from the bar, the King passed through a rabble of soldiers, brutal indignities were cast on him, but his spirit was constant to itself. Some soldiers were reviling him, others blowing tobacco-whiffs in his face, or throwing their broken pipes in his way;—one honest soldier exclaiming, "God bless you, Sir!" his Captain caned him. The King observed, that "The punishment exceeded the offence." In a conversation with Herbert, shortly afterwards, the King asked if he had remarked the cry of the soldiers for "Justice and Execution!" Herbert answered that he did, and wondered at it. "So did not I," said Charles, "for I am well assured the soldiers bear no malice to me. The cry was, no doubt, given by their officers, for whom the soldiers would do the like were there occasion."

This observation is an evidence of the correct judgment of the King. We know that once Hugh Peters hurried out of

Court to instigate a Colonel to command his men to give out a cry for Justice! and that after sentence, Colonel Axtell having first caned his men to it, forced them to cry out for Execution! as the King passed. The real persecutors of Charles were restricted to this narrow circle, nor would the King have had many even among these, had that party not imagined, and several of them declared it, that had Charles lived, their own lives were in peril.

Three days intervened between the sentence and the execution. Charles, in requesting the absence of his friends, admitted his two children, the only ones left in England. It was not possible to be with his children, and not remember their mother. His least agony was not that of bidding them a last farewell; for having done this, and withdrawn to the window to conceal his sufferings, he broke again into a violence of grief, he returned to the door of the apartment, and once more lingered in their embrace.

A domestic incident which occurred the preceding evening, gives a touching representation of the man. Charles taking off an emerald ring from his finger, seemed anxious that Herbert, if possible, should hasten immediately and deliver it to a lady without saying a word. Herbert by great favour procured the parole, and not with little difficulty threaded his way by the numerous sentinels, at that late hour. At the sight of the ring, the lady, who resided in the neighbourhood, desired Herbert to wait. She returned with a little cabinet, closed with three seals, praying that it might be delivered to the hand which sent that ring, and which was left with her. In the morning the mysterious cabinet was opened, it contained diamonds and jewels, and for the most part broken Georges and Garters. "You see," said Charles, "all the wealth now in my power to give my two children." The person with whom the cabinet had been deposited by the provident Monarch was Lady Wheeler, the royal laundress.

In the last pathetic interview with his children, Charles told the Princess Elizabeth, among other things, that "His death was glorious, for he should die for the laws and liberties of the land. He should die a Martyr." On the scaffold he declared that "He was the Martyr of the people."

This style from the lips of "a Tyrant" is strange and unexpected, and the title of "Martyr," which Charles proudly professed, was long disputed by his enemies. The great genius of Milton could condescend to cavil, restricting the sense of the term to those who died for persevering in their faith; but that, since Charles had consented to suspend, or abolish, the Episcopacy in England, he could not be held to be a Martyr to religion. The fact is, that the martyrdom of Charles was a civil and political one. Charles need not have ascended the scaffold, would he have betrayed the liberties and plundered the wealth of the nation. The King alluded to this extraordinary fact on his trial. Once turning himself to Bradshaw, and fixing his eyes on some persons near him, Charles said, "There are some sitting here that well know, that if I would have forfeited or betrayed the liberties and rights of the people, I need not have come hither."* This last of his acts seems an expiation of the errors and infirmities of the early years of his reign.

The Grandees of the Army paused to the last hour of the execution of the King; that unparalleled event, for ancient Egypt had only in their wisdom brought their monarchs on their decease to a judicial trial, was almost counteracted by the fears, the offers, and the interference of great parties, both at home and abroad. On the Sunday preceding the decollation written proposals were tendered to the King to restore him to his shadowy throne, on terms which a pusillanimous and dishonoured Prince would have subscribed. The Council of War proposed to be the sole government of England, and this military force was to be maintained by a heavy land-rate, to be levied by the Army. A close committee held a private meeting. Rushworth was concerned in procuring a house among his friends for this secret purpose. Charles, at the first articles, indignantly threw aside the paper which might have given him an ignoble existence, and exclaimed, "I will rather become a sacrifice for my people, than endure this intolerable bondage of an armed Faction!"† Charles would not be a Slave-king. It

* Trials of the Regicides, 190. 4to edition.

† Clement Walker, History of Independency, ii. 109, gives many particulars. The meeting for which Rushworth was employed to fix on a private place, where

was from this circumstance that Charles the First deemed himself to be "a Martyr for the People."

Halberdiers and musqueteers, who were hourly changed, for they mistrusted their own men, were instigated by some of their officers to perpetual intrusions into the privacy of the King, on the pretext to watch over their prisoner; this occasioned Charles to sigh. It has been suggested that a diabolical device condemned the mortified monarch to listen for two successive nights to the heavy strokes of the workmen in the erection of the scaffold.*

At St. James's the night preceding the execution, Herbert, his

the persons assembled came singly, is told in a manuscript narrative from the daughter of the friend who lent the use of his house on this occasion.—Echard, B. ii. 659. Neither Hume nor Dr. Lingard have attended to these facts, which surely throw light on what Charles afterwards alluded to when on the scaffold.

* All our writers have censured Hume for recording this affecting circumstance. The curious reader, I warn off any other, will take some interest in details which discover how numerous writers may err, either by echoing the first opinion promulgated, or by not being in possession of a material fact.

Mrs. Macaulay reprobates the story as "a calumny on the Parliament and the Army, propagated by the petulant Presbyterian Clement Walker. Whereas," she says, "the King remained at St. James's till the morning of his execution."

The judicious Laing considers it as "an injudicious fiction invented by Clement Walker, in order to aggravate the deed, and Hume, though Herbert lay open before him, on this occasion wrote too much for dramatic effect."

Charles Fox, who in the decline of life was but an ardent novice in historical research, exults that "He had detected the trick of Hume's theatrical and false representation of Charles the First hearing the noise of the scaffold."

Last, but not least, to close the reverberation of historical echoes, Mr. Brodie takes the very copy of Herbert from the Advocates' Library, which may still be viewed, with all the marks and remarks of the simple-minded philosopher, and Mr. Brodie shows that Hume's thumb had scratched where Herbert says, that the King on his last return from the Court passed to his bed-chamber at Whitehall, whence *after two hours space* he was removed to St. James's. Mr. Brodie attacks more fatally than his predecessors Clement Walker himself, for he makes Clement apparently refute himself. Clement, after stating that the King having been disturbed *all Saturday and Sunday night* by the strokes of the workmen, proceeds thus: "*Tuesday 30th of January* was the day appointed for the King's death. *He came on foot from St. James's to Whitehall that morning.*"

Who could have conceived that after so much searching evidence, and against the positive but inaccurate statement of Herbert, the account given by Clement Walker, notwithstanding that by his careless mode of writing Mr. Brodie ingeniously made Clement refute Clement, is, however, the veracious account, and that Hume stands perfectly exculpated from any attempt at a "theatrical representation?"

It now appears from Lord Leicester's journal, recently published, that Charles lay at Whitehall the *two nights* following his sentence, and that he was only removed

faithful attendant, lay on a pallet by the King's side, and "took small rest." The King slept soundly for four hours. Two hours before the dawn, he opened his curtains, and by the light of "a great cake of wax, set in a silver basin, which burned all night," observed Herbert disturbed in sleep. The King arousing him, discovered that he was suffering from a very painful dream. It was indeed a very extraordinary one, at that moment. Herbert, doubtless under the agitation of that direful night, had dreamed that Laud, in his pontifical habit, had entered the apartment—had knelt down to the King—that they conversed—that the King looked pensive, and the Archbishop sighed—and on retiring from the King, fell prostrate. Charles said "The dream was remarkable: but he is dead; had we now conferred together, 'tis very likely, albeit I loved him well, I should have said something might have occasioned his sigh."

Charles said he would rise, "for I have a great work to do this day." Herbert trembled in combing the King's hair. Charles observing that it was not done with his usual care, said, "Though it be not long to stand on my shoulders, take the same pains with it, as you were wont to do. Herbert, this is my second marriage-day; I would be as trim to-day as may be." The weather was cold. The King desired to have a shirt on more than ordinary; for "the season is sharp, and probably may make me shake, which some will imagine proceeds

to St. James's the *night preceding his execution*. The fact is confirmed by this entry in the useful *Gesta Britannorum* among the works of Sir George Wharton, who kept a chronological diary:

"January.—The scaffold was erected before the Banqueting-house at Whitehall." By an omission in the printing the date is not clear, but we find that on the

"29th. (Monday.) King removed to St. James's, whither his children come from Sion House.

"30th. King Charles beheaded."

No reason has been given for the King's removal from Whitehall to St. James's on the last day. Clement Walker, in mentioning the fact of the disturbance occasioned by the erection of the scaffold at Whitehall to Charles, omitted noticing the removal of the King on *Monday* to St. James's. The more remarkable passage in Herbert, that Charles, on his return to Whitehall after the sentence, "whence after *two hours' space* he was removed to St. James's," can only be accounted for either as a defective reminiscence of Herbert, who wrote many years after the event, as happened to Ashburnham and others, or by a false reading of the manuscript, or a careless misprint, "two hours" for "two days:" a circumstance

from fear. I would have no such imputation. I fear not death—death is not terrible to me! I bless my God I am prepared. Let the rogues come!”

By a paper of the day, it appears that Charles declared that he was glad that the act was to be done before Whitehall, rather than at St. James's, where he now was, as the weather was keen and cold, and without a little motion he should be indisposed to what he intended to say. He walked through the Park, as his former use was, very fast, and called to his guard in a pleasant manner, “March on apace!” A sorry fellow, “a mean citizen,” as Fuller describes him, was allowed for some time to walk close to the King, fixing on him the genuine cannibal stare of the lowest of the populace. The King only turned his face from him. The ruffian was at length shoved aside. One of the officers, surely to disturb him, had the audacity to ask him, whether he had not consented to his father's death? His chief conversation was with Colonel Tomlinson on his burial—he wished it not to be sudden, as he dwelt on the thought that his son would do that last office. On leaving the Park, an affectionate domestic reminiscence occurred. Charles suddenly stopped, and pointing to a tree, observed, “That tree was planted by my brother Henry!”*

At Whitehall a repast had been prepared. The religious emotions of Charles had consecrated the Sacrament, which he refused to mingle with human food. The Bishop, whose mind was unequal to conceive the intrepid spirit of the King, dreading lest the magnanimous monarch, overcome by the severity of the cold, might faint on the scaffold, prevailed on him to eat half a manchet of bread, and taste some claret. But the more consolatory refreshment of Charles had been just imparted to him in that singular testimony from his son, who had sent a *carte blanche* to save the life of his father at any price. This

which has often occurred with the careless readers and the negligent printers of those days.

This may be considered as a curious history of the fallibility of written evidence, even from authentic quarters, whenever a material circumstance has been accidentally omitted, or comes to us in a mutilated shape.

* The late Sir Henry Englefield, in conversation, told this anecdote: it is probably traditional. He indicated the spot, as that where the cows usually stand, near the passage from Spring-Gardens. They have often been attached to the trunk of a tree, which possibly was the one in question.

was a thought on which his affections could dwell in face of the scaffold which he was now to ascend.

Charles had arrived at Whitehall about ten o'clock, and was not led to the scaffold till past one. It was said that the scaffold was not completed; it might have been more truly said, that the conspirators were not ready. There was a mystery in this delay. The fate of Charles the First to the very last moment was in suspense! Fairfax, though at the time in the Palace, inquired of Herbert how the King was, when the King was no more! and expressed his astonishment on hearing that the execution had just taken place. This extraordinary simplicity and abstraction from the present scene of affairs has been imputed to the General as an act of refined dissimulation, yet this seems uncertain. The Prince's *carte blanche* had been that morning confided to his hands, and he surely must have laid it before "the Grandees of the Army," as this new order of the Rulers of England were called. Fairfax, whose personal feelings respecting the King were congenial with those his lady had so memorably evinced, laboured to defer for a few days the terrible catastrophe; not without the hope of being able, by his own regiment, and others in the Army, to prevent the deed altogether. It is probable,—inexplicable as it may seem to us,—that the execution of Charles the First really took place unknown to the General. Fairfax was not unaccustomed to discover that his colleagues first acted, and afterwards trusted to his own discernment.*

* No historical character is so darkly veiled as that of the General-in-Chief. Our historians make Fairfax a mere senseless instrument of Cromwell and Ireton. Fairfax has himself confessed that his name was put to papers to which he had never given his consent, and merely for the form's sake. Charles the First once called him "the brutish General," alluding either to his ardour in fighting, or to the gracelessness of his manners. Warburton calls him "the stupid General," from the idea that he was entirely passive under Cromwell. Clement Walker curiously describes him as "a gentleman of an irrational and brutish valour, fitter to follow another man's counsel than his own." It is extraordinary that on repeated important occasions he professed not to know what was doing in his own name. The General, it is certain, was excessively modest, spoke little, and his manners were abrupt; but he had opinions of his own, and acted up to them. "I have observed him at Councils of War," says the sage Whitelocke, "that he hath said little, but hath ordered things expressly contrary to the judgment of his Council; and in action on the field I have seen him so highly transported, that scarce any one durst speak a word to him, and he would seem more like a man distracted and furious, than of his ordinary mildness and so far different temper." The Duke of

Secret history has not revealed all that passed in those three awful hours. We know, however, that the warrant for the execution was not signed till within a few minutes before the King was led to the scaffold. In an apartment in the Palace, Ireton and Harrison were in bed together, and Cromwell, with four Colonels, assembled in it. Colonel Huncks refused to sign the warrant. Cromwell would have no farther delay, reproaching the Colonel as "a peevish, cowardly fellow," and Colonel Axtell declared that he was ashamed for his friend Huncks, remonstrating with him, that "the ship is coming into the harbour, and now would he strike sail before we come to anchor?" Cromwell stepped to a table, and wrote what he had proposed to Huncks; Colonel Hacker supplying his place, signed it, and with the ink hardly dry, carried the warrant in his hand, and called for the King.*

At the fatal summons Charles rose with alacrity. The King passed through the long gallery by a line of soldiers. Awe and sorrow seem now to have mingled in their countenances. Their barbarous commanders were intent on their own triumph, and no farther required the forced cry of "Justice and Execution." Charles stepped out of an enlarged window of the Banqueting-house, where a new opening levelled it with the scaffold. Charles came forwards with the same indifference as "he would have entered Whitehall on a masque-night," as an intelligent observer described. The King looked towards St. James's and smiled! Curious eyes were watchful of his slightest motions; and the Commonwealth papers of the day express their surprise, perhaps their vexation, at the unaltered aspect and the firm step of the Monarch. These mean spirits had flattered themselves, that he who had been cradled in royalty, who had lived years in the fields of honour, and was now, they presumed, a recreant in

Buckingham, who married Fairfax's only daughter, composed a noble epitaph on this military character, "one born for victory."

"He had the fierceness of the manliest mind,
And all the meekness, too, of womankind."

Fairfax was a literary man. Although none of his writings have been published, except his "Short Memorials," he composed several treatises and translations of military and other authors; versified the Psalms; wrote a History of the Church to the Reformation, in a large folio, all in his own hand; A System of Divinity; and this laborious student left besides numerous *opuscula*.

* Trial of the Regicides, 221.

imprisonment, "the grand Delinquent of England," as they called him, would start in horror at the block.

This last triumph, at least, was not reserved for them,—it was for the King. Charles, dauntless, strode "the floor of Death," to use Fuller's peculiar, but expressive phraseology. He looked on the block, with the axe lying upon it, with attention; his only anxiety was that the block seemed not sufficiently raised, and that the edge of the axe might be turned by being swept by the flappings of cloaks, or blunted by the feet of some moving about the scaffold. "Take care they do not put me to pain!"—"Take heed of the axe! take heed of the axe!" exclaimed the King to a gentleman passing by.—"Hurt not the axe; that may hurt me!" His continued anxiety concerning these *circumstances*, proves that he felt not the terror of death, solely anxious to avoid the pain, for he had an idea of their cruelty. With that sedate thoughtfulness which was in all his actions, he only looked at the business of the hour. One circumstance Charles observed with a smile. They had a notion that the King would resist the executioner; on the suggestion of Hugh Peters, it is said, they had driven iron staples and ropes into the scaffold, that their victim, if necessary, might be bound down upon the block.

The King's speech has many remarkable points; but certainly nothing so remarkable as the place where it was delivered. This was the first "King's Speech" spoken from a scaffold. Time shall confirm, as History has demonstrated, his principle, that "They mistook the nature of Government; for People are free under a Government, not by being sharers in it, but by the due administration of the Laws. It was for this," said Charles, "that now I am come here. If I could have given way to an arbitrary sway, for to have all Laws changed according to the power of the sword, I need not have come here, and therefore, I tell you that I am *the Martyr of the People!*"

In his last preparations, the same remarkable indifference to death appeared. He took off his cloak and George, and delivered the George to the Bishop, but he would not suffer decapitation till he had drawn a white satin cap on his head, and had put on his cloak again. Still he was casting a watchful eye on the block, which he thought should have been a little

higher. He seems to have had some suspicion of a cruel massacre, for the executioner and his assistant were disguised in the dress of sailors, and wore frightful vizors.

The Bishop was insensible to the inspiration of that awful hour: cold, formal, trivial in all he did or said, we may credit the sarcastic representation of the simplicity of the man in the Memoir of Ludlow.* Juxon closed his last address by the frigid conceit of the parts and stages of human life; that "the present was a very short stage, but it would carry him a great way—from Earth to Heaven! the prize you hasten to, a crown of glory." The King caught this trite image, and more nobly rejoined, with deeper emotion—"I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can be, no disturbance in the world!"

To which the Bishop frigidly rejoined, "You are exchanged from a temporal to an eternal crown. A good exchange!"

Addressing the Headsman, the King said, "When I put out my hands this way, then!" As soon as he had laid his head on the block, the executioner thrust his hair under his cap; and Charles, thinking that he had been going to strike, commanded him to "Stay for the Sign!" On the uttermost verge of life, men could discover in the King no indecent haste, no flurry of spirits, no trembling of limbs, no disorder of speech, no start in horror—his eyes were observed by an eminent physician to be as lively and quick as ever, as his head lay on the block. The blow was struck—an universal groan, as it were a supernatural voice, the like never before heard, broke forth from the dense and countless multitude. All near the scaffold pressed forwards to gratify their opposite feelings, by some memorial of his blood—the blood of a Tyrant or a Martyr.† The troops immediately dispersed on all sides the mournful, or the agitated people.

* "When Juxon, late Bishop of London," says the Anti-Episcopal Memorialist, "had notice of the King's desire to attend him, he broke out into these expressions: 'God save me! what a trick is this, that I should have no more warning, and I have nothing ready!' He went to the King, when having read one of his old sermons, he did not forget to use the words set down in the Liturgy, inviting all to confess before the congregation gathered together, though there was no one present but the King and himself."—i. 244.

† The relics of Charles seem to have been numerous—the very chips of the block, the sand stained with his blood, and some of his hair, were sold. Some washed

CHARLES THE FIRST received the axe with the same collectedness of thought, and died with the majesty with which he had lived. We may forgive the mean sarcasm of the scribes of those days, of "the King's head being sewed on, but must not be kept embalmed till Prince Charles comes to the Crown;" and we may pass over the stern, but not enlightened Republican Ludlow, who coldly notices the execution of the King by a single line; but there is one person, whose part in this business will for ever attest that there is no greatness of mind that may not be degraded by the animosity of faction, into the mere creature of an age. Had the heart of MILTON beat as coldly on the death of CHARLES THE FIRST as Ludlow's, his democratic feelings might be respected; but that this great tragic genius, having witnessed this solemn scene of Majesty in its last affliction, should have ridiculed and calumniated, and belied it, as the meanest of the mob—who could credit this, had it been a secret anecdote hitherto concealed from the public eye? Milton, in his celebrated "Defence of the People," treats Charles the First as a mere actor, stooping "*Veluti poetæ aut histriones teterrimi plausum in ipso exitio ambitiosissime captare!*" In the kingly calmness of Charles's death he sees but a player's exit—a paltry Mime's ambition to be clapped in retiring from the stage—the artificial decency of a theatrical Cæsar's fall!

The strength of character of Charles the First was derived from that intense and concentrated conception of Sovereignty which was always before him, and was at once his good and his

their hands in his blood. A Poem in "Parnassus Biceps" is "upon the King's Book (the Icon Basilike) bound up in a cover, coloured with his blood."

"Thus closed, go forth, blessed book, and yield to none
But to the Gospel and Christ's blood alone."

Could this volume ever escape the eye of the Biblio-maniac?

A more curious anecdote of the relics of Charles the First has been handed down. The fine equestrian figure of the King by Le Sœur was ordered to be taken down, and was purchased by a brazier, to be broken up, and converted into a variety of domestic utensils; Cavalier and Commonwealth men being equally eager to be supplied, and the supply was as endless as the demand. The brazier counted gold for brass. At the Restoration he proudly produced to the eyes of all the lovers of art, and more particularly to his customers, this beautiful production perfect and uninjured. His ingenuity was again rewarded—the equestrian statue was restored to its place—and the relics were reduced to their intrinsic value of old brass.

evil genius. Once, and perhaps but once, Milton conceived the ideal of A KING.

“A Crown,
Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns ;
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights
To him who wears the Regal diadem,
When on his shoulders each man’s burden lies.
For therein stands *the office of a King*,
That for *the Public* all this weight he bears.
Yet HE WHO REIGNS WITHIN HIMSELF, and rules
Passions, desires, and fears, is more a King—
And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or head-strong Multitudes,
Subject himself to Anarchy within.”

This ideal sovereign of the great Poet, we may at least conceive to have been CHARLES THE FIRST, for, amidst his variable fortunes, his hopes or his despair,

“HE REIGNED WITHIN HIMSELF!”

CHAPTER XLIII.

CONCLUSION.

THE English Revolution under Charles the First was unlike any preceding one ; it is not the story of a single event, nor of a few persons, where a dynasty was changed in a day ; and though it may be considered as the origin of a series of national innovations not yet closed, it was even dissimilar to the first great Revolution of our neighbours, in which a rapid succession of events was driven on by the demagogues of the people. A different spectacle is exhibited in our own Revolution. The Constitution even in the days of Charles the First, however unsettled and indefinite in particular points, cast its venerable shade over the contending parties ; both alike were clinging to the hallowed structure of national freedom, and both equally confident, appealed to the laws within its sanctuary. If the Parliament rose against the King, the act was to be legalised in the King’s name ; if the King in his distresses violated the Constitution, the act received the form of legality in the opinions

of the Judges. The remonstrances, the replies, the rejoinders, and all the voluminous manifestoes remain singular monuments of their reason, their views, and the difficulties which both parties had to encounter. The nation was revolutionising itself through a great variety of human interests, and often by a noble display of the passions, but with many errors, and many miseries, hastening, or retarding the protracted and the dubious catastrophe.

From the age of Charles the First we contemplate in our history the phases of Revolution—in a Monarchy, a Republic, a Despotism, and an anomalous government of the People. Having acquired neither wisdom from the past, nor honesty for the future, by a disorderly return to an unsettled Monarchy, we derived not our constitutional rights from the ambiguous virtues, the undoubted crimes, and the ludicrous follies which the nation had passed through in all these political changes. Another Revolution became necessary; another which, when the gloss of novelty had worn off, was discovered to be neither so just, so efficient, nor so comprehensive as it seemed.

These subjects yet demand the studies of philosophical inquirers. Hereafter, it is probable that some happier genius, the Montesquieu, or the Locke of another order of events, shall deduce new results in the policy of governments, of which we are yet unskilled in the practice, and for which the experience of history supplies no prototype.

Mine has been a humbler task—to look more closely into the interesting period of the first great Revolution of Modern History, without fear or flattery. Should these volumes be acceptable as a critical supplement to our preceding historians; should some popular errors have been corrected, and some novel researches have been opened, the development of this political history will reveal to us a history of human nature, as a philosopher, not as a partisan, would observe it. That an historian of Charles the First must necessarily be condemned as an apologist of arbitrary power, is a painful evidence of the degradation of our popular criticism. More than one of those scribes, who exercise their universal powers, weekly or monthly, and who often imagine that they conceal their ignorance by their insolence, have denounced the present writer as a Jacobite! Light, indeed, is the offence of comparing a man with a non-

entity. It is but a trick of the craft, an ingenious art of calling names without incurring damages, for the law of libel, it seems, does not include chimæras!

My aim was directed by no narrow view, or personal motive; a great subject was opened, and an extraordinary character contributed to give an unity to its diversified scenes.

There are no characters which more powerfully address our sympathies than those of a mixed nature, when, by the peculiarity of their situation, and the singularity of the events in which they were actors, we trace with curiosity their greatness or their infirmities alternately prevalent. Such was the personal character of Charles the First. This King occupied a position, perhaps unparalleled in the history of monarchs; it was one of those awful epochs when an empire is to be subverted. Charles the First was placed in the shock of a past and a future age.

Charles the First has descended to us from writers who have the advantage of standing forth as the advocates of popular liberty, as a tyrant heartless as Nero, and perfidious as Tiberius.*

* Two heavy charges have often been raised against Charles the First—that he was a cruel and heartless man, and so utterly void of sincerity, that his word was never to be trusted. Mrs. Macaulay and Mr. Brodie, evidently with some perplexity, have attempted to mention a circumstance or two, ludicrously trivial, to show that Charles was very unfeeling; and Mr. Brodie sneers at Charles's "tears," i. 291. The notion of his "cruelty" arose from the calamity of Civil War; but this "cruelty" was equally shared by the Parliament; both were combating for their cause. It is unjust to accuse Charles of sanguinary dispositions, who seems to have had more tenderness of disposition than those who have been forced to dwell on such trivial incidents as the King abruptly turning away his horse when Fairfax presented a petition, and trampling on Fairfax's foot, as the marks of a predominant character. That he was not naturally of a cruel temper, numerous facts attest; while not a single one to show his inhumanity has the industry of his malignants been able to allege. Charles was not a man of blood.

In respect to his sincerity, and "the mental reservation" of which he is accused, we must place ourselves in his situation fairly to decide. He was tortured by his perplexities, often forced to act contrary to his conviction. Slow to concede, yet his concessions had been greater and greater, in proportion as the Parliament rose in their demands. To subscribe dethroning propositions, and the abolition of Episcopacy, was a suicidal civil death. Charles had translated Bishop Sanderson's "*De Juramenti Obligatione*." Extorted oaths entered into his casuistical studies. The very circumstance that he had thought long and deeply of the nature of oaths, shows at least a disposition to preserve his integrity. It is well known that Charles, on more than one occasion, refused to violate the honour of his word.

The master-spirits in the school of democracy have saturated their pages with their vindictive declamations. The contemporaries of this monarch found, that to have done justice to the King, even when they could have done it with security, would often have been to criminate themselves, and their successors, the king-haters, felt it would have been injurious to the glory of Republicans. But the story of Charles the First was more involved and ambiguous than the democratic writers have ventured to disclose.

The timid loiterer, Truth, comes after a long delay, and comes veiled, but the veil is lifted by her devoted servants. "The Tyrant" of the Commonwealth was then acknowledged to have been an accomplished Prince; his personal virtues were not disputable; and as Harris, in his degrading style, describes it, "his understanding was far enough from being despicable." This was a new concession; but then it was urged that the character of the monarch was not to be decided on by that of the man.

The Prince, accomplished and virtuous, when viewed on one side, and the faithless and monstrous Tyrant, when seen on the other, exhibited a solecism in human nature. It was difficult to accord this discordance; it was hard to make this incongruity cohere. And it is remarkable that this conflicting feeling has always been a stumbling-block among the open adversaries of this monarch. It was so from the earliest period. John Cooke, the Commonwealth's Solicitor,—he who had been hired to perform in that character only a few days before he made his appearance, anxiously prefixed as a motto to his statement of the King's case,

"Womanish pity to mourn for a Tyrant
Is a deceitful cruelty to a City."

The disparity of the motto with the case is striking; and how it happened that such "a monstrous Tyrant" should excite even "womanish pity," might have perplexed the Revolutionary Solicitor-General to have explained.*

* Cooke's "King Charles's Case," by the circumstance of the King not choosing to plead at his trial, was not delivered in Court, but was published as a pamphlet. Charles was spared the mortification of one of the most vehement invectives. The intentions of the King are assumed as some of his crimes. It is a shrewd work,

But later, and more philosophical writers, such as the judicious Malcolm Laing, and our contemporary Mr. Hallam, have sometimes been startled at this phantom of "a Tyrant," whom they often discovered to have been more deeply occupied by his troubles, his sufferings, and his inextricable distresses, than by his tyrannies. These writers are no light censurers of the King; and sometimes they have judged of Charles, imbued with the feelings and the knowledge of a later age. Amidst their accusatory charges, often a painful truth flashes on their sight—embarrasses their conscientious pen—and has often occasioned a discrepancy in their statements, and an involved apologetical parenthesis for Charles the First, which has spoiled the integrity of their sentences.*

We perceive that these historians, in the fulness of their knowledge, could not avoid indicating those truths which, though vital in the history of human nature, might be extraneous in the history of the Constitution.

The story of this monarch may be said never yet to have been written; for hitherto it has only served as the organ of the monarchical and democratic parties. There is something in

composed without dignity, but well fitted for those whom he flattered as "his honourable clients, the people of England." It remains a striking example of the terrible exaggerations of a factious period and of remorseless men. Some of its sophisms were exposed by the immortal Butler, with all his force, his learning, and his inimitable genius. Both these tracts are preserved in Somers' Collection, v. 214. The most distinguished of all editors doubts whether Butler or Sir John Birkenhead were the author of this noble reply. The internal evidence would have been sufficient to ascribe it to the great writer; but it is placed beyond a doubt, for it was printed from a manuscript in Butler's hand-writing.

* Laing, when censuring the arbitrary conduct of Charles, alludes in this manner to its cause: "Whether his exalted notion of the Prerogative in England were derived from *established or irregular precedents of an unsettled Constitution*, is an inquiry foreign to the design of this history." Thus honestly, though awkwardly, the historian indicates the explanation in respect to Charles, which he avoids to give. Mr. Hallam, on the same topic: "He had shown himself possessed with such notions of his own prerogative, *no matter how derived*." Here we find the same truth crossing the historian's mind, and as cautiously passed over. Many similar notices might be furnished. The Presbyterian Harris, irritated by Charles's theological logomachy with Henderson, censures the King as "a trifler, showing a debasement of character beyond example, in his critical situation;" but after this degrading charge comes forth the limping apology, "'Tis true these were the controversies of the age." I could find even in Mr. Brodie explanations favourable to Charles, by the side of some of the heaviest charges.

the subject which seems intractable, and the historian himself occupies a position as peculiar as that of the unfortunate monarch. All things seem to fluctuate in the very act of contemplation. Justice is allied to injustice, great virtues are not freed from great passions, ambiguous conduct leads to dubious results, and even wisdom errs. There are moments in the study of the reign of Charles the First, when we almost suspect that "the tyranny" of Charles may be as fictitious as "the Rebellion" by which Clarendon designates the Civil War.

We had to disclose the history of a spirited young prince, the victim of that system of favouritism which was then practised in European Courts—ungenerously deserted by his Parliaments—surrounded by conspiracies, and involved in dark intrigues—devoted to maintain the established institutions of his country against an invading Church, and a faction clad in the enchanted armour of patriotism—deprived of his crown, yet still potent by his name—a wanderer and a hero in his own kingdom—and greater in his adversities than on his throne.

Charles the First could not avoid being the very man he was—his errors, his prejudices, his devotion to the institutions of his country, were those of his times and of his station, but his calamities, his magnanimity, and the unsubdued spirit, were more peculiarly his own. There is not in human nature a more noble spectacle than the man long wrestling with his fate, like the *Œdipus* of the Grecian muse. His inevitable errors, and his involuntary guilt, seem not to be his—his virtues and his genius alone triumphed over his destiny.

APPENDIX.

THE following Manuscript has been referred to at page 543 :—

ASHMOLE'S MSS. 800. Art. XXXVI.

NEWPORT, *November, 1648.*

WHEN the Commissioners themselves confess that reason cannot be accepted by them, though clearly offered by me ; when close imprisonment (or worse) is threatened to me if I yield not to all that is demanded ; when my propositions (which are neither many nor extravagant) are not so much as answered ; I leave all the world to judge what freedom, honour, or safety there is in this treaty. And certainly my condition in point of freedom is farre different from what it was at Hampton Court. Witness the strict guard round about this Island, and the troop of horse always attending, or rather watching me when I go abroad.

Since, therefore, none of the conditions are kept to me upon which I gave my word, I cannot be truly said to break it, though I seek my freedom. Besides, the Governor made me declare before the Commissioners, that continuation of guards upon me freed me from my word, whereupon he took away the sentinels at my door, but never moved those of more importance, which was enough to confess the truth of what I declared, but not sufficient to take away the justness of my plea which cannot be avoided, except by the total taking away my guards, the difference of a few paces position, nearer or farther off, not making me the less a prisoner.

Nor will I make a question of that which is none, by setting down the particular reasons of my absenting myself at this time ; yet this I must say, that in order to the present quiet and future peace of this kingdom, my libertie, tho' at a distance, is much more conduceable than my restraint, whether more or less strict. For my freedom takes away the pretence of those who, by their endeavours to set me at liberty, might continue the old or make new disturbances in the kingdom. Also, I shall be able to temper the more youthful and impatient resolution of those who possibly may

rather aim at glorious actions than a quiet life, my chief intention being so to make use of this my escape (in case God shall bless me herein according to my desire) as to come to a personal treaty with my two Houses, that so I may be truly heard. And even all the world shall see that no change of condicion or place shall alter or lessen my earnest endeavours of procuring a firm and well-grounded peace (and in a peaceable way) to these my dominions.

To all my people of what soever station, quality or condicion.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

If my stay here could have happily finished this treaty, or given you the least protection, I would not have thought of absenting myself, nor had I taken the resolution without your advice, if it were not evident that your knowledge thereof would have prejudiced you, and hindered the course I have taken for my own preservation, the necessity of which I will make plainly appear how soon I shall be in a place of freedom, this being one of those kind of actions which is fitter for a servant's praise than advice. However, I cannot but leave you this assurance that I am no less satisfied with your industrious services to me at this time, than I am displeased with my own misfortunes, and desiring you to be confident that I am

Your most assured real constant friend,

C. R.

To all the Lords, Bishops, Clergy, and other Gentlemen,
whose assistance I have had since I came hither.

NEWPORT, *November, 1648.*

I cannot but add this:—It being evident that I must either shipwreck my conscience, or retourne to close prison, none that loves conscience or freedom, but must approve of my resolution of absenting myselfe.

THE END.















