



HER
MAJESTY'S
TOWER



BY
HEPWORTH DIXON



E. M. GABRIELSON.
171, PRESTON ROAD
BRIGHTON.

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YEOMEN WARDERS OF THE TOWER.

Her Majesty's Tower

BY

WILLIAM HEPWORTH DIXON

Popular Edition

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE REV. W. J. LOFTIE, B.A., F.S.A.

Author of "The Authorised Guide to the Tower," etc. etc.

INCLUDING SIXTEEN COLOURED PLATES AND A PLAN

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II.



CHAP.	PAGE
I. A FAVOURITE	1
II. A FAVOURITE'S FRIEND	8
III. THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK	14
IV. TO THE TOWER!	20
V. LADY CATHARINE MANNERS	26
VI. HOUSE OF VILLIERS	33
VII. REVOLUTION	39
VIII. FALL OF LORD CHANCELLOR BACON	46
IX. A SPANISH MATCH	57
X. SPANIOLIZING	65
XI. HENRY DE VERE	71
XII. THE MATTER OF HOLLAND	78
XIII. SEA AFFAIRS	83
XIV. EPISODE OF THE PIRATE WAR	91
XV. PORT AND COURT	103
XVI. A NEW ROMANZO	109
XVII. MOVE AND COUNTER-MOVE	115
XVIII. PIRATE AND PRISON	120
XIX. IN THE MARSHALSEA	130
XX. THE SPANISH OLIVE	136
XXI. PRISONS OPENED	147
XXII. A PARLIAMENT	155
XXIII. DIGBY, EARL OF BRISTOL	164
XXIV. TURN OF FORTUNE	170

CHAP.	PAGE
XXV. ELIOT ELOQUENT	177
XXVI. FELTON'S KNIFE	185
XXVII. AN ASSASSIN	194
XXVIII. NINE GENTLEMEN IN THE TOWER	201
XXIX. A KING'S REVENGE	208
XXX. CHARLES THE FIRST	215
XXXI. PILLARS OF STATE AND CHURCH	223
XXXII. END OF WENTWORTH	230
XXXIII. LAUD'S LAST TROUBLES	235
XXXIV. THE LIEUTENANT'S HOUSE	241
XXXV. A POLITICAL ROMANCE	246
XXXVI. PHILOSOPHY AT BAY	253
XXXVII. FATE OF AN IDEALIST	261
XXXVIII. 'BRITANNIA'	267
XXXIX. KILLING NOT MURDER	273
XL. A SECOND BUCKINGHAM	281
XLI. ROGER, EARL OF CASTLEMAINE	290
XLII. A LIFE OF PLOTS	297
XLIII. THE TWO PENNS	303
XLIV. A QUAKER'S CELL	311
XLV. COLONEL BLOOD	317
XLVI. CROWN JEWELS	324
XLVII. KING AND COLONEL	331
XLVIII. RYE-HOUSE PLOT	337
XLIX. MURDER!	345
L. A PATRIOT	353
LI. THE GOOD OLD CAUSE	362
LII. JAMES, DUKE OF MONMOUTH	369
LIII. THE UNJUST JUDGE	377
LIV. THE SCOTTISH LORDS	385
LV. THE COUNTESS OF NITHSDALE	392
LVI. ESCAPED	398
LVII. CAUSE OF THE PRETENDER	404
LVIII. REFORMERS AND REFORM	410
LIX. REFORM RIOTS	418

CONTENTS.

v

CHAP.	PAGE
LX. SIR FRANCIS BURDETT	425
LXI. A SUMMONS TO THE TOWER	433
LXII. ARTHUR THISTLEWOOD	439
LXIII. A CABINET COUNCIL	446
LXIV. CATO STREET	454
LXV. PURSUIT	461
LXVI. LAST PRISONERS IN THE TOWER	467
INDEX	473

LIST OF PLATES IN VOL. II.



YEOMEN WARDERS OF THE TOWER	<i>Frontispiece</i>	
THE WHITE TOWER	<i>To face p.</i>	80
GATEWAY, THE BLOODY TOWER	" "	144
GENERAL VIEW OF THE TOWER FROM THE RIVER	" "	208
MIDDLE TOWER	" "	276
MARTIN TOWER	" "	340
PRISON OF THE BELL TOWER	" "	400
THE QUEEN'S HOUSE	" "	464





HER MAJESTY'S TOWER.

CHAPTER I.

A FAVOURITE.



IN the crowd which pressed round the block in Palace Yard to see Raleigh die, no man took more of the sacred fire than John Eliot, of Port Eliot, on Lynher Creek. Eliot was then a man of untried power and silent tongue; an idler of the Park, the cock-pit, and the bowling alley; spending much of his time, and laying up most of his hope, in Buckingham's ante-rooms. A few years later he was to grow renowned, in a land of orators and fighting-men, for gift of speech and pride of spirit; to link his name with that of English liberty; to pine and perish in Raleigh's cell. The story of his passage from Palace Yard to the Bloody tower, is that of the drama, which from scene to scene, and year by year, gave Suffolk, Arundel, Bacon, Coke, and Williams to the Tower; Buckingham to the knife; and Wentworth, Laud, and Charles to the headsman's axe.

When Eliot stood in Palace Yard to see Raleigh die, his friend George Villiers was at his best; and

such a youth as Villiers at his best is rarely to be seen in this nether world.

In form, the man was like a god. Spare, tall, and straight, his frame combined a rare degree of strength with lines of perfect grace. Few men could ride so fast, could leap so high, could dance so long, as he; and no man in the court could ride, and leap, and dance with such unstudied ease. His hand was small and white; a lady's hand, with taper fingers, ending in filbert nails; and yet his grip on sword and rein was close and tight. His head was finely formed and firmly set. Young women were afraid to look at him, and painters sighed and said they could not paint his face. A sly, unconscious gaiety flowed about him. In the galleries of White Hall, he played his part of light comedian in a way to have made his fortune at the Globe. He was the genius and embodiment of Youth.

By dress, by speech, by way of life, this fair outside was framed like a work of art. Composed of richest silk and velvet pile, his clothes were all but hidden under ropes of pearl. The buttons on his coat were precious stones. He wore a diamond cockade, with diamonds sewn into his belt and bands. His sword, his spurs, his plumes, were all alight with gems. One suit of unshorn, cloak and jacket, cost no less than eighty thousand pounds. Nearly all his wealth, when he was one of the richest men at court, was heaped upon his back.

To wit and learning he had no pretence; and yet his talk had charms, not only for the pages and courtiers who were bound to listen, but for men who were the lords of human speech. Bacon loved to see him; Abbott lent him an attentive ear. He knew the light things of the world; his heart was gay; his voice was winning; and his talk was bright with prank and jest. A smile sat on his face. His words were always smooth, his manners always soft. He hated to say No, and he

could never say that word to one he loved. When he was spoken to, he flushed into a girl-like pink; and well-worn sinners said, when first they saw him, that he was too good a child to thrive in courts.

King James had seen this prodigal of nature once without being struck; for James was dull of sight; and like a fish, he needed to be dazzled and excited by the bait. The second time, his eye was taken and his heart secured. The scene was Cambridge, and the bait a play; that macaronic comedy by George Ruggles, called "Ignoramus," in which the lawyers are put to shame, while wits and scholars bear away the bell; a piece of humour which pleased the King and drove the lawyers mad; which Ellesmere stooped to notice at the Council board, and Selden to refute in his work on Tithes. James thought this play a compliment to himself; he being the first of scholars and the best of wits! He saw it many times, for he disliked the Inns of Court, and loved to hear his lawyers well abused; but never had comedy made so great a hit as "Ignoramus" made that night. While James was rolling in his chair, and clapping hands, and laughing till the tears ran down his cheeks, the young comedian came upon the stage, all blushing like a rose. James could not take his eyes from that joyous face and from those dainty limbs. "What think you of him?" he turned and asked. "Too bashful for a court," replied Lord Arundel. James called the actor to his closet, patted him on the cheek, and asked him who his father was, and where that father lived.

The lad had nothing much to boast beyond his shining face and his comic powers.

George Villiers was the younger son of a country knight and a lady's maid; the country knight, Sir George Villiers, of Brooksby, near Melton Mowbray; the lady's maid, Mary Beaumont, of no place in particular; though in after times, when she had

peerages and pensions to give away, no end of people claimed her as their kin. She was an old man's fancy, and his second wife. Some people say she was a scullery wench, until the amorous knight induced his wife to lift her from the kitchen to an upper-room, to dress her in more decent garb, and give her the station of a lady's maid. When Lady Villiers died, her pretty maid was quickly in her shoes.

Old crones had told her "fortune," and a wonderful fortune it proved to be. A second brood was soon about the old man's knee; John, George, Kit, Susan; and he saw but dimly how these darlings could be fed. His house and land were settled on William, his eldest son; and when his house and land were gone, the little left would hardly have kept his widow from the street. The old man laid in the earth, she had to front the world with her lovely face, her four small children, and her couple of hundred pounds a-year. She was a Parent, with a duty to perform. The children must have bread, and how was she to buy them bread? Was not her beauty worth its price? Had not the crones, in whom she trusted, told her that many would go mad for her? She put her beauty up for sale. One Rayner bid for it; an old man, rich in money and frail in health. She took him at his word; but he was not so rich as she had hoped, and when he fell asleep she looked more warily for a richer mate.

Sir Thomas Compton was a younger brother of that Lord Compton of Compton, who had married the greatest fortune of those times. A "little man," a "drunkard," and a "fool," Sir Thomas was the butt of his county, and the make-sport of his village-green. But what were such things to a Parent, with her four small children to feed and clothe? She knew that he was rich, and that was enough for her. The match was most unhappy for Sir Thomas, who had every reason to be jealous of his wife. Ere many months

of his married life were spent, his neighbours changed his title from Sir Thomas Compton to Sir Thomas Cuckold.

With men Sir Thomas might be egged into display of spirit. One Captain Bird, a roaring fellow, put such shame on him that every one told him—as a joke—that he must call the Captain out. “What!” cried the pigmy, “fight him?” “Even so,” his neighbours said, each eager for a piece of fun; “a man could only die once, and it was better to fall in a good cause, sword in hand, than to be spurned and flouted like a dog.” It was like asking Master Stephen to send a cartel of defiance to Captain Bobadil. But nervous terror often makes men bold. A note was sent, and Bird, amused by such a cartel, answered that since the choice of ground and weapons lay with him, he would fight in a saw-pit, and with swords, in order that the cuckold should not run away! The two men stript to fight, and dropt into the pit. Bird waved his sword above his head in mockery, crying, “Now, Compton, thou shalt not escape me; come, let’s see what thou canst do!” on which the pigmy, seeing his adversary’s point in the air, rushed in below his guard, and ran him through the ribs. Bird instantly fell dead.

But he had no such courage with his wife. This lovely creature dealt in charms and spells, and mortal daring failed against her demoniac arts. She kept a “devil,” in the shape of Doctor Lamb: a darling of fine ladies and their foolish lords, whose money he embezzled and whose honour he betrayed. This wretch, astrologer, enchanter, secret poisoner, became her “father” in the science; teaching her magic and the seven arts; mixing powders and potions to intoxicate her lord, and helping her to physic and to form her sons. She meant these lads to rise as she had risen. She brought them up for marriage. Never at school herself, she had a poor conceit of learning, as the “beggar’s portion” in a court; but she was quick

to see the charms of dress, of easy manner, and of fluent grace in speech. A year of France would help her darlings more than twenty years at Oxford; and in this belief she decked her stupid John and handsome George in lace and sword, and sent them with a servant into France. When George came back, the gloze and sheen of Paris on his handsome face, he had to find his bread, assisted by the tipsy pigmy, by the handsome and licentious woman who had married three men for money, and by the dissolute charlatan, Doctor Lamb.

His fortune had been quickly found, and day by day the King grew fonder of him. "All that sat in the council," James profanely mumbled, "looking on him, saw his face, as it had been the face of an angel;" and because the lad was fair, he gave him the name of Stephen—as he called it, "Steenie"—from the saint. One week before the comedy, Villiers had been met on the race-course in a faded suit of black, the doublet seamed and bare; a few days later he was a knight, a gentleman of the bedchamber, and a pensioner with a thousand pounds a-year. The enemies of Carr became his friends. Lady Bedford gave him money; Lake procured him place: Pembroke and Arundel took him up; Archbishop Abbott called him son; and Bacon gave him sage advice. A word was sent to him from Raleigh's cell. All those who feared Northampton and his patron Carr, combined in his support. The Parent, strong in her belief in sorcery, consulted Doctor Lamb. The Somersets had the help of Forman; she would meet their devilish arts with darker and more potent spells. She brought the sorcerer to her son, as one who could rule his planets and confound his foes. Lamb soon became familiar in his house, and the young actor learned to bend over magic crystals, and to see his future in a puff of smoke.

Queen Anne was much against him: that neglected Queen being sick of lads with scented locks and

mincing gait, who seemed in her honest eyes neither men nor women; but the good Archbishop, her prudent counsellor, brought Queen Anne to take his side. The youth was dubbed Sir George in the Queen's own bedroom at her personal request. From that hour he was not so much a favourite as an idol of the court:—the visible spirit of its gaiety, its pleasure, and its youth.

No week had passed since he was dubbed a knight that had not seen him graced by royal gift—a chace, a lodge, a manor, a monopoly, a star, a badge, a title, or a place; and only four years from the day when he was met on Cambridge race-course in a worn-out coat, this lucky youth was Baron, Viscount, Earl, and Marquis. Never, save in Eastern fable, where the jester rises from his shawl a pasha, had comedian won such honours in so short a time.





CHAPTER II.

A FAVOURITE'S FRIEND.

ELIOT was twenty-eight years old when Raleigh fell, and through the favour of his friend at court he had been dubbed Sir John.

These friends had youth, health, animal spirits, love of sport in common, and the accidents of life had thrown them for a time together in their early years. They had the foils and differences which make young friendships charming. George was light and John was grave. George was keen and hasty; John was stern and patient. George was quick to quarrel, to forgive, and to forget; while John was slow to take offence, but having taken it was slower to forgive and to forget. They loved the prisoner in the Tower. Villiers had been able to do that prisoner good; not only by refusing to accept of Sherborne Castle, but by speaking for him to the King when every one else had failed, and gaining a reluctant leave for him to sail on his voyage to the Mine of Gold. If Eliot had less power to serve, he nursed a sterner anger in his heart towards Raleigh's foes.

A man of the western country, born near Plymouth Sound, accustomed from his birth to boats and waves, he looked to a stormy and adventurous life. By nature quick and hardy, he had much of the vice, and most of the virtue, of a buccaneer; as buccaneers had lived and rioted from the days of Admiral Drake to those

of Captain Ward. His youth had been somewhat wild ; and he was said to have spent his coin as heedlessly as he was willing to spill his blood. Before he had passed his fifteenth year, he startled the western gentry by his reckless deeds ; and on his neighbour, John Moyle, a gentleman of position in the county, speaking to his father on the subject, he had drawn his sword, and thrust the blade into that neighbour's side. Here was a spirit for the Spanish Main !

A stout walker, a sure bowler, a good shot, he loved to spend his time afield, and found his chief delight in what are called manly sports. Though sent to Oxford for the usual terms, he left his college without having taken a degree in arts. On passing from Exeter College to the Inns of Court, he only glanced at law ; and then procured a license to travel into foreign parts. In France he met George Villiers, then a boy of seventeen summers, with his fortunes all to seek ; and there this grave, fierce youth had spent some time in travel with that frolicsome boy.

At first, the profit of their friendship was on Villiers' side ; for Eliot was the elder and richer lad ; and John, although he could not boast of so fine a face as George, could certainly claim to have far the stronger head. How fast their fates were knit and bound, no sorcerer could then foretell. They met ; and they were not to part. For good and evil days their fate was one ; a clasp of love succeeded by a hug of hate, till death itself divided them ; on this side by a jailor's bolt, on that side by a murderer's knife.

When Eliot came from France, he found his father dead, Port Eliot all his own. After making his peace with Moyle, he gave his love to Rhadagund Gedies, a neighbour's only child ; and was elected to a seat in the House of Commons for St. Germans ; but his passion was the sea, in preference to either courtly or domestic life. His countrymen were sailors. Raleigh, Gilbert, Drake, were western born ; and Eliot, as he

thought of these men, turned his eyes to the fleets in Plymouth Sound. Sitting in the House a silent member, no one dreamed that under that calm outside there lay such depths and furies of volcanic fire. Judged as men saw him in those early days, John Eliot seemed more likely to brave the ocean than to lead debates; to find his foemen in some desperate Don Lepantos, not in petulant Villierses and sickly Wentworths; and to fall in headlong fight, his foot upon a Spanish deck, not waste his strength and yield his life with saint-like patience in the Bloody tower.

The prize on which he fixed his heart was the flag of Vice-Admiral in his native seas. A Vice-Admiral, holding his powers from the Lord Admiral, not from the Sovereign, had to keep the ports in order and the channels free; to watch for pirates, to impress the sailors, and to guard the flag. A Commodore, a Secretary, and a Judge in one, he had to board suspicious craft, to draw up rules of seizure, and to settle what was lawful prize. A Vice-Admiral of Devon was a great man in the west.

This post had been held in recent years by Sir Arthur Champernoon (Raleigh's uncle), by Sir Richard Hawkins, by Sir Christopher Harris; and was then held, under Charles, the great Earl of Nottingham, by Sir Lewis Stukeley, Raleigh's infamous cousin, captain, and betrayer. This base fellow, after stealing his patron's money, and helping to swear away that patron's life, had fallen under such a weight of public scorn, that James, with every wish to stand his friend, could not support him against the storm of public wrath. As men walked home from Palace Yard, they spoke of Stukeley as the Judas of our race. The wretch had sold his master; sold him for a royal beck and a bag of gold. "Sir Judas Stukeley" was a phrase on every lip, and not a lip in London dropt that name without a curse. Sir Judas went to court, and no man spake to him. He waited on great

people, and the servants of great people told him to begone. On every side he heard a hiss of "perjurer" and "villain." Then, as odium grew around him, he repaired to James, for whom he had lost his soul, and offered to be sworn on the sacred bread and wine, that what he had said against the murdered man was true. "Why, then," replied the King, "the more malicious he to utter these speeches at his death." A Master of the Hounds, who was standing by and heard him, cried with honest heat, "Let the King take off Stukeley's head, as he hath done the other's; and let him at his death take the sacrament, and his oath upon it, and I'll believe it; otherwise, I shall credit Sir Walter Raleigh's bare affirmative against a thousand of his oaths." Sir Judas called at the Earl of Nottingham's house to speak on business; but the Lord High Admiral passed his Vice without a nod. Abashed for a moment only, Judas strode to his illustrious chief, and tried to speak. The Earl was eighty-three years old; a prince in rank, a gentleman in speech; but when his eye fell on the wretch, he broke into a passionate rage. "What!" cried the noble sailor, "thou base fellow—thou! who art the scorn and contempt of men—how darest thou offer thyself in my presence? Were it not in mine own house, I would cudgel thee with my staff." Then Judas crawled to the King. "What wouldst thou have me do?" asked James, when Stukeley told him what the Earl had done. "Wouldst have me hang him? If I should hang all the men who speak ill of thee, all the trees in the country would not suffice."

His son, "young Judas," and a French chemist, named Mansourie, had been closely bound up with him, and these luckless men had now to share his ill repute. But justice fell upon them, swift and sure. On New Year's Eve, these rogues received the wages of their shame—the price of blood—in minted gold; and on the feast of Twelfth Night, Stukeley himself

was taken in the act of clipping this new coin. When flung into the Gatehouse, he accused Mansourie and his son of sharing in his crime. Young Judas fled from justice; but the officers caught Mansourie in the west, and quickly thrust him behind the Marshalsea locks and bars. Their game being now played out, this chemist turned on Stukeley, and a long, strange tale he had to tell. Sir Judas was an old and seasoned rogue. A dozen years he had been employed in clipping and sweating coin. Mansourie was a partner in his trade. A Vice-Admiral of Devon had to receive and pay a good deal of money, and on all this money they had used their profitable art. From clipping coin, they had passed to perjury and treachery. But God had found them out. The charges they had sworn were false; the wages of their shame had proved their ruin; in his prison cell, the chemist felt that what had fallen upon him was a judgment for his sins!

When these confessions, signed with Mansourie's hand, were laid before the King, Sir Judas fell at once. Stript of his Vice-Admiral's flag, he was conducted from the Gatehouse to the Tower. To make the judgment yet more striking, he was lodged in Raleigh's cell.

Sir Judas knew so much about the court intrigues, that James would not allow him to be tried, even on so grave a charge as that of clipping coin. So base a creature would be sure to blab; and James, in mortal fear of fresh exposures, sent the wretch a pardon, bade him leave the Tower, and hide his face for ever from the sight of men. But where could Judas hide his face? Down west, among his kith and kin, he found no peace. All gentlemen scowled, all burghers hissed and cursed, when he approached. He fled from town to country, and from country back to town. A curse was on his head. No man would shelter him. At length, he turned from the society of men; took boat for the Isle of Lundy, then a lonely rock on which the

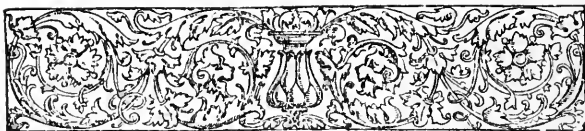
passing pirate built his lair : and there, surrounded by the howling winds and whitening waves, he lived, went mad, and died.

A new Vice-Admiral was wanted. Nottingham, as a Howard, would have sought some friend of Spain ; but just as the flag fell vacant, James was making an arrangement with the Earl for putting his darling into higher place. Already he had bought for him Lord Worcester's post as Master of the Horse ; and he was trying to procure for him the great Lord Admiral's post. The Earl was not unwilling to retire—on terms. If Buckingham could be made Lord Admiral, there was every chance that Eliot would be named Vice-Admiral in the western ports.

Nottingham was persuaded to resign his office for a certain sum ; three thousand pounds paid down, a pension of a thousand pounds a-year for life. The King was happy. A comedian ruled his stables and his fleet ; that youth, whose comely face and joyous spirit made the poor old dotard young again. The lad would fawn, a whelp, at James's feet, and kiss his shoes, and call himself his dog. "Tom Badger," laughed the King ; for Tom was then his favourite Fool. "No," whined the mimic, "only dog." He would be nothing but his Majesty's dog ; and then the King was merry, and drank more wine, and seemed to forget his weight of care.

Buckingham, now Lord Admiral, named Sir John Eliot his Vice-Admiral in the western ports—the first step on his journey to the Tower !





CHAPTER III.

THE COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK.

WHEN Nottingham was pensioned into private life, the Favourite turned upon the elder branch of his great house; the whole of whom he felt, in self-defence, that he must drive from office, and expel from court. It was for him a fight; a fight for place and pay; and it was long a question whether one so young and light could struggle with success against such hosts of Admirals, Councillors, Secretaries of State, as hung upon these Howards; backed and supported, as they were, by lovely and unscrupulous intriguers, such as Lady Suffolk, Lady Salisbury, and Lady Knollys. The fight was on; a boy against a host. The Tower stood open to receive the vanquished. Which would be the first to pass?

These Howards of the elder branch were not so strong as they had been in the reign of Carr; but they were high in office, rich in friends. Suffolk was Lord High Treasurer, Chancellor of Cambridge, Constable of the Tower. Lord Walden, his eldest son, was Captain of the King's Gentlemen Pensioners; Sir Thomas Howard, his second son, was Master of the Prince's Horse. A crowd of officers toiled for them by day and night. The Monsons, Lakes, and Cranfields, knew no will but theirs. Sir Thomas Monson, Master of the Armoury, had his official residence in

the Tower. Sir William Monson, Admiral in the Narrow Seas, had long directed the English fleet. Like Suffolk, these two gentlemen were Catholics, in the pay of Spain. Sir Thomas Lake was senior Secretary of State; his brother, Dr. Arthur Lake, was Bishop of Bath and Wells. Sir Lionel Cranfield was a Master of Requests, Master of the Wardrobe, Master of the Wards. Dependent on these worthies hung a host of fencers, Jesuits, sorcerers, and spies. The men kept bravoos and assassins in their pay. The women toyed with magic, and deceived themselves with charms. Some rogue who "ruled the stars" was a familiar in their councils, over which he exercised an influence only second—and not always second—to the sway of their domestic priest. All members of the Church of Rome regarded Suffolk as their chief, and he was strong with all the strength to be derived from Spain.

In his assault on this great family, Villiers could rely on the support of every man who loved the Dutch, and wished to see the Protestant states in Germany thrive and grow. The truce of Spain and the United Provinces was near the end. A Catholic League was being formed, the object, open and avowed, of which was to attack Bohemia and the Upper Rhine. The Spaniards, hoping that the hour had come for them to crush the Dutch, were building fleets and arming troops; and now, if ever, was the time for Philip's pensioners in London to deserve their pay. An Admiral of the Downs, a Secretary of State, unfavourable to Spain, might do that country the gravest harm. But just as Philip wished to have an English Admiral in the Downs, an English Secretary at White Hall, who would receive his orders—Admirals like Sir William Monson, Secretaries like Sir Thomas Lake—the men who loved their country—such as Abbott, Bacon, Falkland, Eliot, Cavendish—prayed that these base servants of the enemy might be overthrown.

A brush was tried by Villiers with the Monsons, whom he swiftly drove from their important posts. Devoted to Lady Suffolk, they had long been partners in her gains and crimes. Sir Thomas had been used by her in the Powder Poisoning, while Sir William had been useful in the pensioning from Spain. Sir Thomas had put Weston into Overbury's cell, and many of the poisoned meats were fetched by Weston from his house. Sir William was the first English sailor to accept a Spanish bride. An Admiral of the Downs was worth his price; and Monson was one of seven great persons who, besides abundant gifts, received for fifteen years an annual pension from the Spanish crown.

Overbury's murder lent a pretext for removing these two officers; but the actual cause of their arrest was their connexion with the Spanish court. Lodged in the Tower, and subject to a secret quest—too delicate for a court of law—they had been hastily degraded and removed from their important posts. Sir William Cope became Master of the Armoury; but Lady Suffolk had still the power to send her kinsman, Captain Howard, to Monson's flag-ship in the Narrow Seas.

Lady Suffolk sneered at Villiers, as a stripling who might keep his place until the King got tired of his foolish face, and then would have to troop, as Herbert, Hay, and Carr, had trooped before. The only thing that never failed, she thought, was craft; the patience that can plant and wait. Aware, beyond all women of the court, in what the royal weakness lay, she looked about for handsome lads; but having heretofore been troubled by their scruples, she was bent on trying her fortunes this time with a Catholic face. Well used to the marts of vice, she caught with critical eye such points as pearly teeth, soft hair, and dimpled cheeks, and she was no less quick to see how far such lures might be enhanced by necromantic spells. From

girlhood she had been familiar with the Formans, Dees, and Lambs, who looked upon her ladyship as their chief support. The Rokewoods were a comely race; and one of the Rokewoods was presented to the King. He failed. A prettier boy than Rokewood, and as sound a Catholic, was William Monson, son of her Admiral of the Downs, who had now been liberated from the Tower. If Monson could supplant the Favourite, there was nothing she could ask and be denied, from manors, gifts and pardons, to the ducal coronet of her husband's house.

This patroness of poisoners and magicians fell to work in her usual way. Sending for young Monson to her house at Charing Cross, she gave him hints about his dress, his manner, and his speech. She washed his face with milk; she curled his hair with tongs; she scented his breath with spices; and she put him in a place where James must see him as he passed. The stake for which young Monson played was high, and he had friends to help him in the Lord High Treasurer, in the Master of the Wards, and in the Secretary of State. But James was not yet tired; the ambush failed; and Monson found, too late, that he was stumbling headlong into fire. Villiers spoke to James. Much wiser men than Villiers were alarmed by Lady Suffolk's schemes; for Monson in the closet meant a pensioned council, and a policy directed from Madrid. It meant an English court at war with the English people, as to Germany and the Catholic League. No one felt sure of James. The King had no broad views of policy. He wanted peace; he wished his children to do well; he hoped the German princes would be able to hold their own; but he was dreaming of a Spanish bride for the Prince of Wales; he was in daily intercourse with Gondomar, the Spanish agent; if the match went on, he was more and more likely to lend his ear to those who could make themselves strong in Spain. If a rupture

of the crown and country was to be avoided, it was time for men of weight to speak; and James soon heard from men on every side, that if young Monson were received at court, all England would be ready to believe the Jesuits were in power, and no man could be answerable for the public peace. James heard this warning, got alarmed, and sent his Chamberlain to tell young Monson that his Majesty was not pleased with him; that he was much too forward in his ways; that he was not a man who should approach the King, his father having just come out of jail. The Chamberlain added, that his education had been bad, and he was daily seen with persons and in places not to be allowed. "You must not put yourself," said Pembroke, "in his Majesty's way; indeed, his Majesty advises you not to come near his court at all."

Then Lady Suffolk changed her course. In bringing out her youth as a Catholic, she had shown her cards too soon. But she could try again. The Puritans were strong; the men who were neither Papist nor Puritan were stronger still; and these more moderate men had worked against her and defeated her. She ordered Monson to appear at church. She got him to express some doubts—to seek new lights—to listen to the Anglican divines. In no long time he was "converted;" and she played her game so well that Abbott, the Lord Primate, was induced to receive this convert to his Church. At Easter, Monson took the sacraments and appeared at court; but all in vain; for James still took no notice of the lad. Lady Suffolk tried new lines. She bade him pout and fret, and ask for leave to travel, like a youth in love. When James was told that Monson wished to go abroad, he asked, "For what?" "Because," the querist said, "he cannot live in peace when banished from his master's face." "If he is driven from my presence," said the king, "tis more than I know." The leave to travel was refused; some said because the

King was taking to the love-sick youth. Long heads began to ask once more how many days would dawn ere Monson would commence his upward flight?

The Favourite kept his eyes on Lady Suffolk, for the war had gone so far that either he or she must fall. The fight was now become a fight for life; and one of the two must pass beneath the arch of Traitor's Gate. Which of the two would pass beneath that fatal arch?





CHAPTER IV.

TO THE TOWER!

NOT able yet to move on Lady Suffolk and her kindred, Villiers bared his arm against their chief support, Sir Thomas Lake, the senior Secretary of State.

A thin man, weak in body, weaker still in mind, who had commenced his life as servant to a clerk in Burghley's office, Lake had crept and wriggled into place and pay, by exercising talents which an honest man could not possess. This menial had a nose for filth. A parasite and a spy, he crept into great houses, where he pried in nooks and vaults until he found in what corner the family skeleton lay hid. He knew all scandals of private life; he kept a record of all acts of shame. If any page lost money that he could not pay, Lake knew it. If any lord ran after other men's wives, Lake knew it. Cecil could not hide from Lake his frailties, and the crafty listener at key-holes could have named the sum of Lady Suffolk's bribe. The King delighted in such dirt, and Lake was always at his heels.

But Lake was made for higher things than Archie Armstrong and Tom Badger, the accepted Fools. He could indite a brief, as well as feed a dog; and when the King was minded to become a Secretary of State, he put this clerk, as one of whom no gentleman could be jealous, at his desk. But step by step, Lake stole

into importance; keeping his name in the shade; affecting to be nobody; and confining his requests on his master's bounty to such gifts as the reversion of a clerkship, the concession of a fine. In part a porter, and in part a pimp, Lake held in James's palace the anomalous post which a barber and story-teller holds in Eastern tales. Cecil had kicked him out of doors; he crept in softly by the private stair. When Suffolk was in power, he fawned on Suffolk; when Gondomar came over, he joined the friends of Spain. In time he got his spurs, and went to the city, where he found a wife in Mary Ryder, one of those city madams who conceived that when they bought a man with money they might treat him like a slave. This city minx was hot for rank, and while poor Lake was whining for a place—the Secretary's place—his wife took out her purse, inquired the price, and told down fifteen thousand pounds.

Lake had been Secretary of State some years, and earning by his treacheries the pension he received from Spain; but Lady Lake was burning for a coronet; and when the King gave Lake a barony for sale, his wife insisted on retaining it for themselves. James made but one condition; if they kept it, Lake must yield the Secretary's place. With this removal of Lake to the House of Lords, the Favourite would have been content; but Lake was loth to quit a post which kept him near the King, and gave him secrets he could sell in Spain. He could not see his way; he wished to be a lord; he also wished to keep his place. The King got vexed with him; and while the dubious husband and the domineering wife were fighting for their dignities, a sudden tempest swept them both into the Tower.

Ann Lake, their child, a girl as light of life as she was fair of face, was married to William Cecil, Lord Roos, the heir of Thomas, Earl of Exeter. Roos was one of those young fools of quality whom Gondomar

employed in tampering with the English Church ; but he had nothing in either mind or body to invest him with a dangerous power. A youth, he had spent his fortune on drabs and trolls ; a man, he had sought to pay his debts by marrying a low-born wife. This wife, though younger than himself in years, was older in her knowledge of the world. A pupil of Lady Somerset, she was more than familiar with such charlatans as Simon Forman and Dr. Lamb. When Roos had pawned her jewels, and left her father to discharge his debts, she asked him for a transfer of his lands ; and when he sneered at her for asking such a foolish thing, she took up pen, wrote out a bond, and bade him sign it on the spot. He would not—then beware ! What would she do ? She—Lady Roos, his wife—would tell such tales as would compel him to retire from court. She would proclaim to all the world that he was *not a man !*

Poor Roos, alarmed by threats, gave her eight hundred pounds to stop her tongue. But Lady Roos had learned to feel her power. Her father held a mortgage on some lands of his ; she bade him settle these lands upon her, for her separate use. For such a deed Lord Exeter's signature was wanted ; and the old man raised objections to the scheme, which drew the anger of these demons on himself.

Lady Roos began a game of slander, perjury, and violence. Gondomar got the young lord sent on a foolish errand into Spain ; and in his absence Lady Roos declared, that, like her old friend Lady Somerset, she would sue her husband for divorce ; and, like that friend, assert that from the first her marriage had been null and void. But James now interposed. He could not live through such a scandal twice. He would not have his days disturbed ; if Roos and Lady Roos could not endure each other they must find some better way to part. Then Lady Roos set on her brother Arthur (as her friend had set on Harry Howard) to attack

her husband in the streets. When Roos came home, she wrote a letter, telling him that she was kept from him by force; that her mother was to blame; and that she wished him to come and fetch her home. Lord Roos, who loved her in his silly fashion, jumped into his coach, and drove to her door. Here, Arthur and a band of servants lay in wait, and when he stepped from his coach to go into the house, they set on him with clubs. Two of his men were felled to the ground, and Roos was lucky to escape with life. It was as much as Lake could do to hush this matter up, and hide the attempt at murder by his son beneath the cloak of a sudden brawl.

Violence having failed, and James being firm against divorce on ground of nullity, nothing remained for Lake and his daughter but to get Lord Roos to live abroad. The Spanish agent—ever a ready tool of the Howard party—was employed. He tempted the young idiot, not to run away from London merely, but to leave the Court without a license, so as highly to incense the King. With Gondomar's letters in his trunk, Roos left the country, passed through France to Rome, endured conversion from his Church, and then rode on to Naples, where he died. Men said he fell by poison; but who cared how he—a runaway and an apostate—fell?

Yet Lady Roos was not much nearer to her end; possession of her husband's large estates. Lord Exeter opposed her wishes; acting, as the Lakes pretended, on the prompting of a lady, whom he married late in life. They turned upon his Countess. Lake and his wife accused her of intent to murder. Lady Roos accused her of a criminal passion for her husband's grandson. Sara Swinton and Luke Hutton were their witnesses; they even swore that they had forced the Countess of Exeter to confess her crimes, and sign a paper which was evidence of her guilt.

Lady Exeter appealed to the law in vindication of

her fame ; but Lady Lake was no bad scholar in the school of Lady Suffolk. Sending for some leaders of the bar to her house, she told them bluntly that if any of their body should presume to take up Lady Exeter's brief, he should be ruined with the King for ever !

Exeter and Chandos (the injured lady's husband and her brother) went, with the willing help of Villiers, to the King, and, dropping on their knees before him, begged that his Majesty would command inquiry into all the facts alleged, and satisfy himself that none of them were true. The King was sore with Lake ; for he had just received from him a paper asking for a recusant fine, by the hands of Archie, the royal Fool. "Yes ; justice should be done," said James ; and under Buckingham's favour, and in spite of Gondomar's resistance, it was quickly done. The Countess proved her innocence ; the Lakes were overwhelmed with shame. King James pronounced a sentence which destroyed the toil of years. Sir Thomas Lake was fined four thousand pounds, and sentenced to imprisonment in the Tower for life. Lady Lake was to pay a similar fine and suffer like imprisonment in the Tower. Lady Roos was fined ten thousand marks, with imprisonment in the Tower for life. Sir Arthur Lake was fined a thousand pounds, with imprisonment in the Tower for life. Sara, the maid, was sentenced to be whipped.

The Monsons and the Lakes being pushed aside, the war could now be carried to a higher ground, and Lord and Lady Suffolk were attacked.

An officer in the Court of Wards, being taken in the fact of robbery, boldly answered his accuser, that the Lord Treasurer and his Countess (Lord and Lady Suffolk) lived in the habit of daily fraud. Suffolk was called to answer for himself, and his replies were thought so lame, that his staff of office was taken from him, and a strict inquiry ordered into his accounts. But Lady Suffolk, now an adept in the use of pistol, knife, and poisoned cup, was prompt. That officer of the Court of

Wards was murdered. Years ago this remedy might have saved her; but the times were changing; and she only fell into deeper trouble through the rumours which at once arose. All tongues accused her of his death. The Earl, less blind and angry than his wife, proposed to face the facts, admit the Favourite's power, and buy his friendship by a costly bribe. Aware that James was going to set his minion up, he sent to offer Buckingham his choice of either Audley End or Suffolk House.

Villiers either could not, or he would not, stop the inquiry now afoot. What came to light bore out the murdered man's report, and justice laid her heavy hand on Suffolk and his hateful wife. They were indicted for corruption and embezzlement; the charge was proved beyond all cavil; and Villiers had the sweet revenge of fining his powerful enemies thirty thousand pounds, and sending them under escort to the Tower.

But when the gates were closed on them, his wrath was spent. His foes were ruined; they could hurt no more; his gladsome nature shrank from the sight of pain. In Villiers' time the Tower was not itself; a place of racks, of poisons, and of death; but only a sort of "corner" into which a gay and frolicsome creature, playing at government, put his more naughty boys. A day of fret, a month of pain, and he would let them go. The Monsons got away. Sir Thomas Lake was gone; and Lady Roos was gone. In ten days, Suffolk and his lady made their peace. They were to live in the country, and their sons, Lord Walden and Sir Thomas Howard, were to yield their places and retire from court. Walden gave up his post as Captain of the Gentlemen Pensioners; Sir Thomas Howard, that of Master of the Horse to Charles.

Of his long list of victims, Lady Lake alone remained a prisoner. She was prouder than her husband and her child. She would not bend to Villiers; she would not confess her guilt; and she was left to her defiance in the Tower.



CHAPTER V.

LADY CATHARINE MANNERS.

HAVING made his Favourite great, the King was minded to make him rich ; but rich at cost of somebody else's purse ; most cheaply to be done—on the Parent's plan—by marrying him to a big estate.

When first he came to court, the lad was keen on girls with money of their own. One such he found in Ann, a daughter of Sir Roger Aston, one of the King's old Scottish carls. Ann had a pension of two hundred pounds a-year ; and this small sum had seemed a fortune to the younger son of a penniless knight. When George made love to Ann, the fair Scotch lassie gave him love for love. Their friends were told, and all their kin were talking, of the match, when some one whispered in the Parent's ear, that George was throwing himself away on such a girl. The Parent told her son to look still higher ; and Ann was left to weep for his handsome face.

Of all the heiresses at James's court, the first in birth and prospect was the Lady Catharine Manners, only child of Francis, Earl of Rutland ; heiress, in her right, of the ancient barony of Ros, and born to a vast estate in money and in land. Young, lovely, graceful, she was just the wife for George. The girl, it seemed, was not averse ; for every woman in the Park was more or less in love with his lustrous eyes, his dashing

spirit, and his splendid dress; but Lady Catharine's father would not hear of such a match. What! marry his only child—he, Francis Manners, twenty-third Baron Ros, sixth Earl of Rutland—to the younger son of a country squire and a lady's maid!

In such a matter, James could be very stiff; but Rutland was a man not easily won by smiles, or cowed by frowns. He seldom came to court; and what he heard of it in his retreat at Belvoir Castle led him to thank the stars which drove him from so foul a place. For Rutland was a kind of "banished duke," who lived in leafy midland woods, remote from cock-pits and bowling alleys; the representative of a fallen fashion and a persecuted faith. In early youth, he had lived abroad, and chiefly in the Catholic courts. A younger son, with hardly a second hope, he had escaped the perils of the Essex Plot; yet he had shared his brother Roger's views; and since the King came in, he had clung to the party looking back towards Rome. But he was cold and cautious, even in religious zeal; and after Cecil had betrayed and Carr dispersed the Essex circles, he removed into the country and remained aloof. A widower, with an only child, he loved retirement for his daughter's sake. But Belvoir Castle is not a place in which a man can hide; and spies reported that Lord Rutland was occasionally spending his princely wealth in Popish plots.

One object of the King in marrying Buckingham to Lady Catharine, was to lessen Rutland's wealth; he therefore fixed the price of Buckingham's hand at twenty thousand pounds down, eight thousand pounds a-year in land!

Aware that his child was hunted for his house and land, the recluse took to himself a second wife. A son would spoil the game, and soon this second wife presented him with a son. The courtship cooled. Lord Rutland hoped the King would turn elsewhere; but while he was hoping so, his infant died. The

courtship was resumed. His young wife gave him a second son. Again the courtship cooled. If Catharine was a noble, lovely girl, she was not now a peerless bride for George.

But things had gone too far between the lovers for the match to be easily cast aside; yet James made such demands for settlements as gave the Earl some hope of killing the match on this lower ground, without being driven to insult his Majesty by reference to his Favourite's birth. The family—that is to say, the Parent—was content to sell his handsome face for ten thousand pounds down and four thousand pounds a-year in land. Rutland refused these terms as being too hard upon his infant son. While they were haggling over pence, that second infant died; and now the broken peer, too well aware that those who were stealing from him his only child, and all that would accrue to her, could lodge him, if he vexed them, in the Tower, gave way—at least, on grounds of money and of birth. He stood out only on the question of his daughter's creed. She had been bred a Catholic; and a Catholic she must live and die.

But here the King stepped in. He meant his Favourite to be all in all; and public feeling would not suffer the first man in his realm to have a Papist wife. Before the King could yield his blessing on the match, the lady must forsake her priest, and go to her parish church. If left alone, she might have done so, as her father feared; for she was meek in spirit and deep in love; but Rutland was resolved that she should not be left alone. To make things safe he brought her down to his country-house; supposing that in Belvoir Castle, in the midst of her domestic priests, she must be free from harm. How could the strict old Catholic peer suspect that in carrying her home he was lodging her close to the serpent's lair?

Not far from Belvoir Castle lay the village of Walgrave, in the rectory of which village dwelt John

Williams, chaplain to his Majesty the King; a young Welsh parson, young at thirty-seven; whose fair, fat face and glozing tongue had won him favour in the eyes of Sir Thomas Compton's wife: John Williams was a eunuch from his birth, and (like all eunuchs, if our Arab stories lie not) he was lax in thought and free of speech. Lord Rutland knew his neighbour as a fluent wit and boon companion; one of those pleasant men so welcome in a country-house, whose talk inflames the table and imparts fresh bouquet to the wine. He knew this parson as a rising man, with many and increasing dignities in hand; a royal chaplaincy; the rectories of Grafton, Walgrave, Underwood; a prebend's stall in Lincoln; choral places in Peterborough, in Hereford, and in St. David's. What John Williams was, besides good fellow and fat pluralist, the Earl could only learn from time; for Williams was a schemer who would hardly let his right hand guess the purpose of his left.

This parson had been Ellesmere's chaplain; he had learned the secrets of York House; he had made a collection of "tools to work with;" and had come to think the Seals, so long a property of cardinals and bishops, might be won once more to holy Church. When Bacon got the Seals he offered to keep Williams on; but Williams, having talked to the King, and tickled him with merry tales and racy jokes, declined this offer; hoping that much higher duties were in store for him than blessing a Lord Chancellor's meat and wine. The King had told him he must gain a place in Buckingham's heart; and with his knowledge of men and women, he had sought the Parent as the surest way of getting at the son. She wanted "tools to work with" also, and the fair Welsh parson was the minister for her. He courted her with wit; he flattered her with love. The fading creature smiled on his fair young face and brawny back, not knowing what defects they hid. If rumours in her house were true, she took

his fortunes on herself, in view of closer ties, when Heaven should take Sir Thomas to itself.

This supple and adroit divine was just the man to work on Lady Catharine's mind. He rode from Rectory to Castle, not as a commissioner for the match, but as a neighbour, who could come and go without suspicion of a plot. He was to worm himself into the family councils; note how peer and daughter looked upon the marriage; put the King's desire before them in the fairest light; and work, as he should find an opening, on the daughter's love and on the father's fear. It was a shameful office; but this royal chaplain had no sense of shame. If he should win, his fortunes would be made; for he would gain, by one bold stroke, the King, the Favourite, and that Favourite's wife.

In no long time the chaplain scored his game. The girl he found was deep in love; a fact which put him on the shortest track. He spoke to Rutland, who allowed him to perceive he knew the worst, and was prepared for it. The match then might go on? The King, Lord Rutland sighed, would have it so; nay, Catharine herself would have it so. They spoke of dowry, and the chaplain talked the Earl into giving the love-lorn girl a promise of ten thousand pounds in money and four thousand pounds a-year in land on her wedding-day. But higher work was needed from him yet; work that, if duly done, might raise him from his country canonry and parish to a loftier seat. Poor Lady Catharine must be cozened into going to church. The King had tried his skill with her and failed. Sending for her to the palace, he had opened on her his theological batteries; but the lady, stunned by articles and canons, left him, saying she could never change. She was a Catholic because her father was a Catholic. No argument of Jewell and of Hooker was of use when urged against a father's wish. But Williams now appeared, and this divine pursued a different course to James. Riding over to Belvoir

Castle, where he found the girl alone, he talked about her love; and taking from his pocket a copy of the Marriage Service, read it to her sweetly, pointing out the beauty of its phrase, and asking her whether she did not think that this was the better way? The sighing maiden said she thought it was. But Rutland would not hear of such a change; and when the news that Lady Catharine would consent was bruited through the court, he put his daughter under stricter watch. She left her home. "Where is the Lady Catharine?" stormed the Earl. "She left with Lady Buckingham," said his servants; "and she has not since been seen." A day, a night, passed by, and yet she did not come. They ran to Lady Buckingham's house. Yes, Lady Catharine was there; but she was ailing slightly, and was gone to bed. Lady Buckingham went so far in falsehood as to tell the world that Rutland himself had placed his daughter in her hands. But Rutland raged about the town, declaring that the Villiers gang had stolen his child; that they had blasted her reputation; that they were seeking to destroy her soul. On Buckingham's head he poured out all his wrath; calling him seducer, villain, miscreant; never dreaming that the author of his misery was that smiling rector who was sitting at his board. When Rutland met with Buckingham, he fell upon him, and, but for the presence of Prince Charles, the old man and the young one would have come to blows. Rutland refused to take his daughter back; he swore that she had run away, that she had been seduced; and that the only way to purge her fame was for my lord of Buckingham to marry her without a moment's pause.

Buckingham now got cool. The lady, he declared, was pure from him, and cried out pertly, that the only stain she had to fear was that proceeding from her father's tongue. He could not take a wife in such a way; and if the Earl was not more civil, he would drop the match, and throw her back upon his hands. One

day, he asked the King's permission to cry off; pretending that the Earl was mad, and that Lady Catharine's issue would be likewise mad! But James now held him to his vows. No second bride with such a fortune could be found in London; and the rector of Walgrave, who was with her daily, found that he was making progress with her soul. On Lady Catharine offering to receive communion in the English form, the King insisted that his pet should keep his pledge; though such had been the scandal of her elopement and of his behaviour after it, that such a public wedding as that of Carr and Frances Howard could not with decency be held.

In a closed room of the royal palace, with but two witnesses of the rite, John Williams finished his work by marrying George, Marquis of Buckingham, to Lady Catharine Manners; George pretending to believe his bride was won to the English Church, and Catharine willing to perform a convert's part. King James and Rutland were those two witnesses who saw the wedding and signed the book. The King said nothing better could be done; the date was kept a secret; and the Earl resented the affair as one of personal disgrace.

John Williams was rewarded with the Deanery of Salisbury; which he soon exchanged for that of Westminster, on his way to other things—a Bishop's See, a seat upon the Woolsack, and a lodging in the Tower.





CHAPTER VI.

HOUSE OF VILLIERS.

THE House of Howard driven from court, a House of Villiers was to take its place. One evening, at a feast, the King called out for wine, and drank a toast to the House of Villiers; saying that he should make their fortunes his peculiar care; that where he gave his heart he should give his hand; that he would raise that family above all others in his realm. On every side he held this promise; so that Howards, Greys, and Nevills might have time to learn that whether they wagged their tongues or not, the kinsmen of his George should soar beyond their flight. The first in love should be the first in rank. All men who honoured George should find him a gracious master; all who vexed and thwarted George would find him an indignant prince. The family of George should be his own. He meant to make them barons, countesses, and earls, and find for each of them, according to the sex, a wealthy husband or a wealthy wife.

The Parent was created Countess, and Sir Thomas might have been an Earl, but that his handsome and faithless wife had left his house. Having given him a pair of horns, she wished him to remain Sir Thomas Cuckold all his life. Lord Compton, her husband's brother, whom she liked because he was rich, and helped her son with money, was created, through her

influence, Earl of Northampton (one of the Howard titles), and appointed President of Wales.

Susan, her daughter, was provided with a husband, in Sir William Feilding, of Newnham Padox, in the county of Warwick; a country squire, who owed his knighthood to King James. But Feilding was a squire of very great wealth and very high birth; a scion of the imperial Hapsburg line, whose ancestors had come to England in the reign of Henry the Third. Gifts and grants were showered upon this pair. Sir William got the Wardrobe and its many fees; together with a special license, granting him all savings in his office! Groom and bride were then created Viscount and Viscountess Feilding; and when their eldest son was born, the King stood sponsor to the child. In no long time, Sir William and his wife were raised to the rank of Earl and Countess of Denbigh (one of Leicester's titles); honours in the peerage which their children, cousins of the House of Austria, still enjoy.

The search after wives for John and Kit were comedies of their kind, not often to be mated at the Curtain and the Globe.

The Parent began with John, who was already dubbed a knight. A stupid fellow, mean in figure, weak in mind, Sir John was still her eldest son. She sent for Doctor Lamb, who mixed a potion for the lout, and made him drink it with mysterious rites. She begged for him a place at court, as Gentleman in the Prince's Bedchamber; in the hope that it would help him to marry money, even if he should not grow to Charles what his handsome brother had grown to James. She got him the reversion of George's barony of Whaddon, with the Grey estates; but this reversion was not likely to fall in, and witless John had still to be provided with his daily bread.

Looking round the court for a fitting wife for her stupid son, a girl with blood, with money, and a comely face, she fixed her eyes on Frances Coke, a girl of

dazzling beauty, and of yet more dazzling wealth. She told Sir John to court this prize: the timid fool, unapt to take a lady's eye, implored his mother to court her for him; and she undertook—if he would play the man—to see him through the match.

Sir Edward Coke, the father of this dazzling prize, was out of office, out of grace, and longing with a morbid passion to get back. The Villiers folk had driven him out, and only the Villiers folk could bring him in. An agent whispered that a gate was opening for him, if he had the sense to see it, and the nerve to mount the step. He had a chance of getting into the Villiers circle through his child, whose lovely face had charmed Sir John. Much money must be paid, no doubt; but what is money worth except what it will buy? Frances had means and John had power. A match between them would give the old Chief-Justice all that he had lost, and more than he had lost. His daughter might become a peeress; he himself a councillor and peer.

Now, Coke disliked the Villiers folk, and prized his money even more than rank and place; but after turning matters over in his mind, he gave his pledge that Frances should be married to Sir John; the more earnestly as he saw no other means of gaining power at court, and as the portion he would have to give with Frances was the money of his wife.

The first proposal was that Frances should bring her husband ten thousand pounds in gold and a thousand pounds a-year in land. Coke raised objections to these terms as being much too high. The Parent raised her price—she must have twenty thousand pounds instead of ten. She offered Coke a place at the Council-board, a barony, and the Seals. The Seals alone were cheap at such a price. Sir John Bennett was offering thirty thousand pounds. But, happily, while Coke was weighing his greed of gold against his greed of place, the King, who knew but little of these bargains

in his closet, put the Seals into Sir Francis Bacon's hands. Coke lost his tide, and in his future parley with the Parent had to treat for a peerage only, with a chance of higher things on Bacon's fall.

But Frances had a Parent also ; one who had more magicians in her service than the Parent who was courting for Sir John. Coke's wife, Lady Hatton, was the owner of Hatton House in London, of Corffe Castle in Dorsetshire, and of those lengths of iron-sand, and marble quarries, which make the wealth of Purbeck Isle. Much of her land, if not the whole, would go to the man who should be lucky enough to win her only child. Lady Catharine Manners was hardly a greater match than Frances Coke.

This sale of Frances to an idiot, who was only to be kept awake by magic arts, was neither to the daughter's nor the mother's taste. Frances had a lover of her own in Henry de Vere, the young Earl of Oxford, who was then abroad. How far they had gone in courtship was not known ; but Lady Hatton went about declaring they had entered into such a contract as bound them to each other by the Canon law. The King was troubled in his mind, for though he wished to please his darling and that darling's kin, he dared not face such scenes as sprang from quarrels about the marriage-rite. The cases of Lady Rich and Lady Essex had left him timid, if they had not found him so ; and now he thought, that if this match were pressed in spite of Lady Hatton's pleas, he would himself keep out of it. If the law was broken to suit Sir John, he would leave his lawyers to do the deed.

Coke and his wife were made aware that they were left by James to fight it out ; Coke aided by the Parent and her sons ; Lady Hatton by the indolent indifference of her daughter to the match. Each had sense enough to see that one great point would be possession of the prize. Each played the spy upon the other ; each made friends in the house ; each got up

factions in the dressing-room and in the servants'-hall. The household was on Lady Hatton's side ; for every one who had to live with Coke disliked him, just as every one liked his prodigal and handsome wife. One night, when Coke was fast asleep, the mother and her child slipped out of doors, and drove to Oatlands, where they hid themselves in a kinsman's house. For some hours Coke was baffled in his search for the runaways ; but on learning where they lay, he ran to the Council and demanded warrants of arrest against his wife and child.

Bacon would not grant them, and the King and Buckingham were absent in the North. Bacon felt for Lady Hatton, who was of his kin ; and as a magistrate he could not tolerate proceedings which must bring with them a breach of the public peace. Coke went to the Parent, and inflamed her jealousy of the Lord Chancellor. His wife, he urged, was poisoning the young lady's mind against Sir John ; was hiding her in order to defeat the match ; was plotting, with the Chancellor's connivance, to convey her into France. Coke's story went to the Parent's heart. She ordered Bacon to comply ; but Bacon steadily refused. She raved and stormed, and threatened him with the vengeance of her son. It was no idle threat, as Bacon found ; for this base woman never ceased intrigues against him till she pulled him from his height.

Assured of her protection, Coke rode down to Oatlands, with a dozen men well armed, and, after calling on his wife to bring his daughter forth, smashed in the door. Bursting into her room, he seized the girl, and putting her into a coach, drove off with her to his house at Stoke.

When Buckingham heard of these events, he took a middle course, by making Lady Hatton's cause his own, and offering higher terms to her than any he had made with Coke. If Lady Hatton would consent to Frances marrying with Sir John, she might obtain a

peerage for herself, apart from Coke; and even a second peerage which she might either give or sell. He turned his back on Coke; and threatened to bring him to trial in the Star Chamber on various counts, the least of which would justify the Council in committing him to the Tower. He told Lady Hatton that the King, the Queen, and all the court would come to the wedding dinner; and her daughter should be created a viscountess on her wedding-day. The King himself spoke to her, dined with her, gave her five or six kisses, and the honours of knighthood for no less than four of her private friends. But all in vain. They had to wed the pair without her leave, and on the chance that she would afterwards relent. To please her and annoy her lord, the bridegroom was created Viscount Purbeck and Baron Stoke; a dignity which Coke had chosen for himself.





CHAPTER VII.

REVOLUTION.

HAVING found a wife, the Favourite sought a house on the Thames, and hoped to get it as a fairy gift. Suffolk's great pile at Charing Cross had been refused by him when offered as the price of pardon for the Earl. Two houses near the palace suited him; Wallingford House, the residence of William Knollys, Viscount Wallingford; York House, the residence of Francis Bacon, Viscount St. Albans; and he asked for both; the first as a house to live in while the second was being pulled down and built again on a larger scale. Not doubting that he had but to ask and have, like prodigals on the stage, he sent for Inigo Jones, explained his wants, and told that architect to build him such a pile as Italy alone could boast.

William, Viscount Wallingford, an upright, stern old man of seventy-two, was Master of the Wards, and husband to Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the Earl and Countess of Suffolk. Lady Wallingford was her mother's child. Forty years younger than her husband, whom she married for money and affairs of state, she was as profligate and venal as the females of her race. In after years, the secret amours and public frauds of this abandoned creature came before the courts of justice, and the story of her life as Countess of Banbury is still the leading case in illustration of

our adulterine and bastardine laws. She and her sister, Lady Salisbury, were at strife, and each told tales against the other's fame. The mimic, making merry with these tales, suggested to the King that such a post as Master of the Wards should not be held by a ridiculous fellow who was mocked by tavern witlings as a hen-pecked husband with a shrewish wife. No fault was found with Wallingford himself, and James was frank enough to tell him he must yield his post, lest worse befell him, not for anything he had done, but solely on account of his wicked wife.

At first, the Viscount held his own; he would not give his place; he would not sell his house. But Lady Wallingford had no mind to brave a public trial, and to share the lodgings of her mother and her sister in the Tower. She made him yield, and in a few weeks Buckingham went to live at Wallingford House.

The Villiers family had tasted gold and longed for more. Among their fierce and noisy enemies in office, was Sir Henry Yelverton, Attorney-general, Bacon's friend and fellow-lodger at Gray's Inn. This upright man, as pure in life as he was brave in speech, was not disposed to buy his way with gifts. The Parent could not bear him, and the King, though he admired his parts and liked his honesty, was vexed by what he called his "lewd, licentious tongue." Such words as "I will weigh the King's reasons as I weigh his coins," were not to James's taste, and Yelverton had a trick of using words thus bold. The time had come to rob him, and the Favourite was induced to put him in a corner, till he could be squeezed and spoiled. James Ley, Attorney in the Court of Wards, had offered ten thousand pounds for Yelverton's place! A pretext for his ruin was not far to seek.

In drawing up a charter for the citizens of London, Yelverton, a popular man, had put in certain words, to guard their ancient franchise from abuse. These words were said to widen the city freedom at the

King's expense. No one pretended that the Attorney-General had done this act corruptly ; but in such a suit this absence of corruption was the worst offence of all. The King felt piqued ; his privilege was lessened ; and his officer was told he must confess his fault. Yelverton could not help himself ; he sent in his submission ; but these persecutors wanted his place and not his penitence ; and, therefore, on the ground that his confession was neither prompt nor full, they tried him in the Star Chamber, fined him four thousand pounds, deprived him of his post, and sent him, during pleasure, to the Tower.

A greater victim was to follow, in that Lord Chancellor whose house the Favourite wanted to pull down.

York House was dear to Bacon on many grounds. It was to him not only the residence of his place and rank, the sign of his authority, but the house in which he was born, in which his parents lived, in which his early years were spent, in which his father died, in which his mother waited for his coming out of France. In later years, he had returned to it as a welcome guest. It was the scene of his first political labours ; of his waiting on Ellesmere with the coronet ; of his inauguration dinner as Lord Keeper. In its chambers he had written his noblest books ; from them he sent forth his Great Reform. If he could part from such a place, his heart would give it up to Villiers sooner than to any other ; but he would not yield that house to any living man.

Villiers could not see how any one should refuse him what he asked ; and least of all a man for whom he professed to feel unbounded love. York House belonged to the crown, and Bacon only held a lease which, even if he would not sell it, must drop in with time. But then his plans were ready ; plans with garden, water-gate, and terrace, such as Italy alone could boast. Must he wait on for years ? James never made him wait :—then why should Bacon make

him wait? His mind grew sore. The great man wished him well; yet would not give him his father's house! The great man was too high, and he must learn to bend. Quick tongues repeated this wild talk; for Buckingham, when vexed, was loose and loud; and every page at court soon heard that huffs and scorns had passed between the Chancellor and the Favourite anent the transfer of York House.

Yet Villiers, if he had been left alone, would probably have done no more than pout and fret, and strive to gain York House from Bacon by some gentle means. The Parent whom he loved, to whom he had never yet said no, had wider views, and when her son withdrew his smiles from Bacon, she was ready for a spring upon the Seals. She knew how much those Seals were worth, for Bennett, Judge of the Prerogative Court, had bid for them no less a sum than thirty thousand pounds. This woman hated Bacon with all her soul and strength. She hated him for coming in. She hated him for getting place without a bride. She hated him for thwarting the match with Frances Coke. But more than all, she hated him because he was always ailing and would not die.

In making an attack on Bacon, she could count on allies—in the Anglo-Spaniards, such as Suffolk and Arundel; in the Undertakers, such as Phelips, Digges, and Sandys; in personal enemies, such as Coke; in the office-hunters, such as Cranfield, Ley, and Williams; in those reformers of abuse who were prepared to "strike at Chancery," even though they should have to strike through the Chancellor's heart.

The soul of this conspiracy was the Parent's clerical guide; that young Welsh parson, who while serving Ellesmere, fixed his mind on tearing the Seals from a civilian's hands and placing them, where they had lain of yore, in custody of holy Church. Williams was born for office; and he sought his own with a directness not to be repelled. No scruple ever stayed his

course. A man of the world by nature, a divine by chance, he found his cassock a convenient cloak. One doctrine in the Book he made his own; the doctrine of a Scape-goat; which he raised into his rule of policy and his rule of life. Most men are slow to answer for their sins, and Williams taught that princes, and the friends of princes, need not answer for their sins at all. A scape-goat should be always found. This canon, chaplain, prebendary, rector, dean in one, employed in his affairs such arts as tickled the comedian's nerves. One day, the Prince of Wales, in talking of some Spanish agents then in London, said he was amazed to find how much the chaplain knew. "I will go with you and tell you," said the chaplain, "with what heifer I plough. Your highness has often seen the secretary, Don Francisco Carondolet. He loves me, for he is a scholar; archdeacon of Cambrai; and sometimes we are pleasant together. I have discovered him to be a wanton, and a servant to our English beauties, and above all to one of that gentle craft in Mark Lane. A wit she is; and one that must be courted with news as well as with gifts. I have a friend that hath bribed her in my name, to send me a faithful conveyance of such tidings as her paramour, Carondolet, brings to her." All these things Williams stooped to, with a cynic's laugh, when he could turn his practice to account. His price was high. The price of Lady Catharine's mock conversion was a deanery; that of the Lord St. Albans' ruin was to be the Seals.

No easy task was his; for strong as were the Villiers party, they were not above all law and custom of the realm. How could the Chancellor be reached? 'It was a dangerous thing to hint that justice was contaminated at the source. Not many months ago, John Wraynham, a Norfolk gentleman, had been tried in the Star Chambers on a charge of finding fault with one of his decisions; when four of the judges, Tanfield, Hobart, Montagu, and Coke, had sentenced him to

stand in the pillory, to lose his ears, to pay a thousand pounds fine, and lie in prison for the rest of life. The Chancellor begged a pardon from the crown for his assailant ; but his Majesty was stiff about it ; so that fourteen months elapsed ere Wraynham was again at large. Lord Clifton's case was still more recent and more striking. Vexed by one of his judgments, Clifton used some foolish threats. The King, without consulting Bacon, ordered him to the Tower, in which he was to lie a prisoner till his case was heard. Coke, Montagu, and Hobart would have brought him to a speedy trial ; but the offended Chancellor begged that mercy might be shown so far as justice would allow. But while the case was pending, the unhappy suitor plunged two knives into his body, hacked his flesh, and died in his prison cell. No doubt existed, therefore, as to what protection was afforded to a Chancellor by law. Fine, pillory, mutilation, and the Tower, were ready for a man who wagged his tongue against the King's great minister of justice. How could he be reached ?

In one way only, as it seemed. The crown might yield him to his enemies, as it yielded Yelverton and Suffolk to their enemies. If James could be induced to drop him, he was ruined ; for the moment he was in disgrace, the suitors would begin to rail, the clerks would join the winning side, the judges would decide in favour of the crown. But James was not yet ready to betray his great Lord Chancellor. Though he had no fine sense of Bacon's genius, he was quick enough to feel his wit, his learning, and his eloquence ; and he was not inclined to let this minister be hunted down, as Yelverton and Suffolk had been hunted down. Was there no second way ? No, none ; according to the law.

One other way there was ; a dark, a fearful, and a desperate way ; one long disused, and happily forgotten, save by some old reader of the rolls like Coke. An officer of state might be impeached.

Impeached! Old readers knew that there had been a time—a short time—in our annals, when the ordinary rules of law were swept aside, and duke and earl condemned by their victorious foes, not seldom while their blood was hot, and while their mail was on. Lord Latimer was impeached in 1376, the Duke of Suffolk in 1449; these were the first and last examples of a revolutionary time; but since the year of Cade, no minister of the crown had ever ventured to invoke this fatal right. In settled states all crimes are tried by law, and every one should find protection in the law; but this old method of procedure put the life and fortune of a man, however great, however guiltless, at the mercy of an angry and victorious crowd. What need is there to say, that such a right, if once invoked, upsets the reign of law? Yet, what no Seymour and no Dudley dared to face, these fribbles of a court in lace and ribbons ran at with a joyous laugh. “By God!” cried James to Buckingham, “you are a fool, Steenie; you are pickling a rod for your own breech!” The poor old King was right. This falling back upon the custom of impeachment was a falling back on civil war.

It was the Revolution.

A parliamentary impeachment needs a parliament; and (save the fruitless meeting of 1614) there had been no session for a dozen years. But Bacon was contending with an adverse court in favour of a Parliament; and the intriguers, who were working for his ruin, saw that they might gain their ends by helping him in the royal closet to obtain his wish.





CHAPTER VIII.

FALL OF LORD CHANCELLOR BACON.

BACON'S cure for all disorders in the state was free discussion, and those disorders in the state were now grown high. The Treasury was empty. "Not a mark in the coffers," sighed Mandeville. "Then be of good cheer," laughed Bacon, "for you shall see the bottom of your business at the first." But while the Chancellor put a face on things, he saw, on every side, much need for calling up the nation into council. James was at his final card. The ports had been taxed; the peers had paid their fines; the clergy had sent in their tenths; and even the courtiers had been squeezed. No one pretended that the realm was poor; the towns were growing larger, and the shires were growing richer, day by day; yet in the midst of all such signs of growth, the crown was sinking into poverty and weakness every year. Could nothing be attempted for the King's relief?

"A Parliament," said Bacon, "was the cure; a free parliament, in which the King and people should assist each other to conduct the government, improve the laws, and purify the faith." He drew a scheme of policy, on which to reconcile the country and the crown; a scheme for mending much that was amiss at home, and strengthening our alliance and defence abroad. He asked the King to send out writs at

once; to lend an ear to all complaints; to put down unjust patents and monopolies; and to add some squadrons to the royal fleet. The plotters were in ecstasies of joy; for Bacon's liberal policy might be turned against himself; and when their plans were settled, they rode down into the shires to seek for seats.

Coke found a seat at Liskeard, Cranfield at Andover, Ley at Canterbury. The three men formed an inner circle of the Villiers court. Coke and Cranfield were already bound up in the family by marriage; Ley was to be so in the summer months. Coke had fallen to the Parent, Cranfield to the Aunt. That terrible woman, with her fixed belief in marriage, kept about her a supply of penniless brides, and when she heard of any rich man, without a wife, who wished to get a place, a peerage, a command, she sent for him and told him plainly how he might succeed. Sir Lionel Cranfield, once a clerk in the customs, then a broker in the city, afterwards a Master of Requests, a Master of the Wardrobe, and a Master of the Wards and Liveries, had enriched himself by a lucky marriage and a series of suspicious jobs. He had robbed the customs; he had bribed Northampton; he had shown the King how to squander public lands; he had betrayed his patrons; he had denounced the Lord Treasurer Suffolk; he had placed the White Staff in Villiers' hands for sale; and his reward for all these villanies was a string of offices, commissions, manors, grants, and fees. His first wife died. He then cast eyes on Lady Effingham, a widow, and the lady had received his vows before it struck the Parent that Sir Lionel was the man for one of her nieces—coarse, fat, penniless Ann Brett. She sent for Cranfield to her house, and bade him ponder what he had been, what he was. Her breath could make and mar him; he must come into her circle; he must jilt his love and wed her niece Ann Brett. Ann had no money; but in place of money she had friends. These friends could either

raise him up or pull him down. Poor Cranfield writhed, and asked for terms; a seat in the Privy Council, an important post, the coronet of an earl. All these the Aunt could promise him—in time—and then Sir Lionel took the penniless niece to wife.

Ley's case was Cranfield's case, with still worse features. Ley was an Attorney of the Court of Wards, but he had saved much money, and when Ellesmere died, he had introduced himself to the Villiers family by an offer of ten thousand pounds for the Seals. From that day they had kept their eyes on Ley. They gave him a baronetcy without a fee. They offered him the hand of Jane Butler, one of their nieces, with the prospect of promotion, and the coronet of an earl. He was seventy years of age; he had buried two wives; he had several sons grown up; but then his wealth was great; he could not live much longer; and his widow might be left a countess with a fine estate. As yet, the wedding was postponed; but every one at court considered that Ley and Jane were man and wife.

These officers of the crown could count, not only on official men—Sir Thomas Edmonds, Treasurer of the Household; Sir Robert Heath, Solicitor General; Sir John Bennett, Judge of the Prerogative Court; Sir Henry Carew, Comptroller of the Household; and Sir George Calvert, Secretary of State—but on the votes of certain "popular" members, who were known as Undertakers, from an offer they had made to "undertake the King's business" in the House of Commons. As a party, these men held a middle course, and aimed at occupying a position which would give them equal influence with the country and the crown. They used all patriotic cries, while careful never to offend the King. They sought for friends on every side. They loved the breath of popular applause; they loved still more the place and pay which only kings could give; and they were glad to buy a chance of rising in the

public service by their votes. Of these obliging members, Digges and Phelips were the chiefs.

Sir Dudley Digges and Sir Robert Phelips were both young men of courtly habits. Digges had followed Carr so long as Carr was high in favour, and was following Villiers now that Villiers was the morning-star. He was a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, and had recently been sent to Moscow on a public mission. Phelips had also tasted of the royal bounty. He was sent to Spain with Digby, when the Spanish match was first brought forward; he was then a "friend of Spain," a correspondent of the Jesuits, and in danger of conversion to the Church of Rome. Father Greenwood wrote to him on religious subjects. Father Blackman guided his course of reading in the Spanish tongue. The great Chancellor had been kind to Phelips; particularly in the matter of a quarrel with Sir John Stowell; all the evidence in which he had instructed Thomas Meautys, his private Secretary, to suppress. But Phelips nursed a sore with Bacon, who had caused him loss in years gone by. Phelips had tried to get from James a grant of Sherborne House and Park; and he had come so near success that an official draft was laid before the crown lawyers. Bacon reported that the form was bad in law, and ere the draft could be amended, Sherborne Castle was conferred on Carr. Forgetting Bacon's recent kindness, he was ready to pursue him on this ancient grudge.

A young man, not yet known to fame, with sickly face and scowling brow, was seated on the county benches, with ability to serve the crown, beyond this tribe of officers and Undertakers, in Sir Thomas Wentworth, one of those men of glorious gifts who either raise or ruin kingdoms. But his terms were high, and Buckingham could not stoop to buy his aid. For Wentworth wanted more than place—pre-eminence, and power. What he could give in payment

was not known. His health was bad, his manner stiff, his accent harsh. But, worse than all, his theories of government were so tragic and unbending as to fill the soul of Villiers with dismay. Thus, Wentworth had to nurse his bile and bide his time.

The choice of Speaker lay with James; that is to say, with Villiers; and the man put forward by his party was Thomas Richardson, a rich and scurrilous lawyer, whom the Parent afterwards compelled to marry her sister Bess. The parts being duly cast, the comedy began.

The cry at the election booths had been against monopolies and patents, as the Chancellor foresaw; and after the elections, Bacon pressed the King to meet his people frankly, with a statement from the throne that these unpopular patents were annulled. But Buckingham would not listen to the sage; for many of his kin, including two of his brothers, Kit and Edward, were concerned, as partners, in the works conducted under those monopolies; and when Bacon pressed his policy on the Council, his advice was rejected by a majority of votes.

The House was hardly formed before this question of monopolies arose, and as the members wished to avoid all risk of conflict with the Crown, they charged the monopolists, not with holding patents which the Crown had every right to grant, but with a gross abuse of power. Two of these patentees were Michell and Mompesson, and the House was soon upon them. This was not what Ley and Cranfield wanted; for Sir Giles Mompesson was a kinsman of Villiers, while Kit and Edward were concerned as partners in his trade. But how were they to meet the case? If Michell and Mompesson were attacked, Sir Edward and Sir Kit would be in danger. They consulted Williams, and they found him ready, as he always was. "Posthumius and Favonius overboard!" he cried. Sir Edward was abroad; Sir Kit must hide

himself. One scapegoat might suffice. They could but try.

As Michell had no backers, Coke went down to the House, and moved, amidst a scene of great excitement, that the scapegoat be committed to the Tower. A pack of courtiers yelled approval. "Let him make restitution," called Calvert. "Let him be unfrocked at the bar," shouted Weston. "Let him be fined," cried Digges. "Let him be exempted from the general pardon," added Wentworth. Michell begged to be heard in his defence, but Coke opposed such hearing, and the scapegoat was conducted through the streets on foot, attended by the halberds, to the Tower.

Mompesson sat in the House, of which he was a member, while the scapegoat was being hooted through the city. But the town was now on fire, and he was soon aware that he could only save himself by flight. A boat was hired for him, and ere the Commons could arrange the clauses of impeachment he was safe beyond the seas.

The House was now as passionate as the streets, and from abuse of patents, to abuse of lawyers who had certified those patents, was an easy step. "Let us begin," said Cranfield, "with the administration of justice; then go on to trade, and last of all deal with the patents." Cranfield was Master of the Court of Wards—a court in daily conflict with the Court of Chancery—but he was no lawyer, and was not aware that the House of Commons had no right to meddle with the courts. John Wraynham, now a member for Wotton Bassett, was a warning of the price at which they could arraign those courts; but Bacon, when he heard of their reluctance, bade them speak their mind. They wished to probe abuses? They were helping him to do his work, and he was eager to assist them to achieve this end. Without his leave they could not have moved a single step.

Then Cranfield, Calvert, Coke, and Digges, brought

on their case—a charge of laxity in receipt of fees, suggesting bribery and corruption on the bench. Egerton and Aubrey, suitors in his court, declared that they had paid in certain fees as bribes. This charge was monstrous, inconceivable; and all the best reformers in the House rejected it at once—rejected it for ever. Finch, Moyle, Sackville, Cavendish, Meautys, May, opposed themselves to this party motion; Wentworth, Pym, Crewe, Lyttleton, St. John, Hampden, stood aloof; amazed, no doubt, to find that Councillors and Secretaries should endow the House of Commons with such powers. Impeach a minister of State! No blood was asked as yet; but who could tell how soon the appetite for blood might come? When Bacon heard what course affairs were taking, he was staggered. Was the reign of law gone by? Were life and fame become the sport of passing majorities in Parliament? With sad foreboding, Bacon said to James: “Sir, they who strike at your Chancellor, will strike at your crown.” The House were slow to seize this revolutionary power. They had to be assured by reference to the Rolls, that former Parliaments had used this right of superseding courts of law. When Calvert, with the full authority of his place as Secretary of State, proposed that Aubrey’s charge and Egerton’s charge should be delivered to the Lords as facts which had been proved, he was virtually defeated; for the House would only send these charges up “in a relation,” but without the prejudice of an opinion of their own.

The Villiers’ party, now supported by the Howards, were in greater strength in the House of Lords. But still they sought to increase their weight; and when the Chancellor fell sick, they raised James Ley to the bench as Lord Chief Justice, and appointed him by commission to preside in the House of Peers. When Bacon saw that they were sure of a majority of votes, he stood aside, and let the storm

sweep by. "I am the first," he murmured; "may I be the last."

Lord Suffolk moved that Lord St. Albans should be made to answer at the bar, and Arundel was one of the committee of Lords who carried this ungracious message to York House. But there were men in the House of Lords to whom the course pursued by Buckingham's party was an insult and a wrong, and who were eager for a chance of stating why they thought it so. That chance now came. On reading the patent for Inns, the Lords sent down to the Tower for Yelverton, who was still a prisoner, to explain the legal forms; and that frank lawyer told them, glancing at Buckingham, that the true cause of his imprisonment was not the error he had made in the City charter, but the service he had done the State in dealing with that patent. Villiers got alarmed at this bold reference to himself; and James came over to the House to screen his pet from blame. But Yelverton, unchecked by royal frowns, turned sharply on the Favourite, crying, in a phrase which was a prelude to the great harangues of Eliot, "If my Lord of Buckingham had read the articles exhibited in this place against Hugh de Spencer, and knew the danger of displacing officers about the King, he would not have pursued me with such bitterness." Prince Charles stood up. "Such words," he said, "were scandalous." Buckingham bade the orator go on, and when his prisoner had closed his speech, the Marquis moved his close confinement in the Tower. But now a mutinous spirit seized the Lords. The Prince and Marquis spoke in vain. Southampton rose in opposition; his arguments were backed by Say and Sele; and Buckingham's motion, in effect, was put and lost. Next day his Majesty sent word that he was much annoyed with the Peers for suffering any one in that House to compare him, James the First, with such a king as Edward the Second. As to Buckingham and Hugh de Spencer,

he left that matter to their lordships' care ; but in so far as insult touched himself he took the question up, and should proceed to vindicate his right. This threat was a mistake, as James soon saw ; for he was met by a remonstrance from the Peers, and, after some delay, consented to leave the question in their hands.

A scene that should have been a warning to the Court occurred. The notes of Yelverton's offending speech being read, it was suggested that he might be heard in explanation and defence. Lord Arundel, now fawning on the Favourite, objected to a course so favourable to the prisoner. He had spoken ; they had heard him ; they were there to judge. Lord Spencer rose to answer Arundel. Lord Spencer was astonished that a Howard should proclaim such doctrine, as that men might be condemned unheard ; since two members of that family—the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Surrey—had been put to death unheard. "My lords," cried Arundel, stung to the quick, "I do acknowledge that my ancestors have suffered, and it may be for doing the King and country service, at the time, perhaps, when the lord's ancestors that spoke last were keeping sheep." This answer raised a tumult. Arundel was told he must withdraw his words ; a week was given him for repentance ; and on still refusing to beg Lord Spencer's pardon, he was sent with a file of halberds to the Tower.

Lord Arundel was only liberated on the prayer of the Prince of Wales, who gave his word that due amends should instantly be made to the offended peer.

While Arundel was yet a prisoner in the Tower, Bacon was brought to the Lieutenant's house ; arrested in violation of the King's most solemn pledge. In yielding his cause and place, he had received the King's assurance that the sentence passed upon him should be nothing but a form ; his honour would be safe, and even his fortune would be James's care. Yet

after his submission day by day passed by, and James did nothing to remit the penalty and remove the stain. The courtiers knew what caused delay. It was York House, and nothing but York House. Sir Edward Sackville wrote to him, "If York House were gone, the town were yours." But Bacon would not buy the town at such a price. "York House," he answered, "is the house wherein my father died, and wherein I first breathed; and there will I yield my last breath, if it please God and the King will give me leave." Then Buckingham took him from a sick-bed and sent him to the Tower.

He lay in the Lieutenant's house, but only for a single day. "Good my lord," he wrote to Buckingham; "procure the warrant for my discharge. Death, I thank God, is so far from being unwelcome to me, as I have called for it (as Christian resolution would permit) any time these two months. But to die before the time of his Majesty's grace, and in this disgraceful place, is even the worst that could be." James was touched, and orders were despatched to Sir Allan Apsley to allow the Lord St. Albans to depart that very night.

But Buckingham had other means of tearing York House from Bacon, even after the Tower had failed. He got him sent from London, with an order not to come within a dozen miles. What use, then, was a London house? At first the great philosopher thought of his banishment as a passing trial, but, as months flew past and he was still restrained, he listened to Sackville's counsels, sold his lease, and came to reside in his pleasant old lodgings in Coney Court, among the elms and mulberries he had planted in his youth.

Williams, having first been sworn of the Privy Council, and appointed Bishop of Lincoln, got the Seals. "I should have known who would be my successor," said the illustrious victim of his arts. But

Williams was not satisfied with his crozier and his Seals, the income of a bishop and the state of a Lord Keeper. He hoped to win and wear a Cardinal's hat, as Wolsey had won and worn a Cardinal's hat. But he was minded to retain his smaller livings; and, as Buckingham could deny him nothing, he was said to be "a perfect diocese in himself—bishop, dean, prebendary, and parson." Williams laughed at jokes and kept his livings; in the hope of higher things from Rome, and not yet dreaming of his portion in the Tower.





CHAPTER IX.

A SPANISH MATCH.

SO long as Villiers stood in front of the party which hated Spain and the Catholic League, he was too strong for Suffolk and his faction to assail him. Suffolk and his faction, therefore, had been facing round, trying on a second Favourite the arts by which they had won the first. They would become his friends; they would surround his person; they would form his court; and they would worship him as a god. Young, sensual, inexperienced, how could he resist these flatteries and caresses? If they won him over, all would yet be well; and even if they failed to win him over, they might lessen his power to do them harm. They could not hang about him much without exciting the suspicions of his honest friends.

It was a great point in their favour that he had a Catholic wife; the greater that this Catholic wife was one who went to church, and bore the name of convert from her faith. A Jesuit who slept one night in Belvoir Castle could remove next day to Audley End, and secret messages might pass by these safe hands from Lady Suffolk to the Favourite's wife. It was a great point in their favour that he had a wavering Parent, and the greater that this wavering Parent was a woman who attended mass. This Parent was beginning to tire of Williams, grown too lazy and too big

for such hard slavery as hers; and "Little Laud," a parson of a different stamp, was creeping noiselessly into his place. Laud's person was not comely, his address not taking; for his face was red and blotched, as if from drink, and his discourse was sometimes spotted with unseemly oaths. But then his notions of Church government were sound. Like women of tempestuous passions, she was of the High Church very high. She thought that priests should hold the keys; that women ought to have their spiritual guides; that penances, indulgences, and fasts, were charming things; and that confession was a lady-like and easy way of wiping out her sins. "Hocus-pocus Laud," as some folk called him, helped this lady in her spiritual throes, and gained an influence with her only equalled by the sway of Father Fisher and Doctor Lamb. She sent for Fisher to her house, and Laud was not too proud to gratify her by a "hocus-pocus" with that famous Jesuit, once a prisoner in the Tower, and now a secret minister of females in distress of mind. Fisher was soon a guest in the lady's house, and Little Laud his visitor and friend.

Helped by such agencies, the Howard family were soon on terms with Buckingham and his kin. Suffolk was often in his closet; Arundel professed to be his servant; Walden begged him to lend his first-born son a name. They let him into secrets known to few. They taught him how to coin his place, and guide his course by help from sorcerers and quacks. All great men had their wizards—what the vulgar called their "devils,"—who could rule the planets for them. Percy had his Magi; Carr consulted Foreman; Villiers had the service of Dr. Lamb. They called in Lady Salisbury to their aid; and this young dame—a wife, a mother—stooped to court and dazzle Villiers, much as Lady Essex, her more lovely and guilty sister, had been led into courting and dazzling Carr.

Not stout of will, the young man's head was turned,

the young man's blood was fired. By cunning arts these veterans of intrigue inspired him with some portion of their spirit. The Dutch, he came to see, might grow too strong. A good deal could be urged against the Huguenot cause in France. The "Queen of Hearts" was married to a vain and restless prince; and, while he pitied her misfortunes, he began to see that she had grievous faults. Inspired by these new friends, he left the popular party on the final question of a Spanish match for Charles.

This match was now the hope of every man, from Suffolk downwards, who desired to overthrow the system and the settlement of Elizabeth. A Catholic bride for the Prince of Wales would give them in due time a Catholic Queen. The children of that Catholic Queen would grow up in the hands of nuns and priests. A grandson of King Philip would be King of England. Under such a prince the country might be forced, as under Mary, to submit her neck to the Roman yoke.

King James had long been dreaming of a Spanish match for Charles; and Diego de Sarmiento, Condé de Gondomar, the Spanish minister in London, had received a hint to whisper in his ear, though not to give him a certain pledge, that he might have the Doña Maria for the Prince of Wales, if only the Escorial and White Hall could come to terms. When first her hand was proffered to the Prince, Doña Maria was exactly six years old!

One day the council in Madrid, then sorely puzzled how to act in London so as not to lose in credit, yet to save some portion of the ducats paid to admirals and secretaries, saw a sudden light. "I have just been reading in an English volume," cried Pastrana, one of the royal bastards, "how the Queen Elizabeth of that country made pretence of a match with the Duke of Anjou, never intending to wed that prince, but only to baffle France, and gain her ends by craft. Why should we not do like the Queen, and trick our enemies

with the prospect of a Spanish match?" Upon this hint they spake; and then began, in studied words of falsehood, the amusing comedy of "the Spanish match."

Much time was gained, and many ducats saved; for James, in prospect of this match, was brought to regard the Spaniards as his friends; and Philip saw less need to pension ministers and secretaries when he got their secrets from the King himself. A portrait of the Doña, with a face of pea-green tint, was hung in the Prince's gallery at White Hall, and every one was ordered to salute it as the image of his future Queen. Gondomar, a Jew in blood, and probably in creed, could hardly see this capping to the Bride without a smile; he knew too well his Spanish olive was forbidden fruit.

No love was lost between the Prince and the Infanta. When they were old enough to know their minds, they fell into fiery scorn, instead of into fervent love. Maria would not hear of Charles the Heretic, as her people called him; Charles the Heretic saw but little to admire in such a pea-green piece of flesh and blood. "A nice bed-fellow you will have!" sneered the girl's confessor; "this heretic will be the father of your children, and will then be burnt in hell." She told her ladies she would rather take the veil, though she had no great calling to the Church, than marry such a partner. Charles was no less free. "If it were not a sin," he sighed, on turning from her portrait on the wall, "it would be well if princes could marry two wives: one wife to please the politicians, a second wife to please themselves."

Yet Charles—now come of age, and hence, as Gondomar perceived, the central figure on the scene—was willing to go on, if only he could have the lady for a wife on easy terms. He cared but little for her pea-green face, as that of a girl who might be loved and kissed by him; but even his sober blood beat wildly at a hint from Spain that a daughter of the Kaisers might become the mother of his son. Gon-

domar dropped that hint, and Charles was Gondomar's dupe for life.

In rear of these intrigues of the palace, the confessional, and the court, stood the English Commons—fixed as death against this policy of asking for a Spanish bride. To marry an Infanta was to dally with the Beast! Gondomar took no heed of such, except when blood was stirred by news of some great fight like that of Prague, on which they smashed his windows, stopped his coach, and threatened to hang him in the streets. He fled to his chamber, called his priests, and asked for the consecrated bread. He was no hero, as the London lads found out; but he could press for his revenge as cruelly as Shylock for his pound of flesh.

One day the Condé, who resided in a house, with a big garden, in Gravel Lane, Houndsditch, was being carried in a litter down Fenchurch Street, past a tradesman's shop at which three lads were standing. "Sirrah," cried one lad to his fellow, "knowest thou what goes there?" "Why?" asked the second, "what goes there?" "The devil in a dung-cart!" laughed the city wit. A servant of the Condé heard them jeer, and thinking they were laughing at his master, yelled, "You shall see Bridewell for your mirth ere long." "What!" quoth the lad in answer, "shall we go to Bridewell for such a dog as thou?" and going straight to the liveried flunkey, slapped his face and tripped him by the kerb. The Condé wrote to the Lord Mayor, Sir Martin Lumley, who admitted that the boys were wrong, and offered to give them a sharp reproof; but Gondomar insisted that they should be lashed; and Lumley, much against his will, was forced to give an order that they should be whipped from Temple Bar to Newgate Street. As usual, they were tied to carts, and beaten through the public streets; a great mob following them and mocking them; until the news ran through the shops that these

young lads were flogged at Gondomar's suit; on which the city boys turned out with staves and knives. A hundred rushed upon the carts near Temple Bar, set free the lads, and beat the officers. A cry was raised that more than a thousand were coming down Fetter Lane. The sheriffs' officers now fled, and hid themselves in slums and stews.

Gondomar, still more angry, sent to Lumley, asking how the city was governed, that such things could be done? To which the Lord Mayor answered that he should not give account of his government to a minister of Spain. Not answer! Gondomar swore that Lumley should be punished for his insolence; but on seeking the advice of Catholic friends—who warned him that his house in Gravel Lane would fall some night about his ears—he simply asked from James for vengeance on the 'prentice boys. The King rode up to town, and made a speech, in which he told the citizens they must either satisfy Gondomar, or he would put a garrison in the city, break their charter, and rule them by the sword. He ordered the lads to be whipped again, and they were lashed so cruelly that one of them died beneath his blows.

The knights and burghers in the House of Commons were still more troublesome to Gondomar than the apprentice lads. From hour to hour his creatures brought him news of what was done; and, if a word were dropped against his master, he was quickly closeted with the King, demanding that the speaker should be lodged in jail. Gondomar had a deep dislike to Parliaments, and he urged the King to put them down. A king, he said, was not his own master—not the equal of other kings—so long as he was teased by subjects who could meet to judge him. A scene at court came hard upon that scene in Fenchurch Street. Mised by hints that patriots ought to "strike while the iron was hot," some men of the class who liked to be popular in the shires and yet acceptable at court—

the "Undertakers," Digges and Phelips—went on striking when the iron was no longer hot; not seeing that their work was done the moment they had put the Favourite in a way to get York House, they framed a petition to the King, in which they begged his Majesty to draw his sword, to place himself in front of the reforming states, to put down Papists with a powerful hand, to point his weapon at the King of Spain, and wed his son to a Protestant wife. A copy of this paper was (by treachery) in Gondomar's hands before it had been voted by the House of Commons; and on the night when it was carried, Gondomar wrote these words to James:—"Your Parliament is insolent and seditious; and but for my belief that your Majesty will punish these people, I should quit the kingdom. I must do so, as your Majesty would be no longer king; and I have no troops to castigate them." James was furious; not with the foreigner, who had dared to write such things, but with the Commons, who had put the wishes of his country into words. He was insulted in his place. He could not suffer them to judge him. They were ignorant of his policy and his means. Aforetime he had left them to their talk; but he could never allow them to turn this grace against himself. He would punish such speeches in the future, both when they were sitting and when they rose.

The House, in answer to a threat which struck at their right of speech, drew up and entered on their books a protest, reasserting their free and ancient right. Then James rode up from the country, called for the journals, and in presence of his Council and his judges tore out the leaf on which this protest stood.

His act was taken as a call to arms. Villiers bore the news himself to Gondomar, and Gondomar wrote to Madrid the most joyful letter he had penned for many a day. "It is the best thing," he wrote, "for Spain and Catholicism that has happened since Luther began to preach." The King was acting like a king,

and if the quarrel spread, he would be drawn into the arms of Spain. Gondomar took care the quarrel should go on. If James would save his crown, the Condé whispered, he must thrust these traitors from the court and lay them by the heels; and James, too dull to see the craft by which his family were being ruined, ordered Digges into Ulster on a pretended mission, commanded Pym to keep his chamber, and committed Coke and Phelips to the Tower.

Wentworth, who had proved his gifts, was taken into favour and preferred. Some courtiers said he would be lifted to the House of Lords; but they were wrong; for such high proof of favour he had yet to wait some years.

One farther step, and Gondomar could dispose of England as he liked. The King had only to dissolve his Parliament, and in parting from his factious critics break with parliaments for ever, even as the Kings of Aragon and Castile had broken with their parliaments for ever. This stage was nearly reached. The Houses were dispersed, and Gondomar got a promise that they should not meet again. "It is now fixed," he wrote home gaily, "that the King will not call another Parliament so long as he shall live." And then he summed up all his gains in one joyous sentence:—"The King will not be able to help his children on the Rhine; he will not be able to oppose the Catholics anywhere."

Not one of his English dupes—not Charles, not Buckingham, not Laud, not Wentworth—could perceive, as yet, that Gondomar was leading them through violent means to yet more violent ends; that he was driving all these victims to the Tower, the assassin's knife, the court of justice, and the headsman's axe!



CHAPTER X.

SPANIOLIZING.

THE court was Spaniolizing; and the darling of that court, as great with Charles as he had always been with James, was riding in the van. Pimps, pensioners, quacks—all “things of Spain”—were now in fashion, and were with him in his house and in the Park. Williams and Laud were friends of Spain, each hoping to procure from Rome, through her, a Cardinal’s hat. Apartments in York House were given to Doctor Lamb, who was employed to toil for him in secret, to bewitch fair women, to enhance his charms, to cast his fortunes, and to rule his star. The house in which the *Novum Organum* had been lately finished lent a shelter to this quack.

George Calvert, Lake’s successor, warned by Lake’s misfortunes, hastened to join the stronger party. Calvert, a Yorkshire lad, with empty pockets and a silent tongue, had spent his manhood in Cecil’s office, keeping secrets, checking files, and copying letters, till his master, finding his old friends, grown fat with spoil of power, were falling from him, raised this prudent drudge into a Councillor of State, and left him, when he died, a chief executor of his will. Calvert wrote a good hand, and James, now minded to be secretary himself, set Calvert at his former desk. In six or seven years the lad became Sir George, and was in fact, if not in name, a Secretary of State. He

clung to every man who rose at court—to Carr, to Bacon, and to Villiers; but he only clung to them while they were rising men, and quitted them the instant they began to fall. His Yorkshire wit had warned him not to rise too fast, since rising slowly meant rising safely; and his rule of life was never to provoke ill-will by sudden airs, to run on easily with the tide, and get his keel on high, safe ground before the ebb.

For years he had denied himself the luxury of opinions, saying he was too poor to keep a soul of his own; but when he had to give his yea and nay, he was compelled to look about him and to choose a side. Which side? He never dreamt of asking which was right. He only asked himself which side would win. No man knew better than Calvert what was passing in the closets of White Hall. The poor old King was but a king in name. The Howards were again at court, and Gondomar was daily at the side of Charles. All Catholics were looking up. His patron Buckingham, like his colleague Wentworth, was at work upon the Spanish match. That Charles would marry the Infanta he was sure. A dozen years might pass, and then that Spanish girl of pea-green face would be the English queen.

A goodly party was of Calvert's mind, and many of the greatest people were preparing for a change of creed by hearing mass, receiving priests at midnight, and submitting to the Church of Rome. The Queen secreted priests in an upper room. The Favourite's wife threw off her mask. The Parent listened to that Father Fisher who had been concerned in the Powder Plot. One-half the Council was accused, on no light grounds, of floating with the tide; and Calvert, not to be the last and least, threw in his lot with Gondomar and the rising cause. He called a priest, and reconciled his soul with Rome.

When he had taken this bold step, his prudence told

him he must cling for very life to Spain. The service he could do was great. A Protestant colony had been planted in Virginia; he could plant a Catholic colony by its side. A Huguenot power was rising at La Rochelle, which people were beginning to call a second Holland; he might hinder James from going to the help of his natural friends. A Puritan feeling reigned in the royal fleet; and he could fill the ships with creatures of his own. An English princess, driven from her throne by the Catholic League, was at the Hague; he might contrive to keep her there an exile all her life. Would not these services be worth their price? Gondomar knew what Calvert cost; and while the Spaniard ruled at court, the Secretary of State was sure to be a prosperous man.

“The Spanish ambassador directs affairs,” a courtier wrote; “and no ambassador ever had such power.” The power which Gondomar had won was used by him to two great ends—one near and one remote. His foremost purpose was, to hold back England from her natural place in front of the reforming states; his second, to seduce her into making such concessions to the Catholics as would wound her people, drive them into factions, and prepare for her absorption in the Universal Church.

The first was his more pressing care; for Spain was just then making, with her allies of the Catholic League, her final efforts to regain what Rome had lost. The twelve years' truce was ready to expire; the League was ready to advance. Spinola, master of the Lower Rhine, could march at once upon the United Provinces; while Tilly, master of Bohemia, could hurry through a country too divided in opinion to resist his army, towards the Upper Rhine. If England could be held in check while one by one the Protestant states were overrun, Gondomar's presence in London would be worth an army and a fleet to Spain.

At times his task was hard ; for every man not paid in money or misled by priests was clamouring for a war against the Beast. The King was wavering in his mood ; for while he snatched most eagerly at a Spanish bride for Charles, he could not utterly forget his daughter's cry for help. Elizabeth, the young and lovely girl ! who had been sent abroad as England's pledge to the reforming states, was now a fugitive ; the victim of her faith—expelled alike from Heidelberg and Prague. Though Gondomar was cunning, he could hardly keep the Prince of Wales from joining in the popular demand for war. His only refuge was the match ; and he assured the Prince of Wales, that love would give him more than he could hope to gain by war ; the restoration of his sister's province, credit in the Kaiser's councils, and a family union with the King of Spain.

Charles heard him with delight. He loved his sister, and was eager to replace her on the Upper Rhine ; but he was cold and vain, and caught too eagerly at offers which implied relief for her, yet cost no moral effort and no personal risk.

Gondomar talked so much about this match, and heard so much from others of the good which it would bring to Spain, that he, the very minister of deception, fell into his own elaborate toils, and actually began to wish the marriage could be brought about. Why should it not ? If Charles could only be converted to the Roman Church, the treaty might go on in earnest, and his kingdom might become what Naples had become—a fortalice of Spain. Could Charles be reached ? He fancied that if Charles were in Madrid, he could be won ; for Gondomar, a Spaniard, thought no human virtue could resist the arguments of a Jesuit doctor and the blandishments of an imperial court. He spoke to Charles. Why should the Prince of Wales not go and see his bride ? The King and Queen of Spain would greet him royally. *Hidalgoes*

would be proud to swell his train, and lovely doñas would be sure to shower on him their radiant smiles. "Dismiss all state," the Condé whispered; "come alone. A friend, a servant, are enough companions for a knight going forth in search of his lady-love." The Prince sat listening to the tempter's voice, not dreaming of the rage and shame that such a plot would bring into every English cheek. "Could they go safely?" Charles inquired. "Go safely!" cried the Spaniard, in affected wonder. "Yes!" said Charles, "would no one try to stop him?" Gondomar could but smile. Bright eyes might take him captive; loving lips might set him free. Was not the minister himself going home to Spain? If accidents should happen on the road, he, Gondomar, would be there to set things straight!

By Suffolk's arts and Lady Salisbury's smiles the Favourite had been won to back this policy of a Spanish bride for Charles; and, when the Spaniard called him into secret council on the Prince's journey, Villiers leaped to it at once. Yes, George would go with Charles to Spain. The thing was done. No word was said to James, for these young men and their adviser had begun to reign. Their secret must be kept. The Parent must not know. When Gondomar said "Goodbye" to Bacon, and the fallen Chancellor wished him "a pleasant passover," in allusion to his Hebrew blood, no one suspected that he bore with him a secret promise that the Prince of Wales would follow in his wake to Spain.

On two points Gondomar had been told to keep his watchful eyes—the Cinque Ports and the Narrow Seas; for while the Dutch were strong at sea, his master must have steadfast friends in the English waters and the English ports. Two officers watched the Downs; a Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, an Admiral of the Narrow Seas. For many years Northampton had been Lord Warden, and the kings of Spain had paid him

for his treacheries a thousand pounds a-year. For still more years Sir William Monson had been Admiral in the Narrow Seas, and all those years the kings of Spain had paid him for his treacheries three hundred and fifty pounds a-year. This money had been wisely spent. Northampton died; Zouch was made Lord Warden in his stead. Monson fell; but his command was given to Sir Francis Howard. Gondomar had still a servant in Dover Castle and in the Downs.

Abroad, in the actual field of conflict, Gondomar met with less success; though even there he found some means of wasting and corrupting the English bands. A stream of English youth was flowing from the Thames into the Scheldt and Maas, from which it crept into the camps and cities of the Rhine. This stream he could not dam; but he could set his spies to watch, defame, and hamper all the leading men. No soldier could unsheathe his sword, no orator could make a speech, in favour of the reforming states, without provoking Gondomar's vindictive wrath. He satirized Sir Horace Vere, commanding at Heidelberg for the Queen of Hearts. He caused the arrest of Captain North, returning from the Spanish main, and caused him to be flung into the Tower. Phelips and Coke, his recent victims, lay in adjacent cells to North; and no long time elapsed ere, on the same suggestion, they were joined in their imprisonment by De Vere.





CHAPTER XI.

HENRY DE VERE.

HENRY DE VERE, the eighteenth Earl of Oxford, was the first of English peers. Compared with this young earl, the Stanleys and the Howards were but peers of yesterday. De Vere came down in one unbroken line from Alberic, that Count de Ghisnes who fought and conquered at King Stephen's side. For twenty reigns his sires had held the office of Lord High Chamberlain; and nearly all these reigns had kept some story of their wisdom in the council and their prowess in the field. Sir Francis Vere and Sir Horatio Vere were members of this gallant house.

Earl Henry was a youth of daring spirit and irregular life, who ran his course of pleasure, not in London only, but in every town from Paris to the City in the Sea. In gondola and mask, no young patrician was so gay; and having health and money, he could buy those flatteries and delights of life for which a poorer man could only sigh. The times had made him grave. He learnt in Venice that the Spaniards were not willing to renew the truce; he heard that every noble heart at home was swelling with the hope of war. Fame told him that his kinsman, Horace Vere, was fighting for the good old cause, and that his noble friend, the youthful Earl of Essex, was repairing to the Rhenish camp. This news broke on his pleasures

like a roll of drums. Adieu to his signoras and his frolics! Riding fast through Lombardy and France, he came to London, where he sought a place in front; as ready, should his famous kinsman choose him, either to lead a company or to trail a pike. He crossed to Germany and fought as one who bore his name should fight. No man confronted with a higher courage than De Vere the hardships of campaigning life, until, the season spent, he was recalled, like Essex, by a royal mandate, to his place in the House of Lords.

The presence of such peers as Oxford and Essex in the Rhenish camps was gall to Gondomar, who saw with jaundiced eye how quick the golden youth of England were to rush upon his master's pikes. When Oxford came to his house in Fleet Street he was dogged by eyes as keen and ears as quick as any in the pay of holy Church. His words were noted, and inflamed. Unused to curb his tongue, the young Earl spoke as fiercely as he fought. He could not hear with patience of abandoning the Queen of Hearts. One day, when warm with wine, he broke into a furious speech against the King of Spain. His words were borne to Gravel Lane, and Gondomar drove at once to see the King. Ere nightfall Oxford was a prisoner in the Tower.

Oxford was not the only victim of the Condé's will that none of these English nobles should disturb his policy on the Rhine. Southampton, now a wiser man than in his headlong youth, was a devoted friend to the Queen of Hearts; he made his house the centre of much irregular buzzing and intrigue; and once, if not more than once, he had proposed to carry an army to the Rhine. Southampton was a dangerous foe to Spain, not only as a peer of high connexions and broad estates, but as a Councillor to whom all secrets of the court were known. At any cost this foe must be removed; and Gondomar dropped his hints so well that James consented to arrest him on a vague suspicion of

his writing underhand some letters to the Queen of Hearts. The thing was done so quickly that Southampton was arrested as he rose from the council-table at White Hall, and, in the midst of protests, was committed to the Tower.

One man had sense enough to see that such an exercise of power would lash the country into riot. This one man was Williams, who was not so blinded by the Cardinal's hat in prospect as to dream that England could be easily reconciled to a Spanish match. He ran to Buckingham, and showed him the danger of imprisoning men like Oxford and Southampton. How were the Council to explain such things? Could they tell the world that two such men were thrown into the Tower because they loved the Queen of Hearts? Two-thirds of England shared their passion. They must trim their sails some other way. The Favourite felt that Williams spoke the truth; that Gondomar had led him to commit a great mistake. He rode at once to the Tower; paid visits to his prisoners in their cells; and so arranged affairs that in a week the popular and indignant Earls were both at large.

But Gondomar was not beaten yet. If Oxford could not be immured in the Tower, he might be sent to sea, in what would seem a service of defence and honour, but would really be a service to his master's arms. He might be sent against "the pirates"—those Free Rovers of the Sea, who were regarded in Madrid and Seville as the demoniacal enemies of Spain. Villiers, who was always either hot as fire or cold as flint, requested Oxford to assume command as Admiral of the Fleet, and sail in search of these pirate ships. It was a thankless and unpopular service, which he soon threw up in weariness of soul; aware too late that on his flag-ship he was only Gondomar's tool and dupe. He cast about him for revenge. An Earl of Oxford could not stoop to Gondomar, a fellow whom

he called an adventurer, and believed to be an apostate Jew. His ire could only fall on Villiers and the Villiers gang; and he was able to inflict on them a striking loss and a bitter shame.

For Kit, the youngest of these Villiers, now grown up, and decked with golden spurs, was ready for a wife; and his providing Parent swept on Lady Howard, heiress to the Bassetts of Blore, in Stafford county, widow of Henry, one of Suffolk's younger sons. She thought the Howards would have helped her; but the wealthy widow was a Bassett, not a Howard, and she laughed at these proposals for her money and her hand. Sir Kit was both a lout and sot, addicted to low company, while she was then being courted by the finest gentleman alive—that William Cavendish, the friend of Bacon, who was afterwards renowned as Duke of Newcastle in the Civil Wars.

Kit left all wooing to his mother, who inspected those dark courts and alleys out of which such golden damsels as Lord Compton's treasure had been drawn. For blood was not so much required by Kit as gold; since George, if Kit were rich enough, could deck him with the coronet of an earl. A fortune, great as any in the city, was the child of Sebastian Harvey, alderman of Cheape, a Staffordshire man, a member of the Iron-mongers' Company, whose father, Sir James Harvey, had been one of Elizabeth's lord mayors. This child was worth a hundred thousand pounds. Lady Buckingham sent her agents into Cheape. Old Harvey would not hear of such a thing; his daughter was too young; she was not fourteen yet; and years must pass before she could be pestered with a lover's suit. The alderman was chosen mayor, and dubbed a knight; and as he still held out, the King was brought upon the scene. James asked the city magnate to bestow his girl on Kit; and as the mayor was gruff, he rode in person to the Mansion House, and begged him as a favour to consent. James spoke in vain. The lord mayor loved

his child; he wished her to be happy in her youth; and he was sure she would not be so as the wife of such a lout.

A third quest brought the Parent back to court. Francis, Lord Norreys of Rycote, had an only child, a girl named Bessie, who would have his money and his vast estate. This girl was promised by her father to a gentleman of the bed-chamber, Edward Wray, a creature of Buckingham, a friend of Oxford, and a son of Sir William Wray. Buckingham had made this match, and Norreys had been raised in the peerage by the title of Earl of Berkshire and Viscount Thame for giving his consent. But when the King had failed with Harvey, Lady Buckingham thought it might be well to take the Lady Bessie from Edward Wray, and give her as a wife to Kit. Not only was the lady rich, a lady in her own right, but being an only child, her offspring would have claims to the earldom of Berkshire and the viscounty of Thame. Was such a prize to be thrown away? The Parent sent for Wray, and told the lover he must give up Lady Bessie and betake himself elsewhere.

Wray might have yielded up his prize in fear, but Oxford was at hand, and Oxford felt no fear of living man. His care of Edward Wray and Lady Bess was not unmixed with dreams of his revenge for Frances Coke, as well as for his lodging in the Tower. The facts about his early love have not been proved, and no one knows the grounds on which the mother of that girl declared that in the eyes of God the Earl of Oxford and her child were man and wife. That girl, if he had ever loved her, was another man's wife—a most unhappy and disloyal wife—and he was wooing, in the Lady Diana Cecil, a fairer and a richer maid than even Frances Coke. But he was young and light of heart: John Villiers had done him wrong; and he would be revenged on Kit.

The Earl of Berkshire—weak and vain, if not un-

sound in mind—raised no objection to this transfer of his child from Wray to Kit, provided always that she gave her free consent. But Lady Bessie would not change her troth. Kit's mother pressed her suit; and Bessie's father answered they must wait. The Parent raged and fumed; the Earl snatched down a cross-bow from a rack and shot himself to death.

Great pains were taken to conceal this hideous tale. The coroner was told to keep his secret; but the truth could not be hidden from a daughter's eyes. She saw a father whom she loved driven mad by that abominable gang, and in her days of mourning she had time to steel her heart against them.

Oxford learned one morning that the Villiers folk were urging Kit to seize his bride, to carry her off by force, to wed her privately, and trust to love and fortune for the rest. A lady, it was urged on Kit, soon learns to like a man who risks the world for love; and James, he was assured, could easily be won to pardon and forget the breach of law. But Kit took much persuading to this act. No doubt the King might pardon him for his brother's sake; but who could tell him whether Lady Bessie would submit to force? She was a girl of spirit. What could he do if she should scream and fight? Four or five servants might suffice to carry her off; but who could keep her quiet when they were left alone in the dead of night? He must have time to think of it.

Then Oxford spoke to Wray. That youth was sure of Lady Bessie, and a plan for an elopement and a private marriage was contrived. On Berkshire's tragic death, the Parent, fearing that Lady Bessie would run away, had placed her in Montgomery's house; as much in custody as Catharine Manners and Frances Coke had been before their marriages to George and John. Possession was the Villiers' rule of Law; but Lady Bessie had a genius of her own; and one dark morning in the early March she crept out of bed un-

noticed, put her cloak on, hurried through the gates, and fled into the town on foot. Wray and his friends were waiting for her near St. Aldermary Church; a clergyman was ready to perform the rite; and twenty minutes afterwards Edward Wray and Lady Bessie were man and wife. They spent their honeymoon in Oxford's house.





CHAPTER XII.

THE MATTER OF HOLLAND.

ONE triumph more and Gondomar's task was done. An artist in his craft, he had murdered Raleigh, he had pensioned admirals and secretaries, he had kept the Queen of Hearts in exile, he had lodged the bravest and most eloquent of his enemies in the Tower. He had engaged the King in a secret treaty, which implied, as he conceived, the reduction of England to a Papal province at no distant day. He had procured from Charles a secret pledge that he would run away from London, and, without a word of warning to the Council, put himself in the power of Spain. All these were signal triumphs of his art, and yet his masterpiece was still to come. Before he quitted London he entrapped the King, the Prince of Wales, the Marquis of Buckingham, together with Lord Digby, who had lived in Spain, and knew its policy, in a plot so foul as to have left all those concerned in it eternal legacies of hate and shame. This plot was known to the conspirators as "the Matter of Holland," under which title it is darkly mentioned in many of the letters from James to Buckingham, Digby, and the Prince of Wales.

The Dutch, whose patience had been sorely tried by such state criminals as our Wardens of the Cinque Ports, our Admirals of the Narrow Seas—all paid in Spanish gold to do them harm—had sometimes, as

they grew in strength, turned sharply on these enemies in disguise. Our trade had suffered check; our seamen had been hustled in the ports; our flag had been offended in the Downs. But, more than all, these Dutch had pushed their way into the East, and won such favour with the natives as enabled them to raise pretensions to a full monopoly of trade. They had driven the Portuguese from Amboyna and the Moluccas, and the clove trade was entirely in their hands.

Some English skippers put into their ports; the Dutch repelled them, and the sailors came to blows. A score of lives were lost. Complaints were laid before the Council, and the Lord-Admiral, as chief of our naval force, was called upon to redress this wrong. But Buckingham had no fleets to send into those distant seas, and when he asked for justice at the Hague, he heard a story of injustice from the other side.

Exposed to this loud clamour for redress, he opened his heart to Gondomar, who was now become, like Dr. Lamb the sorcerer, his daily councillor and guest. One day, in pique, he called the Dutch a set of rogues, and hoped the King of Spain would some day break their pride. "Why should not you," said Gondomar, "make war on them as well as we? You have your wrongs to right. These burghers take your trade, your money, and your land. What have you left? Your monarchy? In no long time, they will take away your crown, and set up one of their republics in your homes." The Favourite turned to Digby, who was standing near him. Digby had just come home from Spain; he knew the court, the country, and the language well; and he was one of those cold ministers of state, who close their eyes on popular and religious pleas. Believing that it would be wise to connect his sovereign with the Kaisers, he could keep no terms with zealots who, on merely moral grounds, objected to a Spanish match. What were the United Provinces to him? When Digby heard the Spaniard's

words, instead of rising on him, stung with shame, as Eliot would have risen, he coolly asked what part in the spoil of war would fall to England's share? "They used to tell me in Madrid," he added, "you would give up the revolted provinces, if we cared to take them, for a trifle." Gondomar had no power to cede a province; even to suggest the seizure of a province. Every post from Spain informed him of his master's preparations to subdue the rebels and annex their country to his crown. What Antwerp was, that Leyden and Amsterdam were soon to be. But Gondomar saw the advantage of entangling Villiers in an odious plot, by which he might turn his flank, in case the Favourite should be afterwards driven by public clamour into taking up a line of policy more favourable to the Dutch. What part? he answered, turning round to Digby; well, he could not say, off-hand; but thought that if the English joined his master in restoring order in the rebellious provinces, they might look in reason for a great reward. But what, asked Digby, was a great reward? Could they have Holland? Yes, he thought so. Zeeland? Yes, he thought even Zeeland; but he added, that the English must be ready to give and take. If Spain should yield two provinces, near their seas and ports, they must recall their planters and marauders from the west. America belonged to Spain. Elsewhere an empire waited for the English ships. Cathay and Java wooed them with fragrant winds, and he could show them maps of islands, rich in tropical fruits—in nutmeg, cloves, and pepper—such as they might quickly seize and cheaply hold. The Dutch had driven the Portugals away; and why should not the English drive out the Dutch? Their cause was good; their means were equal to their cause. Those rascals who had murdered English seamen, should be taught respect for the English flag. On every side the King would gain. A dangerous neighbour would be overthrown; the rights of kings



THE WHITE TOWER

would be restored. Two naval and industrious provinces would be added to his crown. All those who injured him would meet their fate, and isles and waters would be opened to his merchants on the line. The kings of England and Spain, he urged, had only to combine their forces, and the Dutch republicans must fall.

Villiers and Digby listened to the Spaniard's words; not feeling that, for them, such words were shame and doom. They sat, they listened, they inquired, and after weighing what he urged, they struck a bargain; leaving him to frame his case in such a way that it might seem to be an offer made by them to him, and not by him to them!

This "Matter of Holland" was a secret; a "supreme secret." Villiers and Digby swore to keep it. Not a soul, except the Prince of Wales, must share it; not a Councillor, not an Admiral, not a Secretary of State. The Prince was sworn and told. About the King? Well, can we trust him? asked the Spaniard. Yes, if he be sworn, said Villiers. Sworn! but would he swear? The Prince and Marquis undertook that he should swear and keep his oath. No other? None.

Then rose the question of ways and means. Spinola might be trusted to do his share; but how would England go into the field? What forces could she raise against the Dutch, and where would she employ them to ensure success? Some plan must be agreed upon, which Gondomar could forward, though in utmost secrecy, to his court. But here their wits were foiled; for since they dared not speak of what they meant to do, how could they raise an army and equip a fleet? The King took counsel with his son, and Villiers spent much time in Gravel Lane. A hundred projects were discussed, and thrown aside. At length they hit upon a scheme. Some seven or eight thousand English volunteers were serving the Dutch republic; men of the class, if not the rank, of Oxford,

Essex, Grey, and Vere; and these three plotters (James, the Prince of Wales, and Buckingham) agreed with Gondomar that secret orders should be sent from London to the volunteers, commanding them to rise at a given signal on their allies, put them to the sword, and seize upon their towns! A fleet should sail under Buckingham to aid these mutineers, and Charles might pass the straits with an army, occupy their ports, and take possession of their soil.

Both James and Charles consented that this infamous proposal should be drafted in their names and sent to Spain, as though it were a project of their own. Madrid received that writing gladly; not as a project they could entertain; for no one in Madrid desired to see the old red cross afloat once more in Flushing, Texel, and the Brill; but as a paper which would damn, both personally and politically, the King of England and the Prince of Wales. On one point only doubt was felt by Spain. Was England strong enough to undertake this scheme alone? If so, the Provinces might be seized before Spinola could have mastered the outlets of the Maas and Scheldt; and Spain would lose the Provinces to an enemy she was plotting to betray. This question, whether James and Charles were as strong as they were base, was laid before the Cardinal Albrecht in Brussels, who was warned to keep an eye on the English ports and camps. His comments on this project of campaign were brief:—the English garrisons would not rise; the fleet was not in trim to fight; the army of Prince Charles was not yet raised.

Thus England, in the persons of her King and Prince, was drawn into an act of treachery towards the states for which her noblest heroes—Sydneys, Raleighs, Greys, and Veres—had proudly shed their blood; and neither King nor Prince could see that he was guilty of a crime against religion, policy, and public faith!



CHAPTER XIII.

SEA AFFAIRS.

FOR three or four years, the liking of Villiers and Eliot for each other had been left untouched by public feuds. They lived apart, and while they rarely met, they kept their early love and boyish trust. Sir John appeared to give up public life, excepting as the officer of his friend, and leave with yet more ardent patriots than himself the task of breaking the Spanish match. Not having a seat in the session of 1621, he had no part in that Protest which the King had torn from the journals, and escaped all risk of lodging in the Tower with Coke and Phelips. Living at Port Eliot with his fair young wife, he reared a band of darlings round his knees; first John, then Richard, Edward, Bessie, Nicolas; and frailer ones, who came and went like early blooms. He only left his home when called on duty; but these calls came often; and he spent much time in busy seaport towns. His duties were to watch the coasts from Saltash to Lyme; to press the men for service; to keep his eye on pirates; to report on wrecks and salvage; and to see that Buckingham's rights as Lord-Admiral were not infringed.

These rights of the Lord-Admiral in the western ports were many and of many kinds. The post was paid in fines and fees; in fines and fees amounting to ten thousand pounds a-year; of which great sum the

crown allowed him but three hundred marks. The Admiral levied toll on every side. He granted licenses to trade; he sold the right of supplying stores; he made and unmade officers at his whim. The royal navy was his personal estate; and everything in a ship from hull to pennon was expected to yield him grist. He had his lien on the shipwright's tools and sailor's beer, no less than on the captain's papers and the gunner's pay. He took the lion's share of every seizure made at sea. All prizes passed into his hands; all enemies' property fell into his courts. He took his own from wrecks, and from the goods of enemies captured in time of war. He had a personal interest, therefore, in naval warfare; first, because his office gave him the right to a tenth of all alien property seized on the proclamation of war coming out; and, second, because the naval operations were certain to fill his coffers with lawful prize. In times of peace, he counted on the profits to be gained by the seizure of pirates' goods.

In the reign of James the First the most singular side of our social and political life was that connected with the sea and sea affairs.

That peace with Spain, which gave a pension to Cecil, a prison to Raleigh, left unsettled nearly all the points on which the English people had set their hearts. If Philip paid for peace, he understood that he was buying rights which he could never win by arms. Among these rights he put a claim to exclude the flags of all nations—English, Dutch, and others—from the Southern seas. Some local ports and local trade he might allow such nations to possess, but he denied their right to enter the Straits of Gibraltar, to cruise in the Levant, to cross the Atlantic Ocean, and to land on the western soil. The Midland Sea was a Spanish lake; the North Atlantic was a Spanish main. On every sea his flag was to be lord of all. No English were to trade of right with Italy and Greece,

and in the chiefest articles were not to trade at all. They must not carry passengers from port to port; they must not deal in arms and guns; they must not sell the natives iron, tin, and lead. Skippers who should break these Spanish rules were to be seized as pirates, flung into jails, and either hung as felons or sold as slaves.

At no time could an English council stoop so low as to admit such claims in words, but under James the First a board of pensioners could submit to facts. Our traders sent out ships; but only at their private risk. The Crown would give them no security for trade, and even when their cargoes had been seized, their crews condemned, the State could seldom be induced to seek redress. Who was to seek redress for them? The councillors? Most of them were paid to shut their eyes. The admirals? In England, as in Spain, the admirals took tithe on every ship and cargo seized at sea. Unable to get justice done at court, the merchants laid a statement of their wrongs before the House of Commons; giving such details of their wrongs as blanched the cheek and fired the veins of every one who listened to their tale.

Here was one of the stories laid before the House of Commons, while the great Sea Captain lay a prisoner in the Tower:

A ship of six-score tons and eighteen men, with spices, drugs, and indigo on board, was hailed near Rhodes by a Spanish admiral, and told in haughty voice to give up all the goods on board belonging to either Jews or Turks. This ship was the "Trial," bound for London, and had no such goods on board. The Spaniard, who suspected her of being a war-ship, and of taking a sail, a gun, and hawser from a French barque, declared the purser should confess his crimes. This purser produced his bill of lading, piped his crew on deck, and showed his hold well stuffed with cargo; evidence of his being employed in honourable trade;

but the Spaniard swore it was all a lie; the "Trial" was a pirate ship; the crew was a pirate crew. That Spanish admiral seized the purser; strung him by the arms to a yard; hung weights about his heels; and lashed a savage goat to his dangling legs. At each addition to the pain that Spaniard called on his victim to confess his guilt. He served the crew as he had served the purser; starved them on bread and water; blocked them in holes; and slung them by the hands and feet. He kept them at sea for sixty days; yet neither purser nor seaman could be got to sign a lie. On landing at Messina, the admiral flung them into jail; the jail of galley-slaves; where these poor lads were fed on dirty rations, beaten on the feet with rods, drawn upon beams, and lodged in dismal vaults, until the hair fell off their heads, the blood in their veins turned pale, and one by one they drooped and died. When only four were left alive, mere ghosts of men, they yielded and signed the paper, falsely confessing they were pirates; so that, when the English owners of the "Trial" claimed their cargo at Madrid, this infamous scrawl was made to justify the capture, though the merchants proved that the "Trial" had her papers in perfect order, and had taken from the Thames the very hawser, gun, and sail, which she was said to have stolen from the French!

Such facts were not confined to the Midland Sea. In Greek and Sicilian waters England and Spain were held to be at peace; but in the Southern passage and among the Western islands they were not at peace. The Spanish proverb was, "No peace beyond the line." In Europe Spain was first; in America she was first and last. She closed her ports against all nations; she considered a stranger's presence in her waters as a proof of guilt. Such English folk as fell into her power while sailing to Virginia and Guiana, she either sent to rot in Spanish dungeons, hung on the yards, or pitched alive to the contending sharks.

And Spain was not the only power that made piratical warfare on the English trade. A Tuscan ship of six hundred tons, called the "Livorno," crowded with guns and men, attacked, off the island of Rhodes, an English bark, called the "Farm of Plymouth," two hundred tons. Giles Thornton and a crew of twenty-four men held out against this Tuscan ship for six hours, when the Italian pirates boarded their vessel, shaved their heads, and ironed them to the bench.

Three Livornese vessels chased the "William and Thomas," Robert Bradshaw, master, bound with goods and passengers from Egypt to the Golden Horn. A hundred and sixty Turks and Jews had taken passage on board this English craft, with cargoes of silk and drugs, worth half a million crowns. Stout Bradshaw fought the Italian fleet two hours before he struck his flag; and then these Tuscan pirates loaded him with chains, and fettered his companions to the bench. A second English ship, the "Triumph," was descried at sea, and one of these Livornese gave chase. On board this second English ship were twenty Arabs, bound for Algiers. These men the Livornese took out of her first of all, and told the master, Thomas Gardiner, he must hand over with them all the monies they had paid him, since the English had no right to meddle with the carrying trade from port to port. Gardiner paid the money; but his troubles were not ended with this loss. His captors bade him sign a paper saying that most of the goods on board his ship belonged to these Arab passengers; and as he could not sign a lie, they kept him prisoner, beat and starved his crew, and, after buffeting at sea for seventeen weeks, put into Livorno, landed the goods, and sent the crew into a torture-house, until one of their number, maddened by his cracking joints and bleeding flesh, took up a pen and signed. The port authorities at once condemned both freight and ship. At this time Tuscany and England were at peace; but the

Grand Duke knew the King and councillors with whom he had to deal. A Tuscan agent then in London wrote to tell the Duke that he might safely keep what he had seized; that no great stir would be made about the loss; that should the Council, pricked on by the City, take the matter up, he knew a way to set things square.

The merchants, fretted by such wrongs, implored King James to grant them letters of marque, so that, while the royal navy was too weak to help them, they might arm and help themselves. If not, they must either cease their trade or put their ships under foreign flags. But James could help them in neither way. Not daring to offend the King of Spain by issuing letters of marque, how could he guard their traffic in such distant waters, while his fleets were rotting in the Thames, his admirals pining in the Tower?

And then broke out a singular and romantic war, in which the fortunes of Eliot and Villiers were at last involved. If pensioners kissed the rod held over them in Florence and Madrid, the country groaned with agony and flushed with anger at such wrongs. Young men of family and fortune heard, at first with shrugs of doubt, and then with burning wrath, such tales as those of the "Trial" and the "Triumph." Beg for letters of marque! They asked for war fleets to be sent—such fleets as swept the "Twelve Apostles" from Cadiz Bay; and when they found that nothing would be done by James, they manned their boats and put to sea; put off in sloops, in barks, in rotting hulls—craft weak in rating, poor in speed, but strong in crews and guns, in knowledge of the sea, and, most of all, in passionate hate of Spain. They crossed to Flushing and the Brill, and from the free Dutch ports they took out letters of marque. The foes of Holland were their own; and, under what they held to be lawful letters, dropt down the Spanish

coasts, and soon appeared off Belem Castle and in Cadiz Bay. Among the first to rush into this private war were Giffard, Glanville, Ward; and these fine gentlemen were followed by Jennings, Bishop, Harris, and others of gentle blood. In time these Rovers got into safer craft; but they were always of a light and handy sort; mere birds of the ocean, which no Spanish boat could catch and hardly any Spanish gun could hit. In brigantines too light to chase, they hung off Capo da Rocca and San Lucar, picking up vessels at their ease; until, by fresh arrivals from the Dutch and English ports, they felt themselves strong enough to pass into the Straits, spread out to the Canary Isles, and sail into the tracks of the silver fleets. At the request of Gondomar, these Rovers were recalled, by paper acts at which they only smiled. The King of Spain insisted that his pensioners should force these Rovers to return. Some orders were drawn up and sent; but few, if any, of those daring men obeyed. They were not fighting now to please their King; their letters of marque were signed by Dutch commanders; and while they could not dispute their sovereign's right to call them back, they said these orders to return were Gondomar's orders, not the King's. Instead of sailing for the Downs and piling arms, they pushed into the Straits, where, lying under the rocks of Abyla, they would dart out gaily when some carrack from Peru, some xebec from Palermo, hove in sight, gave chase, and bring her to; thus sending home to many hearts in Malaga and Cadiz all the morals of their boast,—“No law beyond the line.”

The ports of Sallee and Larache without, of Tunis and Algiers within, the Straits, were open to these Rovers, who were soon fast friends and teachers to the Moors. Much spoil was brought into these open ports, where amber, spices, pearls, and slaves were sure to meet with ready sale. As ship after ship fell

into the Rovers' hands, the Spaniards wrote more angrily to their pensioners in London ; but these Rovers had their friends in Court and City ; nay, the wiser sort suspected that the aged Nottingham was glad to hear, if only in his secret heart, of deeds being done which brought him back the England of his prime. In Paul's, the citizen chuckled at the Beast being driven to speak of injury, and to beg redress. Of course the King was weak. Too feeble to reply to Gondomar that these English Rovers were but following the example set them by Spanish Admirals, that the letters under which they sailed were lawful, that they took the fruits of their adventures on themselves, he potted for a time with pensioners and spies, and then proclaimed the Rovers outlaws, treating their letters of marque as void, casting them out of his realm as pirates, and closing against them all his ports.

This act of royal weakness changed the pirate war. Before the days of his proclamation the Free Rovers had been patriots, fighting for their country ; now that they were outlawed and their letters cancelled, they were forced to make their choice between standing out against their King or yielding to the will of Spain. A few came into port and piled their arms ; but many of those gallant men stood out. Called pirates where they meant to be patriots, they, with stern, sad faces, took their chances of a Pirate War.





CHAPTER XIV.

EPISODE OF THE PIRATE WAR.

FOREMOST in a band where all were brave was Captain Ward; a man who was called by Nottingham "Arch-pirate Ward," by Daborne, the dramatic writer, "Lord of the Ocean, Terror of Kings, and Conqueror of the Western World."

John Ward, a gentleman of Faversham, in Kent, was bred to the sea, and was an officer of the Royal Navy, serving on board the "Lion's Whelp," in Plymouth Sound, when a notorious recusant, much favoured by those in power, arrived in the western port, where he had made arrangements for escaping into France. Such an escape was lawless; and the man was known to be carrying off with him no less a sum than two thousand pounds in minted gold. To carry coin abroad was then a great offence. Men said it was a shame that people rich enough to bribe should be allowed to break the law. A pinnace came into the port from France, and Ward got hints that money was being put on board; yet none of the magistrates would move so far as to seize the pinnace and arrest the crew. At length, Ward's soul being vexed, he openly announced that *he* would do his duty, though the heavens should fall upon his head.

A swift, chivalrous man, he raised a crew and hired a boat; and when that pinnace left the port he gave

her chase, and coming up with her at sea, boarded her in a moment, and, to his great surprise, found neither the money nor the man on board. A spy on shore had told the fugitive his scheme; a new course had been taken to steal away; and Ward was now at sea, a public officer, with a foreign prize in tow, and nothing to justify his daring act. What could he do? To put back into Plymouth was to court derision, if not worse. The French would certainly complain, the fugitive's friends would harry him, and on the whole, being sick of his idle life, he thought it wiser to apply for letters of marque, and fight the enemy on his own account.

He piped his crew on board the pinnace, offered them their choice of either eating the King's bread and fish, or sharing the chances of a roving life; and when they answered with a shout, that they would go with him, he swiftly led them to the Spanish coasts.

A bark, a fly-boat, and a cutter fell into his power; and putting such of their crews as feared to join him, for good and ill, on board the French pinnace, to get home as best they could, he entered the Bay of Tunis as a Free Rover, master of three ships of war. He found a friendly welcome from the Dey, who saw what uses could be made of such a fleet. Ward taught his Arabs arts they did not know—the art of cutting square sails, the art of rigging tall ships—and, in return for what he taught and brought them, he was free to have a market for his spoil, with use of all their ports and yards. But though he undertook to serve the Dey in his local wars, he stood out strongly for the condition that he should never be expected to attack a vessel with an English flag.

Ward's path along the deep was swift. Returning to the gulf with his bark and fly-boat, he surprised the "Madalina" and the "Little John." Putting into the "Madalina" thirty-two guns, into the "Little John" twenty-four guns, which he had borrowed from the

Moors, he drew to his flag the most daring cruisers of every port at which he touched—Jew, Arab, English, Greek, and French. He searched the roads of Andalusia, Sicily, and Naples; giving battle with equal fire to the heavy Adriatic galley and the feathery felucca of the Straits. By daring and success he soon enriched himself, while doing the Dey good service and reviving in these Midland seas the long-lost echoes of the English name. For many years the courts of Italy and Spain had told each other that the spirit of England lay in the dead queen's grave; but here they found an English spirit not yet laid in a winding-sheet. Diplomatsists were not more struck by the Rover's headlong race than by the noble reverence which he bore his country's flag. That flag was sacred in his eyes. Sir Henry Wotton wrote from Venice, "Ward has seized another Venetian barca, but on the prayer of some English passengers he has taken very little out of her, with more temperance than I thought had been in this kind of men." But Venice was not charmed by his romantic course; and when the Doge complained of Ward, the Council banished him from the kingdom by a formal writ. The Signiory first heard of this compliance with their wish from Ward himself. An English ship which sailed into the Lagoon, reported to the Council of Ten that when she was off Otranto she was hailed by a suspicious craft, which proved to be a pirate ship, with Captain Ward on board and a Venetian prize in tow. She gave herself up for lost; but when the pirate found she was English, bound for Venice, he had signalled her to sail. "Tell the flat-caps," were his parting words, "that they have got me exiled; tell them also that before I have done with them they shall sue in London for my pardon."

From that hour he became to them a sharper plague than any of the Turks. Sea-generals of the Republic scoured the Gulf, and neither caught him nor escaped

his toils. Attempts to cut him out of Tunis failed. No name was better known on the Rialto, none more noised about the watersides of Venice, than that of Captain Ward. One ship of fifteen hundred tons—"La Soderina"—freighted in the East with velvets, jewels, silk, and carrying tiers of heavy guns, was cruising up the Gulf when Captain Ward gave chase in the "Madalina," of thirty-two guns. The mighty carrack turned on him with scorn; but after a brisk cannonade he crept under her guns, swarmed up her side, and in a rush of pikes upset her crew, and captured his magnificent prize. The Doge and senators were all concerned in her, for nearly all the Ten had property on board; and many years elapsed before the name of "La Soderina" disappeared from the Doge's letters of complaint and reclamation to White Hall.

If Ward was troublesome to Venice, he was terrible to Spain. He spoiled her trade; he blocked her ports; he comforted her enemies; he broke up her communications by the sea. His fleet had now become a rival power; for he had more than thirty ships of all rates, strongly manned and well supplied with guns. A group of captains served with him, whom Raleigh might have led; Captain Bishop, Captain Glanville, Captain Harris, and the like; with crews of every country under heaven, although the leaders of these crews were all of English race. Now harassing, and now eluding, great armadoes, Ward and his captains either lurked in the lonely creek, from which they darted on their prey, or massed their strength to fight with the silver fleets. They cut off Cadiz from Carthage, and made the roads of Malaga unsafe. The Midland water was no longer a Spanish lake, and the outlet through the Pillar of Hercules was ceasing to be a Spanish strait.

On shore at Tunis, Captain Ward was a bashaw, living in the state of an Arab prince. His palace was of marble, built in the Moorish style, with covered

galleries and open courts ; alive with colour, shaded by palms, and cooled by rush of waters from hidden jets. His limbs were robed in silk, his waist was bound in shawls. Rich poniards and pistols adorned his belt. A dusky train attended to his wants ; an English guard kept watch about his door ; his harem was enriched with lovely and dusky slaves.

One day his star seemed suddenly to pale. He was on shore, reposing in his harem, when a Spanish admiral dashed into the harbour, and in fifty minutes set no less than twenty of his ships on fire. His loss was great, for everything he had on board was burnt ; his cargoes, stores, and guns, together with his ships as far as the water-line.

The peace between Spain and the United Provinces put an end to the nobler phases of this Pirate War. When peace was signed, the letters of marque expired ; the English Rovers were without a flag. Some of these corsairs turned their prows towards home ; and gentlemen, who had lived on corsair decks and sold their captive slaves, met afterwards in their shires as justices of the peace, and sent poor louts to the whipping-post for snaring birds. But more remained at sea, and more went out, refusing to admit the "paper peace." On the demand of Philip, James recalled these Rovers, giving up such as refused his summons to the pirate's doom. They knew no country, they possessed no flag. All kings and princes were against them. If they fell into the Spaniard's clutches, they had nothing to expect beyond a speedy sentence and a shameful death. King James announced by proclamation that he closed against them all his English and Irish ports.

It is not much to say that James gave little thought to what might come of closing his ports ; he thought of nothing but his hawks, his bottle, and his minion's rosy cheek ; but Spain weighed carefully that point ; and Gondomar felt certain that this closing of the ports would bring the Rovers back, as *enemies*, to their native coasts.

Giffard, Glanville, Ward, had scornfully repelled the name of pirates launched at them from Spain. They called themselves Free Rovers, and they claimed to be carrying on the work of Drake. They waged an open war on Spanish and Italian foes; they paid a due respect to friendly powers; and in their direst need, they were not tempted into offering insult to the English flag. In more than one affair, they paid it a chivalric homage. But a brave man values honour more than life; and when these Rovers found that they were outlawed by the feeble puppets at White Hall, they felt an impulse stronger than the love of gain and even the fear of death, to fling defiance at these pensioners of a foreign crown. The Minister of Spain was right; yet it was only after many days, and through increasing acts of shame, that these Free Rovers of the Sea returned in character of pirates to their native shores.

At first these Rovers only changed their policy so far as to drop a line they had always held between Spanish and Italian craft, and craft of other nations entering Spanish and Italian ports. They used to spare all ships except the vessels of their foes; but now they treated these Italian and Spanish ports as closed, and every vessel coming out or going in as prize. Some English ships soon fell into the Rovers' power, and James had daily cause to rue the signing of that order which had closed the English and Irish ports.

Petitions rained upon him; praying for some protection to a trade thus suddenly exposed to the risks of war, and asking that a fleet of royal ships should be despatched into the Straits. This question struck him like a shot. A squadron in the Straits! Where could he find the ships, the men, the money, and the guns?

But since he would not seek the evil, it came home to him in time, as evil will. When once the Rovers had begun to spoil the English trade in Spanish roads,

they asked themselves why they should spare that trade in Irish roads? The ports were closed; the worst was done; and they had time to think of profit and revenge. If Ward refused to put his duty in that light, less scrupulous spirits were inclined to try the shortest way; and when the Arch-pirate, now renewed in strength, sailed outward from the Straits, in order to scour the line from San Lucar to Vigo, Captains Harris and Jennings, running ahead of him, crossed over to the Irish Sea. Captain Halsey, Captain Longcastle, and some others followed, putting into Cork, Kinsale, and Youghal; some few in the hope of procuring pardon for the past, but more in search of markets for their spoil. They ran to Milford Haven and Plymouth Sound. With heaps of money in their girths, they met no check in buying what they wished to buy, in selling what they wished to sell. The public heart was with them, and a bribe dropped here and there threw clouds of dust into official eyes. Yet fate was hard on some of those gallant men. Harris was taken on the Irish coast; Halsey and Longcastle, after quitting the sea, and settling down on their estates, were seized and thrown into Exeter jail. Jennings, who had landed on the promise of a pardon being granted to him, was tried on the capital charge. These men, with fifteen others, gentlemen of birth and blood, were given to Gondomar, the gibbet, and the chain. Deep interest was excited by their fate. The mayor and citizens of Bristol begged the life of Harris, once a gentleman of that city, offering to pay for him a ransom of eight hundred pounds. The Cornish gentry strove to snatch their neighbours, Halsey and Longcastle, from a felon's death. But all in vain. A row of nineteen gibbets was built near Wapping Stairs; the pirates were brought up to London; on a dark December morning, long remembered by the City lads, the nineteen Rovers were hung in chains, and left on the river-side for crows to pick and fogs to rot.

These acts of vengeance brought up Ward. Leaving his fleet in the southern seas, he came up northwards, as he said, to purge his fame, to prove that he was not a pirate, and to let his countrymen know the truth. When he came to the English coast he sent a boat on shore, and asked for leave to land. He offered a very large sum in gold as bail; but James, who thought he had got the Pirate in a trap, sent out the "Rainbow," one of his finest ships, to bring him in by force. The ships soon met, and Ward, though he was not inclined to fight a man-of-war, would not consent to strike his flag. A crew of five hundred men, a force of fifty brass guns, made the captain of the "Rainbow" sure of victory, and her second word of parley with the Rover was delivered from her port-holes. "Shoot ye so!" cried Ward; "at me, who never fired upon an English ship!" and then he bade his men make play. A gallant fight it was; fought nobly, man to man and gun to gun; but Ward was nimbler with his shot; the "Rainbow" suffered from his fire; and nothing could have saved her but the Pirate's sharp command to let her crawl away to port, and keep for better times the honour of her flag. Ward gave no chase; he acted only in his own defence; but having given this answer to the writ of outlawry, he sailed again for Tunis, free from taint of injury to the English trade, of insult to the English coast.

It was his first and only visit to our shores; but that one visit made a deep impression on the public mind. Ben Jonson spoke of Ward in the "Alchemist," and Robert Daborne made him the hero of a play. The ballad-mongers trolled his deeds at every fair and harvest-home; and Wotton told the Doge of Venice that if justice were not done to English trade, the King, his master, would let loose upon them a thousand Captain Wards. All London rang with praises of his patriotism, his daring, and his generosity; while gentlemen like Sir John Hampden and Sir Francis Verney

sold their lands, bought ships and guns, and put to sea in order to strengthen the Pirate fleets.

In spite of those gibbets near Wapping Stairs, our ports were more and more disturbed by visits from the pirate ships. On every bluff, in every cove, from Land's End to Lundy Isle, they threw up works of observation and defence. On all those points they found the lairs and castles of Danish jarls, and, once again, the Rovers of the sea became a terror to the land. In Baltimore, Kinsale, and other Irish ports, they found supplies of water, stores, and arms, with ready markets for their spoil of Brazilian sugar and Syrian silk. No government could stop this trade; for every man in Munster was a friend to fellows who could sell him costly goods for a song, and pay him in golden ducats for every horn of powder and every loaf of bread.

Captain Easton and Captain Salkeld, chiefs of these home pirates, built their lair on Lundy Isle, from which they sallied out, while Lord Warden and Lord Admiral were wrangling as to which should have their ships and goods when they were caught. They swept the Severn of every sail. When a royal proclamation banished them, Salkeld laughingly deposed King James from the sovereignty of Lundy, set up an independent kingdom on his rock, and crowned himself the king. A line of coast, from Milford Haven on his left to Land's End on his right, lay open to his raids; and Salkeld, King of Lundy, exercised his royal rights. When he was short of men, he crossed to Milford Haven, seized a ship and pressed her crew; when he was short of food, he dropt on shore at Dale, drove out the boors, and killed their beeves and sheep; when he was short of labourers, he brought off herds of peasants to his rock. These captives he employed in building for him a sea-wall on the shore, a castle on the heights.

The hearts of men were so much with these Rovers

that the naval officers knew not how to act. Commissioners and Admirals were known to shut their eyes. Sir Richard Hawkins, when Vice-Admiral of Devon, was accused of letting them go free; and Nottingham himself was said to be privy to the coming and going of these pirate fleets. A Bristol man brought in a bill to restrain the rovers, and another Bristol man reported against the bill. If no one thought it right for Easton and Salkeld to disturb the English ports, every one heard with rapture of such men as Sir John Hampden, Captain Ward, and Sir Francis Verney, spoiling the fleets and ravaging the coasts of Spain.

This pirate warfare ebbed and flowed as public policy ebbed and flowed. When Spain was calm it sank to nothing, and when Spain was active it rose again. Each year some old hands dropped away, their fortunes made, their passions spent; but fresh arrivals took their place. Ward munched his dates and smoked his pipe in Tunis; cooling his breath with perfumes, and surrounded in his harem with beautiful captives and obedient slaves. Easton came in with a free pardon and a crowd of sail; for he was wise enough to bribe in quarters where his gold was strong to save. Sir John Hampden fell into the hands of a Spanish cruiser, who condemned him to the chain. Sir John was one of the King's gentlemen pensioners; a fact which puzzled the Spaniards sorely; leading them to suspect the English court of secretly supporting the pirate fleets. Sir Francis Verney, after wild adventures, fell to a Sicilian galley, and was put to the bench and starved to the point of death. At last he told his tale; Sir Robert Chamberlain, our Resident in Naples, owned him; and the admiral of Messina, after learning that he was a Christian, ordered his chains to be struck off. But kindness came too late; he tottered to the door of Santa Maria, begged for a wisp of straw, and sank on it and died.

Yet, when the Duke of Lerma spoke of sending to

England a new armada, and Admiral Fajardo proffered his services in a grand attack upon our shores, the young blood of the country leapt into the front, and, as the King could not even then be urged to send a war-ship from the Thames and Portsmouth, patriotic sailors rushed to arms, and on their own account renewed in every sea the Pirate War.

Captain Mannering, the governor of St. Andrew's Castle, threw up his command and put to sea. He quitted the royal service, on pretence of making a voyage to Raleigh's settlement of Guiana. Hiring the bark "Nightingale," he fitted her up for a long voyage, got his crew together, and with papers properly signed by the Navy Board, set sail for the south. At first he thought he would only fight the Spaniards beyond the line; but he had hardly passed Cape Spartel ere he opened fire. From that hour he gave up "the line," and, lying off the Straits, he snapped up every xebec, galleon, or felucca, he encountered on the Spanish coast. Grave losses fell on the Seville traders, who were loud in their complaints; but Mannering only smiled at their abuse, and bade them seek redress in their courts of law. Yet he was scrupulous as Ward about the English flag. One story tells the character of the war he waged. He stopped a Lübeck bark and a Calais boat as they were entering Spain, and taking out their cargoes, bade the crews God-speed. Valentine Blake, a Galway shipper, said the goods on board these foreign craft were his, and were consigned to his factor, Lynch, for sale. The pirate sailed into port, requested Lynch to come on board, and finding that these facts were true, gave up his prizes to the farthest mark.

Captain Walsingham equipped six sail with men and guns, and passing through the Bay of Biscay, showed himself under the walls of Belem Castle, and defied Fajardo to come out and fight him on the open sea. Fajardo would not stir; and Walsingham roved

up and down the Spanish coast, disturbing all their trade; now pushing up the Duero, now the Tagus, now the Guadalquivir; and making the seas unsafe from Vigo to Trafalgar. He spared the ships, but helped himself to everything on board, from hide and wool to silk and pearl. In six weeks he had taken from his enemy cargoes to the value of five hundred thousand crowns.

All these marauders put to sea as enemies of Spain; but Calvert's Yorkshire wit suggested that his party might engage some desperate fellows in attacking those who were the enemies of Spain. He lost no time in testing his idea. As the Principal Secretary of State, with pirate pardons in his desk to vend and give, he had the means of tempting poor and reckless men to try their luck; secure of riches if they won, and safe from peril if they failed. One skilful corsair put to sea at once; and Captain Nutt was soon as famous in his line as Captain Ward. His field was in the Northern Seas; his spoils were levied on the French and Dutch.





CHAPTER XV.

PORT AND COURT.

SMUCH were the pirates, such the pirate-parties, over whom John Eliot, now Vice-Admiral of Devon, was to keep an eye.

The patent under which he served was narrow, and the duties of his work were ill defined. He held his powers from the Lord-Admiral, not the Crown; and yet a Secretary of State could send down orders which he had no choice but to obey. He had to guard the ports and clear the seas from pirates; yet he was forbidden to risk in that service his ships and crews. He had to curb the most reckless devils in the world; and he was asked to do so without imperilling life or limb. As Buckingham's second self he was to act with a single eye to his patron's gain; and yet he might be called by the Council to a strict account of all that he had done. The interests of a Lord-Admiral were not those of a Secretary of State. A Lord-Admiral might find his gain in setting aside pardons for which a Secretary of State expected to be paid. More frequently the interests of his chief were not the interests of his country; for the more a pirate was allowed to reive and rob, the more he was likely to yield on capture to the Admiral's share.

Nor was it easy for a Vice-Admiral to tell what seizures it was safe to make. A pirate was a Rover who had no friends. Halsey was a pirate, and his

bones were hanging by the water-side ; Easton was a hero, thriving in his county as a gentleman should thrive. When Hampden fell into hostile hands, he was reclaimed, while Verney was allowed to die like a forgotten dog. It was safe to arrest Longcastle ; was it safe to arrest Captain Nutt ? It all depended on the state of parties and opinions in the court. Young Rich, a pirate, was created Earl of Warwick. Captain Mannering came on shore to be dubbed a knight. When Captain Walsingham came on shore he was committed to the Tower.

No one could tell how many peers besides the Earl of Warwick were concerned in such affairs. The late Lord-Admiral was suspected of a leaning towards the Rovers, and the new Lord-Admiral was said to be coining money at the ports. The Secretaries of State were vending pardons to the right and left ; not pardons for the past alone ; but papers which, in truth, were licenses to carry on the business of plundering vessels on the seas for a certain time. A common pardon bore a date, to which the crown condoned offences ; but the vagabonds who bought such things from needy gentlemen at court, cared nothing for the past. They wanted licenses to reive and rob ; they offered very high sums for such a right ; and under the pretence of " grace " a form of pardon was drawn out which found a ready sale. It bore a date ; but added to that date a " grace " of three months—so that a pirate buying a pardon through his London broker might have time to receive his papers and come on shore. A ruffian, armed with such a " grace," could prey upon the ships of all the world for a dozen weeks, return to port, and claim to be secured by law in the possession of his spoil. Such pardons sold for various sums ; a hundred pounds, three hundred pounds, five hundred pounds. Every month some drunken pirate, taken in his cups, produced his papers signed by the King's own pen. Not unfrequently a pirate captain,

seized on board his deck, pursued the Vice-Admiral who had taken him in the act of wrong, through the Admiralty courts, and gained high damages in these singular suits; where honest officers of the Crown were fined and ruined for having done their duty against chartered rogues.

In one of these dark passages of official duty Eliot was to bruise his feet and find his wings.

Among the pirates who had put to sea with pardons in their pockets, no man proved so troublesome to the western trade as Captain Nutt. John Nutt, of Limestone, in the county of Devon, was a gunner in those Newfoundland fleets which Calvert sent into the North, to plant his colony of Avalon, in opposition to the colony of Virginia. He had made some trips to Avalon, had risen to the post of captain, and secured the notice of that statesman, ere he listened to the tempter's voice, and ceased to live an honest life.

Calvert's project was a settlement in Newfoundland, with the harbour of St. John's. A band of Catholics went out to found a state, and Nutt was useful to them in their enterprise, not only before, but after, he became a pirate on his own account. He helped to convoy their ships and goods. He preyed upon the Dutch. In fact, what Calvert was employed in doing on shore, the sailor found he could do at sea—make profit of his policy and merit of his sins. All the Free Rovers then afloat were making war upon the Beast; but Nutt was brought to see, like Calvert, that a partnership with the Beast might pay. The Dutch had ships in every port; these ships the Spaniards would be glad to see him spoil; and Nutt might emulate the deeds of Salkeld, even if he failed to win the fame of Ward. How far the Secretary helped him in the outset may be guessed from what came after; but the leading facts are proved beyond dispute. Calvert gave Nutt his ship; Calvert sent Nutt to Avalon; Calvert armed Nutt with pardons; Calvert

received Nutt in London, and renewed his pardon from time to time; Calvert stood by him throughout; and when the pirate fell into the hands of justice, Calvert made that pirate's cause his own.

Arrived in Avalon, Nutt and his comrades stole a French barque and a Plymouth boat, in which they put to sea; and falling in with a Low Country vessel, of two hundred tons, gave chase, and having made a prize of her, ran down the coast of Newfoundland, and plundered the Dutch and French fishing-smacks. With three good boats, and cargoes of oil and fish—all stolen from the Dutch and French—Nutt rode into Tor Bay, near which he had left his wife and youngsters; put up his fleet in a lonely cove, and built for himself a castle on the rock. He went on shore for drink; he put to sea for prey. Darting from his lair from time to time, he cut off bark and lugger, and enriched his men with spoil. At first he kept his hands off native goods, and treated with respect the royal flag; but prudence left him as he grew in strength and time wore on. All prey was soon regarded as his prize. Loud protests poured upon the boards from Bristol, Dartmouth, Lyme, and all the western towns. But what relief could they obtain? What mayor would act against a man who openly came on shore and showed a pardon signed by James himself? Nutt told the Mayor of Dartmouth—timid Thomas Spurway—that he held a pardon signed by the King, so wide in wording as to cover every crime.

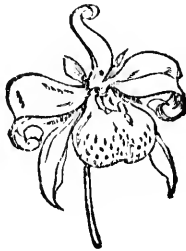
For three years Captain Nutt continued these piratical raids. His friend, the Secretary of State, sent pardons out to him from time to time, drawn up in a form which was, in effect, a license to plunder ships at sea for ten or twelve weeks. When war broke out between Spain and the United Provinces, it was something new for Spain to have an English pirate acting as a friend of the yellow flag.

It was not easy to prevent his raids—impossible to prevent them by local means. A fleet of light-armed ships were in his pay; his lair could not be scaled from either land or sea; and when he came on shore in Dartmouth, he had such a company at his heels that mayor and portreeve were too glad to let him drink, and trade, and go his way, without shedding human blood. But Nutt had none of the redeeming popularity of Ward. He was no hero of the crowd; no knight in conflict with the Beast; but only a vulgar Ishmael of the sea; and every trader in the western shires was praying night and morning that his cunning brain and stalwart arm might some day meet their match.

No help was to be got from the royal fleet, so long as Calvert was the channel through which the King's orders reached the Navy Board. That fleet was weak, and it had much to do. Some of the best ships were under sail for Spain, in waiting on the Prince of Wales. The Admiral in the Narrow Seas had seldom more than three or four sail in hand. Our western coasts were bare of ships, and with a war in the Channel it was easy for the Navy Board to give good reasons for retaining four or five sail in the Thames. The fleet still kept her old dislikes and likes; her jealousy of the Papist powers; her favour for the Dutch and Rochellaise; and when the war blazed up anew her heart beat lustily for the ancient cause. Admiral Mervin and Captain St. John held on steadily by that cause; but some of the younger captains, who had risen through Calvert's measures—such as Christian, Geere, and Bingley—were not unwilling to obey their masters, let the service asked of them be what it might. The times were changing fast; the Prince of Wales was courting a Spanish wife; and men, who had been raging at the Beast for years, now feared that, sooner or later, they might have to embrace his cause.

Calvert seized on every chance to vex, remove, and ruin all those officers in the navy who had

learned their trade in the former wars. The trip of Buckingham and the Prince of Wales to Spain enabled him to act with force upon the royal fleet; to worry Admiral Mervin in the Downs; to fling Vice-Admiral Eliot into prison; and to rouse that sleeping lion into active rage.





CHAPTER XVI.

A NEW ROMANZO.

“**S**WEET boys and dear adventurous knights, worthy to be put in a new romanzo !” sighed the King, on reading letters from Steenie and Baby Charles, now playing what he called “heroic” parts. Each line from them perplexed him with fear and joy—with fear lest they should come to him no more ; with joy that in their coming they would crown him with his heart’s desire.

Ten months had passed in silence ere a single soul was told of that great pledge which Gondomar on quitting London had conveyed to Spain. The young men would not trust the King ; for James, they thought, would fret and fume ; their secret would be blown about ; and they had wit enough to know that if their purpose were disclosed, the shires would rise to stay them and the fleets to bring them back. No word was breathed until they got their cue from Spain ; but when the Condé made a sign for them to come, they rushed into the King’s apartments, barred the door, and made the old man swear an oath that he would keep their secret. Then they told him all. The King sat dumb with wonder. Charles, and George too, going in person to Madrid ! He felt that this was not the way. The boys were mad, and they would ruin themselves and him. To set their feet in Spain would be to yield the game, and take such terms as Philip

should impose on them. The Prince might go to fetch his bride, as he himself had fetched his Queen from a Danish port; but he should wait until the terms were fixed, the contracts signed, and then go out in royal state. The youngsters told him they would not wait. But how, asked James, could they get to Spain? The sea was covered with Dunkerque pirates, English rovers, Netherland fleets. By land? The French would never let them pass. Richelieu was sore against the match. The young men answered him with pouts and jests. They could not tarry for royal ships; they would not ask for a pass through France. In wig and beard, in rough attire, and calling each other Tom and John—Tom Smith, John Smith—they would slip away unseen, would cross the Straits, would drive through Paris, and would hail the Bidassoa ere the keenest eyes had missed them from the galleries of White Hall.

The King gave way before them, for his strength was spent; but, tossing on his bed all night, he saw as in a vision darkly some of the perils they were soon to face,—the risk of French deceit, of Spanish treachery, of English rage. His planets were not ruled by Dr. Lamb; he felt a chill upon his heart; and, though he could not yet foresee the assassin's knife and headsmen's axe, which were to end this wild romance, he rose from his couch in terror, sent for the youths, and, trying to be king and lord once more, he begged them to release him from a promise which he could not keep. But Charles was cold and George was rude. When he had given his word, said Charles, he should abide by it; and if his Majesty drew back, he (Charles) would live a bachelor all his life. "Some knave," cried Buckingham, "has done this thing." But how could knave have known their plans, unless the King had blabbed? Some one had given his master foul advice; but let the busy knave beware! These threats, so thinly veiled, alarmed the King still more; for James had latterly been dreaming that his young

comedian would some day kill him in his rage. "Look," roared Buckingham to his face, "if you go back now, no man will ever trust you in the time to come." Cowed, broken, and ashamed, the dotard shut his eyes and let them go.

"I must change caps with your Majesty," said Archie, the court-jester. "Why?" asked James, in misery. "Why?" laughed the merry-andrew,—"who sent the Prince into Spain?" "Suppose the Prince should come safely back?" put in the King. Then Archie shook his sides. "In that case I will send my cap and bells to the King of Spain."

Before the madcaps left, the pupil of Dr. Lamb took steps to trim and balance his affairs. Young Monson was dubbed a knight, and sent abroad. The fleet was given to Rutland, as a Catholic peer and friend of Spain; but then Sir Henry Mervin and Sir William St. John, bluff old sailors who were known to like the Dutch and Rochellaise, were left in the Narrow Seas. Lord Say and Sele was set at large. Phelips and Coke had been already freed from the Tower; and Pym had been suffered to go down to his country-house. Sir Edward Conway, friend of Huguenot and Reformer, was appointed to the post of Second Secretary of State, to balance Calvert, who was bent on serving Rome and Spain. To screen their journey, ships were ordered to get ready for sea, and folk were told that Buckingham was to fetch the Infanta home, and that the Prince of Wales would sail in the "Royal Charles" to greet his bride as she set foot on board an English deck. Not only were the pages and hangers-on deceived, but veteran councillors and secretaries of state.

Taking leave of the King at Royston, saying they would join him in a week at Newmarket, the grave young Prince and the light Comedian rode to Newhall, one of Buckingham's country-houses, where his man, Dick Grimes, was waiting for them with three strong

horses, pistols, hoods, and wigs. The young men changed their coats, drew on their hoods, struck pistols in their belts, encased their chins in beards, tied ropes of pearls about their waists, secreted emeralds and diamonds of price about their clothes, and, calling each other Tom and Jack, set out from Newhall with no other servant in their wake than Grimes.

They dashed across the Essex fields to Tilbury, hailed the ferry-boat, and passed the river into Kent. Too light of heart and young in years to play such parts, they ran much risk at every turn. In crossing over from the fort, they bade the waterman land them below the town, instead of at the usual pier. He stared at them, and put his helm about. In jumping on the shingle, one of them dropped his beard. The ferryman saw that here were young men travelling in disguise. On mounting, they threw down a piece of gold, and galloped off without requiring change. Supposing they were duellists going into France to fight, the boatman ran to a justice of the peace, and told what he had seen and heard. As justices of the peace in Kent had recently been warned to stop all persons crossing into France without a license, this Gravesend justice sent a postboy after them towards Rochester, with orders to arrest them in their flight. The chase was now begun. But Grimes had chosen his horses well; the runaways outsped the postboy; and had baited and left the inn at Rochester before the messenger of justice crossed the bridge. Below the town, on the great Kent road, they met a royal party bringing up the Flemish ambassador, with Sir Lewis Lewkenor, master of the ceremonies, and Sir Henry Mannering, once a Rover, now Lieutenant of Dover Castle, in command. What could they do? Lewkenor would know them, and their secret would be blown about. It would be better to avoid him. But the royal party was upon them; and they saw, from certain movements of the guard, that they had been observed.

To loose their reins and dash across the country was their only chance; so, putting on a spurt, they leapt the hedge and tore away through ditch and field. The royal party halted, stared, and parleyed. Yon three riders were afraid to meet them. Why? They must have been concerned in some great crime. What crime? Just then the crime on everybody's tongue was an attempt on the Prince of Orange. That crime had been traced to the Barneveldts; these Barneveldts had fled from Holland; and some folk said they were hid in Kent. Who could yon riders, flying from the King's officers, be, except the criminals? They must be followed. They would make for Canterbury, and in crossing country they were losing time. A trooper, riding hard and straight, could reach that city and its mayor before them; so a line was written, and a trooper was sent back to Canterbury, with that line of warning to the mayor.

Dragging through up-turned soil in winter months is tiring to the best of steeds; and as the madcaps came near Sittingbourne one of their horses reeled and fell. The post-boy came upon them in their plight; and as the Prince would not give up his name, they had to go with him and answer to the mayor. "Well, who are you?" asked that officer. Buckingham pulled off his wig and told the mayor his name. He was going to Dover on a visit to the fleet; he pointed to the Prince as one of his friends; and spoke of Grimes as one of the officers of his staff. His visit was a secret, and he told his worship he must hold his tongue.

At Dover they were stopped again, although Endymion Porter and Sir Edward Cottington were waiting for them in the harbour with a ship. A whisper to the deputy in command put things to rights, but that small whisper let their secret out. Early in the morning all the five set sail.

Both Prince and Marquis lay in their cabins, sick, for seven or eight long hours. They landed at Bou-

logne, and passing by the names of Tom and John Smith, hired horses at the yards, and rode away towards Montreueil, where they arrived that night. In two days more they got to Paris; rested one day in that city, where the Prince of Wales first saw his future queen; and then, without a hint of their rank being blown about, the five adventurers pushed for the south of France, and when they crossed the Bidassoa, danced and flung up caps in headlong rush of animal delight.

The older men were soon knocked up; but neither Charles nor Villiers reined his horse. Porter and Cottington knew the roads, the people and the dialects; but the madcaps would not wait for their slower pace. Away they tore in front, their horses foaming at the mouth, their laughter ringing in the air; now leaving their companions in the rear, to catch them up at the nearest inn, and then to be left behind once more, until the trail was fairly lost. The Prince and Marquis rode alone, through provinces of which they neither knew the roads nor understood the speech. At length they grew so hot and eager that they would not pause to eat and sleep, but tore along all day and night, until they dashed one evening, as the bells were tolling eight, into the court of Digby's house. "My lord, my lord!" they cried. A troop of serving men were soon about. Who were these strangers come in such a plight? Tom Smith and John Smith, they replied. They wished to see my lord. When Digby came—a proud, polite old man, as formal as a grandee of the Spanish court—he was amazed to find, in that unseemly garb, without a servant to attend them, and without a word of warning to himself, my lord of Buckingham and the Prince of Wales.

They had ridden hard to ruin; and if either of these hapless youths had been as quick of sight as he was hot of will, he would have read his sentence in that startled and experienced face.



CHAPTER XVII.

MOVE AND COUNTER-MOVE.

WHEN Calvert found the Prince was gone, he felt the time had come for him to act. If all went well, the Infanta, his future queen, would be on English soil in May; and it was time that he should read a lesson to the enemies of Rome and Spain.

His first care was to purge the fleet. In Buckingham's absence, Rutland, as a Catholic peer, was named to the chief command. Mervin and St. John held the Narrow Seas; and Calvert knew that these old sailors gave their hearts and help to Calvinist and Huguenot—that news of their dismissal would be welcome in Madrid.

Rochelle was now become to England what Ostend had been some twenty years before; the rampart and the refuge of her faith beyond the seas. A great contention had been going on; great victories had been won; and France at one time looked as though she might have shed her Celtic and Latin nature, and resumed her place as head of those Franks from whom she had derived her name. The Huguenots marched on Paris, and were strong enough to seat their hero on the throne; but after Henri's death, that hero's son forgot the high traditions of his house; and sent his fleets and armies to destroy the city which had been their best support. Rochelle had fallen to superior force;

but fallen nobly and with honourable terms. She was to keep her ancient rights. She was to hold her popular creed. She was not expected to admit a royal garrison. Fort St. Louis, built against her, was to be destroyed. Not one of these honourable terms was kept with her; for Louis had been taught by the Duke of Guise that heretics stood beyond the pale of law. Again the citizens flew to arms; a town against a kingdom; and they stretched out hands for help in need. The Duke de Rohan put himself at their head; his brother, the celebrated Admiral de Soubise, came over as ambassador, to plead their cause.

All London greeted this great admiral; the pulpits teemed with sermons for the Rochellaise; but how could councillors pledged to a Spanish match assist the Rochellaise? James satisfied his conscience by a grant of three thousand pounds, with a guard of honour for the Rochellaise Admiral on his homeward voyage. This guard consisted of the "Adventure" and the "Garland," in command of Admiral Mervin and Captain St. John.

The man-of-war in which the French Admiral sailed was part of the Rochellaise fleet, and as the Huguenot town was then at war with France and Spain, he chased and overtook a ship with Spanish goods on board, but bound to a port in France. Not much was said of an affair the like of which was happening every week; but Calvert made a note of this event; and when his time was come for showing zeal, he took occasion of a protest made by French and Spanish agents to declare his own opinion, as the senior Secretary of State, that Mervin and St. John had fallen short of their duty in allowing the Rochelle Admiral to chase that ship. These captains justified themselves. They could not interfere in such a strife. They had no means of hindering the Rochellaise from seizing a Spanish boat except by firing into her. They could not fire into the vessel of a friendly power; and

this particular vessel had an ambassador of that friendly power on board. All these things Calvert knew; but then he also knew that men in Paris and Madrid would learn with rapture that Sir Henry Mervin was no longer Admiral of the Narrow Seas. Calling Mervin and St. John before the Navy Board, in which he had much weight, he put them out of commission, and told them they must answer to the Council for their deeds. Captain Thomas Best was named to the "Garland" instead of St. John; Sir Richard Bingley to the "Adventure" instead of Mervin. Bingley was to act as Admiral in the Narrow Seas.

One week after the Prince of Wales left Dover, Calvert sent a pardon to the pirate Nutt, who was at sea; a pardon which was nothing but a license signed by James to carry on his piracies for the next three months.

By happy luck the second Secretary, Sir Edward Conway, once a soldier in the Low Countries, afterwards an ambassador in Germany, was of other politics than Calvert; and his office near the King enabled him to cross the actions of his personal rival and political foe. When his Majesty left London for the country, Conway rode with him, as his confidential man, while Calvert stayed in London to discharge the routine duties of his post. In going progress, James received letters from his ports and towns in blame of Nutt; and Conway, close at hand, seized every moment to support this cry for justice from the towns. "Send out a ship," said Conway, "from the Downs; the 'Garland' would do the work; but let the captain have instructions to pursue the pirate, fight him at any risk, and either bring him in as prize or burn him to the water's edge." James heard these words; but Calvert found some means of thwarting him at the Navy Board by raising questions of a practical sort. Nutt's flag was flying from a nimble ship, well manned, and carrying twenty guns. What vessel in the Downs could be sure of catching her and also beating her when caught?

The chase, too, might be long; for Nutt could either slip into the Irish Sea, and passing round the northern coast, run over to St. John's or drop into the Spanish main. In each he would be safe. The King was timid. Conway sent some hints to the fleet; and Thomas Best, a fine old sailor, offered to go out in the "Garland" after Nutt, and pledged his word to bring that pirate into port within a month. The King was overjoyed. But then, what force, his Majesty wished to know, would guard the Downs when Best was gone in chase of Nutt? No force that could be trusted, said the Navy Board; the "Garland" being the only ship in the Downs then fit for sea. The King was in despair.

A Dutch fleet off Dunkirk, a Prince of Wales in Spain, a war of races and religions on the Rhine, a secret treaty in Madrid, and naval actions daily fought in English waters; such was the state of things his Majesty had to face. How could he send his only war-ship from the Thames? On that side Calvert felt that Nutt was safe.

If anything was to be done against Calvert's man, the means of doing it must be sought in guile, and not in force; and Conway, while he sounded Bingley, Mervin's successor in the Downs, was also hinting to King James that Nutt might perhaps be tempted to come on shore, and, being an outlaw, could be seized the moment he set foot on land. The King was pleased; his kingcraft being excited by the hope of cheating even so small a rogue as Captain Nutt; but then the question rose of where they could find a man with nerve and brain for such a piece of work?

Eliot was an officer to whom they would look for help in what they meant to do. This Nutt was known to be a desperate fellow, served by gangs as desperate as himself; a man not easy to deceive by words; a man who would be sure to strike out madly when he found that any one was playing him false. But Conway

soon perceived that Eliot was the man he wanted. Conway sounded Eliot ere he sent to him a public letter, signed as Secretary of State ; but, when he had felt his ground, he wrote to Eliot from the court at Oatlands Park a public letter, not in open phrase, which might commit the King too far with Calvert and the friends of Spain, yet plainly hinting what his Majesty would have him do as an acceptable service to his country, if the wit and daring could be found for such a task. This Nutt, he said, was guilty of piratical acts ; the towns and ports were all alarmed by him ; the coasting trade was almost killed ; and stain was cast upon the royal fleets. He ought to be arrested as he came on shore. To take him, Eliot would have to act with caution ; to conceal his purposes ; to set a watch upon the pirate's haunts ; to note the times he left his ship, the men he spoke with, and the inn at which he drank ; but in his public orders he was not to point at Nutt by name. In brief, he was to use his perfect knowledge of time and place, so that his Majesty's pleasure might be swiftly done. To let him see how much depended on his zeal, he was to send, when he had things of moment to report, directly to the King himself.

But Conway kept one secret back from Eliot which he should have known,—the fact that Captain Nutt was acting under warm protection of a rival Secretary of State.





CHAPTER XVIII.

PIRATE AND PRISON.

IN ignorance of the powers he would offend by zeal in such a cause, Eliot was working to effect the King's desire, with art so dark and deed so prompt as proved that Conway had been guided by unerring instinct in his choice of means.

For some weeks past the pirate had been busy in his craft; busier than usual; for the rogue was thinking of a change of life. His latest Pardon had expired by flux of time, and, ere he stopped his trade of piracy, he wished to add some thousands to his hoards. Returning from St. John's, where he was beating off the Dutch and French and lending Calvert's colony much aid, he fell to plundering friend and foe, and cries came up from all the western towns for help. In one week Nutt made spoil of a dozen ships.

What could be done against the pirate? Eliot had no choice of means. He could not follow Nutt to sea; he had no vessel strong enough to fight him; and if fortune threw in his way some golden chance, he had no right to peril life and limb. What then? A trap might be laid. A gloss might be put upon a writing which the man who made it knew it would not bear, a promise might be given which the man who gave it knew he could not keep. In such a way the pirate might be caught. It was a dirty end, and all the means of reaching it were base; but Eliot, in this early stage,

was an executive officer, and no more. He knew no fear, and felt no qualms. This pirate was a wretch beyond the pale of law, and Eliot had not learned from personal trials to respect those higher morals which are not included in the forms of law.

By chance, the latest Pardon sent by Calvert to the pirate fell into Eliot's hands. It bore the date of February 1st, 1623, and gave the pirate three months' grace. It had the signature of James. Eliot observed that paper well. It was a full pardon to Captain John Nutt for acts of piracy committed on the high seas before the 1st of May. That day of grace was past; and Eliot, sitting as a judge, was sure that such a pardon could not be received in either his own, or any other court of law. But Nutt was not a jurist, and the question was, whether men who knew that it was worthless, could be got to lead him into thinking that the document was good. If so, he might be tempted to come on shore. No little lying would be needed in the plot; but with this needful lying there was every chance that Nutt would fall into his trap.

Eliot undertook this task. When he had formed his plans, he sent his deputy, Richard Randal, to the pirate's lair to parley. Nutt was to be tricked from first to last. Randal was to make him think his visit was for private gain. He was to give Nutt some hints that Eliot was a man who might be bought. He was to sound the pirate on his wish to land; and if he saw him eager to come in, he was to let him know that Eliot held a Pardon in his hands, which might be purchased from the Vice-Admiral at a certain price. Randal did his work right well, and Nutt sent word to Eliot, in reply, that he would pay three hundred pounds for the Pardon, and would come on shore to treat, if Eliot would only pledge his word that he was free to come and go. Eliot took horse at once, and rode from Plymouth to Tor Bay, in hope that Nutt would instantly come on shore; but something was amiss on

the pirate deck, and Nutt sent word to the Vice-Admiral that though he wished to treat, his crew were much excited, and they hindered him from coming on shore by force.

The fact was true. The crew were flushed by a piece of luck, and they were much afraid that if their captain went on shore and saw Sir John their spoil would be taken from them. Randal told them that the Pardon held by Nutt was good to the date of his message; but this piece of luck had fallen upon them after he was gone. A vessel coming home from the West Indies, laden with dyes and sugars, four or five thousand pounds in value, called the "Edward and John," the property of John Eldred and others of Colchester, was overtaken as she sailed up Channel, six or seven miles from Dartmouth, seized by the pirate crew, made prize, and carried to Tor Bay, where she was safely moored below the pirate fort. They were engaged in searching her hold when Eliot's messengers came on board. No Pardon, as they knew, could give them this great haul,—an English bark, well stored with English goods—and therefore they were stiff against their captain going on shore and giving up their prize.

Sir John, in ignorance of the causes of this change, resolved to go on board the pirate ship, and brave the gangs who held their captain under guard. Calling a wherry, he pushed into the bay, and coming alongside the corsair, took the hearts of all that reckless crew by jovial bearing, and by showing himself unarmed. But he was now surrounded by jealous eyes, and every word he spoke was weighed and scanned. His first remark was careless, and it taught him to beware. On seeing the "Edward and John" in tow, and learning what she was, and when she had been taken, he announced, as such an officer was bound to do, that she must be restored. But Nutt, now closely watched by his men, stormed up at once. They could

not, and they would not, yield their prize. Pardon or no Pardon, they would keep what they had captured. Eliot said no more ; for why raise such small questions on the pirate deck ? His purpose was to snare them all, both crew and captain, goods and ship. When he had got the pirates in his power, he would not ask their leave to deal with the captured bark. Resuming his jovial tone, he passed into Nutt's cabin, where he found a flask of wine, a bundle of papers, and a willing ear. Two hours were spent in drinking, jawing, and accepting terms. The door was left ajar, for every man on board to hear ; since every man on board put life and goods on what was said and done. A crowd of swart and fiery faces pressed upon the open door ; with bare and brawny arms uplifting poniard, musket, marlin-spike and brand, Eliot had to satisfy Nutt that the false Pardon was a good one ; and, as Eliot was a judge in the local court, it was not easy for Nutt to dispute his word on such a point. When Nutt was satisfied that the Pardon held by Eliot was a thing to trust, he offered to buy it. Feeling that the more he appeared to stand on money, the less he would be suspected by a man like Nutt, Sir John advanced his price. Instead of three hundred pounds, he asked for five. To blind the folk in port, it was arranged that Eliot should "seize" the ship and bark, and take some portion of the captured goods on shore. While Eliot and Nutt were drinking in the cabin, the purser of the "Edward and John" came to the door, and pushing through the pirates, fell on his knees, entreating the Vice-Admiral to give him back his ship and cargo ; but Eliot, now hobnobbing with the pirate in pretended friendship, would not listen to a word.

Yet, when his jovial visitor was gone, Nutt's mind was racked with doubts. The crew suspected Eliot ; for a rogue is said to know all other rogues by sight ; and Eliot's handsome face and dauntless mien were not the face and mien of traffickers in private Pardons

and in plundered goods. They would not let their captain land. Would Eliot come on board once more? No; Eliot could not spare the time; but he assured the captain he had nothing now to fear. The pirate, easier in his mind, then left his ship and came on shore. Eliot was ready for him, and the instant Nutt set foot on land, he was a prisoner to the law. Nutt raged and stormed; but Eliot, laughing at his anger, locked him fast in jail. Quick work was made with the pirate ship; her sails were brought on shore; a guard was placed on deck; and her unruly crew was sent into the prison-yards.

The King was so much pleased, that this affair seemed likely to be the opening of Eliot's fortune, not the prelude to his fall. Conway wrote to Eliot, thanking him for his zeal, directing him to place the pirate ship in safety, see that the goods were not dispersed, and sent up Nutt himself to be examined by the Lords. He hinted that the King might like a personal hearing of the tale, and he could promise that Eliot should be admitted to the honour of kissing hands.

Eliot obeyed these orders, and prepared to wait upon the King. Besides the honour of kissing hands, he was likely to make from the transaction four or five hundred pounds in money; but in sending Nutt to London, he was putting all his business into Calvert's hands!

Conway was with the court at Wanstead, Calvert with the Council at White Hall; and, as the Lords knew little, and Calvert much, about this pirate and his doings, it was not hard for Calvert in so slight a business to mislead and cross the King.

Nutt came to London in a fury. Having hoards of money, he had also troops of friends; and when he stood before the Council, it was not so much to answer for his crimes at sea, as to complain about his wrongs against the Vice-Admiral. Ensnared by trick, arrested by surprise, and robbed of both his ship and prize, he

thought he was fighting Eliot with his own bad weapons—impudence and falsehood—when he told the Lords that the Vice-Admiral of Devon had set him on, and was to share his spoil! Randal, he declared, had come to him in Eliot's name and offered him a Pardon for five hundred pounds. He answered Randal he had no such ready sum. Then Eliot sent him word that he must have his price in either meal or malt, and that the pirate crew must find the money where they could. Nutt swore he was unwilling to take the Vice-Admiral's hints; for he was sick of piracy, and longed to yield himself to the King and live at peace. But Eliot pricked him on; not only sending his man to say, but also taking his pen to write, that the roadstead of Tor Bay was not a place to pick up funds, and that he should put off to sea. He further swore that Randal came to him one day, and, telling him of some ships then lying in Dartmouth port with Spanish goods and coin on board, suggested that if he would snatch a prize from the Spaniards, the Vice-Admiral would see him through with it and share his prize. Eight or nine days after Randal's visit, he had fallen upon the "Edward and John," and taken her to raise the sum which Eliot's deputy had fixed.

Such was the story told by Nutt in Calvert's presence at the Council; but the Yorkshire Secretary had too much sense to dream that such a tale would serve him as the ground for an arrest of Eliot. He must think of Conway and the King. If Eliot were in jail, no bruit would be too wild to raise against him; but he was not in jail, as yet; and no man in his senses would receive as evidence against a naval officer in high command Nutt's story of the Spanish coin and goods.

How then was Calvert to entrap Sir John? The Secretary of State was seldom at a loss, and the Vice-Admiral of Devon was not long at large.

John Eldred, one of the three partners in the "Edward and John," was seeking to regain his ship and cargo, stolen by the pirate; and his case was now before Sir Henry Marten, judge of the Admiralty Court.

This Marten was an old and feeble man; not one who would sell his soul for so much dross paid down; yet one who could shape his course on the bench with close regard to his private ends. Inclined to do his duty, he was more inclined to keep his place. In order to keep his place, he had to live in peace with Secretaries of State. The arts by which fat posts are kept in venal courts were not unknown to him; and like his betters, he could watch for looks and nods, and act upon the secrets of a smile. Marten had two strange masters now to serve. So far as he had politics at all, he was a popular man. When he succeeded Dunne in the Court of Admiralty, Gondomar objected to him as an enemy of Spain; and in his office he was branded by that Spanish minister as a judge disposed to act with fairness by the Dutch. Yet he was careful not to break with Calvert and the Catholic party, now so strong at court. No man knew better than Marten when he might speak his mind, and when he must hold his tongue. He would not say the thing that was not true; yet he could close his lips when silence had in him the perfidy of a lie.

Calvert could count on Marten to restore the ships and goods to Eldred, and to frame his order of restoring them in any form that a Secretary might supply. Here lay a chance of tripping up Sir John. A judge's order would, in ordinary cases, run to the Vice-Admiral of the shire in which the ship and cargo lay, and that great officer would be authorised to hand them over to their owners, as determined by the court. Suppose this usual course were set aside? Suppose the judge's order were addressed to other parties; say, to Mr. Spurway, Mayor of Dartmouth, and the local judge of

Eliot's court? Suppose these officers were empowered to call upon the Vice-Admiral to yield the property in his hands to them? An order so conceived would have the effect of superseding Eliot in one of the highest functions of his place. What then? The Vice-Admiral would feel insulted in his office; and, being a man of spirit, he was likely to resist. If so, he might be called before the Council for resisting lawful warrants, and lodged in jail ere Conway, and the King, much pressed with great affairs, could interpose. If Eliot could be lodged in jail, as one disgraced and ruined, every one who owed him grudge would eagerly begin to wag his tongue, and in a week he would be guilty of a list of crimes.

Marten's order was accordingly addressed to Spurway and two local officers, charging them to proceed against Sir John Eliot, and compel him to restore the prize!

Eliot was more amused than hurt. He had no inkling of the actual facts; and, when he read the paper brought to him by the Mayor of Dartmouth, he thrust it into his pocket, and strode away, no doubt with gestures of contempt. When Spurway pressed his orders, Eliot only stormed. He saw that some one—name unknown—was putting shame upon him. He believed that he was strong, not only in his rights of office, but in Conway's friendship, and the King's goodwill. He had just been thanked for what he had done by a Secretary of State, and called to special audience of the King. As quick as he was proud, he told the Mayor of Dartmouth that he would not yield his prize until the proper time—until the piracy was proved, and Nutt had been condemned.

Calvert laid his version of these facts before the Council, and a summons for the Vice-Admiral to appear and answer for himself was quickly signed. Not knowing he had given offence (for his refusal to yield the ships and goods, on an informal order of the

judge, could surely not be pressed against him!), Eliot rode up to London, thinking he had only to appear at court, explain his meaning, and receive the royal thanks. But he was soon deceived. The Secretary of State, by exercise of arbitrary power, arrested him the moment he arrived in town, and sent him under guard to curb his hasty temper in the Marshalsea—the common pirate jail!

This arrest was Eliot's first sad trial of the law which gave an officer of state the power to seize a free-born citizen at will:—a trial out of which great fruits were soon to spring.

The Marshalsea was then the household prison of the court. A grim old place so long ago as the times of John of Gaunt, this prison stood in High Street, Southwark, near the stews, the theatres, and the Clink. The men confined within its walls and liberties were lodged there, not on information sworn before a justice of the peace, but by a personal warrant signed by either an officer of the royal household or a Secretary of State. Known as the "King's Prisoners," these offenders were a motley crew; poets, pirates, parsons, plotters; coiners, libellers, defaulters, Jesuits; vagabonds of every class who vexed the souls of men in power, and yet whom men in power might fear to bring before a court of law. A page, a waiting-woman, or a pimp, could find the means of laying an enemy in this royal ward. A man so laid by the heels might linger in his prison-yard for years. Not long ere Eliot came to High Street, Field the actor, Massinger and Daborne the poets, had been here for "unknown causes." David Sampson had been here on a doubt of his having fired the banqueting-house; Captain Brett, for taking young Smythe abroad with a false pass; Lady Blount, for troubling the Council about her wrongs; Robert Thompson, for saying the Spanish fleet was coming to these islands; Christopher Brooke, the poet, for his share in the marriage of Dr. Donne.

Robert Garret, Mayor of Dover, had been lodged in the Marshalsea for not detaining a French ship; Robert Preston, for confessing women and performing mass; John Bailey, for neglecting to get in a benevolence; George Withers, the poet, for writing his "Abuses Stript and Whipt;" Dr. Everard, Rector of St. Martin's, for a sermon in his church; all, with the exception, perhaps, of Father Preston, victims like Eliot of this power of arbitrary arrest.

One of the men whom Eliot found in this pirate prison was Mervin, lately Admiral of the Narrow Seas. Not satisfied with driving Mervin and St. John from the fleet, and placing officers more ductile on their quarter-decks, Calvert was toiling to degrade them in the public eye. He hoped to do so by a criminal charge. This patron of the pirate Nutt was bold enough to allege against these eminent captains a piratical act! The French and Spanish agents played into his hands. These foreign agents knew that Admiral de Soubise, their enemy, was engaged in making war upon their trade. They chose to call his actions those of a pirate; and they ventured to assert that Admiral Mervin and Captain St. John were guilty of a share in his piratical acts, because they had not fired into a friendly ship with an ambassador on board. On this pretence an English Admiral had been flung by Calvert into the pirate jail.

In every yard of the Marshalsea prison Eliot found these fruits of the power of making arbitrary arrests.





CHAPTER XIX.

IN THE MARSHALSEA.

ELIOT was slow to feel the anger which such wrongs as his seemed but too likely to arouse. As yet he could not see the measure of these wrongs; for much was hidden from his eyes; he still regarded his arrest as either a mistake of person or abuse of form, to end in laughter and apologies, like a tavern jest. Such accidents were common in a time of war. The full iniquity of his treatment only dawned upon him when he saw the results of Calvert's scheme.

The charge on which he was sent to the Marshalsea—that of disobeying a lawful warrant—was not proved. Eliot could have raised the point of form, and showed that his resistance to the Mayor was not resistance to the King. A knotty rule of law would then have come before the courts; but Calvert had no wish to try this point of form. He pressed at once the charges made by Nutt. If Marten could be got to see with Calvert's eyes, another friend of Holland would be ruined and removed from high command. Eliot, Vice-Admiral of Devon—like his comrade Mervin, Admiral of the Narrow Seas—would be left to rot in a pirate jail.

Sending for Marten to his office, Calvert laid before that timid judge the story told by Captain Nutt. He laid much stress on the rank of Captain Nutt; and bade him call both Captain Nutt and Sir John Eliot,

try them with questions, and report to him upon their case. Marten called these parties up: first, Captain Nutt; then Randal, Eliot's officer; and last of all, Sir John himself. Nutt's case broke down at once. Not one of his charges was sustained by proof; the most important points were negatived by his own admissions; and the witnesses called by Eliot gave the lie direct to every word. The judge was not in doubt what he should say: but then he saw that Calvert wanted a report condemning Eliot—not a report condemning Nutt. He could not in his conscience say that Nutt was right. He dared not tell the Secretary of State that Nutt was wrong. He hoped to run between these rocks by sending in a summary of the evidence, but without expressing an opinion of his own.

Poor Marten was uneasy in his mind. The King was wont to send him, once a-year, a brace of bucks; but this year they had failed to come; and Marten could not sleep for fear lest James was turning from him that royal face. What had he done—what had he left undone?

Yet Eliot, far from firing up about the rights of man, so grossly outraged in his person, and in that of his comrade, Admiral Mervin—not to speak of the smaller fry—was thinking only of his master's loss. Annoyed he was; but his annoyance took a practical, not a legal turn. Of his unjust arrest he said but little; but he sent for Tom Aylesbury, whom he knew as the Lord Admiral's clerk, and put the case to him as a man of business, whether his lord's affairs could prosper in the western country while his principal officers were kept in jail? Tom Aylesbury saw it; and as Buckingham's clerks were greater men than Secretaries of State, Tom wrote to Conway, calling on him, as he valued his lord's good will, to interfere at once;—not dwelling on the fact of Eliot's unjust arrest (for what was a breach of law to Tom?), but stating

sharply that his master would be vexed, if through these brabbles he should suffer in the western ports. Thus pressed by Aylesbury, Conway wrote to Marten ; more important still, Tom Aylesbury went and roused that judge himself. That judge now saw things in a clearer light ; for Eliot was not only right in law, but he was Aylesbury's friend and Buckingham's man. Conway was with him, too, and Conway was in personal waiting on the King. Poor Marten saw it all. In trying to please one Secretary, he had piqued the other ; and his brace of bucks had not arrived ! His fault was great—and dead against his conscience too ; but now he saw his error, and would speedily set things right.

Eliot—he wrote to Conway—should be freed at once. What Nutt had urged was not made out by proof. The facts alleged were all denied, and these denials were supported by the witnesses on oath. Much more he might set down, if it were useful to state the case at length. His mind was clear about the justice of setting Eliot free. Each hour that he remained in jail his Majesty and the Lord Admiral must suffer loss. The pirate crew—of whom twenty-three were lying in Dartmouth jail—could not be tried for their offence until the Vice-Admiral of the shire could take his seat in court. No seizure could be made of wrecks and pirates save by officers acting in Eliot's name. The case was clear, and Eliot ought to be enlarged.

But Calvert was not likely to throw up his game. He dared not openly defy Tom Aylesbury ; but the great man's clerk was not so well acquainted as himself with what was passing in Madrid, and could not see how much depended on the seas being safe. If Eliot could be kept in jail on a charge of piracy—no matter what the facts—until the Prince and the Infanta came, it would be easy to deprive him of his rank. He must be kept a prisoner ; and events were running

in Madrid—to outward eyes at least—so strongly in Calvert's favour, that he thought he should be able to hold his own. In striking Eliot he was helping himself, no less than serving Spain; for Nutt was a man whom he was bound to shield. Not only had he coaxed the King to sign a Pardon for him, but had paid the fees for that purpose out of his private purse. He had done so much, he could not help doing all. If Nutt were punished, the disgrace would fall on him. That his rival, Conway, was befriending Eliot made him press the point.

Calvert sent once more for Marten to his house, and told him in the curtest phrase to set down fully and in writing answers to these queries:—first, whether Captain Nutt had plundered any ships after the Vice-Admiral of Devon had been with him, and had told him that the Pardon, though elapsed in time, was good in law? second, whether restitution of the stolen ship and goods had yet been made, as had been ordered by the Admiralty Court?

These queries were adroitly framed; and if the answers had been simply yes and no, good use could easily have been made of them in working on the King. Poor Marten's brain was racked. The drifts were crossing at his feet, and who could say which rush would be the master-tide? He begged a day to settle his report, and spent his time in looking at the facts. Eliot was not guilty:—that was something. Aylesbury favoured him:—and that was much. Conway was also on his side:—and that was more. But Calvert was pushing the Spanish marriage, which, if gall and wormwood to the English stomach, was triumphant in Madrid and Rome. On which side would the Favourite stand at last?

The next day Marten sent his answers to White Hall. They had been drawn with care, and were not much to Calvert's mind. Marten decided for his own ideas, though in making his report he cautiously re-

frained from offering an opinion of his own. To the first query, whether Captain Nutt had plundered any vessels after he was told the Pardon was good in law, he answered that Nutt had continued to plunder such ships as he could meet and master till the Vice-Admiral went on board his ship. To the second query, whether Eliot had restored the ship and goods, he answered, that since the pirate came on shore an order for the restitution of his plunder had been issued from the Admiralty Court, and that the pirate's ship and goods were still in Dartmouth port. "He might have made his certificate fuller had it pleased him," said the angry Calvert, "and with a good conscience also."

Marten's answers seemed decisive. Conway was highly pleased with them, and Marten was rewarded for his honesty with an order to receive his customary brace of bucks!

But Calvert was not beaten off. So long as James could go on dreaming of a Spanish match his Catholic Secretary could not be disgraced; and now his dreaming was at fever heat. "Yes, she is coming!" cried the King. "Joy in Jerusalem! Peace in Zion!" sang the court in concert. Calvert went to the King, and asked him, as a personal favour to himself, to sign a second Pardon for Captain Nutt, on the ground that the former Pardon had not reached him in time. The King was then too lazy and too glad to refuse him, and he probably signed the warrant without glancing at it; for the Pardon covered not only Nutt himself, but the twenty-three pirates in Dartmouth jail; and gave them back—not only the pirate ship, but every article they had stolen before the first of May!

Conway got some promise on behalf of Eliot, whom he still befriended; but the Yorkshire Secretary begged that Eliot's case might be referred to the Council, on the ground that they should free him who had laid him up. Calvert took care the Lords should leave town without having signed an order for his release; and

when they were gone away, he caused a whisper to go round the public places that Eliot remained in jail by order of my Lords.

Poor Marten, though surprised, felt happy, he had steered so carefully between the rocks. In writing to thank the King, through Conway, for his brace of bucks, he said he was glad he had not expressed opinions of his own on Eliot's case, as his opinion might have differed somewhat from that of my Lords. He prayed that all would yet be well, and that the Lord Admiral would not suffer loss.

Thus, ten weeks after Eliot had arrested Nutt on Dartmouth quay, the two men—pirate and captor—seemed to have taken each other's place. Nutt was a gentleman at large; his pirate crew were free; his ship had been restored to him; he had a royal pardon in his pocket; and he revelled in the favour of a Secretary of State. Eliot was a king's prisoner; his deputy, Randal, was in jail; his court was closed, his commission suspended; he was charged with inciting to piratical acts; and he could gain no hearing for himself in any court of law.

In this despair, he could but wait upon events in Spain; events which were to carry him from a yard in the Marshalsea, through the House of Commons, to his dungeon in the Bloody tower.





CHAPTER XX.

THE SPANISH OLIVE.

IN two small rooms, in distant quarters of Madrid, two groups of men, with eager eyes and whispering tongues, were urging on each other, yea and nay, their views of what could now be done with the Prince of Wales.

One of these rooms was in an old hotel, in a dull street a long way from the royal square. The hotel was Digby's house, and round a table, dimly lighted by a swinging lamp, sat Digby, Buckingham, and Charles. When "Tom" and "John" came clattering into the Moorish courtyard, Digby, on the instant, barred his gates, and gave strict orders that none should enter, none go forth, that night. So great a secret could not be too closely kept. This move had thrown his game into the enemy's hand. So soon as it was known at court that Charles was in Madrid, the Spaniards would be sure to raise their terms; to offer less, to ask for more; and Digby felt that as a man of the world, who dealt with facts as they arose, the Spaniards would be right in pressing higher terms. The "Matter of Holland" was a weapon in their hands, for they had only to disclose that document to ruin Charles for ever in the eyes of honest men. Could Digby hide the Prince's presence in Madrid? The three men sat up deep into the night, debating what they ought to do next day. No doubt the coming of

two strangers to the house was known—for every mansion in Madrid was watched; but then their rank could not be guessed; and they would naturally be reported by the spies as a master and his man. Here lay the hint on which they were inclined to act. The servants might give out that Buckingham had come. The Prince might pass for his companion. Charles must hold himself back, till Buckingham and Digby should have felt their way.

A second group was seated in a bed-room of the Alcazar; a boy upon the bed, with wistful eyes and hanging lip, just wakened from his sleep; a man fast rising to the prime of life, the minister and favourite of that startled youth. The boy was Philip, called *El Grande*, and his midnight visitor was Gaspar, *Condéduque de Olivares*, just come in with the strangest news.

Some minutes since, the Duque had been eating his supper in another room, when Gondomar, who was as free to him as he was to the King, had come in softly, with his dark face lighted by unusual joy. "What brings you to my house so late?" the Grandee cried; "you look as though you had the King of England in Madrid." The Condé smiled: "If I have not got the King, I have got the Prince of Wales." The Prince of Wales! How? when? where? Then Gondomar told the Duque how his spies, who watched both night and day round Digby's house, had seen the two men dash up to the door, had heard them ask for the ambassador, had noted what a stir was made by them, and how the gates were suddenly closed and barred. The Condé had no doubt that Charles was come. The Prince of Wales! Why this was better than the King; for James was but a poor old man, whose life could hardly have a year to run. Here was the bridegroom and the future king! When Gondomar had told his story, Gaspar rose, and saying, "This is good news for us and for our holy Church," crept softly to his master's room.

A boy of eighteen years, in feeble health, and only strong in family pride and in religious zeal, Philip the Fourth was but a piece of clay in Gaspar's hands.

A man of thirty-five, who had seen the world ; bright in countenance, bland in manner, quick in speech ; adorned with wealth and rank, and boasting of the noblest blood in Spain ; Gaspar had set himself to captivate the King while he was still a prince, and played his game so well that Philip had given up Spain to him as thoroughly as Louis had given up France to Richelieu, and as James had given up England to Villiers. Agnes, his wife, was a favourite friend of the Infanta, so that Gaspar was a master of the palace and its royalties on every side.

Philip sat up in bed to hear this news. He thought, like Gaspar, that the Lord had given this prize into his hand for good of holy Church and the imperial line. For Gaspar's one idea as a ruler was to raise the House of Austria high above all rival houses, so that there should be once more, as under Charles the Fifth, one temporal prince, even as there was still one spiritual prince, of all the earth. But Spain and Austria were not gaining ground ; and he was much afraid lest they would soon be losing ground. Seven Provinces had been torn from them in the Netherlands. France was daily growing stronger and more jealous. Sweden was rising in the north, and Denmark was already mistress of the Baltic ports. The Turks were pushing up the Danube and along the Theiss. Nor was the Empire one in heart and mind ; for most of the hardy north, and much of the populous west, were now in arms against the Pope. Since war had been renewed with Holland, they had lost their old command at sea ; Ostend, Dunkerque, and Gravelines, were sinking into pirate lairs ; and even the coasts of Galicia and Asturias were not safe from the avenging Dutch. On land, they had met with more success ; for they had sense enough to seek for men with brains, and trust their

armies to the ablest captains, even when they found such leaders in a Genoese banker and a Flemish priest. Ambrosio, Marchese Spinola, was victorious on the Lower Rhine; and John de Tserclas, Graf von Tilly, after driving Frederick and his Queen from Prague, had poured through Germany in fiery haste, repulsing the Margraf von Baden, and pushing the Graf von Mansfeld into France. Rhine, Main, Moselle, were in their power, and England's Princess was an exile at the Hague. Yet these advantages might be lost to Spain if England drew her sword. A dozen ships, supported by the corsair fleets, would seal the ports, and cut off those supplies for which Spinola called more loudly every day. A score of regiments, supported by the troops in garrison, would force the Rhine, and carry the Queen of Hearts to Heidelberg once more. The Austrians had an enemy in their rear, for whom they could not wait; those Turkish janissaries who were riding through the plains of Hungary, up to the walls of Pesth. Another enemy in their front would put in peril more than the Catholic League had won. How could King James be kept from marching to his daughter's aid?

One point was clear to Philip as he sat in bed. He must not falter in the cause of God. The Palatinate should not pass to an enemy of the Roman Church. "I swear to Thee, O Lord," he cried, on turning to the crucifix above his bed, "that the Prince of Wales shall never win me to do the thing of which Thy Vicar on earth shall not approve."

Next morning Digby sent for Gondomar, and told him, as a secret, that my Lord of Buckingham had arrived in Spain. No word was said about the Prince of Wales. Gondomar was to speak with Olivares; and at dusk that afternoon the royal favourites met in a garden of the palace, where they walked and talked till it was dark; when Gaspar, having got from Buckingham all his secrets, led him into the royal presence,

where the Marquis kissed hands, and told his Majesty that the Prince of Wales had come. By this time every one in the streets was talking of these strangers; but a mystery was thrown about them, like the cap and mantle in a Spanish comedy of intrigue. A coach was sent to Charles, in which he was to drive up and down the course. King, Queen, Infanta, were to drive in a second coach; so that each might see the other well without pretending to see at all. A mob of Dons saluted, and the King took off his hat; yet no one was supposed to look at the mysterious coach. Then Gaspar came to Charles. The King, he said, was dying to speak with him. Charles answered he would wait upon his Majesty at once. "You have no retinue," urged Gaspar, "for a prince." "Then let us meet in the open road," suggested Charles. The royal carriage stopped, and Charles got in, with Digby as interpreter; and then the King and Prince spent half an hour in driving up and down.

Olivares spoke to Villiers early. "Let us settle this affair off-hand, without consulting Rome at all," he whispered. Villiers wished to hear how they could do it; since the lady, as a Catholic, would need a dispensation from her Pope. "Do it?" said Olivares, plainly; "by the Prince conforming to her faith." Gondomar had led his Sovereign to expect this change of creed; and his assurances were strengthened by this coming to Madrid. Unless intending to conform, Charles was not likely to have come to Spain.

The Prince of Wales, more nervously alive than Villiers was to personal risks, began to fear that if he failed to win his bride, he might not find it easy to retire from Spain. He found that he was watched by spies; those wakeful spies whom Gondomar had trained; and even when a house was given him in the Calle de Las Infantas, near the palace, he could gain no speech from the damsel he had come to woo. All court officials let him see that he was treated, not

as a suitor to the young Infanta, but as guest and brother to the King. He chafed at these restraints. The Doña Maria had not seen him yet; and when he played the lover, leaping, like Romeo, her garden wall, she fled from him with screams, as though he had been some poisonous reptile; and the officers of her household put him with but scant civility to the garden-gate. He was allowed to write that he would wait for her seven years; but was not suffered to see her more than twice or thrice. Even then he could not speak with her a word. Once only, as a favour, he was carried into the Queen's apartments, where the Infanta was. Some words, set down for him, he was allowed to speak; but he forgot his part, and was saying something else, when her Majesty turned on him in deep surprise, and Doña Maria showed him by her bearing that her mind was hurt. The lover drove back to his lodgings sore at heart. This Spanish courtship was a dull affair; and Charles might well have sighed once more, as he had done before the portrait at White Hall, that princes ought to have a wife to love, if they must also have a wife for show.

But Gaspar needed time; for Tilly and the League were not yet safe against all comers in the Upper Rhine. So songs, and plays, and bull-fights, and processions, were intruded on these English guests. A bull-fight, which is still remembered for its roll of slain, was given in the Plaza Mayor, and Lopez de Vega wrote a song for Charles, which ran:—

“ Charles Stuart, led by love,
Has come from far
To see in Spanish skies
Maria, his star.”

More time was wanted by the Spaniards, and more time was got. The friars preached; the ladies smiled; the crowds applauded; Archie went to court, and

made his jests ; and meantime Tilly sacked and burnt the Lutheran cities on the Upper Rhine.

Among the motley crowd which followed Charles to Spain was Archie Armstrong, the royal fool ; at least a wiser following than Dr. Lamb, who had been left a prisoner in the King's Bench, arrested on a charge of sorcery. King Philip took a fancy to this fool, and often sent for him to the palace, where the braw Scotch callant was as much at home as Sancho in the Duchess's drawing-room. Weeks elapsed before Charles was suffered to see the Infanta ; but the fool, in motley coat, was carried into the lady's chamber, where she sat with her duennas and maids of honour ; and there the fellow laughed and jeered with the women, like Sancho with the Duchess and her court. One day they were praising Max of Bavaria, who with fewer men had driven the Winter King from Prague. "Hist!" cried Archie, in reply, "and I will tell you a little tale. A hundred and forty ships set sail from Spain ; they attacked a little English fleet ; and only ten of these Spanish ships came back to tell what had become of all the rest."

While Archie told them truth in jest, the Spaniards scored their game. King James, to place his minion on a level with Gaspar, sent to Buckingham the patent of a Duke. Buckingham wrote back to him for some of the crown jewels, and especially for "a collar for your dog." The young comedian played his part, not caring to what end it led, if only he got his collar and his daily sport. He took the treaty out of Digby's hands. He used high words with Gaspar, and made love in public to Gaspar's wife. He went to hear the Carmelites in company with Charles ; and when the Fathers ceased their talking, leapt from his chair, threw down his hat, and danced upon it, as the only answer to such folly he could deign to make. On noticing how much his freedom shocked the punctilious Dons, he laughed at their stately manner,

and pushed, and stared, and swore, until the grave hidalgoes fled from him in wrath. He came into the Prince's room without his breeches; he was rude to the Infantas; but he could not weary out a man like Gaspar, who had everything to lose by temper and to gain by time. Day by day the talk ran thus. "We must have the Palatinate," said the English. "Ha! the Palatinate is not ours to give," replied the Spaniards. "You can force the Kaiser to give it up." "Force him! How?" "By breaking with him." "We can never break with him; the Kaiser is our chief; and if he were to call our royal master Knave, and slap him on the face, we could not break with him. But we can use our influence. We will send to Vienna. You must give us time."

"We want to have the treaty signed," the English said. "All in good time," the Spaniards answered; "there are things to settle, and we have to feel our way." One conversation took this form. "The Infanta will be safe in London?" "Yes." "No fear about her household?" "None." "That household must comprise a bishop, a confessor, and a staff of twenty priests?" "Allowed." "No insult shall be offered to her faith, and not a word be spoken to annoy her?" "None." "All English who may please can come to mass in the royal chapel?" "Hum!" "You bar that point?" "Well, no; go on." "The royal children shall be under their mother's charge until the age of ten?" "Agreed." "The King shall instantly suspend the penal laws?" "Yes; that is promised." "These penal laws shall be repealed by Parliament within three years?" "We cannot answer for the House of Commons." "But the Pope will have it so," replied the Spaniards. "You must do without the Pope," the English said. "How can we move without the Pope?" "Then all is ended." "Stay!" rejoined the Spaniards, "we can use our influence, even in Rome. We have some claims on

the Holy Father. We will send an agent. You must give us time."

Then Gaspar sent swift messengers to Vienna and to Rome, who urged the Kaiser to press the war, and told the Pope that Philip would never yield the match.

While troops were hurrying to the Rhine, the Papal agents were instructed to suggest new terms. The Prince of Wales must live in a court of priests; his wife's confessors must be near him day and night; he must engage his royal word that he will hear these priests, upon his wife's request, at all times, and with decent reverence, on the mysteries of their faith. The Princess and her priests must educate his children up to twelve. Those oaths of allegiance, which were fixed by English law, must be replaced by forms of words drawn up for them in Rome. The King of Spain must be accepted as Protector of the English Catholics—in effect, if not in name. King Philip must engage his oath that England shall keep these terms with Rome, and hold his armies and armadas ready to enforce his oath!

As month on month flew by, the Prince, grown cross with waiting, gave up point by point, until the ministers began to dread lest he would give up all, and then compel them to declare their policy in words. "Given way again!" laughed Gaspar, when his secretary brought him some startling tale; "I should as soon have expected to hear the news of my own death." They asked the Prince to swear an oath—"an oath of the Escorial," and he swore. They asked him to indite a letter to the Pope, and Charles complied, in terms which helped to cost him, when the truth was known, his crown and life.

The one excuse that can be made for Charles is, that he played with Gaspar's cards, met lie with lie, capped fraud by fraud, and only gave his pledges in the hope that he would afterwards be able to break his oath.

When all that could be done with the marriage



THE GATEWAY, THE BLOODY TOWER.

treaty had been done, the "Matter of Holland" was brought up. But little time could be gained by parleying on this new ground; for Charles declared himself ready to perfect that treaty when the match was signed. He spoke the truth; for James had sent to Digby his commands to push this matter, with the necessary powers. Gaspar could say no more, without creating trouble; for to give up Zeeland and Holland to King James was farther from his mind than giving an Infanta to the Prince of Wales.

More months flew past. So far as outside men could see, the match was still going on, the college of divines at work, and Olivares bent on smoothing things in Rome. But Charles was sickening fast of Spain; his followers were at daggers with their hosts; and Villiers, tired of making love to swarthy Doñas, was impatient to go home. As Charles and Villiers cooled, the Spanish minister grew warm. On finding that his guests might start some morning, hurt and angry, Gaspar fell back somewhat in his terms, detained the Prince with hope, and even went so far, when pressed for time, as actually to sign the draft.

James heard at length that all was going on well in Spain. The contract had been made; his son would soon bring home his bride; the "Matter of Holland" was as good as done. At this bright moment, Nutt—the pirate Nutt—was pardoned by the poor old King; while Eliot, his patriotic Vice-Admiral, was a prisoner in the Marshalsea, and the Earl of Oxford, his patriotic Admiral of the Fleet, was guarded in the Tower.

But, lo—a change! Two days after Charles had signed the marriage treaty Tilly fought the battle of Stadtloo; and three weeks later the Elector Palatine was compelled by his misfortunes to accept a truce. The war was over, and the Kaiser master of the Rhine.

Then Gaspar, who had waited for success, threw

down his mask. New terms were named, new difficulties raised. The Prince surmised, from what he saw and heard, not only that the olive was forbidden fruit, but that his person was no longer safe. Cajoled, abashed, and ruined, he resolved to go; but even then he could not see things in the living light; and dreaming that Maria would regret his handsome face, and that the King would change his mind, he left a proxy to complete the marriage in Lord Digby's hands.





CHAPTER XXI

PRISONS OPENED.

A CLANG of bells, a blaze of fires, a roar of voices, met the Prince and Duke as the returning prodigals crossed the Thames and drove to their apartments in York House. As yet, the world knew little of their doings in Madrid; but Charles had come without his bride; and, on the instant, that great fact was all that citizens cared to know. The Duke was said to have mocked the Dons; the Prince to have broken off the match; and both the Duke and Prince were breathing war against Spain. Here was a cry to rouse men's souls. War with the Harlot! War against the Beast! In every church, in every house, the talk was now of ships and guns. The gates were opened, and the flood of passion poured upon the land. At every corner fires were lit; at every doorway casks were broached. Rich bankers coiled up pipes of sack, and Cadiz wine was tossed off merrily to the cry of "Down with Spain!" A sense of jubilee seized on men not prone to heat and waste. Staid citizens spread their tables in the streets, and bade all passers-by sit down and eat. Poor people supped on god-wit and potato-pie. The 'prentice lads sang riotous staves, and Cheapside damsels danced round decorated poles. Near friends embraced each other; neighbours who had not yet spoken pressed each other's palms. Old

sores were healed, old feuds forgotten, in the public joy. A panic of good-nature seized on persons who, in ordinary times, would not have done a generous deed. Small debts were cancelled on the spot. Large debtors were relieved by men who had never heard their names. Good citizens drove to the Compter and the Fleet, and paid the fees of such poor prisoners as were lying there for fees. Crowds would have forced the Tower, the Gatehouse, and the Marshalsea, except from a desire, which all men felt, that James should play his part—a royal part—in this great public act. All London, as the Prince and Duke were but too well aware, was beating with one mighty pulse of life.

“I never saw such gladness in my life,” wrote Laud, in sore dismay. “They swear to put a ring through the nose of Leviathan,” said Wentworth, with a sneer; the haughty spirit lowering through his pale, cadaverous face.

While Prince and Duke were resting for a moment at York House, the Spanish ministers came to wait upon the Prince. The Prince refused to see them; and the people, hearing his refusal, took up the news, and bore it onward with a lusty shout. In driving through the streets, on their way towards Royston, where the King lay sick with gout, they met a gang of felons in the hangman's cart; and Charles, in answer to a call for mercy, was compelled to stop his coach, and give these rogues their lives.

Such scenes, if lost on Charles, who looked upon these crowds with an impassive grace, were noted well by Buckingham, whose quick and volatile nature longed for such plaudits as an actor gains. For once he had his measure of delight. Amidst the uproar round York House he heard, “A Villiers!—a Villiers!” mingled with the shouts of “Down with Spain!” and “Ho! the Prince of Wales!” It was a fearful joy; for he was but too sure that had the truth been told—the truth about their long delay,—about the proxy left

with Digby,—and about the Escorial oath,—these crowds, now wishing him a merry life, would have been yelling and cursing round his gates. That truth, if he could help it, they should never learn.

“All over!” gasped the King, when they had told him all. It could not be; his boys had been too hot; for Digby gave him hope; and Secretary Calvert gave him hope. A plan pursued by him for twenty years could not have vanished like a puff of smoke. He was a weak old man; this match was all he lived for; if his heart were crushed, he cared not when he was to lay down crown and life. The Duke fell back on his comic powers. He drew for James a ludicrous picture of the Spanish court; the dwarfs and dueñas, monks and espadas, bishops and buffoons; a motley of lace and rags, of piety and intrigue, of gilded coaches and empty plates. James fell into a roar of laughter, which compelled him to hold his sides, and mop the tears from beard and cheek. Such peals and shrieks had not been heard by page and courtier for a year.

“What must be done?” he asked the youths. “Throw open all the prisons,” they replied, “and call a Parliament at once.”

No wiser counsel could be given, if only it were truly meant. “A Pardon!” and “A Parliament!” were cries coming up from every town. A Pardon was the sign of peace at home; a Parliament was the means of war abroad. These things the nation craved with burning and resistless appetite; and if the Prince of Wales had been content to play the part of an English prince,—to break with Spain, to wed a Protestant wife, to fight with the reforming states,—he might have had all England at his back. But Charles meant nothing of the kind. To him the Pardon was to be a trick; the Parliament was to be a fraud. So far from breaking with the King of Spain, he was resolved to have Maria for his wife. He wanted her on easier terms; but he was fixed on having her; and Villiers

told him that the way to bring these Spaniards to their senses, was to frighten them by seeming—it was never to be more than seeming—to abandon the negotiation, and to join the English people in demanding war. For such a purpose only Charles would help to swell these popular cries.

James lent his ear to this proposal of a Pardon; for a Pardon offered him just then a means of keeping an unpopular pledge. Some days before his son arrived in London, James had given his word in secret to the Spanish agents, that all priests and Jesuits then in custody should be set at large, in deference to their great protector in Madrid. That pledge was given when James was hoping for the best; but how, when fires were lit and feasts were spread against the match, could such a pledge be kept? The Spanish agents held him to his word, while London streets were ringing for the swift arrest and instant banishment of every man who wore the livery of Spain. One course, and only one, lay open to the King; to join the cry for a general Pardon, and to set the Jesuits free as part of that royal act of grace. This course was taken, and at once. The morning after Charles and Buckingham arrived at Royston, secret word was sent to the Lord Keeper Williams, that the priests should be privately enlarged, and that the agents should be told these faithful servants of Philip owed their safety to his Majesty's affection for the King of Spain. Then public orders were addressed to Sir Allan Apsley, his Majesty's Lieutenant of the Tower, to Thomas More, his Majesty's Keeper of the Marshalsea, to Aquila Wykes, his Majesty's Keeper of the Gatehouse, to Sir George Reynell, Marshal of the King's Bench, commanding these officers to open the gates for all their prisoners—with a few exceptions—whom they held on warrants signed by either the Council or the King himself.

For years the political dungeons had not seen so

large a flight. Except some Irish chieftains, who were hardly known by name, two prisoners only were detained in Apsley's charge at the Tower. These two prisoners were the Earl of Oxford and the Countess of Shrewsbury; and the tide of public feeling ran so strong that even these great personages were soon released by special acts of grace. The Countess, who had not been broken by her long imprisonment, was ordered to live in free confinement with Arthur Lake, the Bishop of Bath and Wells. The Earl came out of the Tower to keep his Christmas revels, and to wed the fair Diana Cecil, a daughter of the Earl of Exeter, and to spend in gallant style some portion of her thirty thousand pounds.

The Irish chieftains left in the Tower as rebels, whom no amnesty could touch, were Cormac O'Neil, a brother of Tyrone; Con O'Neil, a son of Tyrone; Neil O'Donnel, and his son. Three of these Irish captives had been so long immured, that Apsley could not say for what offences they were under ward. One Brian O'Rourk had been sent from the Gatehouse to the Tower a year ago; but his offence was said to be "unknown." These Irish rebels had no friends at Charing Cross; the gates swung back on them as Oxford rode away; and soon they were "forgotten in the Tower."

Among those who left the Marshalsea under this act of grace were Eliot, Vice-Admiral of Devon, and Mervin, Admiral in the Narrow Seas. The prisoners who remained were four in number: men who had been committed by the Lord Steward's officers for private crimes. Father Preston went away with his fellow-priests. The Duke's astrologer and "devil," not so lucky as the priest, was left in jail. Doctor Lamb, who lived in great men's houses, and whose demoniac power was said to be so vast that he could open graves and set the heavens on fire, was treated with peculiar sharpness by the 'prentice-boys. His

life was lewd; his hands were stained with blood. The latest charge against this sorcerer was that of having laid a spell on Thomas, Lord Windsor, one of his dearest "sons." Windsor was a Catholic peer, whose family was suspected in the Powder Plot; and Lamb, who knew so many secrets of the time, declared that if they kept him in the prison he would tell the world strange stories. Villiers could not leave his necromancer in the bench, and when the storm was somewhat over, Lamb was quietly let out.

"A Parliament!" was not so welcome to the King; but Prince and Duke were now above the King.

"A Parliament!" murmured James. What would become of him if Parliament should meet? They might revive that right of speech. They might resent his tearing up their protest. They might question his proceedings at the Tower. A Parliament would declare against the match; would pry into his secrets; and would urge him into war. The Duke was fierce, the Prince was cold. Such fears, they said, were vain. They knew the people, and could answer for the members. See what fires were lit, what shouts were raised! To treat with Spain, they wanted ships, forts, guns, and men; and here were towns and counties eager to give them ships, forts, guns, and men. Let them take all the people offered. The Commons could be managed. Villiers knew the popular leaders, and could trust them. Not a word should come from them about the right of speech, the imprisoned members, and the torn-out leaf. Both Charles and Villiers felt that they must now go on. To pause was to perish; even to go forward was to perish; but the end that way was not in sight. The Duke could see that if he would save himself, he must appear in front, and get the nation between himself and Spain. The Prince could see that, if he would win his bride, he must obtain her by a show of force. Their policy was fixed

by fate ; a policy of fraud and lying ; yet not the less, they thought, a policy beyond their choice. The old King mumbled, sulked, and signed.

James lived a few months more, but he had ceased to be the ruling power. The Duke sent word into the shires that but for him no Parliaments would have been called for all future time.

The Howards saw this change of front with terror ; for a rupture with the court of Spain was loss of pension and loss of power. A war would be their ruin. Arundel felt that his seat in the Council was no longer safe ; and Suffolk, who had long been waiting for a seat on the board, consented, as a last resource, to marry his son, Sir Edward (afterwards Lord Howard of Escrick), to Jane Butler, one of Buckingham's penniless cousins. Villiers liked such flatteries from great houses ; at the wedding-feast he promised to be a father to the pair ; but even his light genius shrank from giving a second seat in the Council to that powerful and unpopular house. From all sides he was urged to drive the suspected Arundel from the board ; and when Lord Oxford left the Tower at Christmas, bets were laid at court that Arundel would shortly occupy his cell.

A reference of the question, Peace or War ? to seven wise members of the Council, threw the court into two camps. Imagining that this question was a lovers' quarrel between the King and Duke, the seven wise men took sides according to their sense of what was safe. Carlisle and Conway were for war ; Calvert and Weston were for peace. Williams and Cranfield were for neither ; they were only for the stronger side. Williams, who knew that James was bent on peace and on the match, conjectured that the Duke was only shamming zeal for war ; and, not yet seeing that the King had ceased to rule, he voted with his Majesty against his Grace. To break with Spain was to forego his dream of wearing the Cardinal's hat that Wolsey

wore. The votes were four to three : majority of one in seven for peace. The Duke, enraged against his tools—this parson Williams, whom his breath had made Lord Keeper, and this broker Cranfield whom his smile had made Lord Treasurer !—called heaven and earth to witness that their fall should be as sudden as their rise.

This Council vote was kept a secret—more or less—for not a chance remained of passing a supply-bill through the coming House, unless the court should talk of war ; nay, talk in that high tone, as though the armies were to march, the fleets to sail, so soon as means were voted, and the guns were shipped. The world must be deceived. A clatter of inspection must go on, especially at the Tower, the heart of our defence. An order, therefore, came for Apsley to survey the guns and stores, inspect the officers and gunners, test the wharf and outworks, note what masonry was unsound, and see that the magazines were full. An excellent report was made ; and having served to mystify the town, this excellent report on the Tower was thrust into a hole in Conway's desk.





CHAPTER XXII.

A PARLIAMENT.

A PARLIAMENT was a desperate cure for men in danger like the Prince and Duke. They wished to stop men's tongues, and they were sending for the talkers out of every shire. They wished to hide some ugly blots, and they were calling up men whose duty it would be to sift all facts. They wished to gain supplies, without being pledged to take a definite course; and they were going to ask these grants from an assembly which had never yet given, in that loose form, one penny to the crown. Could wit of man enable them to cajole the country and deceive the Commons into granting war supplies without an actual war?

Lamb's spells were useless now; nor was the wizard free to help his master in the hour of need. That rogue had barely got his freedom on the charge of sorcery, ere he was taken, tried, convicted on a charge of rape. For rape the penalty was hanging, and a jury had convicted him of rape. To snatch him from the gallows was not easy; since the evidence was clear, the judge consented to the finding, and the public clamoured for his life. But could they trust him on the gallows? He would blab. When lying in the Bench, he turned on Windsor with a threat of telling what he knew about the Powder Plot. If he were sent to Tyburn, what would he not say before he

swung? Chief Justice Ley was asked to see what could be done for Lamb. Ley made a vague report. The verdict turned upon the evidence; the witnesses were humble folk; the criminal was a man of note; it was a case for pardon—if the King saw fit. For once the King was slow in a bad cause; and Ley was told that his report was much too vague; and he must answer clearly whether Lamb was worthy of the royal grace. Again the rogue got off, but with an odious fame, some part of which was settling on the Duke.

To call in Wentworth was impossible as yet. The knight for Yorkshire was disposed to serve the King; and Calvert, who was well aware of his supreme abilities, was eager to arrange the terms. A peerage; with a seat in council, were his claims. He wanted power, and promised, if they gave him power, that Charles should be as much a king as Philip or as Louis was a king. But Villiers, light of head and gay of heart, recoiled in comical dismay from Wentworth's haughty language and imperious looks; and Wentworth, dark and scornful, stood aside in silence, broken only now and then by crashes of electric storm.

No man could help the Duke in such a strait save that unscrupulous divine who found a scapegoat in his Bible, and presented it at court. The man, who had converted Lady Catharine, who had ruined Lord St. Albans, who had tricked the Canon of Cambrai, and sold his conscience for the prospect of a Cardinal's hat, might help in such a pass; but Williams and his Grace were now at strife. Williams had voted with the King, and Villiers had sworn to hurl him from his height. That vote was a mistake; that oath was also a mistake; and they had only to adjust the point of view in order to be friends once more. In voting with the King for peace, the Lord-Keeper thought he was casting his vote against a falling man; in swearing he would ruin Williams, Buckingham thought he was clearing from his path a minister who had ceased to

be his slave. A few words set things right; and soon that Eunuch's brain was seething with a plan for marshalling all parties into one vast army for the Duke. All parties were to be cajoled and tricked; and Williams—Rector, Dean, Bishop, Lord-Keeper and expectant Cardinal—was the only man in England who could venture to cajole them all.

He made himself a solvent for all passions, all ideas. He could feel with each and all, and drop his words of balm in every ear. To peers who hated Parliaments, he could hint that James was bankrupt, and must get supplies; to burgesses who hated kings, he could suggest that James was rich, and might go on without them to the end. All parties in the State were right; and king and country ought to meet each other in pacific mood. To courtiers who resisted an appeal to the country, he was ready to declare in secret that the King could not go on another week. To patriots who suspected motives for this hot appeal, he was as ready to declare, in secret, that the crown could do without them for a hundred years. He sought the Undertakers, Phelips, Digges, and Sandys, and made a bargain with them in his Grace's name. They were to keep the House from broaching dangerous themes; they were to drop the right of speech; they were to raise no question of prerogatives and liberties; they were to say no more about the protest and the torn-out leaf. A meeting of the House should be a sign of concord, not a cause of strife. The courtiers must forget their jealousy of the House; the burgesses forego their strictures on the crown.

The Lord-Keeper met with great success. By means of Digges, some members of the popular party came into the plan proposed for interchange of thought, and came to accept this policy of a common sacrifice of wrongs. Among these men it was agreed that war votes should be swiftly passed, that grievances should be redressed, that nothing should be said about the

torn-out leaf, that all allusion to the right of speech should be avoided, but that everything should be told about the events which had occurred in Spain.

These intricate deceptions were too much for James. He could not trust those Undertakers who had roused his gall. When told they must come in, he broke into a dotard's rage. "They shall not be returned," he potted. When the shires and towns returned them, he exclaimed, "Then they must be expelled." The House would have to raise that point. Could they be sent away? Could they be sent to Ulster, on commission, and detained by business till the prate was over? Such a trick had served the King already. Why should it not be played again? If Pym, Coke, Sandys, and Phelips, could be sent to Ulster, he might live in quiet. No one thought of Eliot. Wentworth was a friend of peace, and even a friend of Spain. From him the King had more to hope than fear. But Coke and Pym were dangerous speakers; these, at least, he would not have; and warrants for the Ulster mission must be drawn at once.

But Williams told the Duke that such a course was full of snares. If he would use the popular leaders, he must seem to trust them. If he wished to carry his money-bills, he must not open his campaign by acts which would alarm the popular camp. Wise men should work by wit, and not by force. To exile Pym and Coke, on pretexts like the pretended Irish mission, was to court attack, and bring on some decisive vote. They must be prompt to give, as they were keen to take; if they would lead the Commons, they must urge the King to yield this mission to Lough Foyle. The Duke supported Williams, and the King reluctantly gave up his point.

The session opened well. No sooner had the members sworn the oaths, than Sir Edward Giles, a western man, secure in popular votes, threw down his glove; not only to the Secretary of State in person, but to all

the tribe of lords and pages who had made a boast of their fidelity to Spain. Giles moved that certain suits, then pending in the courts of law against Sir John Eliot, member for Newport, late a prisoner in the Marshalsea, be stayed by orders from that House.

This motion was a note of war. These suits against Sir John were known to have been raised by Calvert's tools and dupes; who wished to punish him, as Vice-Admiral, for disturbing Nutt, and hinder him, as Burgess, from fulfilling his duties in that House. A Secretary of State could count on all the official votes, as well as on the votes of men who laboured to stand well at court. In ordinary times, a Secretary of State could easily have stifled such a motion; but the times were far from ordinary; and Giles's motion was adopted by the House.

Then Eliot rose, and for the first hour England heard that voice, the waves of which will echo through her story to the end of time. Wentworth and Eliot were soon at war. They had their flouts of wit, their keen retorts, their passages of strength. Eliot was for France, while Wentworth was for Spain. Eliot spoke for war, while Wentworth spoke for peace. Is there much need to add—that Eliot was sincere, unchangeable, in what he said, while Wentworth, as a practical statesman, though he had ideas of his own, could put them forth and draw them back at will?

The Duke rode down to the House of Lords, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, and gave, in Charles's presence, with his warm assent, a narrative of their Spanish trip. His story was a fiction, from his first word and to his last; but in the ring of those who heard him none could know the tale was false, except the Prince of Wales.

He spoke of the Spaniards as being false throughout; of Digby as assisting them to deceive the Prince. In going into Spain the Prince and he had but one object; to recover Heidelberg and Manheim from the Catholic

League. They had no other thought. They would not have delayed one week in Spain; they would never have left that proxy in Digby's hands; they would not have sworn the Escorial oath; they would not have paid the Infanta one single compliment; but that by seeming to accept the Spanish terms they hoped to get the Protestant Rhine restored.

These points were put so coarsely, that the Ambassador from Spain declared the Duke had stained his master's honour, and he asked from James such justice as the King of Spain would grant, if any grandee of that country should traduce the English king. What justice? the Ambassador was asked. He boldly answered,—“The offender's head!”

This wild demand made Buckingham a hero. Who could doubt his patriotism when the Spaniards asked his blood, as years ago they had asked for Raleigh's blood? A crowd ran round his coach, lit bonfires in his name, and rang the parish-bells. Both Houses of Parliament endorsed his saucy speech—the Lords declaring by a vote that he had done good service to his country; while the Commons took upon themselves to say, that he had not affronted the King of Spain; that he had told his countrymen no more than he was bound to tell; and that in making his narration of events he had “deserved well of the Commonwealth and the King.”

Eliot took no part in this delusion. When he rose it was to recall the previous session and its great events. He claimed the privilege of speech; he joined in that high protest of the House; he proved that liberty of speech was for the King's advantage; and he urged that measures should be taken to secure that right. Phelips opposed his motion, as inopportune; but the House, inspired by eloquence such as it had rarely heard, assented; naming a committee to consider and maintain their liberties in all coming time.

A note was struck by Eliot which warned the court that, loud as were the plaudits showered upon the

Prince and Duke, those plaudits meant no more than a desire for war.

Rudyard brought on the question, backed by Coke and Seymour. Eliot went still farther. "Let us rend these treaties," he exclaimed, "and man our ships. There has been talk enough; the time has come to act. Let us arm our forts. The enemy is said to detain our ships; our answer to that wrong should be a powerful fleet." Such words had quite another ring to an Undertaker's words, pretending much and meaning nothing. Pym, a man not likely to be tricked by Williams, backed him in a noble speech; and Eliot's motion, seconded by Pym, was carried by an undivided vote.

The Prince was frightened and the Duke surprised. So far, their march was stayed. A House which was to raise no question of free speech, had named a committee to protect that right. A House which was to give them money, leaving them to spend it, had begun the session with a warlike vote. A money-bill was now brought in and passed. Once more the voice of Eliot rose above the throng,—“You say we are poor! Spain is rich. Break with her! She is our Indies. Break, and break at once!” The money-bill was voted as an act of war.

That night a stranger in London would have thought the people mad. They fancied war was come at last; and bells rang out, and bonfires blazed, and casks of wine were broached. A fire was lit near the Spanish embassy, and every man supposed to be a Don was hooted in the public street. “Cobblers, bigots, and the brethren,” cried the haughty Wentworth, “have insulted the servants of a friendly prince.” Wentworth was a friend of Spain, though not as Suffolk was a friend of Spain. “Let them be punished,” cried the Undertaker Phelips. “First inquire into the facts,” said Eliot. “Better let the matter drop,” said Maynard; and the matter was allowed to drop.

The house now turned on Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, whom the Duke gave up to them with fear. Poor James objected, and with reason, to this trial by impeachment of his treasurer. But Williams knew that they must have a scapegoat ; if not Cranfield, it must be himself. "Not yet, not yet," he thought. The Prince of Wales was easily induced to give up Cranfield to the Commons. "You will live to have your bellyful of Parliamentary impeachments," said the poor old King to his sedate and faithless son.

Cranfield, since his peerage and his marriage to Ann Brett, had plundered everybody within his reach ; and his official posts as Master of the Wardrobe, Master of the Wards, Privy Councillor, Commissioner of the Treasury, and Lord High Treasurer, put almost everybody within his reach. A list of his peculations would fill a book. He robbed the magazine of arms ; he pocketed bribes from suitors in his court ; he made false entries of the royal debts ; he sold his name to grants and privy seals ; he kept vast sums received from the farmers of accounts. Abbot, the virtuous Primate, who had not forgotten Cranfield's conduct to the great Chancellor, took part in bringing him to justice. After an impartial hearing Cranfield was condemned to loss of all his places, to a fine of fifty thousand pounds, and to imprisonment for life.

War being voted, Cranfield ruined, and supplies obtained, the session was prorogued. The Prince and Duke seemed crowned with success. Their version of events had been received ; the Spaniards had been buffeted and sent away ; a large supply had been obtained. The price they paid for these advantages seemed small ; a word, a smile, a nod ; the word a breath, the smile a leer, the nod a snare. Their policy of deception was complete ; and Charles was only frightened lest the Parliament he had tricked so well should press him yet more warmly not to curse them with a Papist Queen.

Cranfield was lodged and left in the Bloody tower. On seeing the gates close on him people said, "In future ages men will wonder how my Lord St. Albans could have fallen, how my Lord of Middlesex could have risen."





CHAPTER XXIII.

DIGBY, EARL OF BRISTOL.

THE closing years of James the First found Apsley still Lieutenant of the Tower. Sir Allan, now a staid and stately gentleman, with brood of youngsters in the garden, had been wild and wayward in his youth; a lad who ran away from school, who diced away his money, and when all was gone, went out to Cadiz and to Dublin, where he learned the art of war, and married a rich widow, and became a knight. A second and a third wife blessed his love; the third of whom, a sister of Sir Edward Villiers' lady, brought him into close relations with the court. Through Buckingham he had got the Lieutenant's place; for which he paid no less than twenty-five hundred pounds. His second and his third wives brought him children, nine of whom lived in the Tower; and as the kind old soldier kept in his house the offspring of his Irish love by her former lord, the grim old pile was gladdened with their happy faces and their joyous shouts. One of the girls was Lucy Apsley, dear to all readers as the future wife of Colonel Hutchinson, the purest and bravest soldier in a camp where most of the men were brave and pure. A picture, lightly touched and truly drawn, is left to us by Lucy of that household in the Tower. We see, in her fair page, as in a glass, the grave old warrior, stiff and bronzed with time; the

sweet young wife and mother, not yet twenty-five years old; the brood of youngsters, children of three several wives, now romping on the green, now wending softly to St. Peter's Church. Lucy herself was born in the Lieutenant's house. Her mother, a St. John of Lydyard, was not eighteen when she came to live in the Tower, and take a woman's part, as the Lieutenant's wife, in ministering to so many noble griefs. The Wizard Earl was lodging in the Martin tower; the Countess of Shrewsbury lay in the Queen's lodgings; Cormac O'Neil, and his little nephew Con, were on the northern wall; Raleigh was toiling in the Garden House. "She was a mother to the prisoners," says her daughter; going into their cells, providing them with broths and cordials, brightening up their rooms, and shedding by her beauty and her tenderness a sunshine in that shady place. She had to receive into her house a line of guests; the wicked Lady Somerset, the cunning Arundel, the dashing Oxford, the illustrious Bacon; but the man to whom she owed the most was Raleigh, who had taught this girlish matron how to blend her simples, how to tend her sick, and make herself a comfort to the poor.

Her guests continued to arrive.

When Charles and Villiers left Madrid, the match, and all that turned upon the match, had fallen under Digby's care; and this diplomatist, though grieved to find his house of cards come down, was of opinion that his house of cards might still be raised again. A check provokes strong men to put out strength.

As an ambassador, Digby had a great respect for embassies; and being a master of his art, as Gondomar was a master of his art, he kept in his pay a host of spies, of under-secretaries, and of councillors' wives; and through such means as intercepted letters and clandestine copies of public-writs, he was hardly a day behind Olivares in his knowledge of what was being said and done at the Spanish court. All letters of

importance passed beneath his eye; all secrets were repeated in his ear. Keys to the newest cyphers were in his desk, and confidential passages from Gondomar's despatches hardly reached the King of Spain ere copies of them were in Digby's hands. Through these dark channels he had made—some years ago—his great discovery of the pensions paid to Cecil, Monson, Lady Suffolk, and their kin; and time had not yet filched the cunning of discovery from his brain. Yet he was popular in Spain; for in his mind and manner Digby was an old Castilian don. He put his trust in bribes; he knew the price of every clerk; and if he had been left to work alone, he would have raised once more his ruined pile of cards.

That what the Prince and Duke had tumbled over in his presence was a house of cards, he knew, and long had known. Some years ago he had discovered from a stolen paper that the court of Spain was playing with his master a game for time. He smiled, and watched them play. He thought the match was useful to his country, and he thought that Philip could be forced by skilful playing to accept in earnest what he had proposed in guile.

That James and Charles both wished his treaty to proceed he had no doubt, and that his treaty had been put in peril by the Duke he also had no doubt. The question was, how far the King would go to gain an end he passionately desired? Would he break with Villiers? Could the Duke be driven from power? If so, the match might still be made. To learn the King's true mind he must repair to London, and he wrote to James for leave of absence from his post.

Aware of what was pending in Madrid, and strong in his alliance with the popular leaders, Buckingham took his measures boldly. Some of the messengers sent to Spain were told to spread reports that Digby was recalled, disgraced, and lost. The Duke, they were to say, had turned against him; he was charged

with treason; he might find himself a prisoner; he would certainly not return to Spain.

Much anger was excited in the Spanish court, and the expression of this anger wrought him harm. Philip, who sent for him to the palace, offered him a home in Spain, and Olivares laid a sheet of paper on his table, telling him he was authorized by the King to bid him fill it up—condé, duque, grandee of the highest class; senator, governor; any title, any office; he had but to ask and have, if only he preferred to end his days in Spain. Duque de Infantado was suggested as a title he might like; and when the English nobleman put aside these courtesies with a smile of thanks, the minister asked him whether some protection could not be extended to him on his reaching home?

Those words made Digby start. Protection from a foreigner to an English peer on English soil! The question stung him to the quick. Was he a minister of Spain? If not, why should he need protection from an alien prince? How could he take such courtesies? These offers were an insult. He must go at once; for he would rather die in London than remain a grandee of the highest class in Spain.

When Digby went to take his leave, the King drew off a ring, and placed it for remembrance on his finger. Every one who saw the monarch marvelled, for an act of courtesy so personal and gracious was a thing unknown in that frigid court. That finger-ring, as Digby found, was not a fairy gift to ward off evil days.

On crossing into France, he heard that Villiers, who was riding high and safe in favour, would not suffer him to approach White Hall! Vague rumours met him on the road; he was accused of this and that; all meaning, as he guessed from hint and shrug, that he was marked like Cranfield, for a scapegoat, to be cursed and driven into the Tower. On reaching Calais he was sure; for no one in that port of passage would convey him to the other side. A spotted man,

the skippers whom he sent for shook their heads. They had their orders from the Navy Board. In vain he urged his public mission and produced the King's recall. He could not pass in a royal ship; and an ambassador, returning to his court on leave, was forced to cross the Channel in an open boat. On coming into Dover he was seized, conveyed to London, and committed to the Tower.

Digby was the victim of a hundred falsehoods and a single fact. One fault, apart from his devotion to the match, had set men's tongues against him, and prepared them for his fall:—his having taken Sherborne House from Raleigh's orphans, as a royal gift from James. That house was laden with a curse, and every owner of it, not a churchman, was by heavenly wrath to suffer in his temporal and eternal hopes.

A Norman knight, named Osmund de Seez, who sheathed a warrior's sword to seize a pastor's staff, was said to have given these noble uplands to the bishop's see, accompanied by a monkish curse on such as should withdraw them from the care of God and Holy Church. This Osmund came to be a saint, and every sinner who assumed his lands was withered from the earth like grass licked up by fire. King Stephen took them, and he fell. King Henry would not add them to his crown. The Montagus, who held them next, were cut off, root and branch. One earl was killed by a mob, another slain in war; and till these lands fell back to Holy Church the Montagus found no peace on earth. For ages they remained in pious hands, until the Lord Protector Somerset, caring for neither saint nor devil, seized them to his use, and lost his head. The next lay-lord was Raleigh, who removed the house to another spot; but could not by his building and his planting lift the curse. On Raleigh's fall they passed to young Prince Henry, who was hardly in possession ere he died. Then Carr obtained them, and was cast into the Tower. No

man, it seemed, could enter Sherborne and defy St. Osmund's spell. But public feeling, while it clothed itself in legends, called for blight and murrain to descend on all who snatched the widow's portion and the orphan's bread. The King had wished to give these lands to Villiers, but the young comedian would not risk both public censure and the wrath of Heaven. When Digby was rewarded for his service with a peerage, Sherborne House and Park were given to him by the King. For Digby laughed at legends, and he took those uplands, with the curse upon their smiling face.

If Heaven forgot St. Osmund's words, England was mindful of Lady Raleigh's claims. This property was her only stay; and Digby, as the spoiler of her children, was pursued with execrations deep and loud. When Digby fell into disgrace, the taverns and exchanges rang with brave hurrahs. Men heard with no surprise, no pity, that this spoiler of the widow was committed to the Tower. Yet Buckingham was not flint, and, after some few weeks of trouble, Digby was allowed to quit his room in the Lieutenant's house, and ride away to Sherborne; followed, like the scapegoat, by a nation's curse.





CHAPTER XXIV.

TURN OF FORTUNE.

WHEN Charles succeeded to his throne, the world was all at Buckingham's feet; not only in the Tiltyard, in the closet, in the Park, but in the Church, the Council, and the courts of law. The new King was as much his creature as the old had been. By bringing on the Gallic match he won the Queen of England and the Queen of France. To Charles he was all in all; so far as any one could be all in all to Charles. He held the royal ear, he moved the royal pen. Through him, and only through him, could the King be reached; could titles, grants, monopolies, commands, be got. A crowd was always at his gate. Proud lords attended on his getting up; fine ladies hung about his walks and drives. Good bishops waited patiently for a smile, and judges in their ermine paled before his frown.

All officers of state were made, unmade, remade by him. He struck down Williams at a blow, and set up Coventry in his place. That pluralist had lost his favour, and his services in "the policy of deception" could not save him. Laud, so welcome to all Catholics, was become the Duke's adviser; for the three great women whom he wished to please were Catholics—his wife, his mother, and his queen. Williams, once again at fault, was saucy to his Grace. "I mean to stand on my own legs," he said. "If that be so," replied his

Grace, "look you stand fast." Williams was forbidden to appear at Council and to use the Seal. On finding that his fall was near, he begged the King to send some lord of his Council to receive the Seals. But Charles would not allow him so much grace. Four peers, the greatest in this realm, had been appointed to wait on Bacon and receive the Seals from him. But Williams was not Bacon, and the King sent Suckling, his Comptroller of the Household, who discharged his errand rudely, telling the fallen Lord-Keeper that his disgrace was due to his unthankfulness to the Duke! When Coventry showed a little spirit, he was promptly warned. "Who made you Lord-Keeper?" "The King," said Coventry, starting back. "'Tis false!" exclaimed the Duke; "I made you; and you shall find that I who made you can and will unmake."

The Church was no less subject to his will. Bishops and primates rose and fell as he inclined; and when the venerable Abbott, strong in learning and in popularity, refused to be his vassal, Buckingham had the insolence to set a mean dependant on to say in public that his Grace the Duke would drive his Grace the Primate from his throne. "I own no master save the King," said Abbott; but the Duke thought otherwise, though he had to bide his time. Laud, now advanced from his poor Welsh see to the Chapel Royal and the diocese of Bath and Wells, assisted in the room of Williams at the coronation, took his seat on the Privy Council, acted as confessor to the Duke, who meant him to succeed the Primate when the primacy should fail. Abbott was old and sickly, worn with gout and stone, confined to his bed at Croydon, and unable to attend the court. An accident had deprived him, for a moment, of such feeble strength as sickness left him. Shooting at a buck, he shot a man. "It might have happened to an angel," said the poor old King; but Charles was of another mind; and those who hated the Archbishop for his English views declared that

one who had stained his hands with blood, however spilled, could not officiate in the Church.

And yet, when Fortune seemed to smile on Villiers most, her face was darkening into sudden storm. All England was awaking from her sleep; the truth was coming out like dawn. Such men as felt no wish to mingle in the fray and take their chance of falling with the Duke—it might be, with the King—were looking carefully to their nests. With Yorkshire prudence, Calvert had sold his place of Secretary for six thousand pounds and the Irish barony of Baltimore; a barony which he was free either to keep or sell. He kept it, giving the Irish name of Baltimore to the chief town of his Catholic plantation, now removed from Newfoundland to the Chesapeake; and called by him Maryland, in honour of the young French Queen. Conway had secured himself a seat in the Upper House. Sir Henry Marten was become “a popular man,” a friend of Eliot, and a member for the borough of St. Germans. Some of the Undertakers failed to keep their seats, and Digges and Phelips were burning to assail the court. Even Digby was uneasy in his spell-bound cage. When he was liberated from the Tower, it was understood by Buckingham that he was to live at Sherborne and to hold his tongue. But Digby could not hold his tongue. A man of parts, who lived behind the scenes, and knew a hundred things which people yearned to know, was always tempted to deny his bond. Some facts came out. A world, which Williams would no longer lead astray, began to hear of the Escorial oath, of Charles's letter to Pope Gregory, of the proxy left in Digby's hands. The days of deception were about to close. The public were to learn the worst, and then . . . no man could say what then!

On all sides there was failure to atone. The Duke had ordered Laud—at least Laud wrote so—to prepare for changes in the Church, by drawing up a list

of clergymen for Charles's use, in which the Puritans were to be marked with a letter P, the Orthodox with a letter O. These "Puritans" were the English pastors who desired a simple form of worship and a popular spirit in the Church; these "Orthodox" were the Romanizers who desired a gorgeous ritual, a celibate clergy, and a priestly spirit in the Church. Laud's Puritans were to be crushed, his Orthodox clergy to be set on high. These doings brought no peace to England and to Charles.

Some show of carrying on the war for which they had got supplies was made by King and Duke. A fleet was sent to sea; a dozen regiments were put on board; but fleet and troops returned from Spain without having struck a blow; the men declaring that their officers would not fight. The spells of Calvert lay upon the royal fleet.

Nor had the Duke less cause for worry in his family than in his public place. His wife's reversion to her Church had hurt him much, and Charles was not quite blind to this discredit of his friend; but blame fell far more heavily on his mother than on his wife. The Parent was an Anglican by birth; and after all that had been done for her by James, her falling from the gospel was an insult to the Crown. Her faith was not yet fixed, and neither Laud nor Fisher could be sure of her. When told that she must either give up court or give up mass, she tossed her nose into the sky. When told that if she went to church and took the bread and wine, she would be paid two thousand pounds, she instantly obeyed the call. One day "Pope" Laud was all in all; next morning Father Fisher had regained his rule. Cupidity completed what apostasy commenced. A chain which had belonged to Anne was given by Charles to his kinswoman, the Duchess of Lennox, and hung upon her neck with his own royal hands. The Parent was annoyed. If costly chains were to be given away, she thought her-

self the lady of all others to receive such gifts; and with a greed and impudence not easy of belief, she sent an officer to the Duchess to demand the chain. His Majesty, this officer was to say, desired to have his chain again; he would replace it to the Duchess by some other gift; but in the meantime she must send it back. Amazed and hurt, the Duchess asked this messenger if he himself had heard the King say that? No, said the man; he brought his message from the Countess of Buckingham; the Countess, he supposed, had heard it from the King. "Then tell her," said the Duchess, "that I shall not so dishonour the prince who brought it as to suffer it to be carried back by any other hand than his or than my own."

His Parent quarrelled with his wife, and with his wife's proud kinsfolk. She had feuds with Lady Rutland and with Lady Hatton. Pride and greed were her besetting sins. Her pride embroiled her with the Queen, from whom she strove, supported by her son, to exact the courtesies of an equal. Once, when Henrietta was too busy to return a call, the Duke intruded into her room and went so far as to exclaim, "You shall repent it." Henri's daughter was not used to threats; she gave him word for word; and when she turned upon him in her anger, he was fool enough to bawl, "There have been Queens in England who have lost their heads." The Parent made him wretched, much as she had made Sir Thomas wretched. Few of her ventures had been crowned with true success. She and her husband had to live apart. George had been blighted by his marriage. Susan was not happy in her lot; and Kit was miserable; and John was mad.

No scandals of that scandalous time had startled London more than the affairs of Viscount Purbeck and Frances Coke. For Frances made the fool a perfectly wicked wife. She ran away from him; she dressed in male attire; she strutted in the Park with sword and plume; she roystered with her gallants in St. Paul's.

She made a compact with his "devil"—that Dr. Lamb who had striven, before their marriage, to uncloud her husband's wits with potions and enchantments; and this rogue supplied her, at a price, with philtres, sorceries, and magic dolls; all which she tried, not only on her husband, but the Duke. When Villiers quarrelled with the Howard family, she cast her eyes on Robert, one of the sons of Lady Suffolk, and induced that flighty youth to fall in love. When Lamb was tried at the Court of King's Bench for rape, she drove to see him in his prison; going to him openly, to seek his help. No long time afterwards she became a mother; and, as every one knew that her child was not Lord Purbeck's son, the question of his peerage and the right of his succession rose. Poor Purbeck, hot with shame, then offered, as a lesser evil, to adopt her child; but Lady Purbeck, in her wicked temper, swore that the boy was young Sir Robert's boy. This matron of twenty-three astounded Lady Suffolk, schooled as she was in every form of vice; and Lady Suffolk, fearing the consequences of such female frankness on her son, threw out some hints that Robert, from his state of health, could not have been the father of that starless child.

Committed to the custody of Sir Edward Barkham, Alderman of Cheape, who took her most reluctantly into his house, Lady Purbeck was carried by that magistrate to Serjeants' Inn, where the Lord Chief Justice and the Judges were attending to attest her story. "What have you old cuckolds to say to me?" was Lady Purbeck's greeting. Ley replied, that she was charged with using demoniacal charms upon her husband and the Duke. The facts, he told her, were confessed by her accomplice, Dr. Lamb. And what he said was true. That necromancer, in his eagerness to save his neck, had turned on his adopted "daughter," and, believing he should please the Duke, confessed the catalogue of her crimes. She laughed at Lamb,

and mocked at Ley. The Lord Chief Justice dared not recommend his patron to proceed against her in a criminal court for witchcraft, since the proof of her offence would lie with Dr. Lamb; a wretch, who was not only known as the Duke's "devil," but was lying under sentence of death for rape. Buckingham had to rest content with trying her in a spiritual court. Sir Robert Howard, as a member of the House of Commons, would not plead; and when the Duke complained of him, Sir Robert sent a friend to tell him that his sword was of such and such a length. Buckingham would not fight. The spiritual court made haste to satisfy his anger. Howard was excommunicated from a church of which he was not a member. Lady Purbeck was condemned to stand—a modern Jane Shore—in a white sheet, at morning service, in the doorway of Savoy Church!

Purbeck was such a fool that, even after Lamb's incantations and confessions, he was willing to receive his wife. His Parent and his ducal brother wished him to be divorced; he would not hear of such a thing. He would have lived with Lady Purbeck, even with Sir Robert in the house. The family got sick of him at last; they sent him beyond the sea; and in a short time heard, without surprise, that his intellect was completely wrecked.





CHAPTER XXV.

ELIOT ELOQUENT.

DOWN with the Duke! was heard on every side. His sorcerer Lamb, condemned for rape, received a royal pardon, and was now at large; but popular fury rose against him, as it rose against his patron; and this fury of the people was distinguished by a new and ominous cry for blood.

“Who rules the King? The Duke. Who rules the Duke? The Devil.” Such were the terms of a placard which was one day posted on the City gates. The devil was Dr. Lamb; and these three names—of Charles, of Villiers, and of Lamb,—were daily linked together in the popular cries, the popular placards, and the popular songs.

One Samuel Turner, a lady's doctor, serving as a member for Shaftesbury, sparkled into momentary fame. This doctor, whom fine ladies paid and patronised for feeble jokes, got up in his place and asked six questions, on the ground of public fame:—
(1) Whether the fact of Buckingham being Lord Admiral had not caused the loss of our royalty in the Narrow Seas? (2) Whether the unreasonable gifts to him and his family had not caused the crown to be so poor? (3) Whether the many offices held by him and by his kin were not the cause of bad government? (4) Whether his own connivance, and the fact of his

mother and his father-in-law being Papists, were not the support of recusants in general? (5) Whether the sale of honours, offices, and places in both law and church, was not by him, and for his profit? (6) Whether he, by staying at home, and giving wrong orders, had not caused the recent losses by sea and land? A sudden tumult filled the House. "Such words," the courtiers yelled, "were treason. Who had said these things in public?" Turner, much surprised at the effect of what he seemed to have thought a harmless sarcasm, answered that he took them up from common rumour. "Rumour!" cried the courtiers, "is no ground to go on." But much stronger men than Turner sprang into the front. Wentworth, Lyttleton, and Noy, averred that public fame was a sufficient accuser; and Eliot, who had probably drawn the queries put by Turner, cited the case of William de la Pole, the first Duke of Suffolk, in the reign of Henry the Sixth, in support of the doctrine that a Duke might be accused by public fame, and censured by the House of Commons. Eliot was become the leader of debate; and in a splendid piece of historical criticism turned the weapon of Impeachment on the Duke.

Eliot had tried to save him; tried at Oxford, tried again in London; not by covering his public crimes, but by withdrawing him to that popular ground which he had occupied in their younger days. But neither Charles nor Villiers could perceive the danger yet; although events occurred which would have startled men less blind. Arundel, with a view to the restoration of his ducal honours, had contrived a union of his eldest son, Henry Lord Maltravers, with the Lady Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Esmé, Duke of Lennox. Esmé was the King's cousin, and his daughter was a member of the reigning house. To marry her without the King's consent was an offence of high presumption and suspicion. Were they never to have done with

these ambitious projects of the Howard family? Charles, in his passion, caused the offenders to be seized while parliament was sitting. Lord and Lady Maltravers were confined in Lambeth, Lord and Lady Arundel in the Tower—illegally, as Charles and his ministers were soon to learn. Bishop Williams, whom the Duke had driven from place, got up in the house of Peers, and bade the Lords take notice of an empty seat. It was Lord Arundel's seat; that nobleman was absent; where was he? Arrested—in the Tower! How could a lord of Parliament, not yet condemned by judgment of his peers, be absent from his place? It was a question of their right; and they would do no business until Arundel should be there. The King got angry, but the peers were firm; and after three months had been lost in quarrels, Charles had to yield, and Arundel came back with laurels on his brow.

Lamb came, as it was thought, to Buckingham's help, by diabolical means. When this debate was high, the members were excited by a sudden noise outside, and, running to their windows, saw a marvellous sight. A mist lay thick upon the Thames; the waters boiled and rushed; and out of them arose a circular mass of storm, which lashed against the stairs, the walls, and bulwarks of York House. It lashed and roared in vain; and then, to the surprise of all beholders, rose from the earth, like smoke ascending from a fire, and spread and lost itself in the higher air. When all this tempest cleared away, the sorcerer himself was noticed on the river in a boat—the master-spirit at his unholy spells.

Two years of silence wore out Digby's patience, and, while Arundel was lying in the Tower a prisoner, Digby asked permission from his peers to charge the Duke of Buckingham with high crimes and misdemeanours. The Duke retorted through Sir Robert Heath, Attorney-General, with a counter-charge of treason against Digby. But the peers, instead of

siding with his Grace, resolved that both these charges should be heard.

Digby made out his case; Villiers broke down completely; and the King was so much vexed, that he committed Digby to the Tower a second time.

But sending Digby to the Tower could not undo the work that he had done. Some portion of the truth was told; and now the voice of England swelled into one earnest cry. Had Villiers worked with Gondomar for the Prince's journey into Spain, in order to his conversion? Had the Duke, when acting for the Prince as an ambassador, yielded to the Spaniards on the point of faith? Eliot gave such voice to this indignant cry, as England had till then but rarely heard. He pointed to the Duke; he pointed to his creature Laud. A secret committee, of which Eliot, Granville, Selden, Pym, and Digges, were members, met with locked doors, to draw up articles of impeachment against the Duke. These articles were accepted by the House, and Eliot was appointed to conclude the evidence and demand a judgment from the peers. The speech then made by Eliot is the highest flight of eloquent denunciation in the English tongue. He likened Buckingham to Sejanus. He referred to his pride, his lust, his avarice, his revenge. "My lords," he ended, "I have done. You see the man!"

The King, who had been to the House, to read some foolish words set down for him by Laud, and gone away, returned on hearing of this speech; a speech to shake the court, as it afterwards shook the world. "He means me for Tiberius," murmured Charles; and Charles for once had not deceived himself.

While Charles was speaking to the Lords, a royal officer strode down to the House of Commons, called out Digges and Eliot to the lobby, seized them by force as prisoners, put them into a barge, and carried them to the Tower.

Some time elapsed ere this arrest was known to the other members; but when Eliot had been gone some time, inquiries were commenced; and then a whisper spread along the benches that their eloquent brother had been flung into that ominous cell in which the Princes had been slain. They instantly cried "*Rise!*" Pym tried to soothe the members; but they answered, "*Rise!*" No other cry was heard but—"*Rise!—Rise!*" They rose until next day. A stupor seemed to seize all minds. Men stood in groups, without a word being said. All cheeks were pale, all faces sad. Next day, the Speaker, rising in his chair, was met by two stern words—"*Sit down!*" He rose again. "*Sit down!*" the members cried. In vain Finch begged them to proceed. "No business till this wrong has been set right." They sat in silence; sat in silence long. At length, Sir Dudley Carlton, now Vice-Chamberlain, rose to speak, and what he said compelled the House to listen; for he told them, as a man who knew court secrets, what, in case of their disputing with the King and Duke, they had to dread. All other countries once had Parliaments; the Kings of these countries had put them down. The same, he said, would come to pass in England if they vexed the King.

Digges, who had been arrested by mistake, was freed next day; but Eliot was too great and grave an enemy to release. His words were flying over England like a cry of war; and every artifice that Coventry and his lawyers could invent, was used to draw him deeper in the toils. They threw him into Overbury's cell. Sir Randall Crewe, Chief Justice, and Sir Robert Heath, Attorney-General, went to the Tower, and in the council-room of Apsley's house, they questioned Eliot on a dozen points. With whom had he talked of Kings being forced to yield? With none. With whom had he talked about deposing Kings? With none. From whom had he got his

precedent in the reign of Richard the Second? From Raleigh's "Dialogues between a Councillor and Justice of the Peace." Who gave him a treatise on depriving Kings? No one. What speeches had he held with the deputies from Rochelle? No speeches. Was he at Gray's Inn on Sunday, who were his companions there, and what had they said? He had not been at Gray's Inn for seven years. What conference had he held with foreign agents? None. The King's Attorney was completely foiled. This prisoner in the Tower had nothing to conceal, and little to explain. The case was one of violated law; and Charles had just been warned what comes of violated law by his defeat in the Upper House. No burgess could be legally arrested while a Parliament was sitting, save for high treason; and as nothing tending towards a charge of treason could be found against Eliot, Charles and the Duke were forced, reluctantly, to order his discharge.

Buckingham, now more firmly pressed by his impeachers, made his answer in a form set down by Laud and Hyde. That answer raised a tempest in the Commons; and the King, who swore he would never abandon George, dissolved the House. In future, he would reign alone; he and his friend; with their adviser, Laud.

Eliot, as their foremost enemy, was involved in suits about his patent of Vice-Admiral. A dirty dog, named Bagg, was set to worry him; and when every other means of ruining him had failed, he was arrested on a frivolous charge, confined in the Gate-house, and removed from his command in the western ports.

The Duke now ruled alone; assisted in his private hours by the advice of Laud and Lamb. He tried a loan; but no one, save the courtiers, were disposed to lend. Lords Warwick, Essex, Say, Clare, Lincoln, Bolingbroke, declined on public grounds to lend their money; a refusal that was promptly followed up in

every shire. The question was debated in the King's own presence, whether these six lords should not be sent, as an example, to the Tower? The Council was divided in opinion, and the lords were saved by a majority of two. Williams—who would not lend—was not so lucky as the temporal peers. The Duke was vexed with him on other grounds, and most of all for rescuing Arundel from his grasp. On a suspicion of his having spoken in his see against the loan, the pluralist was taken in the country, brought to London, and committed to the Tower.

Abbott, the Lord Primate, was suspended in his office for refusing to license a sermon preached by Sibthorp, one of Laud's divines, affirming that a Christian man was bound to submit in all things to his prince. Sibthorp contended that a good Christian was bound to lend the King his money; and the Primate's refusal of his license was regarded as a condemnation of the loan.

But days of strife were not in Buckingham's mood. He wanted plays, masques, dances, feasts, and cock-fights. To receive the King and Queen at Chelsea House; to lounge in the Tilt-yard with a pretty woman; to compare the books of fashion and invent new styles of dress; to show the Doge's minister how to bait a lion; to confer with Lamb about his imps and stars; to read the last new sonnet in his praise:—all these were his delights; not struggles, warrants, and impeachments; racks, chains, courts of justice, and the headsman's axe.

A loan having failed him, Villiers thought of war. Success in war would cover up all sins; and, as the country clamoured for an expedition to Rochelle, he raised an army and equipped a fleet. A hundred vessels sailed from Portsmouth; but the Huguenots, who knew their man, refused him leave to come into their port. They told him he must fight elsewhere. He landed on the Isle of Oleron, and failed.

On his return to England, broken and disgraced, he was received with murmurs, not unmixed with threats. A mob surrounded York House gates, and ominous cries were heard through windows in White Hall. "A Parliament!" was shouted in every street, in every town; and Charles, in doubt and debt on every side, was fain to hearken to these cries, to sign the writs for new elections and to order the liberation of his prisoners.

Eliot left the Gate-house; Digby and Williams left the Tower. Yet Charles, though calling up these babblers, would not trust them for a day; and when they met again, he meant to be their master, not in name and courtesy, but in force and fact. In Paris he had seen the King surrounded by a foreign guard. In France he heard that parliaments had been reduced into obedience by that King, who held his state by means of a Swiss and Scottish guard. He, too, would have a foreign guard, and by that foreign guard would keep unruly souls in order. Conway was empowered by Charles to send out thirty thousand pounds to Colonel Dalbier and Colonel Balfour, two freelances, then in Flanders, out of work, to purchase arms and horses for this guard. The mercenary force was to consist of a thousand cavalry, five hundred foot. With such an army at his back, the King felt certain that the Parliament of England might become a Parliament of France.

This foreign guard was not yet raised when Parliament met, and under Eliot's inspiration framed that great Remonstrance, in which Bishop Laud was denounced as unsound in faith, and the Duke of Buckingham was delivered, as an enemy of the kingdom, to his frightful doom.



CHAPTER XXVI.

FELTON'S KNIFE.

THE Duke had grown too great to live. All passions swayed against him; passions noble and legitimate, passions ignoble and illegitimate; from those of men who looked to crush him by a public judgment of his peers, to those of men who edged against him an assassin's knife.

A change was creeping on him day by day; and every new year found him a richer and baser man. His charm of manner was the last to go; but charm of manner means some goodness of the heart; and perfect style is never to be kept by men of selfish minds. The generous mood was gone. A youth who had been soft with men, was now becoming harsh with women; and a keen observer noticed, as a sign of fallen nature, that this son of a country knight would keep great ladies waiting in his ante-room while he sat playing with his dogs.

In dealing with the Howards he had caught some portion of their greed. The dross began to stick, the stain began to sink. From them he heard what profits could be made in such a place as his; how every favour could be sold for money; and how easily the buyers of his favour could be cheated of their due. From them he learned to take rich presents, and to mock the dupes who brought them when it served him

to refuse his pledge. In brief, he was become a moral wreck.

His fortunes would have turned a wiser and an older head. He held the highest rank his sovereign could confer. He wore the Garter; he was Master of the Horse; he was a Privy Councillor; he was Chief Justice in Eyre, both north and south of Trent; he was Steward of Hampton Court; he was Lord Lieutenant of Bucks; he was Constable of Windsor Castle; he was Chancellor of Cambridge; he was Lord High Admiral; he was General of the Forces; he was Constable of Dover; he was Warden of the Cinque Ports. His kinsmen, near and distant, were ennobled. John, his elder brother, was Viscount Purbeck; Kit, his younger brother, was Earl of Anglesea; his mother was a Countess in her own right; his sister's husband was created Earl of Denbigh. All his kindred were advanced to honour. Thomas Beaumont was made a baronet; John Butler, who had married his half-sister, Bess, was made a baronet and peer; William, his elder half-brother, was made a baronet; and Sir Edward, the younger, just escaped a coronet by his untimely death.

Clerks and attorneys had been raised to the peerage as a recompense for marrying his kith and kin. Cranfield was made Earl of Middlesex for wedding Anne Brett; Ley was made Earl of Marlborough for wedding Jane Butler. Montagu, who gave his son Edward (Cromwell's master in the art of war) in marriage to Susan Hill, the Duke's kinswoman, received as his reward the Earldom of Manchester. Compton, who gave his son, Sir Spencer, in marriage to Mary Beaumont, the Duke's cousin, received as his reward the Earldom of Northampton. Richardson, who married Elizabeth Ashburnham, the Duke's aunt, was raised to the bench as Lord Chief Justice; and his wife was made a baroness of Scotland, with the title of Lady Cramond, and remainder to his eldest son.

Some leaders in the new Parliament—Eliot, Pym, Coke, Selden, and some others—met at Sir Robert Cotton's house; and, after much debate, resolved to put off the Impeachment, as a personal matter, and proceed to frame and pass a Bill of Rights. This Bill was not to raise new claims, but only to assert and classify the ancient liberties of this Commonwealth. The King, alarmed by such a movement of the leaders, turned for counsel to a man whom he disliked. Williams had helped him once in hour of need; and, threatened with a Bill of Rights, he sent for Williams to his closet, and consulted him again. Williams, having kissed the royal hands, spoke privately with the Duke. He took upon himself to see and manage those who were engaged upon this Bill of Rights. Like Charles, "Pope" Laud was for a policy of resistance; meeting the Bill at once, and throwing it out by a majority of votes; but Williams, not being able to count those votes, and not being sure they would suffice to throw it out, proposed to win his game by wit and not by force. His new plan, like his old plan, was a policy of deceit. He was never to be seen at court; he was to pass for a man disgraced; he was to court the people and their leaders; he was to gain the name of an earnest advocate for this Bill of Rights; and when the moment came, he was to use the power this advocacy gave him, to emasculate the Bill. All this was done with signal guile. The Commons trusted him; the Peers affected to regard him as a "popular" man; and when the Bill came up, he took on all great points the views expressed by Eliot, Coke, and Pym. In this sense only he pretended to suggest his saving clause. "We present this our humble petition to your Majesty, with the care not only of preserving our own liberties, but with due regard to leave entire that sovereign power wherewith your Majesty is trusted for the protection, safety, and happiness of the people," were the words he asked per-

mission to insert; a phrase which gave away the very liberties it affected to preserve! His cunning spent itself in vain. "Leave him a sovereign power!" cried Alford, when this clause was read in the House of Commons; "how can we leave him that which he never had?" "We ask for no new thing," said Wentworth; "and from this petition we will not recede, in either whole or part." The Bishop's cunning was defeated, and the House struck out his "saving clause."

At once the King showed fight. The House of Lords, in which he had enlarged his party by creating some new peers, opposed the Commons; and the war of motions, conferences, and intrigues, led on to two events—a proud denunciation of the Duke by Eliot as the Great Delinquent, and the last apostasy of Wentworth from the popular cause.

Never had Eliot reached such height and force of eloquence as he now attained. His speech was like a call to judgment, and a knell of doom. Adopted, printed, scattered through the land, this speech, and the Remonstrance founded on it, raised the whole country like a cry of war. To save his ministry the King dissolved. He caused proposals to be made to Wentworth, who had proved in these debates, but too abundantly, his power to make and mar; and Wentworth, even while the Bill of Rights was still unvoted, passed over from the popular to the royal side. "I have left you," he observed to Pym. "So I perceive," replied that sturdy tribune; "but *we* shall never leave you, so long as you have a head on your shoulders." It was coming fast to heads! "Pope Laud" might yet be saved for years, but neither dissolution nor concession would avail the Duke. All arms were raised against him, and the only question was the time and manner of his fall. Most people wished the Great Delinquent to be fairly tried, decorously condemned, and publicly put to death. But these solemnities were

not to be. The golden upstart was to perish, not like Dudley, not like Essex, with the pomps and sceneries of a soldier's death, but like a knave who is mobbed and murdered in a mutinous camp.

A warning came to him, when Lamb, his "devil," was set upon and killed in the public street. This rogue was leaving the Fortune play-house for a tavern in the City, when a mob of 'prentice lads perceived him, and began to hoot and yell. The necromancer fled before them, running towards Cheapside; the lads ran after him, shouting, "Witch, witch! Devil, devil!" Lamb met some sailors, whom he paid to thrash these lads. A battle opened, and the sailors, few in number, ran. The City blood was up; the lads now pelted Lamb with stones, and drove him, seeking shelter, to the Windmill public-house; a tavern in Old Jewry, where the vintner took him in. Such shelter could not save the necromancer now. The Windmill was surrounded, back and front; the mob was going to pull it down; and then, to save his house, the landlord tossed his "devil" into the street. Lamb got into a second door; but followed by the mob, he was again expelled. Once more he darted from his foes; once more he flew into an open house; once more he was dragged out by force. A thousand hands were on him. "Where is your master, devil?" they exclaimed; "if he were here, we would do as much for him." No help was given to Lamb by man or maid; all decent people fled from him; and his tormentors left him on the ground for dead. Conveyed into the Compter prison, he was laid upon a pallet, where he bled to death. Folk said that night in every street, "The devil is dead."

On that same night, the Duke's portrait, hanging in the obsequious Court of High Commission, tumbled from the wall!

Too angry to be wise, the King sent messengers to the Mansion House, in which he threatened to withdraw the City charters, as a punishment for this public

crime. "Let the Duke look to it, or he will be served as his doctor was served," a second warning ran. More anger brought fresh threats from Charles; and these again were answered by a third prophetic note upon the City gates:

"Let Charles and George do what they can,
Yet George shall die like Doctor Lamb."

And in a loose sense, so it was to be.

All other means of getting on being spent, the Duke resolved to win back popular support by making show of war. Rochelle was calling to her English friends for help, and M. de Soubise, the Duc de Fontenoy, was now in England, pressing for support. A fleet was therefore gathered in the Thames, an army mustered in Gosport and Farnham, on pretence of going to her relief. The Duke had no design to fight; it is not certain that he meant to sail. King Charles cared little for the Huguenots; but they were useful to him; and should their city fall, as he was sure it must, he was prepared to put on mourning for the loss. What James had suffered for Ostend, his son could suffer for Rochelle!

The army and the fleet were in a higher mood. They wished to fight the Cardinal Richelieu, as their sires had fought the Cardinal Albrecht. Copies of the Remonstrance, and reports of Eliot's speech, were passed from hand to hand, from lip to lip throughout the fleets and camps. "An Enemy of the Kingdom" was to lead them on. Could such a man be trusted with their lives? They feared, too, that the Duke had some base motive for this show of war. Not many of the troops were armed; and few of them had shoes and socks! A troop of Irish—wild and lawless kernes—had come into the country, and were pillaging the farmsteads night and day. These kernes were part of that foreign guard which Charles was anxious to enlist; and, from their first appearance in the Hampshire lanes, they acted more like enemies in a conquered

country, than like soldiers of the crown. Milk-maids and plough-boys set upon them; farmers refused to lodge them; and the King was driven to interpose. On all sides jealousy and strife broke out. At Gosport, some of the soldiers mutinied; a fight ensued; and four of the men were killed. Great numbers of arrests were made. A regiment on the march through Botley came to blows with the townfolk, one of whom they slew, and many of whom they hurt. The mariners were like the troops. At Dover and the lesser ports they rose against the press-men and refused to serve, pretending that the warrants were not stamped, as usual, with the Castle seal. At Spithead, a sailor-lad "insulted" Villiers, who arrested him. His shipmates gathered round the house in which he was confined, and the offending lad was yielded to these seamen for the sake of peace. When Charles rode down with the Duke to Deptford, to inspect the ships, he murmured, "George, there be some that wish both these and thou may perish; care not for them; we will perish together, if thou dost." Perish they would, and in one cause; though not together, as the King foretold.

Lamb had impressed the Duke with a belief that fate had tied their lives up in a mystic knot. "If I survive," the Sorcerer said, "the Duke will live." And now that Sorcerer was dead! "Were it not better," asked Throgmorton, on the eve of starting for the army, "that you wear a secret shirt of mail?" Men marching to their fate are blind; and Villiers, turning to his cautious friend, exclaimed, "There are no Roman spirits left."

Before he rode from London, Villiers tried once more to put his confessor, Laud, in the Primate's place; but Abbott stood upon his right, as head of the English Church; and Charles was not yet ripe for such a deed as forcing an Archbishop to resign his staff.

A low brick house, two stories high, the property of Captain Mason, Paymaster of the Forces, standing in

the main street of Portsmouth, had been hired for the Duke ; and this low house was crowded, on the morning of Saturday, August 23, 1628, with troops of lords and ladies ; Admirals, Generals, Secretaries, the young Duchess, Lady Anglesea, and other dames of rank. A coach was waiting at the door. Lord Dorchester had just arrived from court, and Villiers, with a joyful face, was starting to see the King. Good news, he said, had come by post ; Rochelle had been relieved by land ; no need remained for him to sail. But M. de Soubise, well knowing this good news was false, came over from his lodgings to Mason's house, and was in high words with the Duke ; protesting that if England meant to save Rochelle, the fleet must sail, and sail without delay.

This noise within the house was deepened by a noise without. A press of sea-folk roared along the streets, abusing Villiers, calling him a tyrant and a murderer ; for the previous day, on coming to Portsmouth, he had seized the lad who insulted him, caused him to be tried, and on the finding of a drum-head court, condemned him to be hung. A press of sailors set upon the guards ; these guards discharged their pieces ; and the town was hot with battle, when the Duke slashed in among them with two hundred sabres, drove the rioters to port, and forced them to seek refuge in their ships. Two men were killed, and heaps lay wounded on the ground. But Buckingham's bad blood was up ; he seized a leader of the crews ; and ere he supped, he had that leader tried, condemned to death, and hung in company with the luckless lad.

The Duke was but too well aware that going on board the fleet was hardly safe for him. The French prince got excited ; but the Duke was deaf, his coach was ready, and his gentlemen were mounting in the street. A group of officers streamed out ; some walking off, some leaping to their seats. The Duke was following close, when, in a narrow passage, darker than

the hall, he stopped and reeled. Lord Cleveland, who was near him, heard a thud, and then a voice cry, "God have mercy on thy soul!" The Duke bent backward; uttered a faint scream of "Villain," tore from his breast a knife, a common tenpenny knife, and staggering, swooned and fell. Red blood was oozing from his mouth; his eyes were filming over; and the flutter of his heart was stopped. The Duke was dead.





CHAPTER XXVII.

AN ASSASSIN.

AS the Duke reeled backward, screaming "Villain!" his adherents, who had heard the passionate language of Soubise, and thought the Huguenot prince had struck him, raised the shout, "A Frenchman! A Frenchman!" and a hundred swords flashed out. But while they sought the Prince a small, dark man, an officer, bareheaded, sword in hand, attired in dusty clothes, came out from a door into the open court, and cried, "I am the man!"

All faces turned upon him. "Here I am!" the dark, bareheaded officer exclaimed, and yielded up his sword.

Examined by the councillors present, he avowed his deed, as one to which he had received a call from Heaven. He was an instrument, his act a sacrifice. "His name?" "John Felton." "His profession?" "Soldier." Felton had served his country in her wars; served her in Flanders, on the Rhine, and in the Isle of Rhé. Some pay was due to him; a company was also due to him; but he protested that his personal wrongs had not inspired him with a wish to kill the Duke. A patriot, he had read the Remonstrance, stigmatizing his commander as a public enemy; and a Voice had called on him to execute that judgment of the court. No one had set him on; no mortal man was privy to his thought. It was the Voice, and nothing but the Voice. A public enemy had been

pointed out. A guilty magnate had defied the law; and justice was about to fail on earth. A higher Power than man had called upon him. He had taken the task of vengeance on himself. In killing Buckingham he had done his duty, and he hoped to win and wear a martyr's crown.

The Lords then told him Villiers was not dead. His dark face lighted with a flush. Not dead! "That stroke had killed him," said the practised swordsman, "though he had been dressed in mail." His hat, which he had lost in the crowd, was found. Within the lining was a paper, with a writing, in the prisoner's hand, declaring that he bore no malice to the Duke, although he had suffered some private wrongs from him; but that he was about to slay a public enemy, denounced as such by name, and by the highest lawful court—the Parliament of England.

Charles, who heard the news while he was kneeling at his morning prayers, assumed that Felton must have an accomplice; and he hinted, in no dubious form, that he could tell the lords who that accomplice was. He pointed to the eloquent tribune who had branded Villiers as the Great Delinquent, and delivered him up to public judgment with that terrible sign, "You see the man!"

Charles took his ground at once, that Eliot was the cause of Buckingham's death, and from that ground he never could be got to move. In all his public acts he showed this working of his mind. He ordered that the murderer should be sent to London, lodged in the Tower, and questioned by the most unscrupulous tools of Buckingham, his Lord Chief Justice, Richardson, and his Attorney-General, Heath. He started where he meant to end, by ordering Felton to be lodged in Eliot's cell—the Bloody tower.

So soon as news ran round the city that the soldier who had slain the Duke was coming up to London as a prisoner, crowds went forth to meet and bless him.

On the road he heard such cries, as "Now God bless thee, little David!" In the city he was cheered with shouts from shop and lattice of "Lord, comfort thee!" Vast multitudes were waiting at the Tower to see him pass, and as he entered, with a martyr's air, "Lord, bless thee!" broke in sobs from a thousand breasts. All day that multitude kept watch under Raleigh's Walk, and pressed on the Lieutenant's garden to the Bloody tower. To them, this poor assassin was a hero, who had snatched the sword, like Mattathias on the hill of Modin, and delivered his country from a foreign yoke. That night his health was drunk in taverns and in private houses, from the City ditch to Charing Cross; as it was drunk next day, in Oxford, where the freshmen tossed off horns of college ale in envy of so classical a deed! Even in the precincts of White Hall men's eyes were lighted with unusual joy. No one, except the King and two or three women, seemed to have been touched by what had come to pass. Great lords could find some comfort in the crime. A stone of offence, they whispered, was removed; the King and Commonwealth might now get on; and England would enjoy a term of peace. Good counsels might be heard; brave actions might be dared. Even those who could not drink a murderer's health, were yet inclined to think that out of evil there might spring some good. They saw in these events the hand of God.

That night the name of Felton was on every lip; on some lips it was heard in praise, on more lips it was heard in prayer.

Next day, and afterwards for weeks to come, a crowd assembled under Raleigh's Walk to see their "Little David," their "Deliverer," while lords and gentlemen were pressing into the Bloody tower to see what kind of man this murderer was.

Low in stature, slight in build, with lowering eyes, pale face, and slouching look, John Felton was the type of a fanatic. One of his fingers had been lopped

at the joint, and those who asked him how he came to lose it, started from him, as with unraised voice he told his tragic tale. A neighbour vexed him; he demanded his revenge. This neighbour fancied he was not in earnest; then he chopped his finger off, and sent the piece of bleeding flesh as evidence that he meant to fight. A man to go all lengths when he was vexed, much more when he was "called" by Heaven! He was an officer in the army, a lieutenant in a company of foot. In Flanders, on the Rhine, before Rochelle, he had served in many camps, and hoped he had done his duty in that cause, which was the cause of God.

Applause ran through the country. Poets sang his praise, and curious idlers turned off anagrams from his name. Townley, the friend of Camden, Gill, the friend of Milton, were conspicuous in these rhymes and riddles. Townley's hymn to the assassin was so fine that Jonson was supposed to have had a share in it. Laud brought rare Ben before the Council, but the Laureate swore the lines were Townley's lines, not his. He knew the writer; he had lately supped with him. Townley was his friend, and he had given a poniard from his girdle to the poet, who was also a divine. Gill was arrested for his rhyme, and Townley fled for refuge to the Hague.

A still more ominous thing occurred. Sir Robert Savage went about in public boasting that he was a friend of Felton, that he helped him in his task, and that he meant, should Felton fail, to have killed the Duke himself. Arrested and examined by the Council, Savage stuck to his tale that he was of the plot. Laud fancied he had struck a mine, and as a first step to inquiry, Savage was committed to the Tower. But details he had none to give, and Felton, questioned in his turn, declared that he had never seen the man. The jailers put him to a test. Removing Felton from the Bloody tower, and locking some

one in his room, they brought in Savage, who at once walked up to the prisoner, shook his hand, and cried, "How do you do, Mr. Felton?" Savage was removed from the Tower as an impostor; whipped from Fleet Street to Westminster, set in a pillory, shorn of his ears, and branded on the cheek.

Pope Laud, who was the Duke's successor in the royal closet, took from the Lord Chief Justice and the Attorney-General most of the labour of unravelling "the plot." Like Charles, he was convinced there was a plot; an irreligious and disloyal plot; a plot connected with the Bill of Rights; and, like his master, he was clear that Felton's comrade in the plot was that eloquent burgess of Parliament who had caused him in a public document to be declared "unsound" in faith. Laud felt his fate bound up with that of the Duke. One public document had denounced them both. If Buckingham had been named as dangerous to the State, he too was named as dangerous to the Church. Who could assure him that some new "deliverer" was not waiting on his steps unseen? If Felton knew that secret he would pluck it from him, if he tore out life as well. The rack should make him speak.

But Laud's ferocity was foiled by Felton's craft. "You must confess," cried Laud, "or go upon the rack." "If I am racked, my lord," said Felton, "I may happen, in my agony, to accuse your lordship." Laud was silent for a moment; but he rallied courage, spoke to the King about it, and received his Majesty's commands to have the murderer tortured to the furthest stretch allowed by law. To what extent could it be used by law? Some judges doubted whether torture could be used by law at all. The point must be submitted to the bench; the bench was ordered to consult the rolls, compare decisions, and report to Charles. Their verdict was, that torture could not be applied according to the English law.

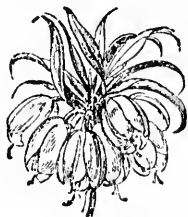
From that day forward, all the racks, screws, ropes, and hooks, once used as means for getting at the truth, were tumbled from the Council Chamber into holes and passages of the Tower.

What else Laud learned about his prisoner was of personal interest only. He was poor; a brooding, lonely man; not given to speech; a Bible-reader, and a Church attendant; loving England much, and hating Rome and Spain with all his soul. He lodged in Fleet Lane, with Thomas Foot, who let his house in single rooms to tenants paying no great share of rent. A woman lodger lent him books; among the rest a "Life of Mary, Queen of Scots," which book he kept. He nursed some grudge against the Duke for keeping back his pay, and passing him over when his captain died; but he had never dreamed of doing his General harm, until a month ago, when, walking into a scrivener's shop in Holborn, he had seen a copy of the Remonstrance passed in Parliament, denouncing Villiers as "a Public Enemy." He felt a call within him to complete that sentence on his Grace. Not willingly had he obeyed that Voice. For weeks he strove against it, praying in agony of soul that God would spare him such a fearful cup. He could not stay that Voice. He went to the scrivener's shop to read that document again; the copyist, busy at his trade, would only let him read it if he meant to buy. "Would they not let him read it first?" "Well: yes." A clerk went with him to the Windmill tavern, in Shoe Lane, where he sat reading it, through and through, two hours. Then Felton paid the clerk and took it home; to ponder in the dead of night, with wrestlings of the spirit and in agonies of prayer. Five weeks he pondered on the deed. The Voice still called him, and he answered to his soul that he was ready to obey. Running to the nearest church, he begged that on the following Sunday prayers might be said for him as one who was sore in need. Going forward to Tower Hill, near the place

of execution, he bought a tenpenny knife. Taking a slip of paper, he signed his name, wrote the few words already noted on this slip, and pinned the paper in his hat. The rest his Lordship knew.

When he was tried for murder, Heath, the prosecutor, dwelt on the loss his Majesty had suffered in so great and good a man as the Duke. Felton held out his right hand. He was sorry to have slain so good a servant to the King; and bade them hack the hand off that had done this deed!

John Felton died as he had lived; callous, yet devoted; pious, yet impenitent; his fingers red with blood, his brows encircled with a patriot's crown.





CHAPTER XXVIII.

NINE GENTLEMEN IN THE TOWER.

NO evidence could be found by Laud connecting Eliot, Selden, and their colleagues of the Bill of Rights, with Felton's deed; save only such a passion as in times of public danger drives men into acting under common impulse in their several ways; yet Charles was resolute in his first design of holding these great citizens responsible for the blood that had been shed.

Another Parliament was called; for "Money—money!" was a cry still coming up from every corner of the court; a hard necessity for Charles, who hated all these babblers in the House of Commons; but with empty pockets and a host of duns, he was compelled, though sorely vexed, to try once more his famous "policy of deceit." This Session was a shorter Session than the last. A Session of five weeks only, it was memorable to all after times for two events: for Cromwell's first appearance as a speaker on the scene of strife, for Wentworth's and Eliot's last commitment to the Tower.

Three Parliaments had been called, three expeditions had been formed, in this short reign. In each a policy of deception had been urged; but this bad policy had failed as signally in the House of Commons as at Cadiz and Rochelle. No heart, and not much brain, were in it; yet the King, too dim of sight to see things in

their actual shape and hue, was ready in his need to try "deceit" once more. He must have funds, and he must have them soon. His ships were rotting in the ports; his troops were shoeless in the camps. No one would lend him a jacobus. Call it tonnage; call it poundage; call it impost; call it benevolence; no one would either give or lend him money. Peer, knight, burgess, equally replied to his collectors, "Parliament only can impose a tax." A Parliament was called. But Laud, not Williams, was the King's adviser, and the policy of scapegoats was abandoned for a policy of force and fraud. High tones, bold words, rough deeds—the magic of a royal name, the presence of a faithful bench, the awe of halberdmen and musketeers, the daunting glance of marshalsmen and jailers, were the means to be employed.

Some things had recently been done by Wentworth, Laud, and Charles, which set all England in a blaze.

Rochelle had been allowed to fall, even as Ostend had been allowed to fall.

At home affairs had gone from bad to worse. The Bill of Rights had been invaded, and in all its parts; even in the text, which, though in print, had been suppressed by order of the Council, and re-issued in a fraudulent shape. A new rate had been levied on the shippers and merchants, by authority of the crown; and merchants, who refused to pay a tax not levied by a vote of the Commons, had been cast into prison, contrary to law. Divines who had been censured by Parliament, had been taken into royal favour, pardoned their offences by the Crown, and raised to higher places in the Church. Laud had been promoted to the see of London; Montagu had been made Bishop of Chichester; Mainwaring had been rewarded with the rectory of Stamford Rivers. Every man who was obnoxious to the people had been taken up by Charles; so that the Civil War, though not declared in terms, appeared to have commenced in fact.

Before the Houses met, a small committee of the Council, having Laud for leader, held a secret sitting, and resolved upon their course. In case the question of these rates of tonnage, poundage, and the like, was raised in Parliament, his Majesty would express his willingness to have a parliamentary power to tax the ports. A Bill should be prepared to give him this legal right. If such a Bill were passed, the King should satisfy the country by an affirmation that he owed the money to his people's love. If it were not passed, the King would use his sovereign right, dissolve the Parliament, and raise these taxes by his royal power.

Charles would not pay his mutinous subjects such a compliment as opening Parliament in person. Every one expected strife; and Eliot rose at once to give the national anger voice. Rochelle, he said, had put religion into peril, and involved the country in everlasting shame. He spoke of Buckingham as Achan, and referred to Montagu's promotion as a censure of that House. Selden complained about the Bill of Rights, so scandalously printed by the King's command. A day was given to church affairs; to Neile, to Laud, to Rome, to Babylon; a great day in the session, since a man, not heard of till that moment, but much heard of since, stood up and said, with loud, unmusical, and earnest utterance, "he had heard that Dr. Alabaster preached flat Popery at Paul's Cross." The blunt and earnest speaker, meaning what he said, was Cromwell; henceforth to be counted as a foe of Rome and all who clung to the skirts of Rome.

King Charles was angry. Why this rage, he asked, about religion? He and the Church could take good care of religion. The Commons must go on with business; with his Bill for tonnage and poundage. He insisted on their voting for his Bill. His Bill! men cried in wonder. How could a bill involving grants of money be his Majesty's Bill? Sir John

Cooke, the Secretary of State, was ordered to concede that point, if only they would fall to work. To work! They were at work. Affairs going ill abroad, they wished to hold a solemn fast; but Charles, coquetting with his book of Sports, objected to this holding of a fast, and begged them to discuss his Bill.

To Laud, then trifling with the Articles in a Popish sense, the Commons sent "a challenge," in the shape of a Declaration, that all good Churchmen understood the Articles of Religion in the sense adopted by their fathers in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; rejecting that interpretation which was now being given to them by Jesuits and Arminians. By Jesuits and Arminians they meant Laud and Neile. The House declared that not until they were satisfied in this matter of religion, would they touch the Bill. Eliot, as a Churchman faithful to his creed, denounced as worthless sons of an august parent, hirelings such as Montagu, Laud, and Neile. Sir Dudley Digges, whose "undertaking" for the court had won him a promise of succession to the Rolls—a manifest job, since Digges was not a member of the bar!—requested Eliot, in a private note, to hold his tongue, as silence would "advantage" him. Digges had been silent all this session, with "advantage" of the Rolls (in time); but Eliot was not Digges, and on the eve of dissolution he was ready for his bravest work.

A Declaration had been made by a committee, on which Eliot sat, against the King's right to levy tonnage and poundage; and as Eliot was the chairman of committee, it was known that on the morrow he would ask the House to ratify this Declaration by a vote. A crisis was upon them now; for Charles would not allow the Commons to debate, much less deny, his right to levy rates. But how could Eliot be restrained? Charles sent for Speaker Finch, and laid his royal will upon him. He was not to put that Declaration to a vote. He was to stop all reference

to the subject. If Eliot rose to speak, he was at once, and in the royal name, to adjourn the House. Finch promised to obey.

Some hints of this palace plot to silence and adjourn the House got wind; and when the Speaker took his seat next morning, Denzil Holles, a son of Lord Clare, and Benjamin Valentine, the member for St. Germans, left their benches in the House, and placed themselves on the Speaker's right and left. So soon as prayers were ended, Eliot rose. The Speaker also rose. "Adjourned for a week," said Finch—"adjourned by his Majesty's command." "Adjourned! That is no message for a Speaker to bring down," cried some. "Adjournment lies with the House alone!" cried others. One great call rose up for Eliot to proceed. He rose again; the Speaker also rose again. "Sit down!" said Holles and Valentine to Finch, and taking him by the arms they pressed him down into his seat. Poor Finch was dumb with fright, and Eliot went on like a fire much fanned by winds, until he ended an address of matchless power, by stepping to the table, and laying his Declaration down. But Finch, still writhing in his agony, refused to take it up. The clerk was asked to read it; he refused. A crowd of members called for Finch to put the Declaration. Shedding tears, he sobbed, he could not do it; nay, he dared not do it; for his Majesty the King had laid that duty of refusal on him. Selden bade him think a moment. He was their Speaker; he was bound to put all motions to the vote. Poor Finch could say no more. He wept; he wrung his hands; he rose to go. "Sit down!" cried Holles and Valentine, pressing him back into his chair. "Disgrace of Kent, and blot on a noble family!" cried Hayman. Hobart, Strode, and Long, got near the Speaker's chair to hold him fast. Some members of the Council—Edmunds, May, and others having seats, came forward in support of Finch; but all those country

gentlemen were armed, and seeing hands on sword-hilts, these pacific Councillors fell back. "God's wounds!" cried Denzil Holles, "you shall sit here until we please to rise!" Strode called upon the House to vote. "Let all who wish this Declaration to be read stand up!" The House, with few exceptions, rose. Great uproar followed; Finch made efforts to escape; and members in their fury, struck each other. Winterton, who stood by Finch, was pushed aside by Coryton, and the elder men were flying from the House in terror, when a messenger came in with news that Charles was waiting in the House of Lords for Finch.

But Finch was now a prisoner in his chair, surrounded by a noble guard, with Denzil Holles at their head. Again his Majesty sent for Finch. Where was he? What kept him back? The King was waiting for the Speaker! But the members could not let him budge one step. A serjeant came to the table and removed the mace. "The door!" cried many voices—"shut the door!" Miles Hobart rushed upon the serjeant, took from him the mace, and locked the door inside. Then Eliot read an abstract of his Declaration in the midst of wild excitement. Knocks were heard; but Eliot still went on. These knocks grew louder as the fury rose within. Black Rod was waiting with a message from the King. Black Rod was forced to knock and wait. When Eliot finished reading, Holles stood up and read three Resolutions, which he put to the members one by one. (1) "Whoever seeks to change religion shall be deemed a capital enemy to this commonwealth?" "Aye, aye!" (2) "Whoever raises tax by tonnage and poundage shall be deemed a capital enemy to this commonwealth?" "Aye, aye!" (3) "Whoever pays such tax shall be deemed a betrayer of liberty and an enemy of the commonwealth?" "Aye, aye!"—a hundred times "Aye, aye!"

Enraged to find the doors were locked, and that his messenger could not enter, Charles despatched an officer for his guards to force the doors; and one of his officers was just come up when Hobart threw them open, and the members, three or four hundred strong, rushed out, with Holles' three Resolutions voted by acclaim. That officer was borne along the passages like drift upon a racing tide.

The Declaration had been read, the Resolutions had been passed. No violence could now undo that reading and that vote. But Charles could punish deeds which he had not been able to prevent; and in a week from that dramatic scene in the House of Commons, Nine of the leading members—Holles, Eliot, Selden, Hobart, Hayman, Coryton, Valentine, Strode, and Long—were prisoners in the Tower.





CHAPTER XXIX.

A KING'S REVENGE.

TWO of these nine gentlemen in the Tower were soon at large—relinquished, pardoned, and despised of kings and men. Sir Allan Apsley, in whose house the prisoners lodged, was told to hold out hope of pardon to the weaker fry. He was to tell them day by day that Charles was no less merciful than just, but that his Majesty must be entreated and obeyed. If they would ask his grace, they must deserve it; asking it in humble phrase, and earning it in contrite heart. Hayman and Coryton were weaker fry. Inspired by noble fellowship, they had shot for one brief hour into a higher sphere; but silence and restraint soon chilled that patriotic glow. These men confessed their fault, agreed to sin no more, and left the Tower, to wander into empty space.

Seven gentlemen were left; seven gallant men in thought and deed. For more than thirty weeks they lay in Apsley's charge, the court not knowing what to do. They would not bend. They stood upon the law. They looked for other Parliaments to come. At White Hall nobody could see his way. The King declared that they should either bend or break. The judges felt grave doubts in point of law. The councillors were fearful lest, in despite of Charles, another Parliament might be called. A press of gentlemen was always at the Tower—peers, knights, and bur-



H. G. T. P. 1871

GENERAL VIEW OF THE TOWER FROM THE RIVER.



gesses—to see and cheer their champions. Apsley, rough old soldier as he was, looked grave, and more than once his prisoners' rooms were changed. Some counties sent petitions to the King, complaining that this seizure of their members was against the laws and liberties of England, as attested in the Bill of Rights. What could be done?

The King said, "Bend or break." Chief Justice Hyde, who wished to please the King, said, "Let them lie in jail, as men forgotten, till their stomachs come down." Heath could not go so far as Hyde. He knew there was no law for such a course; he held that men arrested must be brought to trial; he had seen too much of public life to dream that no more Parliaments would meet; and, wishing to be safe, he recommended that some show of justice should be held.

The seven prisoners were then indicted and condemned. Eliot, Holles, and Valentine were tried in the King's Bench for causing the King's subjects to withdraw their affection from him. Eliot was fined two thousand pounds, Holles a thousand marks, and Valentine five hundred pounds. All three were sentenced to imprisonment during pleasure—Eliot in the Tower, Holles and Valentine elsewhere, as his Majesty should see fit. Long, indicted in the Star-Chamber, was condemned to pay a fine of two thousand marks, and lie in the Tower till he should make submission and confession to the King. Selden and Strode, who gave the King much trouble by their applications to the courts of law for leave to put in bail, were carried to the King's Bench prison; while Hobart, last and least of these stout champions of free speech, was taken to the Gate-house near White Hall.

And now began the weary work of misery and restraint that was to bend or break these gallant souls. The youngest, Denzil Holles, was first to fail in strength; he made some compact with the court, and

went to live in his country-house. Hobart fell next, though not before months of rust had rotted into his soul. For two years Strode and Selden lay in the King's Bench prison; varied only once or twice, in time of plague, by transfer to the Gate-house. Once, to their surprise, they were remitted to the Tower; a move on Charles's part to cross the Court of King's Bench in what he feared was a design to set them free on bail. They gained their liberty at last, by what is known to jurists as the legal process of "escape." A few weeks later Valentine was at large. Two prisoners yet remained; but Long was striving to obtain his pardon and release. Two years of silence, darkness, and restraint, had cowed his spirit; and he offered, in exchange for light and air, to own his fault, express his sorrow, and continue humbly at his Majesty's feet. "Humble at last!" thought Charles; and Long, who was first removed from the Tower to Giltspur Street Compter, was soon afterwards set at large.

One prisoner now remained. "Ringleader Eliot," he was called by Charles—that man of swift audacities, who had visited Nutt on his pirate deck, and afterwards flamed into the Bill of Rights. Would he too bend? Would he confess his fault? Would English freedom have to stand without a witness? Would the three great Resolutions, passed with so much fervour, fall into the ground? The King was firm, the prisoner no less firm. Submit, confess, atone, said Charles and Charles's agent. Nothing else would serve. Submit!—the prisoner could submit so far as to request his liberty and the remission of his fine. Confess!—he had no error to confess: his words were true, his acts were just. Atone!—he had no evil to undo, no utterance to unsay. He would not promise to retire from public life. The work must still go on. His last words in the House of Commons, "Where I now leave off, I will begin again," was his unchangeable resolve. The liberties and laws of England were at

stake, and, whether he lived their champion or died their martyr, they should never perish in his hands.

Too well he knew the royal temper and the royal purpose to deceive himself, and he prepared his mind, his dungeon, and his family, for the strife. Sir Allan Apsley, doubtless by command, had lodged him in the Bloody tower; that ominous and fearful cell in which his hero Raleigh had pined for years, his poet Overbury had been done to death. This cell the prisoner furnished with some chairs and desks, some paper, pens and ink, the necessary comforts of a captive lot. The doors then closed upon him, and that constant soul was lost for ever to the public sight.

Closed in behind those bars, he gave up most of his days to writing and his nights to prayer. In later years—and he was yet so young!—he had become devout in word and thought; sincerely bent on walking in the ways of life. A deep sense of religious duty spurred him into patriotic ardour, and his patriotic ardour passed into the reverence which he paid to God. To him the Bloody tower became a chapel, and the precinct of his prison was a holy place. A side door in his chamber led to Raleigh's Walk, from which he could look over Water Lane, the Wharf, the Thames. His window opened on the Green, the Lieutenant's garden, and the main approach. The room was cold and dark; and the portcullis, raised and lowered by chains, disturbed the prisoner's rest. Yet Eliot was a free man in the Bloody tower. He kept his "freedom of the mind;" not, "as a stranger," since, "thank God, he had never been without it in his life." While he was strong in health he laboured in his cell, as he had laboured in the world. Three exercises of his pen—the first of his prison studies—still survive: *De Jure Magistratus*, an *Apology for Socrates*, and *The Monarchy of Men*—three noble exercises, instinct with the love and yearning of his heart. He wrote some letters to his friends—to one dear friend, John Hamp-

den, more than all. His two boys, John and Richard, came to see him in the Tower—came up from Hampden's house, to which they afterwards went back. John Hampden rode to town, and by contrivance with the keepers, saw his friend in the Bloody tower. The prisoner wrote to Luke, to Grenville, and to Knightly—noble friends, who shared with Hampden and with England all the treasures of his love. His letters breathe of freedom, charity, and hope. His prison was no jail to him. The cell in which he lay was near to heaven; one sky bent over all.

“No day,” he wrote, “has seemed too long, nor night has once been tedious; nor fears, nor terrors, have affrighted me. No grief, no melancholy, has opprest me; but a continual pleasure and joy in the Almighty has still comforted me. His power, His greatness, has secured me!” What could the highest of earthly kings effect against such a spirit?

Cold, passionless, implacable, King Charles was deaf, as Wentworth and as Laud were deaf, to that grand and mute appeal which Eliot, as a prisoner in the Tower—a prisoner for his country—offered to all noble hearts. Days, weeks, months, years, dragged on; but neither love nor fear inclined the royal heart to justice. “Bend or break” was all he had to say; bend neck, break heart; on no less terms could he forgive.

Since Villiers fell, the Tower had been itself again. The play was over and the lights were out. A shadow fell from the arch of Traitor's Gate on coming and departing barges, just as it had fallen on such barges in preceding reigns. No clemency, in future, at the Tower! Sir Allan Apsley died, and Lady Apsley, with her little ones, removed from the Lieutenant's house. Carey, Gentleman-Porter, held the keys, as second in command. Who would succeed Sir Allan and his gentle wife? The choice of a Lieutenant would betray the King, all secret though he was. The Tower had ceased to be a name of dread; for years,

no man had perished in its vaults ; no life had fallen to the headsman's axe. An age had come, like that which marked the earlier years of good Queen Bess ; an age not free from strife, commitments, trials ; yet in which the rage of faction paused at the point of blood. With all his faults, the Duke had never put an enemy to death. If he had sent men freely to the Tower, he had neither treated them harshly nor held them long. In such a reign Sir Allan and his gentle wife were in their place. Would some new Apsley get the dead man's post ?

A ruffian, loud of tongue and fierce of clutch, was hanging on the court, whom Charles had wished to take into his pay ; Sir William Balfour, that Free-lance whom he had chosen to command his mercenary guard, and light his Parliament with a sheen of halberds. Him he chose ; and Balfour came to live in the Lieutenant's house.

Poor Eliot felt the shock. New rules were framed ; his rooms were changed, and changed again ; pen, ink, and paper, were removed from him. Men saw that Charles would either kill his prisoner or compel him to deny the truth. The room to which he was removed was cold and dark. If Balfour sent him candles, he would hardly give him fire. A cough came on ; a dry, hard cough, which baffled his physicians' skill. It was the place, the air, the chill, the darkness ; these were killing him, and his physicians said so. " He must have fresh air," they wrote ; " he will never recover of his consumption, unless he breathes a purer air." A purer air ! His room was changed again ; from bad to worse ; from chill to frost ; from dark to black. His cough grew harder, and his voice began to fail. The man was dying ; slowly done to death !

Then Balfour, bent on giving a triumph to the court, persuaded him to ask for grace ; and Eliot, in his weakness, drew up a petition to the King. " Your judges have committed me to prison in your Tower of

London, where by reason of the quality of the air I am fallen into a dangerous disease, and humbly beseech your Majesty you will command your judges to set me at liberty," he wrote. Here was no dropping of his flag, no taking back his testimony; nothing but a personal petition for his right. "Not humble enough!" sneered Charles, throwing down his victim's prayer. The prisoner, told what the King had said, took up his pen once more. "You must humble yourself; admit your fault, and crave His Majesty's pardon," hissed the Lieutenant, who was standing near his desk. "I thank you for your friendly advice," said Eliot to the mercenary; "my spirits are grown faint and feeble, and when it pleases God to restore them I will take it into my consideration." He laid his pen down, with a patient spirit. He kept his testimony to the last. His work on earth was done; and fifteen days later he was dead.

The King's revenge was full?

Not yet.

The patriot's son applied for leave to take the body to Port Eliot, where it might be laid in the family vault. The King would not permit that pious act. "Let him be buried where he died," Charles wrote with his own hand upon the boy's petition; and the eloquent Witness for our Liberties was laid by his prison warder in St. Peter's Church.

Charles hoped to pile up scorn and shame on Eliot's head. He made the stones of that lowly church within the ramparts sacred for ever to the men whose rights the illustrious orator had died to save.





CHAPTER XXX.

CHARLES THE FIRST.

FOR more than eleven years after Eliot passed into the Tower, for more than seven years after he was laid in St. Peter's Church, no Parliament was called in England. Charles had taken to himself new councillors, who taught him to rule his country as the Bourbon ruled in France and the Austrian ruled in Spain. For these years force was right and power was law. Wentworth was the State; Laud was the Church; and Charles was God.

This Prince has always been, and always will be, one of the dreamy pets of romantic youth and credulous age. Poets and girls look up into his eyes, as they beam down from walls in Vandyke's pictures, with a yearning of the soul akin to love. What dignity, what sweetness, in the royal saint! If not in every line a King of men—for some of these lines are certainly wanting in curve and mass—no man with gift of sight can say that Charles looks other than like a student and a Prince. Judging him from what the arts have left us, we perceive that here was a Prince, who, whether he acted well or ill, was to be adored by women, and by men who love and hate like women; for even such hard critics as would lash him heavily for what they call his craft and baseness, own that he was graced by charms beyond the reach of ordinary men. His face was fine. His smile was sorcery. His voice was low

and sweet. His figure, not a bad one, was adorned with care; each point of light and shade being studied for effect from plume to spur. Each caught the eye like a work of art. In dress, in gait, in speech, his ways were perfect; in so far as such things can be governed into outward harmony by line and law. Frank, open, natural, he could not be; the school in which he had been trained forbidding him to move his hand, to part his lips, to nod his head, excepting in accordance with the rule laid down. Young, pensive, picturesque, he glided through the world, like one who was subdued by sorrow, even as he seemed to be refined by taste. Yet Charles was not all outward show. Some good there lay in him beyond his love of art. His life was pure. In days when Kings kept harems, much as they kept kennels, he was true (in measure) to his marriage vows. At first, his French wife led him a fretful dance; but, after Bassompierre had made them kiss the kiss of peace, the King was what a husband should be; on the side of charity a little more. For all the youngsters at his knee he had a parent's fondness, and a parent's pride; at seeing which satirical lords-in-waiting would occasionally smile and turn their heads. In books he was fairly read; and of the arts he was a noble judge. Pictures and poems were his higher world, the choice companions of his silent hours; and in these happier moments of his life he fled from Coventry and Laud to gaze with wonder on Rubens' tints, and listen with delight to Shakespeare's lines.

Unless his soul were stirred by wrath, his voice was tuned to sweet and limpid chords. But when he left the field of dress and taste, of smiles and words, he was deficient on every side; in strength, in trust, in truth; in all that makes a noble man. His intellect was weak. His moral sense was dull. No love of truth as truth, no loyalty to fact as fact, sustained his life. He was not gentle, and he was not brave. But

seldom could he find the clues of right and wrong. A thing he liked was never wrong; a thing he loathed was never right. No man could trust his word; no party reckon on his pledge. A trick of settling with his conscience, day by day, grew on him; silencing the voice within by acts of self-deceiving guile. No courtly priest was ever readier to absolve a royal saint than Charles was ready to absolve himself. He could not help it. As he told himself, he meant no harm. If wicked and unfaithful men abused him, he was bound to crush them. Had he broken faith? Then he repented of his sin—in secret; and in secret he forgave himself that sin. Yet Charles was only in the higher sense, in presence of the nobler verities, a fool. He saw that “policies of deception” have a first success; he could not see the weakness, shame, and danger that are sown in every violated oath.

The ministers of his choice were all unpopular and suspected men. Wentworth was a friend of Spain and no great enemy of Rome. Laud was so much a Papist that Pope Urban offered to confer on him a cardinal’s hat. Finch, his Lord Chief Justice, was the most noxious creature on the bench. Windebank, whom he had made his Secretary of State, went over to the Jesuits’ church.

For seven years after Eliot’s death, the land was ruled by fear and force. The lash, the stocks, the jail, were freely used. A servile bench compelled the people to accept a Laudine church. A troop of horse went forth to levy rates. The men who stood for law and right were seized by Charles, who flogged them, slit their noses, cropped their ears, and burnt their cheeks. Torn, bleeding, singed with burning irons, these patriotic men were carried from the pillory to the Gate-house, Marshalsea, and Tower.

Nine months after Eliot died, Sir William Balfour brought into the Tower a barrister of Lincoln’s Inn; a scholar and polemic of the highest reach; who had

alarmed and mortified Laud by making motions in the name of public justice in the courts of law. This barrister was William Prynne. A Reader and a Bencher of his Inn, profoundly versed in doctrinal theology and in canon law, he set his teeth against the policy pursued by Laud, and stayed by timely actions many of the causes which the Primate would have sent before the court of High Commission. Prynne was marked, as Eliot had been marked; and when, in 1632, the zealous Puritan produced his "Scourge for Stage Players," Laud persuaded Charles that Prynne was libelling, in this famous book, his King and Queen. This Puritan spoke ill of plays; his Majesty was fond of plays; his censure was a libel on the King. The Puritan spoke ill of masques; the Queen had dawdled through a masque; his censure was a libel on the Queen. Away with such a fellow to the Tower!

Prynne's true offence was not his rage against the actors, but his hint that, under Laud's advice, the Church was being turned into a theatre, the ritual into something like a play. He spoke of the garnished altars and the church music introduced by Laud as sceneries and accessories of Rome. Laud took an eager and dishonest course. The "Scourge" had been duly licensed by Abbott's chaplain, and was legally entitled to appear. Laud represented it to Charles as having been printed in secret, in a press well known for issuing unlawful books. The work was published six weeks before the Queen appeared in any masque. Laud showed a passage to the Queen reflecting on the frailty of female players, and suggesting that the passage was directed against herself. By these deceptions he inflamed the court; and Prynne, who was arraigned in the Star Chamber (he and his printer, licenser, and publisher—one of them a widow), was condemned. The "Scourge" was to be burnt. Lord Cottington, pronouncing sentence, said that, in other countries, libellous books were burnt by the common

hangman. Such was not the law and use in England ; but the custom was a good one ; he would introduce it ; and the "Scourge" should be delivered by a common hangman to the flames. Prynne was to be deprived at Oxford, and disbarred at Lincoln's Inn. He was to stand in the pillory twice ; in Cheape and Palace Yard ; to have his ears sliced off, one ear in each city ; to pay a fine of five thousand pounds, and to lie in prison till he died.

Abbott's chaplain was censured, fined, imprisoned ; but the Primate, whom Laud and Charles desired to hurt, was past all earthly wounds. The good Archbishop was near his end ; and Laud rejoiced to think that *he* was also near his end.

Laud, now Archbishop of Canterbury, had his brutal sentence brutally carried out. Prynne's ears were cropped. Prynne's bleeding body was returned to the Tower, in which the new Lord Primate hoped he would "lie and rot." Prynne lay four years a prisoner ; but unlike some younger men, his spirit never quailed. With pens and books, he kept himself alive, and, after four years' durance, sent from his cell in the Tower his "News from Ipswich," an attack on Laud.

While Prynne was lying in his cell, with no more freedom to observe what men were doing in the world than Sunday service gave him, he was edified by a scene in the little church. One Archibald Mackeller, chaplain of the Tower, was sued for payment of a bond, and lost his cause. The debt was twenty pounds ; the pleadings showed that these twenty pounds were to be paid for help in getting the chaplain's place. A cry of simony arose : a second action was commenced, and judgment given ; on which the King—that is to say, his ghostly adviser, Laud—deposed the simonist from his post, and made one Shipsea, chaplain of the Tower. Mackeller would not troop, and Balfour could not drive him beyond the

gates—except by force, which, in a clergyman's case, he had no heart to use. Shipsea reasoned with his clerical brother; proffering him a benefice in the country, in exchange. Mackeller would not leave the Tower, and force at length was used. Thrust out into the street, Mackeller got a joiner who was sending a coffin to the Tower to let him lie inside it, so as to pass the warders at the gate unseen. At dawn he was carted in, and set down in his coffin, with the lid nailed lightly, at St. Peter's door. A sexton came to toll the bell, unlock the door, and sweep the church. While he was tolling prisoners to their prayers, Mackeller burst from his coffin, passed into the church, and locked the congregation out. Sir William Balfour came. The chaplain would not unlock the doors. Patrols were called, the doors were forced, the simonist was seized amidst the wildest uproar, and conveyed by Balfour to a prison cell. Here, thought the Puritan barrister, was a Sunday scene in the House of God!

Laud cited Prynne, in company with John Bastwick, doctor in medicine, and Henry Burton, bachelor in divinity, to answer in the Star Chamber for their opposition to his doings in the Church. Prynne tendered a cross bill, charging the Primate with usurping royal power, with bringing in new rites, and giving his licence to Popish books. Coventry refused his bill. Laud, who sat in the Star Chamber, not as accuser only, but as judge, requested that the prisoner might be punished as a libeller, for tendering such a bill; but Coventry, who was a lawyer, told his Grace, that though Prynne's application was refused, his bill had been tendered to the court in legal form. But Finch was more complaisant to the Primate. Bastwick, Prynne, and Burton, were accused by Laud of wishing to change the constitution in Church and State; and all the three were sentenced by Finch to lose their ears, to stand in the pillory at Palace Yard, to pay a fine of five thousand pounds each, and to be

imprisoned during life in three distant castles—Carnarvon, Cornwall, Lancaster. As Prynne had no second pair of ears to lose, Finch ordered that the roots of his ears should be sliced away, and both his cheeks burnt deeply with the letters S and L. (seditious libeller). But Finch took nothing, Laud not much, by this brutal deed. The pillory-yard became a court; the scaffolds were likened to the three crosses on Mount Calvary; and when the prisoners were removed from London, scourged and seared, great multitudes of people marched with them along the roads, to comfort them with psalms and prayers. A concourse gathered in Carnarvon, to salute the barrister, that frightened Laud into breaking the law still further, by removing him to the Isle of Jersey, where he lay a prisoner in Mont Orgueil Castle, until Finch, and Laud, and Wentworth, had accomplished all the evil they were born to do on earth.

As Prynne came forth from the Tower, a man more hateful and more dangerous to Laud came in to occupy his place,—my Lord of Lincoln, who had now given up his dream of wearing a Lord Cardinal's hat. Driven from court by Laud, the pluralist had tried the northern wolds; much riding, racing, dining, and baronial splendour; but the days grew long upon his head; he saw the errors into which his Majesty was falling; and he felt that sooner or later Charles would find a scapegoat in his Primate Laud. What then? The spiritual throne of England would be vacant. Then . . . ?

Too well aware of his lordship's daring, Laud set on his agents to entrap him into some offence. Williams was free of tongue, and Laud's first accusation charged him with spreading tales and news against his Majesty's government, and revealing matters which were only known to him as a councillor, contrary to his service and his oath. But this was not enough. A second charge was founded on proceedings taken on the first. Williams was accused by Laud of tampering with the

witnesses, of telling them what to swear and what to cloak. The Dean of the Arches testified that Williams had said to him, "What kind of people are those Puritans whom you complain of; do they subscribe the Loan?" To which the Dean replied, "They pay their money, but are not conformable to the Church." On which the Bishop answered, "If they pay their money readily, they are the King's best subjects, and will carry all at last!" To be accused by Laud was to be guilty; and the Star Chamber sentenced Williams to be fined ten thousand pounds, to be deprived of his income, to be suspended in his office, to be imprisoned during pleasure of the King. A hint was given him that his fate might turn on money. Could he be persuaded to resign his see, together with that deanery of Westminster which he also held? If so, he might obtain his liberty from the Tower, and a bishopric in the Irish Church. He would not listen; it was hard, he said, to defend himself against Laud in England; if he crossed over to Ireland, the Lord Lieutenant, Wentworth, would shave his head off in a month.

For three years and six months Bishop Williams lay a prisoner in that Tower, to which, in his days of greatness, he had sent so many of his scapegoats, while the Primate Laud was running to his fearful end. Williams was himself a scapegoat now. For three years and a half he only heard from spies and servants what was doing in the world; but all that dreary time he never ceased to pray most loyally that a Parliament might come.





CHAPTER XXXI.

PILLARS OF STATE AND CHURCH.

THAT Parliament for which so many prisoners prayed, with higher faith in prayer than Williams felt, was come at last, and with it fell the two stout pillars of the State and Church.

Thomas Wentworth, now become Baron Raby, Viscount Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, was the chief enigma in the reign of Charles the First. This Yorkshireman was born of patriot stock; he had a liberal tutor; he was carried into Parliament by liberal votes; he married twice into liberal houses; he was recognised by liberals as a leader in the House of Commons; he was hated and denounced at court as dangerous; once, at least, he refused to subscribe the Loan; he was imprisoned in the Marshalsea; he stood in front of the attack on Buckingham; and then, by what his comrades called an act of treachery, he passed to the other side; became a courtier and a councillor of Charles; accepted honours from the King, and took in temporal things that chief direction of affairs which Laud had recently assumed in spiritual things. What caused this change? Ambition—love—revenge?

Most people said the first. Proud, passionate, and rich, Sir Thomas Wentworth, baronet, of Wentworth Woodhouse, found a superior to himself in influence, even on his Yorkshire moors, and on the popular side, in Sir John Savile, of Hadley, who contested the county

with him, and assumed to be the principal mouthpiece in Parliament of the Yorkshire folk. Wentworth's sister, who had married into the Savile family, was left a widow, with two infant sons; and family jars about her settlements were added to the proud man's list of wrongs. Savile had passed from the popular to the courtly side as Baron Savile, of Pontefract; and from whatever course he fell, Sir Thomas Wentworth quickly followed this Yorkshire rival to the House of Lords.

Some people said the force which drew him to the side of Charles was love. A beautiful and charming woman, Arabella, daughter of the Earl of Clare, was Wentworth's second wife; and yet the Countess of Carlisle—that Lady Lucy, who had lighted with her gaities the Martin tower—entangled his affections, drew him from his home, and led him into devilries and indecorums ill consorting with his years, his health, and state. This lovely creature, whom the poets gifted with more charms than ever met in woman, and whose vanity it was to fall in love with every man of mark, from Pym to Wentworth, was a Royalist, and the wife of Lord Carlisle, the reigning favourite now that Buckingham was gone. She lured him to the court, and many thought she led him to betray his ancient cause and early friends.

Some people counted it revenge. The same bright woman was a friend of Wentworth and of Pym, and Pym was said to be the man more favoured of the two. Wentworth, mad with jealousy, is thought to have left the popular side in order to seek an opportunity for revenge on his successful rival in that lady's heart. His pride was flattered to the full; his patent of nobility set forth his pedigree up to John of Gaunt; connecting him in a public document with the royal blood.

Yet Wentworth's course was less erratic than it looks. The man was born a despot, like his shireman

Calvert; and in foreign travel he had learned to think that Liberty was a thing worn out and soon to pass away. In Spain the old municipal franchises were gone; in France the parliamentary rights were crushed; in Germany the Empire was encroaching on those minor states in which some sparks of popular life survived. The Pope, supported by the Jesuits, was extending and enforcing his traditional power. In England there was much dispute and some despair; the crown disposed to follow in the wake of France and Spain; the people bent on holding to their ancient rights. By nature he was with the despots, since he hated popular and divided counsels, and was conscious of the power to reign and rule. Mere accidents of birth and schooling threw him on the popular side, but he had no belief in popular success, and for himself he was determined to succeed. Not once, but many times, he tried to win the royal ear. He had a secret to impart. He knew the use and the abuse of speech; and he could show the King a way to live and rule. His rise was slow, but from his early youth he threw himself upon the court. At twenty-six he held a seat in the presidency of York, a most unpopular and unlawful board. At twenty-seven he brought in Calvert for his county, on a promise (which was broken) that he should be made a peer. He was a partisan of the Spanish match, and clung to the policy of seeking allies in the kings of Spain. Once only he was false to nature and conviction; when, chagrined by ill success at court, he wished to let the King observe how surely he could launch the thunderbolts of war. He played his game, and won his stake.

No mist of doubt hangs over the conditions on which he came to favour. Wentworth was to carry out Charles' views of regal power. Williams had proposed to insert a "saving clause" in the Bill of Rights. Wentworth was prepared to burn that Bill. He was to take his law from Finch, and men like Finch. He

offered to lock the doors of Parliament-house and throw the keys into the Thames. He undertook to cow the judges and to clear the bench. To quote his words, he was prepared to "vindicate the monarchy for ever from under the conditions and restraints of subjects." Give him power, and then the King should govern like a King, the liege should pay obedience like a liege. No man should raise his voice against the court, and Charles should stand to his people in the place of God.

Wentworth was now employed, and soon gave proof of his capacity to govern. Sworn of the Privy Council, he was sent to York as Lord President of the North, to keep down popular demands for due observance of the Bill of Rights; a lawless office, which he executed with despotic sway against the views and protests of the bench. From York he went to Dublin as Lord Deputy of Ireland; where he shocked the well-worn English of the Pale by his amazing words and his despotic acts. He put down protests with a haughty gesture. Talk to him of law! Your laws were words, wind, parchment, dust. No vital force in all your rolls and records! He, a man of force, could pay no heed to scrawls. He treated the Irish judges like so many boys at school. Williams was right in preferring his cell in the Tower to a bishopric in Ireland, for the new Lord Deputy was assuredly capable of having his head off in a month.

Laud's course, though it appeared to be less abrupt than Wentworth's, was in no degree less servile. From the first this preacher of the Gospel of Kings and Bishops, had set himself to serve great people, and to push his way through right and wrong to power. As chaplain to Lord Devonshire, he had lent himself to an irregular, uncanonical marriage of his patron to Lady Rich; but when Laud offended God and holy Church to please his patrons, Devonshire was a leading man, and Lady Rich a leading woman at the court.

So soon as these great folk were questioned for their sin, Laud's conscience had begun to prick him; and when James denounced him for compliance, he was stricken into agonies of self-reproach. His hope of rising in the world seemed wrecked, and never till his dying hour could he forgive himself that lapse from virtue for a patron's gain. For years he made no progress in the Church, although he found a second and a safer patron in Bishop Neile, whose Romanising views he had supported and outdone. Neile gave him a prebend's stall; but years elapsed ere James would make him Chaplain; still more years ere he would make him Dean. But Laud had sought the Parent as a means of getting at her son, and found her in the moment of her wrath with her adorer, Eunuch John. Soft, servile, and loquacious, Laud enchained this woman with his "hocus-pocus." She was quarrelling with her preachers as too popular; and Laud's willingness to confer with Father Fisher, now become her spiritual guide, induced her to support him, as a clergyman who was willing to allow the Pope his due. From that hour Hocus-pocus—as the cynics called him—was the leading personage in the Church.

He tried to get the Deanery of Westminster from Williams, but the pluralist would not yield his place. He got the mitres of St. David's, Bath and Wells, and London; and when Abbott died he passed to Canterbury, where his Popish views were so pronounced that he received from Rome the offer of a cardinal's hat.

For seven long years Laud persecuted every man in the Church who differed from his views on candles, copes, and stoles. He preached the gospel of obedience to the King, of looking to the Church for light, of leaving public matters to public men; and, more than all, of lending money to the royal house. If any one protested, in his looks or speech, against these gospels, Laud indicted him in the Star Chamber,

where, on proof being tendered, he was sentenced to be whipped at a cart-tail, to stand in a pillory, to have his nostrils slit, his ears cropped off, and his forehead burnt. A hundred gentlemen, no less learned and respectable than Prynne, were mutilated, lashed, and singed like Prynne.

If people wagged their tongues against such doings, Laud was ready with his answers to complaints—troops, cannon, suits of law, and lengths of rope. A paper, posted on the City gates, invited the 'prentice lads to come to Lambeth on a certain day, and pull the Primate's house about his ears. Laud sent for men and guns; and, when some lads came up at the appointed hour, he quickly drove them off with shot, and went to dinner thanking God that all was well. A cobbler was the chief of these "rascal routers," and this cobbler he condemned to death. By help of Windebank and Finch these rascals should be made to see that frightening a Lord Primate was a capital crime.

But English folk are slow to learn such lessons, even from such holy men as Laud. Before the case was tried, they gathered round the prison-gates, in which the cobbler, not yet tried, was lodged. They broke into the King's Bench, and into the White Lion, and set a number of "the rascals" free. The government could do nothing, for the King and Wentworth were in York, with all the musters they could raise, to check a popular inroad of the Scots.

A swift irruption of the Scots had brought the deluge. Wentworth, moving with a gallant army on these Scots, had found that troops like his are apt to have opinions of their own. "A Bishops' war," "a Surplice war," these troopers called the march into the north. They cheered the Puritan divines; they broke into the Laudine vestries; and they pitched all Popish furniture into ponds. Some officers tried to bring these gospellers to reason, and these gospellers shot

such officers through the head. They would not kill the Scots to set up Laud. At York the King and his Lord Deputy heard this news—an English army falling back, a Scottish army coming on. What could they do to save the kingdom? “Call a Parliament,” said the peers; “A Parliament,” said the towns. In bitter mood the King gave way, for Parliament was the reign of law. But force had failed him when he called for force; and now his only chance of living was a frank reversal of his policy, a full surrender of his power. Had Charles the vision of a seer?

Swift answer to such question came. A Parliament was hardly met before his Secretary Windebank was a fugitive in Calais; his Lord-Keeper Finch a fugitive at the Hague; his Lord Deputy Wentworth and Lord Primate Laud were Balfour’s prisoners in the Tower.





CHAPTER XXXII.

END OF WENTWORTH.

WILLIAMS was lying in the Tower, a prisoner, when the Houses met. A short petition, praying their lordships' leave to take his seat, was read and voted, much to Laud's dismay, who saw in such a courtesy to his victim something like a challenge to himself. But Williams, as a sufferer, was a popular man; and Charles, instructed by Lord Arundel's case, avoided fresh disasters by at once submitting to the mandates of that House. On filing to his seat, the Bishop met his enemies, Laud and Wentworth, face to face; and every one expected he would flash out into speech against them. They were much mistaken. Williams took a calm and moderate course; now siding with the Deputy and Primate in their struggles, backing his peers in their resistance to impeachment; afterwards voting with the courtiers in their efforts to resist the factions; until Charles, attracted by what seemed his wisdom and his softness, noted that this able and zealous Bishop was a man who might be sent for in his time of need.

The popular party, led by Pym and Holles, broke upon the courtiers like an army in the field. Finch, Windebank, Wentworth, Laud, and others were assailed at once. The weapon of attack—Impeachment—had been tried in Buckingham's interest, and the Commons

were disposed to use all instruments in destroying ministers and judges whom the ordinary laws could not have reached. They knew that these proceedings were illegal, in the stricter sense; but they were not to be misled by phrases; and they took their stand on what they had come to see was a state of war.

Wentworth, as the greatest of their enemies, was the first laid up. It was a question whether Pym would get his heel on Wentworth, or the Earl would get his heel on Pym. Had Charles been bold enough, the Parliament would have been dissolved and Wentworth saved; but Charles was nerveless, wavering, false. He yielded to the House, and Wentworth, lodged in the Lieutenant's rooms, was quickly tried, convicted as a "public enemy," and condemned to die.

Windebank's turn came next. This Secretary of State, with no one talent for his office save unlimited deference to the will of Laud, was charged with the offence of pardoning and protecting priests. Unable to withstand the evidence, he fled the country, landed in France, and wrote a base apology for his life, in which he ventured to deny—in face of a thousand facts—that he had ever abandoned the English Church.

Then Finch was struck. A short debate sufficed to fix the articles against him. He was judged "a public enemy," and an order to impeach him in the House of Lords was drawn. He had a night to think what he would say in answer; and the morning found him in a strange disguise, a fugitive, on his way to Holland; where he lived in opulence for years, awaiting the return of better times for men of his peculiar class.

Laud's case came next. The Primate strove against his fate, for even after Wentworth's fall he could not fancy that his peers would give him up—a holy man, most reverend, holding office "by Divine Providence," as spiritual head of the English Church. Black Rod awoke him from his dream. Black Rod—Sir James

Maxwell—came to arrest him by an order from the House of Commons. He was not to bear him to a prison, but to hold him in safe custody till he purged his fame. Laud took advantage of this weakness. Could he not go to Lambeth for an hour? He wanted papers for his answer—one or two books and such small things. Black Rod went with him in a barge, and Laud secured his “Diary,” a mass of private papers, and the Service-book which he had tried to force upon the Scots.

Ten weeks he lay in Maxwell’s house; a prisoner in a garden, with his chaplains, butlers, cooks on duty, and the Church administration at his back. At length an order came for his removal to the Tower, and either a Eunuch’s cunning or a sense of justice fixed his lodging in the cell which Williams tenanted so long. But Laud objected to these lodgings as “unfit for an Archbishop,” and sent to ask Balfour to prepare apartments for him more in keeping with his rank. The purpose was not pressed, and rooms were furnished for him in the Lieutenant’s house; a suite of rooms, with cabinet and antechamber, having open casemates, giving on the green. Wentworth had been removed to “a prison lodging”—seemingly to the Bloody tower; but though the Lord Deputy’s room and the Lord Primate’s rooms were near each other, no communication was allowed between them, saving only such as passed through friendly bishops who were sent to visit them as spiritual guides.

Although condemned to die, the Earl could not be put to death unless the King would sign a warrant for his death; and such a warrant Wentworth felt assured no power on earth could ever bring his Majesty to sign. Though he had served the King so long, he hardly knew him yet. So soon as cries for Wentworth’s blood were raised, his Majesty began to fear and waver in his fear. He tried to soften Pym, but found that Pym was rock. He begged his servant’s life, but was

refused the boon. He stooped to ask for leave to exercise that gift of mercy which in legal times could not be separated from his crown. The Commons would not yield, for legal times were past. All law was set aside when Charles, at Wentworth's motion, had suspended the Bill of Rights. What more could Charles attempt? His army would not fight; an enemy was encamped upon his soil; his guards were overawed; the city bands were threatening; and the streets were loud for blood. He was alone; the men on whom he leaned in days gone by were not behind him. Windbank was in Calais, Finch was at the Hague, and Laud was in the Lieutenant's house. Where could he turn for counsel? Then he thought of that much-suffering prelate who had lain in the Tower so long, and yet on his release had shown no bitterness against his foes. He sent for Williams:—the Lord Deputy's fate was sealed. With sleek and tender guile the pluralist touched the King; alarmed him for his personal safety; and suggested that a scapegoat must be made of the unhappy Earl. The state of his affairs required a sacrifice; a sacrifice as great as the occasion; and the blood of Wentworth only could suffice. No power on earth could save him;—let him perish as a scapegoat for the King!

Charles heard, and signed.

Wentworth learned with lofty, uncomplaining scorn that he must die. He asked for three days' grace, in which to settle his affairs; but Pym would not consent to spare him for an hour. The tyrant's head must fall, and fall as had been fixed. "We ought to have a coach, my lord," urged Balfour, when the morning came. "A coach!" exclaimed the Earl, "for what?" "For safety," answered the Lieutenant; for the surge outside was great; the people were excited, and that officer was afraid the throng would push aside his guard, and tear the despotic noble limb from limb. "No, Master Lieutenant," said the livid and con-

temptuous Earl, "I can look death in the face, and the people too. I care not how I die—whether by the hand of the executioner or by the madness of the people. It is all one to me!"

As he came out to execution, attended by the Earl of Newport, Constable of the Tower, the Primate of Armagh, the Earl of Cleveland, and a train of gentlemen, he paused beneath Laud's window and looked up. Some days before, the Primate of Armagh had carried a request from him to Laud, desiring Laud to stand at the open casement as he passed, and give him a final blessing on his road to death. On seeing Laud, the Earl stood still a moment; bowed with holy reverence, and exclaimed, "My lord, your prayers, your blessings!" Laud held up his hands, in act to bless; but either fear or feeling overcame him, and he swooned, and fell into his attendant's arms. "Farewell, my lord," said Wentworth, turning towards the archway of the Bloody tower, "and may God protect your innocence." Then the halberdiers resumed their march.





CHAPTER XXXIII.

LAUD'S LAST TROUBLES.

ALONE in the Lieutenant's house, with secretaries, cooks and butlers, Laud began to write, as prisoners in the Tower are apt to do; continuing his "Diary" in briefest notes, and jotting down a History of his Troubles more in full. A year passed by. His enemies were busy; and for months he seemed to be "forgotten" in the Tower.

One chance was offered to the King by Williams to preserve his crown, by calling to his aid such men as held the public ear. This was "a policy of deception" also, on a larger scale and a more dangerous field. But Charles was playing as a gambler plays the hour before he flings away his life. Lyttleton, the foe of Villiers and the friend of Selden, got the Seals. St. John, who had spoken against ship-money, was appointed Solicitor-General. Bedford, Pym, and others were invited to take office, and the Eunuch was promoted to the see of York.

These changes brought no comfort to the prisoner in the Tower. His dainties were abridged; his jailers proved less pliant; and his household was reduced. Low people were allowed to hiss him; and his grants of livings in his province were constrained. But worse was soon to come. His Grace of York, now powerful in the closet and the House of Lords, procured

from Charles a sequestration of the Primate's powers. Laud was not brought to trial; for the popular chiefs were doubtful whether treason could be proved against him; and it suited Williams to postpone his sentence till he felt more certain of being able to secure his seat. While Laud was in the Tower untried, the actual primacy of England lay in the see of York. But short of being tried and punished, Laud could be made to suffer both in person and in purse. His plate, his books, his armour, his furniture, were seized at Lambeth, Croydon, and elsewhere. The guns which he had used against the "rascal routers" were removed from Lambeth to the Tower. Each day his servants brought him some bad news. He was to be arraigned for treason to the State; he was to be transported beyond the seas; he was to pass the remnant of his days at Plymouth Rock.

The newest policy of deception also failed, and Williams, as its author, was in no long time a prisoner in the Tower a second time. Pym would not join the court; the Earl of Bedford died; and Lyttleton and St. John, though accepting office, threw their energies into the Good Old Cause. The revolution grew apace. A motion was proposed to put the Bishops out of Parliament; on which his Grace of York, with sundry of his brethren, drew up an address, asserting that all acts promoted in their absence would be null and void. For this offence his Grace of York, and all the prelates who had signed his protest, were committed to the Tower.

For eighteen weeks, the Archbishop and his brethren lay in prison; begging pardon when they found that hectoring would not do; and going out, on due submission and repentance, not as lords of Parliament, but as simple ministers of God.

In the Lieutenant's house, the two Archbishops met at table: yokemen of the time and prisoners of the Church. His Grace of Canterbury forgave his

Grace of York ; his Grace of York shook hands with his Grace of Canterbury ; and then the two Archbishops parted on Balfour's stair, to meet no more on earth, profoundly ignorant of each other's better side. York carried his policy to another field, while Canterbury was left in the Tower to wait and watch events ; events which were to guide his fortune and control his life.

To try the Primate of all England as a public enemy, even though he were called Pope Laud, was one of those high and fatal acts from which the consciences of people shrank. Such spectral shapes as Bastwick, Prynne, and Burton—with their nostrils slit, their foreheads burnt, their ears cropped off—might yell and shriek for blood ; but men who had not suffered from the knife, the shears, the branding-irons, were content to hiss and curse, and leave Lord Hocus-Pocus in his lonely cell. Much fighting in the open field, wide waste of burning towns and slaughtered saints, were wanting, ere the public ire could flame into consuming heat. But soon this waste of fire and death set in. Unable to pursue his policy of deceit, the King attempted to arrest the popular members—failed—left London secretly—collected his adherents—fought at Edgehill, Brentford, Newbury, Nantwich, Marston Moor ; each battle bringing his Archbishop nearer to the tragic end.

Charles' flight from London threw the Tower into citizen hands. Sir Isaac Pennington, Lord Mayor, replaced Sir William Balfour as Lieutenant of the Tower. The Puritans were masters now, and Laud, though sorely tried by these events, was forced to close his ear and keep his choler down. The warders treated him with less respect ; the chaplains turned their texts against him. Parson Joscelyn, preaching at St. Peter's Church, abused him till the boys and women rose, and stared at him, to note how he would bear such "malice." Parson Kem was harder to

endure than Parson Joscelyn. Kem was the Captain of a troop of horse, who preached and fought with equal fire. He only knew one duty—that of smiting hip and thigh. He stood there for the good old cause, the cause of holiness, of liberty, of God. To fight for it was instant gain; to die for it eternal life. The Primate could not hear such stuff with patience. Worse than all, the House of Commons, careless of his dignity and dinners, took away his serving-men, excepting only three—two servants and a keeper. He petitioned for two more, a butler and a cook.

When Reading fell, he was removed from the Lieutenant's house to "a prison lodging:"—which appears to have been the Bloody tower. His keeper, too, was changed, and his establishment still more reduced in size.

One day, while fretting under these new miseries, he saw, on waking from his sleep, a spectre in the door-way of his cell; a man in shape, but with the image of his Maker seared and slashed; a tall, dark thing with branded cheeks, slit nostrils, shorn-off ears, and lacerated jaw. That spectre near his bed was William Prynne! The famous scholar, burnt, hacked, cropped by Laud, had come from Jersey, like a ghost; come back to track his foe, to fasten on his flesh, and never quit him more till he should see that blotched and purple face roll white beneath the headsman's axe. Prynne held a warrant in his hand; a warrant such as Laud had often signed, to search for papers. Laud rose up in bed; but Prynne had seized the Archbishop's clothes, and turned his pockets inside out. Some books, some papers, were discovered in his rooms—his "Diary," his Scottish "Service-book," his correspondence with the King—in all some twenty bundles. These were tied together, and, in spite of Laud's remonstrance, carried off by Prynne.

With all these treasures in his desk, Prynne fell to work. He thirsted for the Primate's blood, but he

had mountains to remove ere he could count on his revenge. He had to reconcile men's minds to taking an Archbishop's life. Once only had a deed so strange been done; and Cranmer's blood still lay, a heavy weight, upon the consciences of men. Before the world would listen to him, Prynne must prove that Laud was base in heart as he was weak in brain; as false to God as he was harsh to man. He had to show that Laud, an enemy to the Commonwealth, was also an apostate from the Church. The "Diary" which he seized in the Tower became his armoury of facts; for in that self-recording "Diary" of a life, he found such weakness, arrogance, servility, and baseness put in evidence as his vast and various reading could not match. *A Breviate of the Life of Laud* gave all this evidence to the world, with added sting and poison from his pitiless hate. But not until the fierce encounter of Marston Moor were people so far roused by passion as to see a Primate of all England tried, condemned, and put to death.

Laud's trial lasted long, and he was not cut off till four years after he had fainted at the sight of Wentworth on his way to rest. These four years brought more prisoners to the Tower; men of all parties and opinions; Sir Thomas Bedingfield, Sir Kenelm Digby, the two Hothams, young Lord Digby, Sir Richard Gurney, lord mayor, Colonel Hutchinson, Monk, Sir Harry Vane; but all these prisoners came and went, while Laud was left in the Tower to struggle with his fate and vampire Prynne. At length his "troubles" ceased, and he prepared for death. He made a decent end, as most men do when they are forced to die. Some people said, as he came forth, that he had painted his face that morning purple; but the standers-by were hushed into sudden awe on seeing that purple face turn ghastly white; and then the softer portion of the crowd sighed, "Lord, have mercy on his soul!"

Four years again flew past, and a more solemn scene

took place. From Marston Moor to Naseby was a step. Then followed Holmby, Hampton Court, and Carisbrook, High Court of Justice, and the scaffold at White Hall.

Another year, and Williams also closed his policies of deceptions. When he left the Tower he rode to Conway Castle, which he strengthened with guns and men, as a secure retreat for an Archbishop in distress. He rode to Oxford, where he told his Majesty he must either buy up Cromwell or have him taken off. Not finding that his "policy" was welcome, he retired to Conway Castle, which he held for Charles, so long as Charles could help him; afterwards for Parliament, while Parliament had the upper hand. His grace of York was always on the winning side. He wrote to Cromwell, whom he had vainly urged the King to either buy or murder, claiming help and kinship. But while writing to the Lord Protector, he was whispering to his chosen friends that his poor old heart was breaking for his exiled Prince. And so, successful and deceitful to the last, the Eunuch lived and died.





CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE LIEUTENANT'S HOUSE.

IN the south-west angle of the wall, a stack of quaint old Tudor buildings, marked by a fringe of lime-trees, stands the Lieutenant's house,—in strict official language, Government House. Above the roof grows a massive tower, much older than the pile itself; and from this tower springs a belfry, whence it takes that name. This Belfry has no separate door. The house has a ground-floor, occupied by guards and servants, opening on the Green; a second floor opens on the outer wall and river; while a third floor, later perhaps in style, looks over these above the Pool, the Bridge, and the Kentish shore. The rooms are small, the ceilings low. A gallery runs along the house; a covered way, connecting Prisoners' Walk with Raleigh's Walk; passing from that Strong room in the Belfry, which was the prison-house of Cardinal Fisher, Margaret Douglas, Edward Courtney, and the Princess Elizabeth, by the inner front of the building to the main staircase, where it crosses the house, and coming out on the wall, runs forward over Raleigh's Walk to the Bloody tower. The house was built in the reign of Henry the Eighth, and has the strong pictorial look of Tudor domestic art.

Planned after the charge of State offenders had come to lie with the Lieutenant rather than with the Constable, it was furnished with many chambers be-

sides the Strong room and the Council room ; since every personage of rank and credit who was brought into the Tower on a royal rescript, had to be received and lodged with his keeper until one of the "prison lodgings" on the wall could be furnished for his use. Such furnishing cost days and days, according to the prisoner's means and tastes ; a man like Seymour needed weeks ; hence, every one who came into the Tower, as prisoner, had to sleep in the Lieutenant's house, and dine at the Lieutenant's board.

This house has an abiding interest in the history of Thought ; for in its panelled rooms have lodged no insignificant number of the brightest wits and keenest intellects of our race. In these quaint chambers More could dream of his free Utopias ; Surrey could compose brave compliments to his fair Geraldine ; Wyatt could sing more Songs and rhyme more Sonnets ; Hayward could study to depose fresh Richards ; Southwell could tune his plaintive cithern ; Essex could dream of wiser Apologies than those he wrote ; Raleigh could shape his History of the World ; Watson could revolve his Quodlibetical Questions ; Father Garnet could review the field of Jesuit learning ; Overbury could revise *The Wife* ; Bacon could enlarge his Essays ; Coke could think of new Institutes ; Eliot could lay down his *Monarchy of Men* ; Prynne could add a Scourge to his enemies the players ; Archbishop Williams could recast his Holy Table ; Laud could keep his Diary, and project the History of his Troubles ; Jeremy Taylor could meditate on Holy Living, and Holy Dying ; Davenant could strain more Odes to an ungrateful world ; and Forde, Lord Grey of Werke, compose his Secret History of the Rye-House Plot. Down to the times of our Civil War long troops of poets and philosophers had come to the Lieutenant's house, though poetry was not the poet's crime, and speculative thought had seldom sent philosophers to the Tower ; but with the growth of learning Thought itself became suspected,

watched, imprisoned. When that noble confidence in the power of truth to beat down error, which inspired John Milton to contend for "liberty of unlicensed printing," ceased to be a poet's dream, the writers who in other times would have been simply whipped and pilloried, were committed to the Tower.

The list of thinkers, writers, preachers,—and of persons closely connected with thinkers, writers, and preachers,—widened from reign to reign. To the Lieutenant's house, and thence to their prison lodgings, came—the younger Vane, "Vane, young in years, but in sage counsels old," as Milton sang of him; Henry Marten, the famous Parliamentary wit, first, for reflecting on the King, afterwards for condemning him to death; William Taylor, member for Windsor, for saying "the House of Commons had committed murder with the sword of justice;" James Harrington, the dreamer of ideal commonwealth; Bishop Hall, whose *Historical Passages* are still admired; Colonel Hutchinson, the husband of Lucy Apsley; Roger, Earl of Castlemaine, for writing the *English Catholic's Apology*; George Villiers, the serio-comic Duke of Buckingham, author of *The Rehearsal*, and the *Satire against Mankind*, committed for the only virtuous act of his life, his marriage; Samuel Pepys, the unlucky diarist, suspected of the Popish plot; Jack Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, poet, profligate, lampooner, who had the audacity to write the lines (so frequently misquoted) on the bed-room door of Charles the Second,—

"Here lies our sovereign lord the King,
Whose word no man relies on,
Who never says a foolish thing,
And never does a wise one,"

and whose life by Bishop Burnet was so highly praised by Johnson; Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, cynical author of *The Characteristics*; Algernon Sydney, author of the great *Discourses* con-

cerning Government; Archbishop Sancroft; Thomas Ken, the pious Bishop of Bath and Wells; William Penn, who wrote in the Tower No Cross, No Crown; Henry, Earl of Clarendon, son of the great historian; Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, founder of the famous library of books and manuscripts; William Shippen, known as the "Plain Speaker,"—

"I love to pour out all myself, as plain
As downright Shippen and as old Montaigne,"

committed to the Tower for telling George the First that one who could not speak the King's English could not be an English king; Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, the friend of Pope and Swift; John Wilkes, editor of the *North Briton*; John Horne Tooke, author of *The Diversions of Purley*; and Sir Francis Burdett, for writing a letter to his constituents, which appeared in Cobbett's *Political Register*.

In and out, among these saints and rakes of literature, come other saints and rakes,—men of the sword, men of the pulpit, men of the long robe; peers, adventurers, spies, assassins, rebels,—a dramatic and exciting group; Sir John Maynard, on a quarrel with Sir Thomas Fairfax; Lionel Copley, for proceeding with public business in the Speaker's absence; Edward, Lord Howard of Escrick, committed for bribery; Sir Sydney Montague of Hinchinbrook, for opposition to the Earl of Essex; John Glyn, member for Westminster; Thomas, Lord Morley and Monteagle, for killing Henry Hastings in a tavern brawl; Thomas, Earl of Danby, afterwards Duke of Leeds; William, Lord Russell, the famous patriot; James, Duke of Monmouth, bastard son of Charles the Second; with the Duchess, and her children; Charles, Lord Mohun, accessory to the murder of William Mountford, in a street brawl; Arthur Capel, Earl of Essex, who committed suicide—as a jury found—in the Gentleman Jailor's House, the prison of Lady Jane Grey; Judge

Jeffreys, who expired in his prison lodging; the adventurous Earl of Peterborough; John Churchill, Earl (and afterwards Duke) of Marlborough; Henry Grey, a member of the House of Commons, on a charge of accepting a bribe for his vote; Edward, Earl of Warwick and Holland, for his share in the murder of Richard Coote; William Cotesworth, for bribery and corruption in procuring his election to Parliament; Sir Robert Walpole, Secretary-at-War, committed by the House of Commons for high breach of trust and notorious corruption in his office; the Scottish nobles who supported the Chevalier de St. George—Cornwath, Wintoun, Nithsdale, Derwentwater, Widdrington, Kenmure, and Nairn; Thomas, Earl of Macclesfield, Lord Chancellor of England, for high crimes and misdemeanours in his office; Lawrence Shirley, Earl Ferrars, for the murder of his servant, John Johnson; Lord George Gordon; Arthur O'Connor; Lord Cloncurry; Arthur Thistlewood, of Cato Street renown.





CHAPTER XXXV.

A POLITICAL ROMANCE.

ON a dark December evening, in the year of Restoration, Captain Edward Short, a King's gentleman-pensioner, accompanied by the head-borough and a squad of troopers, came to the house of William Dugard, the lexicographer and printer, near Newington Butts. He smote the door, and clamoured for the printer to come down. A great offender was supposed to be in hiding; one of those men who had dipped their hands in royal and sacred blood. Was he concealed among the frames and types? Short meant to search and take him. Show his warrant! Short whipt out his blade; a gentleman-pensioner, a captain, acting under the Earl of Cleveland, his commission was a yard of steel! What offender were they seeking? Harrington; James Harrington, of Rutland; falsely called *Sir* James, being one of Cromwell's knights. A rebel? nay, a regicide! The bolts being drawn, the squad of men pressed forward into the printer's house; and Captain Short laid hands on a guest who gave the name of Mr. Edwards, and said he was staying on a visit with his friend. Dugard was loud in voice and rough in mien. This "Edwards" was his guest, and should not be disturbed. If Captain Short, whom he had known in other days as a Congregationalist, if not an Anabaptist, had a lawful warrant, let him show

it ; if he had not, let him go next day before a justice of the peace and get one. Dugard would answer for his friend ; if bail were wanted, he was ready with his bond. " Edwards " was a crusty man, who would not suffer himself to be seized in flagrant violation of the law. Afraid of going too far, Captain Short accepted Dugard's bond in five thousand pounds that " Edwards " should surrender to a warrant duly signed ; but when the Captain came to the house next day, Dugard and " Edwards " were no longer to be found.

That " Mr. Edwards," hiding in the printer's house, was actually Sir James, a Councillor of State, and one of the late King's judges. In his days of power, Sir James had done a service to the printer, which the printer now returned. Dugard, a staunch Cavalier, had issued most of the royalist books of chief repute,—the *Icon Basilicon*, the *Elenchus motuum nuperorum Angliæ*, the *Salmasii Defensio Regia* ; and for this disservice to their party he was clapped in jail by the victorious Ironsides, indicted as a public enemy, and put in jeopardy of his life, Sir James had saved him ; and in changing fortune he was now resolved to save Sir James.

The dogs were soon upon their track, though never on their scent. A year passed by, but Harrington was not found. His land was seized, his knighthood taken from him, and his Rutland holding settled on the Duke of York. Dugard was faithful to his guest, and Harrington defied the vigilance of Captain Short.

This clever, bustling, and evasive Harrington had a cousin, once or twice removed, who also bore the name of James. A student and idealist, this second James had done no wrong, unless much thinking on the art of government was wrong. A nephew of Lord Harrington, of Exton, author of the *Nugæ Antiquæ*, and a pupil of Dr. Chillingworth, author of *The Unlawfulness of Resisting the Lawful Prince*, James Harrington was by birth and training bound to the Court, and

while King Charles had lived was closely held by him. This man had seen the world, had chatted with the Queen of Hearts, had watched the Doge ascend the giant stairs, had borne a flag in Craven's regiment, had heard the Pope pronounce anathema, had sailed below the guns of Elsinore, had loitered on the Louvre swards, had run through Alpine pass and German town, had lived with Charles at Holdenby, Carisbrooke, and Windsor, now as Gentleman of the Chamber, then as companion, afterwards as confidential scribe. He had been true to Charles; not as a dog is true, but as a man is true. He never told him lies, he rarely hid his thoughts, even when he knew that Charles would not agree with him; but he contrived by wit and compliment to say his say with only slight offence.

"I hear," said Charles, "you would not kiss the Pope's toe. You might have done so in respect to him as a temporal prince."

"Sir," replied the adroit philosopher, "since I have had the honour to kiss your Majesty's hand, it is beneath me to kiss another prince's foot."

When Charles was gone, and every one was toiling after Ideal Commonwealths, he slipt from public sight, forgot that men are men, and in a court of books—Hesperides, Utopias, Cities of the Sun—lay down and dreamt a dream. He thought him of a green and golden isle, where "Ceres and Bacchus are perpetual twins;" an islet rising in the Western seas, in which the verdure hides no snake, the woods conceal no beast of prey, in which the cooling breezes bring no frost, the ripening sunshine darts no fire. Soft hills and lovely lakes adorn this Eden of the West. Great herds of sheep and cattle browse upon her slopes, from which a troop of shepherdesses shear the fleece, and bands of milkmaids carol at the pails. A race of brave men, nursed by gentle mothers, dwell upon this isle; brave men, and free, who know the arts of life, and put them into practice day by day; not only for the good of one,

but for the good and love of all. This isle is Oceana—England; not the country of our civil strife, with one Big Bashaw called a Lord-Protector, and ten Lesser Bashaws, called his Major-generals, ruling it; but an Ideal Commonwealth, with citizens who fight no Naseby, cut off no King's head, and shoe their horses in no church, but bask in peace, like children of one house, in loyal confidence that what is best for all is in the long life best for each.

The story of this book called Oceana is a romance not less curious than the book itself.

When Harrington set down the particulars of his dream he sent his manuscript to press; believing he had only just to tell the world how happily it might live without those twelve Bashaws called Major-generals, for Skippon and the rest, to lay aside the swords and smoke the calumet of peace. But Bashaws have rough ways, and some of Major-General Skippon's people (Skippon was Bashaw in London) pounced upon his printer, seized his copy, judged it to be perilous stuff, and bore it to the Lord Protector's house.

In vain the philosopher begged to have his papers back. White Hall was ruled just then by Ironside law, and dreamers who had visions of Ideal Commonwealths were apt to get confused by Major-generals with those Levellers and Anabaptists who contended for imaginary reigns of Christ with midnight drill and push of pike. The Oceana might be a romance; but Harrington, well known as an adherent of the fallen cause, had made no secret of his hope, that by exhibiting a perfect model of free government, he might leave the rude Bashaws in power without excuse. His romance was constructed to that end. He proved by arguments, which no one could have said were false, that brave men, dwelling in a green and golden isle, with cooling winds and ripening heats, with grass which hides no snakes, and woods which screen no beasts of prey, might live in trust and peace, without a Big

Bashaw called Lord-Protector, and his Lesser Bashaws called Major-generals. Stuff like this was not to be endured, and Harrington tried in vain to get his papers, till he thought of Lady Claypole, Cromwell's favourite child, the friend of every one who had a cause to plead in that Ironside court. He went to her house, and while the chamberlain was taking in his name a little girl came walking with her women through the room, to whom the dreamer told such pretty stories that she nestled in his arms, and would not leave him till her mother came. Laying the child down at Lady Claypole's feet, he said, "Madam, 'tis well you have come in the nick of time." "Why?" asked Lady Claypole. "Else I had certainly stolen this pretty little lady." "Stolen her!" exclaimed the mother, "she is too young to be your mistress." "Not for love, but for revenge, should I commit this theft." "What injury have I done, that you should steal my child?" "None!" answered the Idealist; "but then you might have been induced to prevail with your father to do me justice by restoring to me my child which he has stolen." "Stolen your child! It is impossible; he has so many children of his own!" Here he explained that his stolen child was the issue of his brain. Lady Claypole promised that his suit should be heard, and if his book contained no dangerous matter he should have it back. "It is a mere political romance," said Harrington. "So far from treason to your father, I mean to dedicate it to His Highness." To herself he promised one of the earliest copies from the press.

"The gentleman," said Cromwell, after reading *Oceana*, "would like to trepan me out of my power; but what the Sword has won will not be lost by a little paper shot." He read it well, and saw no reason to refuse the dedication. "I approve the government of a single person as little as any of them," Cromwell added. "I am forced into the office of High Constable to preserve the peace."

No sooner was Oceana out, than two great factions set upon it:—first, the High Church clergy and connexion; then the Non-conforming and Republican divines. A stream of books and pamphlets issued from the press; of which the more famous pieces were Bishop Ferne's *Pian Piano*, and Richard Baxter's *Holy Commonwealth*. Matthew Wren (a son of the Bishop of Ely) wrote against Oceana; and as Wren was one of Bishop Wilkins' circle, who were just then founding the Royal Society, Harrington said of these philosophers, "They have an excellent faculty of magnifying a louse and diminishing a commonwealth."

To make the principles laid down in Oceana known, he founded a political club in New Palace Yard, called the Rota, and the members held their meetings in a sort of rivalry to the Rump, which they esteemed no Parliament at all. Henry Nevil, Cyriac Skinner (Milton's friend), Roger Coke, Sir William Petty (founder of the house of Lansdowne), Major Wildman (chief of the Anabaptist party), John Aubrey, and Sir William Pulteney were members. They discussed all questions, and they took all votes by ballot. Harrington had seen the balloting in Venice, and he fancied he was bringing into use a new, as well as philosophical, way of taking votes. He was mistaken in his history, as reference to the journals of Parliament would have shown him. Yet his Rota had a great effect in rousing public thought upon the ballot; and his Oceana will be always held in honour by political thinkers as the first great English book in which a free delivery is regarded as no less essential than a free possession of political power.

The Rota was dissolved by Monk, when the excluded members were recalled, and Parliament was supposed to be itself again.

When Charles the Second came back, the dreamer of Ideal Commonwealths retired once more into his chamber, shut the door, and began to write. His

friends, who knew how fertile he could be in systems, begged him to draw up something for the royal use; some short and easy "Instructions for the King's Service," which might help in settling the new affairs in Church and State. At once, he fell to work, and soon a paper of "Instructions," showing his Majesty how he could govern "with satisfaction to the people and with safety to himself," was penned. But Charles, less tolerant of advice than Oliver, gave orders for his instant arrest, and close imprisonment in the Tower!

Sir William Pulteney—late his pupil in the Rota—came to his house with a squad of officers, who found him putting the final touches to a System of Politics which was to make men free and happy ever more. Sir William knew his man; but the officials who had drawn the warrant of arrest, being busy in pursuit of Harrington the Regicide, supposed the new offender was the old, and when the paper was presented, it was found to authorise Sir William Pulteney to arrest *Sir James*.





CHAPTER XXXVI.

PHILOSOPHY AT BAY

WARNED by the failures of Captain Short, Sir William Pulteney would not stand on forms. He knew his man too well. He saw before him the dreamer of Ideal Commonwealths, the advocate of Independent Votes, the author of "Instructions for the King's Service;" and he cared but little for such legal stuff as whether his warrant was correctly drawn or not. The King had given his orders, who should say him nay? If wrong were done, the King would answer it. For Pulteney, there was nothing but to execute his trust.

Then Harrington must yield to force, and seek his remedy in the courts of law. Might he send for any one? Not a soul. Could he have time to settle his affairs? Not an hour. Might he pick up his written sheets, and fasten them with a skein of thread? Well; yes, if he were quick. Within an hour Sir William Pulteney rendered him a prisoner to Sir John Robinson, Lieutenant of the Tower, who gave this member of the Rota a receipt for his master's body, and proceeded, in accordance with his orders to secrete that dreamer from the world.

Pulteney took the papers he had captured to White Hall, where Charles referred them, not to his chief advisers, who were men of trust and had some knowledge of affairs, but to John, Earl of Lauderdale, Sir

George Carteret, and Sir Edward Walker; Lauderdale being his Scottish Secretary, Carteret his Vice-chamberlain, Walker his Clerk of the Council. Lady Ashton, one of Harrington's sisters, went to the King, who knew her well as one of his staunchest friends. She threw herself on the ground before him. She would answer for her brother James as for herself. She knew his capture was an error. He had done no wrong. His Majesty might see that he was not the man. The warrant was to apprehend her cousin, *Sir James*, not her brother James. Charles dryly answered that if they were wrong about the title, they were right about the man. He feared the prisoner was more guilty than she thought her brother could be. Lady Ashton, who was not allowed by Robinson to see her brother in his cell, beseeched his Majesty to let him have a speedy trial; to which the King replied by sending Lauderdale, Carteret, and Walker, as his Commissioners, to examine Harrington in the Tower.

These three Commissioners—Secretary, Vice-chamberlain, and Clerk—sembled in the Council-room of the Lieutenant's house, on which Sir John Robinson and his halberdiers placed the philosopher before them. Lauderdale, who was connected with the Harringtons, saluted him: "Sir, I have heretofore accounted it an honour to be your kinsman. I am sorry to see you upon this occasion; very sorry, I assure you." The Commissioners sat in front of the wooden bust of James the First, beneath the lying panels of the Powder Plot, with Harrington before them, placid as the sea around his golden isle. This prison talk took place:

Lauderdale. Sir, the King thinks it strange that you, who have so eminently appeared in principles contrary to his Majesty's Government, and the laws of this nation, should ever since he came over live so quiet and unmolested, and yet should be so ungrateful. Were you disturbed? Were you so much as affronted, that you should enter into such desperate practices?

Prisoner. My Lord, when I know why this is said, I shall know what to say.

Lauderdale. Well then, without any longer preamble, will you answer me ingenuously, and as you are a gentleman, to what I have to propose?

Prisoner. My Lord, I value the asseveration (as I am a gentleman) as high as any man, but think it an asseveration too low upon this occasion; wherefore, with your leave, I shall make use of some greater asseveration.

Lauderdale. For that do as you see good; do you know Mr. Wildman?

Prisoner. My Lord, I have some acquaintance with him.

Lauderdale. When did you see him?

Prisoner. My Lord, he and I have not been in one house together these two years.

Lauderdale. Will you say so?

Prisoner. Yes, my Lord.

Lauderdale. Where did you see him last?

Prisoner. About a year ago I met him in a street that goes to Drury Lane.

Lauderdale. Did you go into no house?

Prisoner. No, my Lord.

Carteret. That's strange!

Lauderdale. Come, this will do you no good. Had not you, in March last, meetings with him in Bow Street in Covent Garden? where there were about twenty more of you; where you made a speech about half an hour long, that they should lay by distinguishing names, and betake themselves together into one work, which was to dissolve this Parliament, and bring in a new one, or the old one again. Was not this meeting adjourned from thence to the Mill Bank? Were not you there also?

Prisoner. My Lord, you may think, if these things be true, I have no refuge but to the mercy of God and of the King?

Lauderdale. True.

Prisoner. Well then, my Lord, solemnly and deliberately, with my eyes to heaven, I renounce the mercy of God and the King if any of this be true, or if ever I thought or heard of this till now that you tell it me.

Carteret. This is strange!

Lauderdale. Do you know Barebones?

Prisoner. Yes, my Lord.

Lauderdale. When did you see him?

Prisoner. I think that I have called at his house or shop thrice in my life.

Lauderdale. Had you never any meetings with him since the King came over?

Prisoner. No, my Lord.

Carteret. This is strange!

Lauderdale. Do you know Mr. Nevil?

Prisoner. Very well, my Lord.

Lauderdale. When did you see him?

Prisoner. My Lord, I seldom used to visit him; but when he was in town, he used to see me at my house every evening, as duly almost as the day went over his head.

Lauderdale. Were you not with him at some public meeting?

Prisoner. My Lord, the publicest meeting I have been with him at, was at dinner at his own lodging, where I met Sir Bernard Gascoin, and I think Colonel Leg.

Walker. They were good safe company.

Lauderdale. What time was it?

Prisoner. In venison time I am sure, for we had a good venison pasty.

Lauderdale. Do you know one Portman?

Prisoner. No, my Lord, I never heard of his name before.

Carteret. This is strange!

Lauderdale. Come, deal ingenuously, you had better confess the things.

Prisoner. My Lord, you do not look upon me; I pray look upon me. Do you not know an innocent face from a guilty one? Come, you do, my Lord? Every one does. My Lord, you are great men; you come from the King; you are the messengers of death.

Lauderdale. Is that a small matter? (at which my Lord gave a shrug).

Prisoner. If I be a malefactor, I am no old malefactor; why am not I pale? why do not I tremble? why does not my tongue falter? why have you not taken me tripping? My Lord, these are unavoidable symptoms of guilt. Do you find any such thing in me?

Lauderdale. No; I have said all that I think I have to say.

Prisoner. My Lord, but I have not.

Lauderdale. Come then.

Prisoner. This plainly is a practice; a wicked practice; a practice for innocent blood; and as weak a one as it is wicked. Ah, my Lord, if you had taken half the pains to examine the guilty that you have done to examine the innocent, you had found it; it could not have escaped you. Now, my Lord, consider if this be a practice, what kind of persons you are that are thus far made instrumental in the hands of wicked men. Nay, whither will wickedness go? Is not the King's authority (which should be sacred) made instrumental? My Lord, for your own sake, for the King's sake, for the Lord's sake, let such villainies be found out and punished.

Lauderdale rose, and fumbling with his hands upon the table, said—

Lauderdale. Why if it be as you say, they deserve punishment enough, but otherwise look it will come severely upon you.

Prisoner. My Lord, I accepted of that condition before.

Lauderdale. Come, Mr. Vice-Chamberlain, it is late.

Prisoner. My Lord, now if I might I could answer the preamble.

Lauderdale. Come, say.

Then Lauderdale sat down again.

Prisoner. My Lord, in the preamble you charge me with being eminent in principles contrary to the King's Government, and the laws of this nation. Some, my Lord, have aggravated this, saying, that I being a private man have been so mad as to meddle with politics: what had a private man to do with Government? My Lord, there is not any public person, not any magistrate, that has written in the politics worth a button. All they that have been excellent in this way, have been private men, as private men, my Lord, as myself. There is Plato, there is Aristotle, there is Livy, there is Machiavel. My Lord, I can sum up Aristotle's politics in very few words. He says there is the barbarous monarchy (such a one where the people have no votes in making the laws); he says there is the heroic monarchy (such a one where the people have their votes in making the laws); and then he says there is democracy; and affirms that a man cannot be said to have liberty, but in a democracy only.

Lauderdale showed some impatience.

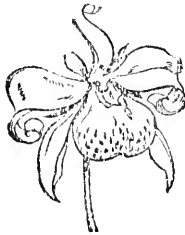
Prisoner. I say, Aristotle says so; I have not said so much. And under what Prince was it? Was it not under Alexander, the greatest Prince then in the world? I beseech you, my Lord, did Alexander hang up Aristotle? Did he molest him? Livy for a Commonwealth is one of the fullest authors. Did not he write under Augustus Cæsar? Did Cæsar hang up Livy, did he molest him? Machiavel, what a Commonwealth's man was he? But he wrote under the Medici when they were Princes in Florence; did they hang up Machiavel, or did they molest him? I have done no otherwise than as the greatest politicians;

the King will do no otherwise than as the greatest Princes. But, my Lord, these authors had not that to say for themselves that I have. I did not write under a Prince, I wrote under a usurper, Oliver. He having started up into the throne, his officers (as pretending to be for a Commonwealth) kept a murmuring, at which he told them that he knew not what they meant nor themselves; but let any of them show him what they meant by a Commonwealth (or that there was any such thing) they should see that he sought not himself—the Lord knew he sought not himself, but to make good the Cause. Upon this some sober men came to me and told me, if any man in England could show what a Commonwealth was, it was myself. Upon this persuasion I wrote; and after I had written, Oliver never answered his officers as he had done before; therefore I wrote not against the King's Government. And for the law, if the law could have punished me, Oliver had done it; therefore my writing was not obnoxious to the law. After Oliver the Parliament said they were a Commonwealth. I said they were not, and proved it; insomuch that the Parliament accounted me a Cavalier, and one that had no other design in my writing, than to bring in the King; and now the King first of any man makes me a Round-head!

What could Lauderdale reply—unless he chose to echo Carteret—"That is strange!" His lordship, rising from his seat, said, "If you be no plotter, the King does not reflect upon your writings," and he moved away, accompanied by the Vice-chamberlain and the Clerk. At the stair-head, the philosopher added, with a covert sarcasm which was utterly lost upon the Scottish Earl:

"My Lord! there is one thing more. You tax me with ingratitude to the King, who had suffered me to live undisturbed. Truly, my Lord, had I been taken right by the King, it had been no more than my due.

But I have been *mistaken* by the King. The King, therefore, taking me for no friend, yet using me not as an enemy, I have mentioned to all I have conversed with a high character of ingenuity and honour in the King's nature." Catching at the word, and missing the sense of Harrington's reply, the dull Earl muttered, "I am glad you have had a sense of it," and so went down into the open air. Still standing on the stair, the prisoner fired his Parthian bolt, "My lord, it is my duty to wait on you no further."





CHAPTER XXXVII.

FATE OF AN IDEALIST.

NOT a gleam of light could Lauderdale and his fellow-commissioners bring to Charles of any plot in which Harrington was engaged; but they had learned enough to understand that such a speaker could not be safely indicted in a public court. He had a fearless power of speech; a power of which men like Lauderdale and Carteret felt a wholesome dread. But neither could they set him free. They saw that if he were at liberty he would talk and write.

The true offence of Harrington was his political views; his theory of governing men by Rota, Ballot, and the like. Charles heard that Rota meant a frequent change of his advisers, and that Ballot meant a choice of those advisers by an independent vote. He knew that ballot-voting was an English method; that it was established in the free colony of Massachusetts; that his father, finding it in use in London, called upon the Lord Mayor, the Corporation, and the City Companies, to put it down. They had not done his will, though pressed by threat of fine and jail; for voting by the gilt box, yea and nay, had been a city fashion long before the Stuarts came to England; long before the Reformation; perhaps before the time of printed books. To Charles the Second, as to Charles the First, free voting was a greater evil than free speak-

ing; and as Harrington was the ablest champion of free voting, and such heresies, it was held desirable to hold him under the Lieutenant's key.

Some charge, of course, it would be well to bring against him; and the Chancellor, now Lord Clarendon, was required to make it. In a conference of the Lords and Commons, Clarendon had the baseness to connect his name with the names of Henry Nevil and Major Wildman, and to speak of his suspicions as established facts. Though nothing could be proved, he managed to create a prejudice in the minds of passionate Peers, and no less passionate Commoners, that the prisoner in the Tower was not a man who could be safely left at large.

Week after week, month after month, slipped by, and nothing could be done for the philosopher in the Tower. His jailor and that jailor's wife, Sir John and Lady Robinson, were not a bit like stout Sir Allan Apsley and his gentle spouse. Sir John, a nephew of Archbishop Laud, and Alderman of Dowgate, fussed and fumed about the Court in Monk's time, and persuaded Monk that he had done much service in recalling Charles. The citizens, he said, were oxen and asses, whom he yoked and ploughed with as he pleased; and this poor braggart, for a service which was next to nothing, was created knight and baronet, Lord Mayor, and King's Lieutenant of the Tower. A drinking, baffle-headed fellow, who could hardly spell and write his native tongue, he had no rules of office save to please his royal master, and enrich himself by fees. His wife, a daughter of Sir George Whitmore, haberdasher and malignant, was a worthy partner of such a husband. Pepys, who knew them well, and dined with them at the Tower, describes the lady as "very proud and cunning . . . and wanton, too." So far from being a mother to poor prisoners, Lady Robinson only thought how she could press them into buying her indulgences by bribes. When Harrington's

sisters got admission to the Tower, they found him in a wretched den, not fit to house a dog; and on complaining of such treatment, were informed that the Lieutenant must be paid his vails. Before Sir John would grant his prisoner decent lodging, he extracted from these ladies fifty pounds.

Dependent on their brother for allowances, these poor ladies were without a penny; for his tenants, used to paying him their rents, and sore in mind about the legal rights of "a king's prisoner," would not pay one groat of rent unless they saw him sign the quit-tance with his own right hand! A second time, Lady Ashton threw herself on the ground, and for the woman's sake, the King gave orders that Sir John Robinson should admit these bumpkins to a sight of their landlord on quarter-day. A humorous scene took place. These country louts came in, through files of halberdiers, each bringing in his bag of angels, which he laid on a table in the narrow cell, and watched his master sign the quittance—sign with his own hand!

Five months the poor Idealist lay a prisoner ere he thought of asking for his right of trial from the High Court of Parliament. Lady Ashton had disturbed the gallery of White Hall with daily prayers. The King referred her to his Council, and his Council to the King. She spoke about his loyalty as a Cavalier; they answered with a well-bred sneer. She hinted at his free-born rights; they turned upon her with a darkening scowl. When he prepared his note to Parliament, asking, not for freedom but for trial, not a member of the Commons had the courage to present his mild petition to the House. Knight and burgess told her it would do no good, and cause her brother to be more and more restrained. She must be patient; she must wait for kings to change and times to mend.

But Lady Ashton could not wait for kings to change and times to mend; she felt that he was innocent of plots; she hoped his innocence would appear; and

when petitions failed her, she applied to the courts of law. She asked for a writ of Habeas Corpus; forcing the Council either to relax their grip or prove him guilty of some crime. At first the servile judges would not hear her case; but barristers are not so timid in their speech as knights and burgesses; and when the point was pressed, the judges yielded and the writ went out. Poor Lady Ashton thought her work was done, her brother saved.

At dead of night, some minutes after one o'clock, a barge drew near the Tower, and warders came with arms and torches under Harrington's window. Knocking at his door, they woke him from his sleep, compelled him to put on his clothes, and go with them on board that barge. No time was given him to see his man, to write a line, to send for money, even to pack his things. No hint was given him why he was removed, whither he was going, when he would be suffered to communicate with his friends. A guard of soldiers bore him to the boat. This boat conveyed him down the river to a war-ship; and the war-ship weighed her anchor and put out to sea.

So soon as daylight came, a keeper who had learned to feel for Lady Ashton, pulled up to Westminster, and running to her house, informed her that her brother had been spirited off in the dead of night. The news appeared to her a dream. What, snatch a man from justice, break the covenant of law, insult his Majesty in the person of his judge? Why, this was treason; treason of the highest class! Poor Lady Ashton had to learn that law is not for men like Charles.

She drove to the Secretary of State, but he could tell her little; to the Lieutenant of the Tower, but he could tell her less. She roamed about the Tower, a restless, raving creature, questioning every one she met, and learning nothing for a fortnight, till a letter reached her hands from James himself. He was on board a vessel in the Solent, near Hurst Castle, bound

for some place farther west—near Plymouth, maybe. Four weeks later, she received a second note from him, dated from a lonely rock in Plymouth Sound, the chapel of St. Nicholas, and bearing still the name of that sea-faring Saint. She could not go to him, and they would hardly suffer her to write. Confined to his lonely rock, compelled to drink the brackish water, and unable to walk and ride, the dreamer fell into bad health and feverish spirits; yet he never ceased to dream that men, in order to be happy, had no more to do than read the *Oceana* and apply the rules laid down.

Of all the cities he had seen in early life, the City on Sea was his delight. From love of bright lagoons, and golden houses, he had passed into poetic rapture for Venetian institutions—the elected Doge, the great Council, the electoral colleges, the secret ballot; nearly all of which he held to be absolutely perfect as to *form*. So strong was his belief in forms, that he asserted and believed that the Venetian government must last to the end of time!

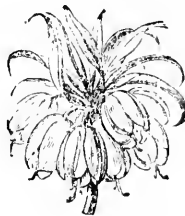
His mind began to fail him, even as his health had failed. The brightest brain depends on air and exercise, on food and drink. Damp lodging, brackish water, restraint of freedom, tell on the stoutest frames; and Harrington's poetic intellect was unsupported by a powerful frame. The flesh fell off, the bones protruded through his skin, the pleasant eyes grew dim, and the observant speech was flat and stale.

When he was little save a wreck, the King permitted him to quit his sea-girt rock for a prison on the main-land of Devon, on his brother and his uncle giving bonds of five thousand pounds that he would not escape. He was a figure pitiful to see; a living skeleton, with his skin all sore from scurvy, caused by brackish water and unwholesome food. The doctors tried to save his life; and one of these doctors, undertaking to cure his scurvy by decoctions of guaiacum

taken in coffee, made him worse, not only in his body but his mind. Many supposed that he was poisoned in a slow and artful way. "He has been given a drink," they said, "that would drive a man mad in thirty days." Poisoned or not poisoned, he never was himself again.

Allowed to visit London, and to drink the Epsom waters, he was still a "king's prisoner;" and as one of the court physicians gave him huge doses of hellebore, the hint of poisoning never dropt until the poor old man, a harmless "wanderer in the waste," succumbed to an attack of palsy, and expired in his house near Palace Yard.

The poor Idealist, prattled to the last about a green and golden isle, in which the grass conceals no snakes, the woods no beasts of prey, and men live happily together in trust and love. His wasted frame was laid beside the altar, in the very next grave to Raleigh, in St. Margaret's Church.





CHAPTER XXXVIII.

“*BRITANNIA.*”

WHILE the dreamer of a golden age was wearing out his life in Plymouth Sound, his place in the Tower was filled by Charles Stuart, Duke of Richmond, cousin to the reigning king.

The Duke had fallen in love with a fair and foolish woman of his family, Frances Terese, a daughter of Walter Stuart, of the Blantyre branch; the loveliest and the silliest creature in a court adorned by lovely fools. Fine judges thought her beauty perfect, and her head, as drawn by Potier in the figure of Britannia, has the form and turn of an ideal Grace. The artists of all nations loved to look on her. Lely painted her as a girl; Huysman arrayed her as a warrior; Potier struck her as the genius of her country on his dies. Tall, fair, and lithe—with French accomplishments in dress, in speech, and taste—a brilliant songstress, an untiring dancer, a diverting mimic—Fair Stuart was adored by all the golden youth. Count Hamilton admired her. Grammont felt the magic of her eye. Richmond was her slave. Buckingham left his mistresses to dangle at her heels. Mandeville was her Valentine. Carlington lit candles in her honour. Digby died for her; a wild and passionate sacrifice, which Buckingham mocked in his *Rehearsal*, and Dryden celebrated in his heroic verse.

Chief among Fair Stuart's lovers were the King and his brother James, who held high words about her, and at one time almost fell to blows. She had apartments in White Hall, a few steps only from the King's; a few steps also from Lady Castlemaine's. Pepys lifts the curtain on an evening scene, at which the King was present, while these silly, shameless women parodied the marriage-rite; when Lady Castlemaine played the part of groom, and Frances Stuart that of bride, with ring and riband, bell and book, posset and slipper; an indecent comedy, played amidst ribald jests and roars of laughter. Frances held the post of royal mistress, and was next in favour to her friend and patroness, Lady Castlemaine, with whom in spite of their daily rivalry, she lived on terms of friendship—for a time. These high-born women had their enemies on a lower line. Of noble lineage, they had need to stand by their order in each other, while such acting hussies as Nell Gwynne, Moll Davis, and their peers, were dropping curtsies to the King.

With this angelic simpleton the Duke was deep in love, and rumours flew about the Park and Bowling Alley that he meant to snatch her from all rivals, carry her into Kent, and take her to his bosom as a wife. The King grew livid at this news; his fair and foolish cousin being the only woman who had ever touched his heart. Not once but many times the Court was startled by a hint that he would yet divorce his Queen, and raise his pretty mistress to the throne. He offered her the rank of Duchess, with a pension to support her rank. He offered to dismiss his harem, purify his house, and live for her alone, if only she would live for him alone—her life of shame! The Duke was soon aware that Charles was mad upon this point, and that his passion, which was light enough in cases such as those of Nell and Barbara, would brook no rival in his love for Frances, and the least of all a rival with a husband's rights.

Few men in story are so falsely figured to the popular mind as Charles the Second, in his guise of “Merrie Monarch” of a “merrie isle.” A bright young prince—with saucy eye and rosy cheek; a fell of loose brown curls about his graceless brow; a gay and bounding step, a laughing voice, a reckless hand; a youth with all the heat and prank of youth; a wit, a gentleman, a courtier; with uncontrollable delight in pretty girls, pet spaniels, and guitars; as ready in his warmth of heart to help a fellow with his purse as to surprise a barmaid with a kiss:—behold the shape of Charles the Second as it haunts the boards of country theatres, and adorns the picture-galleries every May! Another picture, closer to the facts, reports him as a dark, gaunt man, with hairless scalp, and bleary eyes, and sensual mouth, false teeth, false curls, false colour; bald, be-wigged, and painted; with a sunken cheek, a hideous leer, a pinched and saturnine face; a man past middle age, and looking older than his years; just hobbling to his grave with gouty leg and broken frame, amidst a rout of gamblers, courtesans, and pimps, who cheat each other and play false to him; a prince who sells his country for a bribe, a churchman who betrays his faith, a man whom no one calls a friend, a lover whom his lemans dupe and cheat.

Fair Stuart, though she liked the devilries of a court, was yet not blind to the advantages of an honest title and a good estate. Her suitor had great merits and defects. He was a Stuart like herself, but standing nearer to the throne. He was a Scottish and an English duke. He held a string of castles, manors, and commissions. On the other side, he was a sot, a profligate, a fool. Aware that he would be an excellent cloak for her, she gave him hope, though she was living under Charles’s roof. This courtship brought her suitor to the Tower.

When Frances told the King that her name was being spotted, that her only hope of keeping up the

game, was in a speedy marriage with some gentleman of rank and wealth, who would be near the court, and could maintain her properly, what could he say in answer to her wish, except that he would see her settled, in accordance with her merit and his love? She told him what the Duke had done. Charles answered he would look to it; he meant, in secret, that he would prevent the match. Charles knew the Duke was deep in debt, and made proposals for her settlement such as Richmond could not meet. Fair Frances saw this trick, and Richmond also saw that these proposals were not made by her. She meant to have him, and he spent long evenings with her, plotting an escape, when Charles imagined she was sick in bed.

One night, the King came suddenly into Lady Castlemaine's room; his peevish brow and sullen words betraying the vexation of his heart. The woman knew that he had met some slight, and, quick with jealousy, she guessed that he had been with Frances and repelled. "Mistress Stuart," she suggested, with a sneer, "has sent you packing on some ground of indisposition?" Yes; she had. "Sick!" cried Lady Castlemaine, with scorn, "go back to her chamber; you will find your happier rival in your place!" Charles looked at her, and frowned; as though, all gentleman as he claimed to be, he felt inclined to go and see if her insulting words were true. Lady Castlemaine had just been told by her Italian spy, Babiani, that the Duke had passed into the lady's room! Taking Charles by the hand, she led him forward into the gallery which divided the royal apartments from the harem. "Go in quickly," said the jealous woman to the King. "Follow," she added to her spy, "and bring me back the news." It was close on midnight, and the chambermaid begged his Majesty not to enter, as her mistress had been ill, and now was gone to sleep. "That I must see," Charles blurted out; and pushing

the chambermaid from her watch, he strode into the room.

Fair Frances was in bed, but not asleep; and Richmond was beside her bed, arranging plans for her escape. The King's dark scowl became a sudden fire, and words rushed from his lips, the like of which no man had ever heard from him. Frances was overcome with fear, and Richmond bowed his head in silent shame. Once only, he looked up. A window of the chamber opened on the Thames, and thoughts of leaping down, and dying for his love, passed rapidly through his mind. But Richmond was not made of such fine stuff; and after listening till the King had ceased, he bowed his head, and left her room without a word.

Roger Harsnett, serjeant-at-arms, received an order to arrest the Duke of Richmond and convey him to the Tower, where he was lodged in the Lieutenant's house. No crime was specified; nor was the Duke examined in the usual way. The cause of his arrest was secret, personal; not for the public ear, not even for the Secretaries of State. The Duke drew up a brief petition to the King, imploring him to calm his anger, and deliver his prisoner from restraint. His Majesty, supposing that the Duke would now give up his suit, relented towards his cousin, and after keeping him three weeks under Robinson's charge, he issued, on Friday morning, April 21, 1665, a royal order for his release.

The Duke revenged himself by following up his chase. Fair Frances slipped from her apartments in White Hall, procured a boat, and dropping down the river, found her ducal lover at the Bear Tavern, near the foot of London Bridge. They rode to Cobham Hall, in Kent, where they were soon made man and wife; the Duchess sending back her jewels to the King, and Charles declaring he would never see her face again. “It is the noblest romance and example of a brave lady,” says Pepys, “that ever I read in my life.”

But King and Duchess soon were friends again, and the "Britannia" of our coins was far from living as a wife should live. She tried, and tried in vain, to wean her husband from his drabs and drink. He died some five years after his runaway match; his frail and beautiful wife survived him more than thirty years. She left a princely fortune, and a number of annuities to cats.





CHAPTER XXXIX.

KILLING NOT MURDER.

ON the day when Richmond left the Tower, Sir John Robinson received the King's command to hold his lodgings ready for a peer, who stood accused of having slain a gentleman that morning in a tavern brawl. This peer was Thomas, Baron Morley and Monteagle, grandson of the man who was so strangely compromised in the Powder Plot.

On Friday, April 21, 1665 (the day after James had sailed, with Admiral Sir William Penn on board his ship, against the Dutch), some bucks and bloods were drinking in a room of the Fleece Tavern, York Street, Covent Garden, late at night. Among the company were Lord Morley and his follower Captain Francis Bromwich, Harry Hastings, and his friend Mark Trevor, with John Johnson, and some others of the Mohawk tribe. The Fleece was a notorious house, in which several gentlemen of name had recently been killed in drunken brawls.

Morley and Hastings, night-birds of the town, had reeled into the Fleece about eleven o'clock, and sat there drinking till the chimes struck four. About this time Lord Morley missed a half-crown piece, which he had either laid, or only fancied he had laid, on the table, and accused the company of picking up his coin. Hastings, flushed with wine, repelled the insult, know-

ing that what his lordship wanted was to fasten this charge on him. Bad blood was in their hearts. Ten years ago they had a row ; they drew upon each other ; and Lord Morley was disarmed and hurt. Since that mishap it was supposed that Morley had been waiting for revenge ; resolved to pick a quarrel when occasion served, and he could kill his enemy in what might seem to be an act of self-defence. He had attached to his person Captain Bromwich, an able fencer and successful duellist, who had killed his man, and was a hero of the tavern and the park. He had annoyed his enemy with petty slights ; refusing his salute, abusing him in private, and reflecting on his courage. He had tried to make him drink, and draw when he was hot with wine. But Hastings was a dangerous man to tempt, for he was no less ready with his sword than with his tongue. He, too, like Captain Bromwich, had slain his man, and as a fencer he had scarcely any rival from Covent Garden to Tothill Fields.

“Where is my half-crown piece?” roared Morley, fastening on his tipsy foe.

“Half-crown!” quoth Hastings; “what half-crown?”

Morley declared that he had laid his coin on the table ; that some one in the company had picked it up.

“Half-crown!” jerked Hastings, in a tone of scorn, “take these for it,” and threw down four half-crowns. Lord Morley pressed his point ; some one had taken his half-crown ; and he would have it back—the very coin.

“How can a man of honour make so much of half-a-crown?” cried Hastings. Bromwich drew his sword. “Put up your blade,” said Hastings, turning to the fencer ; “meddle in no man’s quarrel but your own.” The Captain sheathed his weapon, whereupon Lord Morley yelled across the board—“We don’t come here to stab folk!” “Nor do we,” retorted Hastings ; “we come for no such purpose ; but if such a thing were to be done, a fitter place was out of doors.”

The Captain drew again, and hectorred for his lord ;

on which Mark Trevor, as the friend of Hastings, also drew. Morley and Hastings drew as well, and passed upon each other till the landlord and the company rushed between them; one to save his house from further stain of blood, the other to prevent a crime in which they might have a share. But Morley would not hold his tongue.

"I am a gentleman," shouted Hastings; as by birth he was; a gentleman of the noblest blood. "A gentleman, and as good a gentleman as my lord!"

On this the tumult rose again; the Captain drew, Mark Trevor drew; and all the bucks and bloods poured noisily out into the street. A streak of April dawn lit up the town, and citizens put their heads from windows as the rioters rolled down Bow Street, through Clare Market and the passages leading into Lincoln's Inn Fields. In Bow Street, Bromwich made a pass at Hastings, which Mark Trevor parried. Morley for a moment slunk away, supposing (it was afterwards suspected) that his bravo would be able to do the job alone; but he was not far off, and by-and-bye he joined the band once more.

"What is it all about?" asked Hastings, whom the April air was sobering fast. "I'll give five pounds to any one," he said to a gentleman near him, "who will tell me what this quarrel is about!"

Beneath the archway leading from Duke Street into Lincoln's Inn Fields, Morley set upon him. Hastings parried, and fell back some steps, to clear his point; but Morley and Bromwich pressed upon him closely, and he could not put himself on guard. Bromwich struck down his sword, and Morley, rushing on him, seized him by the shoulder, turned his blade, and jobbed his own weapon like a knife into his skull. The point went through the bone, two inches deep, right down into the brain. Hastings fell back wounded to the death. Morley drew out his sword, and flung it on the dying man, exclaiming, "Damn me, there

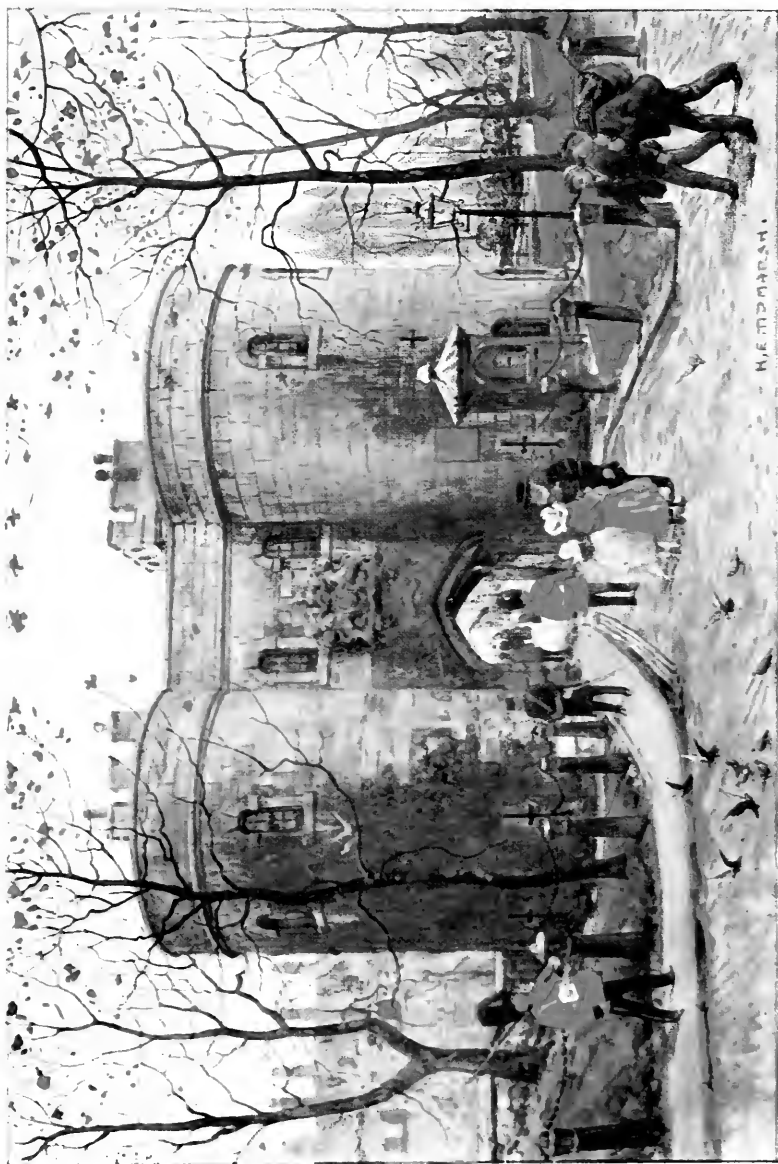
you lie, you rogue ! I promised you, and now you have it."

A crowd soon gathered round the brawlers, and assisted in conveying Hastings to a surgeon's shop. Tatham the surgeon made a brief examination of the wound ; but Hastings was beyond the reach of drugs and bands. What could be done for him was done ; he lingered out the night, and next day was a corpse.

Before he died, a warrant to arrest Lord Morley was in Harsnett's hands. The cause assigned was fighting in the public streets against the King's proclamation ; but the coroner's inquest on the body ended in a verdict of wilful murder against Lord Morley, of abetting murder against Captain Bromwich, of a general charge of murder against the two. For seventeen days Lord Morley managed to escape pursuit ; but Harsnett caught him on the tenth of May ; and Robinson had the grim delight of pocketing the fees of a noble lord.

Morley lay twelve months in the Lieutenant's house before he could be put on his defence. Nice points of law were said to be involved in this offence :—the nature of justifiable homicide ; the line which separates murder from manslaughter ; the composition of a Lord High Steward's court ; a prisoner's right to challenge any of his triers ; the right of any peer who was a trier to consult the judge. Debates were held on every point ; and time was gained for public feeling to subside. The King, the Duke of York, and almost every member of the House of Lords, were anxious that an English peer should not be hung.

The time of Morley's trouble was the time of plague and fire. The sickness round the Tower was even more deadly than in Tothill Fields and Drury Lane. In autumn, when the pest was highest, Robinson was authorised by the Council to allow his prisoner to remove (a warder going with him, and security being given) to his country house, until the time of sickness should be past.



MIDDLE TOWER.

A full year after Hastings died of his wounds in Duke Street, Charles gave orders for the murderer to be tried. Lord Clarendon was created for the purpose Lord High Steward, with twenty-nine peers to assist him as a court. A canopy was raised in Westminster, with chair of state, and benches for the judges, councillors, and peers. Two private boxes were erected near the chair of state, from which the King and Queen, the Duke and Duchess, could observe the trial, though they were themselves unseen. Lord Clarendon was dressed in a mourning gown, and all the peers and judges wore their solemn robes. At ten o'clock the King and Queen were in their private box.

Sir John Robinson received his warrant to bring his prisoner from the Tower by water, and to spare the prisoner he was landed from his barge in a by-place, near the Court of Exchequer, and so conducted privily into the hall. A guard marched with him, and the headsman strode beside him with the axe.

A white staff was presented by the Usher of the Black Rod to Clarendon, who returned it to the usher; and commanded all those present to uncover, excluding only such as had a right to wear their hats in court. The judges, peers, and privy councillors, put on their hats.

Morley was observed to limp in his gait, and Clarendon, to ease him, gave an order that his lordship should sit down.

A vast array of lawyers stood within the bar, but Sir Griffin Palmer, the Attorney-General, and Sir Heneage Finch, the Solicitor-General, had the burthen of the fight. Palmer was not eager for a verdict, but Finch was satisfied of the murderer's guilt, and anxious that the law should take its course.

"Hold up thy hand," proclaimed the clerk, and Morley answered with his hand.

"Guilty or not guilty?" asked the clerk.

"Not guilty," said the prisoner.

“How wilt thou be tried?”

“By God and my peers.”

Clarendon, who leaned most strongly towards the prisoner, gave him comfort in his need, and noted every point of evidence in his favour. Snell, an apprentice lad, who had seen the fight, was missing on the day of trial; and the master of this Snell declared that the boy had told his fellows my lord would soon be tried, and he would not be there to give his evidence for the Crown. Finch would have read Snell's evidence, but Clarendon ruled that his intentional absence was not proved, and therefore that his deposition could not be received. Clarendon refrained from summing up; in fact, he left the peers to find according to their fancies and desires. They went into a private room; the prisoner was removed by Robinson from the court. Three hours the lords remained in doubt; for while the great majority were willing to let their brother, who had only killed a commoner, escape the gallows, some of them could not trifle with the evidence, and, peer or no peer, they would have the murderer hung. Some wine and cakes were sent for, since the King and Duke would not retire for luncheon, and the tray was handed from the royal box to judge and peer, to councillor and serjeant. When the lords came back into the hall, Clarendon, forgetting where he sat, inquired if they were quite agreed in their verdict; but correcting himself in a moment, he turned round to John, Lord Freschville, as the young peer, and put the question,—

“Say, my Lord Freschville, is my Lord Morley guilty or not guilty?”

Freschville answered him,—

“Not guilty of murder, but guilty of manslaughter.”

All the twenty-nine, save two, were of Lord Freschville's mind. These two, Lord Wharton and Lord Ashley, found him guilty of murder; but as unanimity was not required in a court of peers, Lord Clarendon

took this answer as a verdict of acquittal on the graver charge.

Proclamation was made for the Lieutenant to produce his prisoner, and Sir John Robinson returned with Morley, followed by the headsman, to his former place.

"My lord," said Clarendon, "the lords have found you guilty of manslaughter; what have you to say?"

"I humbly beg the benefit of my clergy and my peerage," said the murderer with a bow.

This benefit of his clergy and his peerage was the benefit of an Act of Edward the Sixth, which gave to lords of Parliament and peers of the realm immunity for all offences which were free to clerics, even though they could not read, and some offences not then free to clerics—such as house-breaking, horse-stealing, highway robbery, stripping and profaning churches. For such offences peers and clergymen could not be punished—if the peerage and the clergy were allowed. Lord Morley claimed them both; and Clarendon assented to his claim. About his clergy there could be no question, and about his peerage none—as Clarendon conceived. On Clarendon turning to the bench, the judges yielded to his ruling of the law with silent nods.

"Then you have but to pay your fine and go your ways," said Clarendon to the murderer, who had only killed a man. Rising from his chair, Lord Clarendon dismissed the court, and broke his staff.

Sir John returned to the Tower without his prisoner, but with a lordly fee.

Captain Bromwich, not being able to plead his clergy and his peerage, lay for months a prisoner in the Bench. A government that had pardoned Morley could not execute his second; but the fencer had no friend at court save Morley, and the influence of that nobleman was at the ebb. Events, however, fought for Bromwich; as the first success of James (success entirely due to Penn) had brought on war with France,

and threatened to bring on war with Denmark ; so that fighting men, who knew their trade like Bromwich, were in high request. He proffered to serve the King abroad, and Charles consented to let him go, if he would serve at sea, and not come back to London. Sixteen months elapsed before the captain was at large ; but once at large he started for the scene of war ; in which Lord Morley was entrusted with a regiment of horse.





CHAPTER XL.

A SECOND BUCKINGHAM.

A FEW days after the Dutch surprised Sheerness and Chatham, on a summer night, a peer, debauched in morals, but superb in lace and feathers, coming with a troop of revellers to the Tower, asked to see Sir John Robinson, and on the Lieutenant walking to the gate, surrendered himself a prisoner to the King. Sir John was glad; but he was not amazed; for early in the afternoon he had received a message from the Sun, a city tavern, telling him that his Grace the Duke of Buckingham, who was proclaimed a traitor, yet for four long months had baffled all pursuit, was dining with some friends in the city, and after making merry, would appear in person, and deliver himself to justice! Full of wine and frolic, he was now before the gates, and ready to surrender to the King; that King who was his constant comrade and congenial friend!

It was his fourth confinement in the Tower. Sir John was glad to see his ducal guest; for, both on coming in and going out, the fees to pay were heavy; and the King's first minister of pleasure was not likely to remain too long upon his hands. The fees could not be less than a couple of hundred pounds; and fees were always welcome to his itching palm.

The best apartments in his house were at his Grace's service, and his Grace knew every cranny of that man-

sion, as he knew the city slum, the White Hall garden, and the country fair. For this new Duke, a worthy offspring from a worthy sire,—

“Stiff in opinion, always in the wrong,
Was everything by turns, and nothing long ;
But in the course of one revolving moon
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon.”

Though often in the Tower, he always left it with a jest, as though a prison were no more to him than a playhouse scene. A son of the comedian Duke, he overpassed his sire in comic power. His whole life was a farce, and his most serious writing, the *Rehearsal*, was a farce upon a farce. From first to last his course was one long scene of stage expedients, stage surprises, stage catastrophes ; even as his genius was a medley of opposing gifts. Witty and foolish, bold and craven, true and faithless, clear and muddled, bright and stupid, he was capable of anything yet capable of nothing. He was fond of plays and players ; chiefly of female players ; and was hardly less fantastic to these dames than their ideal swains. No man could count on him ; his oath was wind, his pledge a snare ; and Robinson, when he received his tavern message, could but faintly hope that he might keep his word. His Grace would not have done so, had the thing not struck him as a quaint and merry jest.

Ten years had passed since he was first a prisoner in the Tower ; committed for the only act which, in a life of sixty years, an honest pen can praise—his marrying Mary, daughter of the great Lord Fairfax ; an offence that Cromwell's government found it difficult to forgive.

An exile, with his houses gone, his lands in strangers' hands, the youth of twenty-six began to think he had been a fool to cast his lot with a losing cause. It was not like a grandson of that Parent who had given him his position in the world ! If he had struck with

Fairfax and Cromwell, not with Rupert and Charles, he would have been a prosperous man, the chief of a great party, and the lord of York House, Wallingford House, and Belvoir Castle; not a beggar in a foreign city, forced to buy his bread by selling the Italian pictures from his wall. It was too late to fight; but he could marry on the popular side. Lord Fairfax had a daughter Mary, who was young and comely, though of Puritan descent. If he could win her love, he might regain what he had lost. Lord Fairfax, in the great division of delinquent lands, had got York House, his palace on the Thames. This palace he might fairly hope to get, if he got Mary first. He had not seen the girl; but that he only needed to appear, protest his love, and win his prize, he could not doubt. For was he not the handsomest man alive? He had the highest rank, and one of the best estates, in England; but he trusted chiefly to his beauty and his wit. But how was he to throw himself at Mary's feet? He was a banished Duke; the Councillors of State were watchful; and the Lord Protector was a man of iron. He began his suit by telling some of those spies who dogged his steps in foreign towns, that he had fallen in love with Mary Fairfax, and was going to Yorkshire to espouse the maid. Not many days elapsed ere Cromwell and Fairfax heard this news; the first with open scorn, the second with a secret pride. His Grace disguised his person and passed the sea. No comic actor on the stage could make up parts so well as Buckingham, who lived in London as a Jack Pudding, singing ballads in the streets, and vending mithridate and galbanum plaster at St. Paul's, while Cromwell's officers were seeking him in vain. He came, eluded Cromwell's spies, enchanted Mary, whom he saw in secret, gained her father's blessing on the match, and married his comely bride at Nun Appleton, a country house near York.

His honeymoon was rudely broken by a rush of

troopers, bearing Cromwell's orders to arrest the Duke and lodge him in the Tower, till he should answer for himself. Lord Fairfax interposed ; but Cromwell who was said to have meant the Duke for one of his own daughters, never would consent to hear of his release. On Oliver's death he was removed to Windsor, where he lay some weeks, until the Lord Protector Richard, still much pressed by Fairfax, suffered him to rejoin his Duchess in the North. An admirable actor, he surprised the Yorkshire Puritans by his sober life—until his old friend Charles came back ; on which he made them stare with wonder at his oaths, his orgies, and his waste. He rode to London, where he soon became the wildest rioter and coarsest reveller of the town. No man was safe, no woman sacred in his eyes. He mocked the Chancellor Clarendon to his face. He laughed aloud in church, and put the ministers of God to open shame. He called in preachers to inform his mind, and kept them waiting in his room while he was dining at a tavern with his wench.

A second visit to the Tower was caused by his petulant fray with Thomas, Earl of Ossory, one of his Irish kin. A bill was in the House of Lords prohibiting the exportation of Irish cattle, as a measure of assistance to the Irish poor. His Grace, having no estate in Ireland, was for pressing on the bill ; while Ossory, as an Irish landlord, wished to sell his beeves where they would fetch the highest price. "Whoever votes against this bill," cried Buckingham, "must have an Irish heart!" Lord Ossory took the insult to himself, and following the Duke into an outer room, demanded the satisfaction of a meeting. Buckingham only sneered, but when the Irish Earl grew loud he offered to oblige him, and their friends arranged that they should fight with swords next day, in Chelsea fields. Ossory was on the ground, but no antagonist came nigh, except a party of police ; and Ossory returned to town, declaring that his Grace had made a

fool of him. The Duke was watching the proceedings from a tavern on the opposite bank.

Next morning Buckingham rose in the House of Lords, and, with a face of judge-like gravity, related all the circumstances of his duel with the Irish Earl. Poor Ossory was maddened into taunts and jibes; his peers committed him to the Tower. The Duke was given in custody to Black Rod; but afterwards he was sent to keep his Irish kinsman company in the Tower, until their tempers cooled and they were friends again.

A third confinement followed on the second, through his impudence in leaning, at a conference of the Houses, on the back of Henry, Marquis of Dorchester, an older and much graver man. Dorchester moved away his arm. "Are you uneasy?" asked the cynical Duke. "Yes," said the angry Marquis; "and you would not dare this thing in any other place." His Grace declared he would. "You lie!" roared Dorchester; on which the Duke knocked off the old man's hat, took hold of his periwig, and in the sight of Lords and Commoners, lugged the old nobleman to and fro, until Lord Manchester, the "fighting Earl," rushed in between them, tore them apart, and held them both in custody till the peers, assembled in their chamber, sent a messenger for Sir John Robinson, and committed the noble brawlers to the Tower.

Pepys met his friend the Lieutenant in Westminster Hall. Sir John was radiant with the hope of fees, and took the fussy little man to dinner; when he told him, over wine, that the committal of a Duke and Marquis to his keeping was a good three hundred and fifty pounds in fees.

The prisoners soon made up their brawl, and having paid their fines to the Lieutenant, passed away; but Buckingham, though he forgave Lord Dorchester, could not forgive the King for letting him be sent to the Tower. He had expected Charles to stand by him, as he was ready to stand by Charles, in such a

paltry brawl; and feeling nettled in his pride, he called to mind that one of those quacks in whom his father trusted, some successor in his family to Dr. Lamb, had prophesied that he would himself be one day king. A king! Who would not like to be a king? One subject had become a king—in all except the name; why should not he? Had Cromwell brighter wits and nobler friends than he could boast? As Charles had been his friend, he would do nothing to disturb his reign; but Charles was wasting with disease, and could not live for ever. Could he live a year? His Grace consulted an astrologer, living on Tower Hill, and paid him to draw a horoscope for Charles, which showed, by planetary proof, that his remaining days on earth were short. Encouraged to go on, the Duke began to chatter over wine and cards about his hopes; and then Jack Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, his brother wit and rake, being eager to get his place as Gentleman of the Bedchamber, persuaded Charles that Buckingham was engaged in plots against his crown and life.

A warrant, signed John Barcroft, Serjeant-at-Arms, was sent to Owthorpe, in Northants, to seize the Duke and carry him to the Tower. All sheriffs, justices, and mayors, were called upon to aid John Barcroft in the execution of his task. A second warrant was drawn up and sent to Sir John Robinson, commanding him to receive the Duke's body, and to keep him prisoner until the King should send down fresh commands. But neither serjeant, sheriff, mayor, nor justice, could arrest the slippery Duke, who seemed like Jack o'Lantern, here and there and everywhere at once. When Barcroft came to Owthorpe he was gone. He heard of him at Stamford, but on reaching Stamford he was gone. He heard the Duke had crossed to Westhorpe, in Suffolk, and he spurred in that direction; but when near to Westhorpe he was overtaken by the Duchess on the road, who, better mounted than himself, outstripped him; so that when

he came to Westhorpe all the gates were closed. Next morning Barcroft came again, with half the county at his heels; the Duchess bade him welcome, and entreated him to search her house. He sought in vain; for Buckingham had crept away, at nightfall, in a peasant's dress, and was already lodged in one of his London slums. The King proclaimed him; closed the ports; and called on every officer in the realm to bring him in. Jack Wilmot got his place; but the comedian Duke could not be caught, although in laughing wantonness of risk he rioted in the streets at night, and was arrested under other names no less than *thrice* for brawling at unseemly hours. His make-up was so perfect, that the City Shallows never guessed his rank. Sir John had lost all hope of seeing him, when he came to the gates that summer night, well flushed with wine, and yielded to the King.

When Buckingham arrived at the Lieutenant's lodgings, many of the cells were full of prisoners whom Sir John detested, as "too poor for such a place." Charles Bayley, a Quaker preacher; Thomas Fletcher, a letter-carrier; Major Hume, a Scottish prisoner; Rice Vaughan, Mat Rose, and three poor Frenchmen, MM. Coureur, Fourdin, and Choisin, were such fellows. One of his prisoners was Abraham Goodman, accused by Buckingham of coming into his presence with some evil purpose, and was lodged in the Tower for daring to alarm his Grace. Goodman allowed that he was rude, but resolutely denied that he meant to do his Grace a bodily harm. Yet this poor fellow had been pitched into the Tower, into the darkest dungeon of the keep. For twelve days he had lain in that dark and mouldy vault; and after his removal into upper air he was forgotten by the Court. The Duke and he were fellow-prisoners now. Among the men of higher rank were General Desborough, Clement Ireton, and Adam Baynes, all captains of the Commonwealth, committed on a general charge of treason to the King.

Next day the Council met, his Majesty presiding, and the ducal prisoner was placed before them. Clarendon and Arlington were the Duke's accusers; greybeards persecuting harlequin; and Charles, who had not laughed since the Dutch burned Chatham, could not help joining in the laughter when that mimic fleered and mocked his Chancellor and Secretary of State. "Why should you have the King's nativity cast?" asked Arlington, laying a letter on the table. Arlington, who had searched the astrologer's house, and found a letter asking for the King's nativity, had lodged the astrologer in the Tower. "Sir," answered Buckingham, turning with contempt from Arlington to the King, "this is none of my hand, and I refer it to your Majesty, whether you do not know this hand." Charles knew the writing; it was not the Duke's. It was a woman's writing, and the King was satisfied on the point. "You aim at making yourself popular," urged the two grave ministers. "A man," said Buckingham, "has only to be sent to prison by either my Lord Chancellor or my Lord Arlington, and he will soon be popular." Charles shook with merriment. Lady Castlemaine's pouts completed his forgiveness. When the Duke was taken back by Robinson from the Council to the Tower, his Majesty sauntered into Lady Castlemaine's room, and told her what had just been done. The lady took the prisoner's part so warmly that the King got vexed, and bade her hold her tongue:—"You jade, who meddle with affairs in which you have no concern." "You are a fool," she answered: "if you were not, you would not suffer your business to be carried on by fools, and shut your best and faithfullest subjects in a jail." She would not see the King until the Duke was out; and after struggling with the pouts and tears of his enchanting mistress three or four days, the King gave way, the lady smiled, and Buckingham was free.

Ten years elapsed before Buckingham was in the

Tower again—a fifth time, and the last. His outrage on the Earl of Shrewsbury, whom he first dishonoured and then killed, had covered him with a lasting load of shame. But he was light as ever, profligate as ever.

“Then all for women, printing, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.”

Years brought no wisdom to his Grace. Grey locks appeared with time, but not the reverence which befits grey locks. When Charles committed the four lords (the Earl of Shaftesbury, the Earl of Salisbury, Lord Wharton, and the Duke of Buckingham) for giving voice to a common view of parliamentary law, he treated his fifth commitment to the Tower as a passing jest, propitiated Charles with jests, and left his fellow-prisoners with a jest. “What!” cried the Earl of Shaftesbury from his prison-window, as he saw the Duke going out, “are you going to leave us?” “Why, yes,” laughed Buckingham in his face: “you see, such giddy-headed fellows as I am can never stay long in one place.”

And thus the light comedian bade adieu to the Tower, and went his way to that Yorkshire home belonging to his wife in which his mad career was shortly to be closed.

“In the worst inn’s worst room, with mats half hung,
The floor of plaster, and the walls of dung
Great Villiers lies—alas! how changed from him,
That life of pleasure and that soul of whim!”

Almost at the very moment when he left the Tower in his fourth imprisonment, on the pout and prayer of Lady Castlemaine, the husband of that lady was brought in.



CHAPTER XLI.

ROGER, EARL OF CASTLEMAINE.

A MAN with a fair wife and a fretful pen was Roger Palmer, gentleman, student, controversialist, whose starless fortunes sent him as a prisoner to the Tower no less than seven times in the space of four-and-twenty years.

A dwarf in size, with dark complexion, lanthorn jaws and sunken eyes, this Roger was as slight in frame as he was slow in mind. Roger was rich, and had the hope of being one day richer still. Like all his race he was a Catholic, and beyond his race he was devoted to the Church. Too mean in form and strength to make a figure in the parks, all chance of winning grace in woman's eyes appeared to have been denied him; and like other weaklings, he devoted most of his time and gifts to what he understood as the cause of heaven. From Naseby to the Restoration he had watched events with one desire, and only one desire; to see if he could help, in any small degree, at any cost of credit and of life, to shape them into benefits for his Church.

This mean and ugly creature fell in love with the most beautiful woman of her time.

Barbara Villiers was the orphan child of William, Viscount Grandison, in the Irish peerage. Grandison is one of the striking figures on the page of Clarendon; a paladin of honour, courtesy, and virtue, such as helps

to make the name Grandison appear a second name for gentleman. This Viscount, born a Villiers, and a cousin of the reigning Duke, had left an only child, a daughter, Barbara, not yet three years old, when he was hurt to death in the siege of Bristol, fighting for his King. The child grew up a wonder in all eyes. Her house was famed for beauty, but the charms of Barbara soon eclipsed them all. The females of her line were lax in morals, but the profligacy of Barbara was a thing apart. At fifteen years she had her amours and intrigues; but her preference as a girl, like her preference as a woman, was for ugly men. Stanhope, the forbidding and licentious Earl of Chesterfield, was her earliest flame. Stanhope could not marry her, for he had a wife alive. When Barbara found that she must have a husband to conceal her shame, she took the rich and ugly little brute who pestered her with love. She took him openly—and only—as a purse and as a cloak.

Proud of his wife, who treated him like a whelp, he was content to fawn, and crawl, and shut his eyes, and turn her beauty and her talents to account. She sang with skill; she danced with grace; she threw into her air a something of imperial pride. Her husband kept a priest, one Father Scrope, *alias* Father Pugh, who helped him with his prayers, who tried to keep him in the upward path, who egged him on to write and publish books for Holy Church.

Roger had three ideas in his brain—his wife, his sovereign, and his pope. All three required his care; for each and all were in distress; the first an orphan child, the second an exiled prince, the third a martyred priest. All three he hoped, in some degree, to serve; but he was mainly bent on service to his church. If he could only help in reconciling England to the See of Rome, his life, his fortune, nay his honour, should be freely spent.

So soon as he was one with Barbara, she proposed

to him that they should cross to Holland, see the exiled court, and offer their assistance to the Prince. They went; they saw; they conquered. Charles was glad to see them; no less glad to see a gentleman with such a purse than a lady with such a face. For Roger brought his money, which the King was good enough to take; and Barbara brought her beauty, which the King was also good enough to take. Busy with a vast intrigue for his recall to London, Charles was much in want of funds; and Palmer's rents were scattered by the liberal hands which took possession of his young and lovely wife.

The dark, small husband acquiesced in her arrangements, in the hope that good might come of it. She was a Catholic in her heart, like all the women of her house; and Charles, her royal lover, was as much a Catholic as he dared to show himself, while still pretending to a Protestant crown. A Catholic mistress would be good for Rome, and the fanatical schemer for his church, in darkly pondering over ways and means, persuaded himself that he was called upon to make a special sacrifice in that righteous cause. He said so little, and appeared so blind, that Charles, who openly expressed his fear of Stanhope, felt no jealousy of the man whose money he accepted, and whose honour he betrayed.

Few faces have been painted either better or more frequently than the face of Barbara. She was painted as Minerva, as a Virgin, as the Mother of God. At Hinchinbrook, at Hampton Court, at Dalkeith, and in many other places, these amazing works are found. A beauty such as Rubens loved to paint was Barbara; rosy, ripe, and full of flesh, with round voluptuous eyes, and pouting lips and wanton cheeks. Much wiser men than Pepys affirmed that it did them good to look upon her face. A plump, round thing—a laughing Venus, a lascivious Grace, a Sultan would have bought her at the ransom of a province. One day Charles and

she got on a pair of scales; the girl of twenty years was heavier than the man of thirty-two. Charles was so taken by his rosy mischief, that he left his family, his councillors, and his guests, on the very night of his arrival in London from the Hague, to sup in private at her house.

To be near the court of her royal lover, Barbara got her husband to remove their lodgings into King Street, close by the Cockpit and Bowling Alley. Roger, put to some expense for money, not to mention higher things, for his Majesty, begged the reversion of a lucrative, though dirty post in the King's household—that of Marshal of the King's Bench Prison; which, the dwarf being just the man for such a place, his Majesty was pleased to grant.

This grant was but a prelude to far greater things. To qualify the wife for any high place at court the husband must have rank, though it were only titular rank. Some rocks were in the way. Charles wished his favourite to be called a Countess; yet he shrank from giving such a dog as Palmer rank and place before old peers like Nevill, Scrope, and Ros. An Irish peerage was the thing; and Roger Palmer, the reversionary Keeper of the King's Bench Prison, was gazetted as Baron Palmer and Earl of Castlemaine. As Barbara was likely to become a mother, the descent was limited, not, as usual, to the husband's offspring, but entirely to the wife's. In truth, the coronets of Palmer and Castlemaine were given by Charles to his expected son.

A few months after he had won his Irish title, Castlemaine asked for a higher post than that of a Prison Marshal,—the Secretaryship for Wales, then held by George, Lord Norwich, for the term of life. Ten weeks later, a son and heir was born to him in his house in King Street; but instead of bringing joy and peace, as first-born youngsters should, the infant brought domestic storms. Roger, as a Catholic, look-

ing to his church as his supreme affair, desired his son to be christened by a Catholic priest, according to the Catholic rite; but Barbara, who believed that Charles could be persuaded to adopt his child, was eager to conciliate the world in which that child would have to live. Warm words broke out between the husband and his wife. Roger waylaid the nurse with the infant in her arms, carried them into a private room, and calling his domestic priest, insisted on the child being named and sprinkled in the Catholic way. The deed was done; the infant sprinkled, sealed, and blessed; but Lady Castlemaine, when she heard this news, complained to the King, who ordered one of his chaplains to perform the rite afresh, with a proviso that the former christening was informal and of no effect. A gallant ceremony was provided. Charles himself was present, and gave the child his name. Aubrey, twentieth Earl of Oxford, with Barbara, Countess of Suffolk, were the sponsors; and the scene took place at Castlemaine's house.

This infant was that Charles Fitzroy, who was in after-life created Baron Newbury, Earl of Chichester, and Duke of Southampton, and who bore his mother's titles of Nonsuch and Cleveland. Roger could leave his wife to live in shame for the advantage of his church, but he was galled beyond his patience when he saw the fruits of his connivance ravished by the rival church. A quarrel quickly came, and Barbara fled from his house in King Street to her brother's villa at Richmond—Charles being then at Hampton Court!—taking with her every chair, dish, hanging, groom, horse, coach, and servant; leaving him nothing but his empty house and a single porter with the keys. Poor Roger took a ship for France, and left his faithless wife a last adieu. Next day, the idlers in White Hall Gardens heard that the gloomy and patient husband had become a monk.

Three years he lived abroad, in French and Italian

cloisters, writing an Account of the Present War between the Venetians and the Turks, and brooding on the change of heart which would restore his country to the fold of Rome. He suddenly came home, appeared at court, and lodged in his house for about a year. He found a second son on his hearth-stone, born to him in his absence, who had also been baptized by a Protestant chaplain. This second son was Henry Fitzroy, whom he lived to see created Duke of Grafton. Odd rumours passed about the Cock-pit. Lady Castlemaine was likely to become the parent of another duke, and two months after the Earl's arrival she gave birth to George Fitzroy, the king's third natural son by her. Poor Roger could not stay in London, and a friendly separation of the pair was drawn and signed. He was to live abroad. The King and Lady Castlemaine were not to be disturbed. On his side, Charles was good enough to help in settling the Irish Earl's affairs, and deigned to write with his own hand to the Mercers' Company in favour of some claims. He went abroad; but could not stay. A demon who is stronger in such a man than love and jealousy drove him on; the demon which inspires inquisitors and missionaries—the demon of fanaticism. Six months after going away, with promise on his lips that he would not return, he was again in London, busy with Father Pugh, *alias* Father Scrope, and Thomas Milburn, printer, in getting out a book of politics and controversy, which the Government could not license to appear. This book, *The English Catholics' Apology*, was well contrived, and made so strong a case, that people were surprised to find how much a Catholic writer could advance in favour of his cause. The House of Commons was highly scandalised, and many of the members, knowing the Countess of Castlemaine's relations with the King, inferred that the Catholic Apology was printed with the secret knowledge of the court. That House gave orders that the book should be seized, the printer found.

the type dispersed, and the copies burned. The printing-press was seized, and Milburn clapped in jail. Good evidence of authorship was soon obtained; for Thomas Osborne, one of the men employed by Father Pugh in getting his printing done, declared that the original writing was in Castlemaine's hand; while Milburn and his wife affirmed, that "the little gentleman" came to their house with Scrope (or Pugh); that he brought the manuscript copy; that he read the proof-sheets; that he paid the printer's bill. In no mild mood, the House of Commons asked for Castlemaine's arrest.

The King was also angry with the dwarf, not only for returning to his home, but for exciting talk on subjects which he would have gladly dropped. Charles loved his ease, and hated violent speech. Above all other zeal, he most disliked the zeal that fights for creeds. As one who had much need for grace, he had a kindly feeling for the Church of Rome, which in his wanton hours he would describe as "the only church for a gentleman;" but in the matter now made public by the dwarf he had an interest to consult beyond his personal ease. Having owned no less than *four* of Lady Castlemaine's children as his own, he had to think of these young dukes and duchesses, and not to fling away their chance of marrying into the highest families, when they should grow up, by showing any mercy to the fool whose name they bore.

Castlemaine was at once arrested in his lodgings, and committed to the Tower.





CHAPTER XLII.

A LIFE OF PLOTS.

FATHER SCROPE, *alias* Father Pugh, escaped pursuit. The King himself presided in the Council when the warrant for Castlemaine's arrest was signed. No cause for the arrest was given, except that his offence was "treason of the highest nature," and the Irish Earl was to be held by Robinson, not only as a safe prisoner, but a *close* prisoner. A "score," as printers call it, underlined the word *close*; while a note on the margin of the sheet explained to the King's Lieutenant that his Majesty was present, and expressly ordered that the Earl's imprisonment should be close.

Yet Charles was conscious of the ridicule which must attend this locking in the Tower of one whose wife was in his company day by day. For squibs were posted on city gates; lampoons ran glibly from lip to lip; and Lady Castlemaine met him in the park with pouts and frowns. To please his Commons, Charles had lodged the writer of the Catholic Apology in the Tower; and now, to ease himself, he set the complaisant husband of his mistress free. He would have opened all his prisons rather than see a frown on Lady Castlemaine's handsome brow. Barbara had twenty lovers, even as the King had twenty mistresses. She called him Charles the Third; since she preferred to him both Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, and Charles Hart, ex-

captain and comedian. Yet, false to him with poets, pages, actors, soldiers, rope-dancers, what not, she behaved to him with a haughty rudeness, such as Catherine might have used to one of her complaisant serfs. She bade him do her will, and he obeyed her nod. She asked for some of the royal plate; five thousand ounces were bestowed on her at once. She asked for ducal rank; and the strawberry-leaves were set upon her brow. She asked for money to discharge her debts; and thirty thousand pounds were paid her in a single lump. Her base-born children were created duchesses and dukes. If Charles grew restive, knowing that she was false, she turned upon him with her eyes aflame; "Not own this child! You *shall* own the child, whether it is yours or not!"

The dwarf was freed from the Tower under pretext of a public mission. He was to part from his wife; he was to live abroad; and he was never to come back. For some good time he kept his bond, residing in the Jesuit colleges of St. Omer and Liège. While abroad, he wrote "A Short and True Account" of the Anglo-Dutch campaign in Savoy; which was only true from the Jesuit point of sight. But he was now awakened, suddenly, to a sense of his dishonour; for his wife, no longer in the bloom of youth, had wearied Charles with her caprices, had been pensioned, and dismissed the court. With all her passions still alive, she crossed to Paris, where in a licentious circle she consoled herself with the Chevalier de Chastillon, Ralph Montagu, the English ambassador, and other swains. This levity her "little man" could not endure. A king's concubine was one thing; a wife given up to lovers of a lower rank he could not bear. At once he fell to seeking a divorce, and this sharp seeking brought him back to London—and the Tower.

The Popes allowed divorce to none but Kings who stood beyond their reach. The Jesuits could do much, when they had cause to move; but as a rule, the

Jesuits were at one with pope and cardinal in holding to the rule that man should never sunder those whom God has joined. Much time, more money, were expended on the suit. Roger's friend, the Rector of Liège, tried to help him; for so rich a lodger in his cloister must be fed with hope. Much time was needed by the doctors ere they ventured an opinion, and Roger saw the years go by without much ground being won. He came to London, to consult with Father Strange, Provincial of the English Jesuits. Strange was willing to oblige so rich a man, and drew an argument in favour of divorce. From spies, and priests who took the pay of spies, the King soon heard of what was going on; and as the plea for a divorce must turn on his connexion with Barbara, Father Strange's house was searched, the document was found, and Castlemaine was committed to the Tower.

This second of his seven imprisonments was short. On seeing that Pope and King alike opposed his plea, he laid his project by as not to be achieved, and four months after his committal he was free to leave the Tower.

Ten months later he was in again. Father Strange and his Jesuit brethren were engaged upon those secret projects which alarmed the public under the name of Popish Plot, and in those secret projects Castlemaine was involved. These Jesuits held a conclave at the White Horse Tavern, where Castlemaine found the apostate clergyman, Titus Oates, who had recently come from Spain. Wild talk, no doubt, was held over pipes of tobacco and mugs of ale. Great things were to be done for the ancient faith; the laws were to be changed; the King was either to be coaxed or forced to do them right; the Pope was to get his own again; the Jesuit councillors were to have their say at court. Oates carried this talk to Charles, with much addition and invention of his own; and officers were sent at once to seize a number of Catholic lords

and gentlemen in their beds, and lodge them in the Gate-house and the Tower. Among this number, Castlemaine was carried to the Tower.

While he was lying in his cell, awaiting trial, he wrote *The Compendium* : a Short View of the Trials in relation to the Present Plot; a piece which was printed immediately, and spread abroad by secret agents of the Catholic party. One of these agents was Captain Dangerfield, a handsome, dissipated man, who earned a living by the trade of go-between and spy. Lady Powis found him in a jail, a felon and an outlaw. Dangerfield had been pilloried, whipped, and burnt in the hand; but he professed to be a convert to the Church of Rome. By help of Castlemaine, Lady Powis got him a discharge from prison and a pardon from the King. He was employed to visit jails, corrupt the turnkeys, and procure indulgence for imprisoned priests. Lady Powis made him known to Castlemaine, whom he visited in his lodgings at Charing Cross. At Castlemaine's wish he had procured the liberation of Lane from the Gate-house, and at Castlemaine's cost he had circulated lists of names and letters through the Catholic ranks.

A short time after Castlemaine was committed, Dangerfield came to him in the Tower, and strange words passed between them. Castlemaine was sitting at his desk, and writing the *Compendium*, when his visitor came in. A serving-man stood by. The Earl dismissed his man, and then the sullen dwarf and handsome felon were alone. "You came into the Tower yesterday?" said the Earl, his countenance dark with meaning. Dangerfield assented. "You will not refuse the business for which you were taken out of prison?" "What was that?" asked Dangerfield; "do you mean the King?" "Yes," said the Earl, below his breath; "that is it." But felon as he was, his visitor shrank from such a deed; on which the dwarf flamed out into sudden fire, and told the rascal he

would either kill him with his own hand, or make his servants kill him, if he came to him again.

When brought to trial, Castlemaine denied having urged the felon to murder Charles; but owned that he was maddened by Dangerfield, and threatened to kill him if he came again. The jury took his word, acquitted him of treason, and released him from his durance in the Tower.

Ten years elapsed before he was again a prisoner. James the Second, as a Catholic, found employment for the Irish Earl, in a ridiculous embassy to Rome. Pope Innocent received the curious "little gentleman" with a chilling welcome, for the name of Castlemaine was odious to that good and lofty priest. "His Pope," it was drily said, "received him like his wife." The mission failed, and Castlemaine came home, to help in ruining his royal master, and to find himself denounced as a public enemy by the House of Commons. In the reign of William, he returned to his lodgings in the Tower, in company with James, Earl of Salisbury, Henry, Earl of Peterborough, James, Earl of Arran, Richard, Viscount Preston, and Sir Edward Hales.

In two years, he was lodged in the Tower four times. Being charged by the House of Commons with the double crime of going as Ambassador to Rome, and sitting as a Privy Councillor without having sworn the usual oaths—he answered, to the first, that he had never sought the Roman embassy, that the King commanded him to go, and that the case of Overbury proved how far a subject could decline such service to his Prince; to the second he replied, that the oaths had not been tendered to him, that he could not have taken them on his conscience, that he knew the omission was a fault in law. The House remanded him to the Tower.

He asked the Commons to relax the sternness of his imprisonment, from "close" to ordinary, so that he might walk about the lines, attended by his keeper,

and receive such friends as came to see him ; but the burgesses refused his prayer, and he was kept in sharp confinement till he got his habeas corpus, and applied to the Court of King's Bench for leave to go out on bail. The Government took a lenient course ; the Attorney-General raised no obstacles ; and four good men being found to bail him, he was liberated on bonds for thirty thousand pounds.

Disgusted with his life of plots, he quitted London for a country-house in Wales, where he forgot the world, and almost forgot his wife. After the Revolution, the faded woman left her French lover and returned to England, took a house at Chiswick, drew a profligate set of men around her, and, immediately on her husband's death, avenged his wrongs by marrying a man who robbed her, beat her, and deserted her. This man was Beau Fielding, Steele's Orlando the Fair. Beau Fielding made the Duchess miserable, and the wicked old woman only got released from him at last by proving that he had another wife alive.





CHAPTER XLIII.

THE TWO PENNS.

JOHAN DRYDEN'S Year of Wonder was succeeded by King Charles's Year of Shame; that year in which the Dutchmen forced the Thames and Medway, took Sheerness, burnt Chatham, and surprised the royal fleet; the most ignoble year in an ignoble reign.

A Dutch fleet in the Medway, breaking booms and cutting out ships, was an indignity that required a sacrifice. The proper sacrifice was the Duke of York, whose riotous life and lack of sea-craft were the causes of our recent shame; but no one dared to mention the Duke of York. Some thought of Pett, the ship-builder; but the man was not of mark enough. A scapegoat must be chosen from the sacred herd.

Some courtiers thought they could put the blame on Penn, Vice-Admiral under the Duke of York, and father of a youth of noble parts and handsome figure, who had just been startling that corrupt society by joining the disciples of George Fox.

Sea-General Sir William Penn, who lived at the Navy Office, near the Tower, was a jovial fellow, bent on living out his life, on rising in the world, and leaving to his family a noble name. A hint had been given him by the Duke of York, that he might have the barony of Weymouth when he pleased, and while he sang his song, and saw his comedy, and sipped his

wine, he gave his thoughts to earning money and buying land, in order to support his dignities as a peer. But while this able and worldly father was employed in scheming for the things that perish, his more brilliant son was toiling in his new-born zeal for things which do not pass away.

At Oxford, William Penn, the younger, had been placed in charge of a Puritan dean; the Admiral, when he was not at the King's Theatre or the Fleece Tavern, being himself a staid and homely man; and there, with other young men of his age, he went to hear strangers preach, and gave his heart up to a Quaker, Thomas Loe. On hearing of this change in his boy, Sir William sent for him to the Navy Office; rated him on his folly; told him of his prospects; and replied to John Owen and Thomas Loe, by taking him to the play-house, and letting him see "The Jovial Crew." Not finding the "Jovial Crew" of use, he sent him into France, where he supposed a young fellow, well born, well dressed, and well supplied with money, would get rid of Puritan habits; and for a time he seemed unlikely to miss his aim. The young man was as young men are. He wore his sword, and learned to use it when assailed. He bore his plume in hat, and learned to lay it at a lady's feet. When he came home, he was a modish gentleman, inclined to arms as a profession; and an Irish rising having thrown a chance of fighting in his way, he showed such pluck in leading an attack, that Ormonde, his father's friend and Lord Lieutenant, would have given him instantly a company of foot. But just as he was entering on the soldier's trade, he met with Loe a second time, and going to hear him, got arrested as a ranter, flung into a jail, and driven by persecution to the persecuted camp. This time the change of mind was final; and the youth, for whom a scheming Admiral, in close relation with the Duke of York, was toiling for a baron's coronet, cast aside his sword and

plume, refused to hear of titles, and declined to unbonnet, even to the King.

Sir Robert Howard, playwright, took the leading part in what was meant to be a comedy, just to make men talk and pass the time. No accusation could be framed against Sir William Penn; but Howard took his hearers back to September, 1665, when James had won his crown of oak at sea. Penn was on board his ship, and the complaint now urged against him was, that he had failed to capture and destroy the whole Dutch fleet! If all that fleet had been destroyed, the Dutch, it was alleged, could not have forced the Thames; and Sheerness would not have been surprised; and English ships would not have fallen into an enemy's hands. Penn's fault in not destroying that fleet was, therefore, the occasion of our losses; and for this offence, the House of Commons were invited to commit him to the Tower!

Penn answered Howard promptly. On the night of victory, James had called a council of war on board his flag-ship, when his Vice-Admiral, Sir William Penn, had told his officers they must look for hotter work. The enemy had been beaten and were flying to their ports. Penn knew how they would fight when pressed too hard, and he would have the captains ready for the coming day. All being arranged, the captains went to bed, except the Vice-Admiral, who remained on deck, arranging for the fight next day, and pressing sail on his retiring foes. At midnight, Brounker came to him from the Duke of York's cabin, and gave him orders to slacken sail; which orders he reluctantly obeyed. Two prizes were picked up; but when the daylight came, the Dutch were out of reach.

James swore that he had given no orders to arrest pursuit. Penn quoted Brounker, and that lord of the bedchamber had to bear the blame, so far as public joy was chequered with the thought of blame. Howard, who brought this story forward, hinted that Sir William

had betrayed his duty to secure the prize ships, and demanded an impeachment and committal to the Tower. On hearing all the details, yea and nay, the House of Commons let the matter drop; but Arlington, the Secretary of State, was not content to see the matter drop; and not being able to arrest the father, seized an occasion to arrest the son.

This Quaker youth, who *thou-ed* Lord Arlington, and would not doff his hat before the King, had been disputing publicly with Thomas Vincent, late a pastor of St. Mary Magdalen's Church in Milk Street, on the Inner Light. Of this debate some record was set forth in a tract called the *Sandy Foundation Shaken*, which was printed, like most pamphlets of that reign, without a formal license. Partizans declared it blasphemous, in so far that it asserted God was One, so that the printer laid himself open to proceedings under the act for preventing publication of heretical and offensive books.

Arlington seized the printer, Derby, and committed him prisoner to the Gate-house; but so soon as Penn was made aware of Derby's arrest, he walked to Arlington's house, announced himself as the author of *Sandy Foundation Shaken*, and desired to take his share of any trouble that might come of it. The Secretary called his officer, gave Penn into custody, and despatched him under escort to the Tower.

Penn was a prisoner, not of the King, but of the Secretary of State. No council had been called, no warrant signed, no crime alleged. The seizure was an arbitrary act; a stretch of power, for which the men concerned in it, as actors and as agents, might be called to answer in the courts of law.

Sir John Robinson was ill at ease. This bringing of a prisoner to the Tower, on other than a legal mandate, was a blow for him. Responsible to the courts, and liable to suits for false imprisonment, Sir John, though willing to oblige his master, was unwill-

ing to put in risk his money and his freedom by an open breach of law. A King's attorney, he must have the King's authority for his acts. If Penn should sue his Habeas Corpus, Robinson could not plead, as ground for his restraint, an order from the Secretary of State. No judge would hear of such a plea. A Secretary had no power to seize men of his individual will. A dozen secretaries could not send a man to jail without assigning cause. A legal warrant to detain a prisoner must be signed by the King's Council—understood as being the King *in* Council—and must plainly state the crime for which he was to answer when arraigned.

These legal forms were wanting in Arlington's arrest of Penn. Sir John Robinson was timid; for the Admiral, his neighbour in the Navy Office, was a man to fire at insult; and, a friend of James, the Duke of York, his future sovereign, might be strong enough to crush all those who aided in this wrong. In haste, Sir John Robinson desired Lord Arlington to send him a legal warrant for his prisoner's safe detention in the Tower.

Aware that he was in the wrong, and that his measure must be justified in some way, Arlington rode down to the Tower, and bade the Lieutenant bring his prisoner in. Penn was accordingly brought in. The Secretary of State received him with a frown. What was the paper he had dropt in Lord Arlington's house? Paper! He had dropt no paper. Come; a paper had been found; it lay on the floor, where he had stood; a bold, ridiculous paper; full of rant against the King and State. He would do wisely to confess his writings, his accomplices, his purposes. A good King would be merciful to the penitent; but a just King would be terrible to the impenitent. Penn told Lord Arlington he had dropt no paper, had no purpose, no accomplice. He had written a pamphlet, not on state affairs; he had avowed his authorship; he was prepared to answer

for his conduct in a court of law. Completely foiled in his attempt to worry and confuse his prisoner, Arlington affected to be glad that all was well, and said, on leaving, he should make the best of his case with his royal master, and had little doubt that Penn would soon rejoin his father in the Navy Gardens.

Arlington had next to try the King. If Charles should fail him, he would surely be undone.

Henry, first Lord Arlington, had lived in Spain for years, and played the sombre Don in public; but in private life he was an actor and buffoon. A wicked leer, a fluent tongue, a cynical spirit, won the heart of Charles. In park and street, he was a dull, staid man, who seemed to live on forms and rules; but in the cabinet of Charles, among the dogs and dwarfs, the sluts and concubines, he played both harlequin and pantaloon. He seized all oddities of gait and voice, and mimicked them with such drollery as kept the King in a perpetual roar. He whined like a spaniel, cackled like a goose, and strutted like a stag. By such arts he had gained his post as Minister of State; amusing idle and vicious men by Don-like gravity and monkey-like tricks. His comic vein was gross, and he was dumb in the presence of such wits as Buckingham and Rochester. To mock the stately walk, the lofty speech, the old-world manner of Hyde and Ormonde, was his pride; and while this noble pantaloon was strutting and declaiming in the royal closet, making service, age, and virtue odious in his master's eyes, the King would lean back in his chair, with five or six spaniels on his lap, and laugh until the tears rolled down his cheek.

We can imagine how this jester would report his interview with Penn; burlesquing the homely speech and earnest spirit of the young man who had come to talk about justice, to confess his book, to give himself up; a man who *thee*-ed and *thou*-ed his elders, told the truth, and wore his hat while he was speaking with

you! Charles enjoyed it much; the more so as he knew the youngster well, and thought him a pretty fellow, perfect in his dress and French, albeit too grave and wise for a boy of twenty-three. He took upon himself to back his Secretary of State; but under what pretence could Arlington be justified in sending such a prisoner to the Tower? No one could say that his offence was treason. Let the worst be proved, he was the author of an unlicensed pamphlet; and the printing of such a pamphlet was a misdemeanour only. By an Act of Parliament lately passed (14 Car. II. cap. 33), it was provided that no person should presume to print heretical and offensive books, containing any doctrine contrary to the Christian faith and the Church of England; that no private person should presume to print a book without a license; and authority was given to search suspected houses for persons and presses employed in printing unlicensed books. The customary forms of law were to be observed; the searchers were to have warrants duly signed; and having taken the offender at his work, they were to carry him to a justice of the peace, who might, according to the evidence, commit him in the usual way. Not one of these legal forms had been observed with Penn; for in his haste—and hate—the Secretary had sent his visitor to the Tower, as though he had been detected in some plot against the King.

How were they to cover such a stretch of power? A lucky thought occurred to them. That lord of odalisques and mountebanks was also, by his rank, Defender of the Faith; and as Defender of the Faith it was his part to guard the purity of Christian doctrine from assault. Penn's book was a religious treatise, dealing with the highest theological mysteries—conscience, grace, the unity of God—and it was easy for Defenders of the Faith to hint that it was "blasphemous;" and then to hold the writer prisoner, not

of the King as head of the State, but of the King as head of the Church.

Charles, therefore, of his own will and motion, caused an entry to be made in the Council-book "approving" of his Lordship's act in sending Penn to the Tower, and adding of his own good nature, that the young Quaker's imprisonment should be *close*. Two days elapsed before the Council met and signed a legal warrant, and Sir John felt safe in his house and easy in his mind.





CHAPTER XLIV.

A QUAKER'S CELL.

ACLOSE prisoner in the Tower was not allowed to see his friends, to write a letter, to provide his food. That Christmas-tide was very hard.

Deep snow lay on the ground ; great floes of ice blocked up the Pool ; and Penn, whose chief offence was a romantic eagerness to save his printer, was for several wintry weeks denied the prisoner's only hope of health—his daily walk upon the ramparts and the Green. Arlington meant to break his spirit, to force him to retract his views, and beg for mercy on his knees. But Arlington was utterly mistaken in his man. With feeble cunning, he gave out that Penn was the Church's prisoner, and he hinted that Humphery Henchman, Bishop of London, was the cause of his restraint. Penn was himself deceived by these reports ; and when his servant one day told him in the Tower, that Henchman was reported to have said that " Penn should either recant or die a prisoner," he replied, " Now, all is well." He paused a moment, musing to himself, and said, " I wish they had told me so before, since the expecting a release put a stop to some business." Turning to his man, he charged him, in a voice that never faltered, " Thou mayest tell my father, who I know will ask thee, these words : My prison shall be my grave before I will budge one jot. I owe my conscience to no mortal man. I have no need to fear ; God will make amends for all !"

Blasphemy, the offence on which Penn stood committed, was a crime unknown to the Statute-book; and Charles, who had himself much need for toleration, was against pursuing men for crimes of speculative thought. The fiery sects who governed in the Civil War, had persecuted many for opinion's sake; such men as Nayler, Fry, and Love; but these sectarians were not models for the King to follow. If he cited Penn to answer for his book, he must arraign him under the common law, and punish him in the ecclesiastical courts.

But how could blasphemy be proved? Alike in legal and in popular speech, the crime of blasphemy implied abuse and ridicule of God, derision of the Saviour, and profane allusions to Holy Writ. Not one of these offences could be found in Penn. His Sandy Foundation Shaken, though a little sharp on Vincent, was exceedingly reverent and devotional in thought. But one of the mysteries held by Penn—and by his master, Fox—most firmly, was the Unity of God; and if the Unity of God is held to be denial of co-equal rank to Christ, that mystery of faith might be construed into an act of blasphemy, according to the English Church. Charles acted on this hint, and held his prisoner in the Tower for an offence of speculative thought; held him in close confinement, as he might have done a man condemned to die, until his pleasure should be further known.

The Secretary, wishing to force his business on the Bishop of London, got a Council order for the Bishop to take cognizance of the charge, and bring the matters of offence before his court. But Henchman would not move. A grave and prudent man, he saw that nothing but discredit would arise for him and for his Church if he should help the persecutor, and he met the order with a resolution not to meddle in this suit.

Lodged in a prison for the crime of maintaining that God is One—a question of theology, which has less to do with man's life as a citizen than the question

whether the sun goes round the earth—Penn asked himself in what respect the English Council was above the Spanish Inquisition? Arlington was but an English form of Torquemada. London followed in the wake of San Lucar. His uncle Giles had been flung into a Spanish prison; and the nephew, like the uncle, was accused by private malice of offending the established faith: in neither case was the offender brought before a court of law. A Secretary of State who sent a man to jail unheard, unjudged, was acting in the spirit of an Inquisitor, who armed himself, according to the fashion of his country, with all temporal and all spiritual power, and was himself pursuer, jailor, prosecutor, referee, and judge.

Arlington was at secret feud with Admiral Penn, whose credit with the Duke of York he thought injurious to his own. He wished to win the fame of a godly man. In pressing heavily on his prisoner, he could mortify his colleague in the Navy Office, while he gained applause from congregations such as those which met in Spital Yard; and driven by these passions of revenge and popularity, he pressed with all his weight on Penn.

Yet other influences were soon at work, and Robinson, while keeping to the letter of his orders, put his prisoner more at ease. Books, pens, and ink, were suffered to come in. Friends also found a way into his cell. Sir William and Lady Penn came over from the Navy Gardens, and good people of all persuasions flocked to see the Quaker who would not unbonnet to a King. He asked for trial, but a trial was not granted him. He heard from friends that paper wars were raging round his name; that Vincent, Owen, Dawson, and some other writers, had come out against him; and that men who should have known him better were reviling him as a "blasphemer, seducer, and Socinian," chiefly on the ground of his having been charged with blasphemy, and being kept a prisoner in the Tower.

Vincent put his answer to the Sandy Foundation Shaken in the hands of an unlicensed printer, Thomas Johnson; and the officers of justice seized some proof-sheets in the house of William Burden; whereupon a royal warrant was issued to a king's messenger to bring the bodies of Johnson and Burden before the Council. In a week they were released; and Vincent, author of the book, was not molested in his work; for no political hatred drove Lord Arlington to strain his power in Vincent's case. A new edition of his pamphlet soon came out, which had no license and no printer's name!

Penn's printer, Derby, was detained in the Gatehouse six months; and was discharged without being tried for his offence. The law was violated by the King in every part.

Penn turned his thoughts to higher things; the love of God, the use of suffering, the abuse of priestly power; and drew in his prison cell the outlines of his famous book, *No Cross, no Crown*. Sir John, who wished to stand as well as might be with his neighbour in the Navy Gardens, winked at liberties in his captive's room. Friends brought him a Bible, which he studied day and night. The world he found in this great Book, and that which he had left in park and palace, were opposed like day and night. He pictured that bad world; that lewd and rotting lay society, that proud and self-sufficing priesthood; and he spoke of what should next be done, if Christian men would see it born to a better life. He showed how pride had eaten into the soul, and gave those reasons for rejecting earthly rank which made his father say, *No Cross, no Crown*, was a serious cross to him. He spoke of pride and selfishness as lying at the root of all our vices. What we want, he wrote, is sacrifice. To do good, to bear evil, are the first of merits; and he proved his law of self-denial from the sayings of wisest men, the sages, singers, heroes of all time.

The Admiral, though he could not understand his son, could pity him—so deeply injured and so harshly kept. He went to see him almost daily, and was proud to find in what a resolute heart he bore his wrongs.

No length of dreary days and nights induced the prisoner to recant. He said: "They are mistaken in me; I value not their threats; for they shall know that I can weary out their malice. Neither great things nor good things ever were attained without loss and hardship. He that would reap and not labour, must faint in the wind." Sir William moved the King; and Charles, who seemed to weary of the business, sent his chaplain, Edward Stillingfleet, the first divine and controversialist in the Church, to visit Penn in prison, and to get from him such owning of his fault as would allow the King to set him free.

This eminent divine rode down to the Tower, and saw the youthful prisoner; who, with nothing but a Bible in his hand, contested inch by inch his theories of duty with the man whose chief contemporaries hailed him as Stillingfleet the Great. Author of the *Irenicum* of the *Origines Sacræ*, Stillingfleet was known to Penn before he came to the Tower, as the most powerful disputant of his age; a man employed by Bishop Henchman to demolish Jesuits, Anabaptists, and the sectaries of every rank; and even then the strongest pillar of his Church. Penn was no match for Stillingfleet in learning; but the very meekness of his mind disarmed his visitor. "Tell the King," said Penn, "that the Tower is to me the worst argument in the world." Stillingfleet would not press that point. He was too calm, too learned, and too moderate, to support the Secretary of State. "Whoever is in the wrong," urged Penn, "those who use force in religion can never be in the right." Stillingfleet spoke to him of the King's favour, of his father's place, and of the prospects of advancement he would risk. Penn heard

these things in silence, for he held his visitor in the highest honour; but they were to him as empty sounds. Not so that visitor's arguments upon the unity of God and the divinity of Christ. Stillingfleet came down to the Tower again. He brought his books for Penn to read, and these great writings had an instant and a lasting influence on the prisoner's mind. They swept away all doubt—if he had felt a doubt—on the divinity of Christ; and Penn composed a pamphlet, wholly written in the Tower, in which he stated, with the help of Stillingfleet's quotations, his maturer views. This pamphlet was entitled, *Innocency with her Open Face*.

Stillingfleet returned to Charles with a good report, and Penn was liberated on the prayer of Admiral Penn, supported by the Duke of York.





CHAPTER XLV.

COLONEL BLOOD.

ABOUT a year after Penn the Younger had left his lodgings in the Tower, a member of his sect was lurking, on a dark December night, with five companions, at the corner of St. James's Street, Piccadilly, then a lonely spot, in front of Clarendon House, in which the Duke of Ormonde lived. This Quaker, who was broad in build and bent in body, spoke to his comrades with an Irish brogue, and jested on their doings in a pleasant Irish vein. Each rode a good stout nag, on which he sat in silence, listening for a sound. Each wore a crape across his face, and carried a brace of pistols in his belt. The Quaker with the Irish brogue had coiled upon his horse some yards of rope. Well armed, and masked, this party watched the gates of Clarendon House, and listened through the darkness for the crash of coming wheels.

The Irish Duke was in the city, where a banquet was being given in honour of the Prince of Orange, then a youth of twenty, on a visit to the King, his uncle. Many of the greatest nobles were invited to this city feast; among them the distinguished man who fought so gallantly for the reigning house throughout the Irish wars, and by his personal virtues shed so pure a light upon the royal cause. His Grace had won the hearts of honest men. In Absalom and Achitophel, he figured

in the noble form of Barzillai, "crowned with honours and with years." Dryden touched his character with the finest hand :

"Large was his wealth, but larger was his heart,
Which well the noblest agents knew to choose,
The fighting warrior and recording muse."

Ormonde had just been called from Ireland, where his fair yet firm administration had subdued the factions, raised the towns, and given unusual order and prosperity to the Pale. A court intrigue had led to his recall. Lord Robarts had gone over in his stead ; a prim and lazy officer, who offended some by his neglect of business, and still more by his neglect of courtesy and hospitality. The Duke was hoping to return with credit to his government ; but his stainless name and moderate counsels stirred up hosts of enemies in a palace like White Hall. Buckingham could not bear his serious face ; and Barbara flouted him as a servant of the crown whom neither smiles could soften nor preferments buy. The King's chief friend and mistress had contrived his ruin, and were commonly believed to have sought his life.

Six years ago, a desperate plot had been contrived to seize the Castle and to kill the Lord Lieutenant. Some of the rogues were caught and hung ; but Major Blood, of Sarney, county Meath, the soul of that conspiracy, escaped. A man of many natures and professions ; born in a smithy, trained in a camp, and exercised in a conventicle, Thomas Blood was an artizan, a soldier, a divine, a jack of many trades, a combatant in many causes, and a preacher in many sects. Like hundreds of the Irish of his day, he fought for Charles, for Cromwell, and again for Charles. From each he took such gifts and grants as his effrontery could gain ; a township, a commission in the army, a reversion of delinquent lands. Some fear lest he might lose these lands, should peace and old proprietors return had

driven him to sedition; but the Duke of Ormonde knew that in his dash at Dublin Castle he was acting on some hint thrown out by greater men. Blood fled into the northern wilds, and found in peasant-cabins, and in priestly robes, that perfect cover from pursuit which in his country fugitives from justice always find. One day he was a Scottish pastor, hot in zeal against the scarlet lady, and the next an Irish priest devoted to the Pope of Rome.

In Cromwell's army he had been lieutenant; but when peace was made he scorned so mean a rank, and raised himself from time to time into the grades of captain, major, colonel. Living in conventicles and camps, where true men were religious, and where rogues were hypocrites, he learned the jargon of all parties. He could whine, and sneeze, and drop his jaw, and turn his eyeball up, and give the blessing with his outstretched hand. Some years passed by, and yet the Major was not traced. Men heard of him by fits; at Penthill Hill, and then in an affray near York; but those who read the secrets of a Secretary of State, had ample knowledge of his doings all those years. A rebel to the King, he was not the less an agent for the crown. He mixed with all the sectaries, and wrought them good and evil, as his passions urged him; one day asking a release for prisoners; next day risking limb and life to help them; and a third day writing secrets to the Council which he hoped would bring new batches of the brethren into jail. He lived in London much, while Ormonde thought him in the Ulster bogs; subsisting under various names, as Captain Allen, Major Grove, and Colonel Blood. He used the Rose and Crown, a tavern near the Tower, at which disbanded soldiers and despairing sectaries drank perdition to the King and Duke of York. Arlington could always find him when he pleased; and yet the Secretary was no match for Blood; who found protection in a quarter which a Secretary dared not cross,

The Duke of Buckingham was his patron, and the Lady Castlemaine his friend. Some persons fancied he had friends in Charles and James, to whom these details of his wild career were not unknown.

This Irish Colonel—Quaker, Anabaptist, Romish priest—was waiting with his five companions for the Duke's return. They meant to murder him that night. Young Blood, the Colonel's son, was of the party; also Hunt, his son-in-law; together with an Irish giant, whom the Colonel had selected on account of his enormous size, to play a part in their attempted crime. In killing Ormonde on the spot these bravos would have earned their wages; but the Irish colonel nursed a grudge against the Irish Duke; for Ormonde had proclaimed him, set a price upon his head, and hunted him from bog and lough, until his native country was not safe, and he was driven to eat in bitterness an exile's bread. At length the hour of his account was come. The Duke was in his toils; the Duke must die. Not only must he die, but die by him whom he had wronged. Nay, more; he should not perish as a soldier falls, by steel and lead. A sword, a bullet, were too good for him. His Grace must hang; hang like a common felon; hang in the usual place, and on the usual tree. He, Colonel Blood, was bound by oath to hang the Duke with his own hands!

Such was the deed for which due preparation had been made. His Grace was coming from the city in his coach, attended by six footmen, and the first point was to deal with those attendants, who might raise the quarter, even if they would not fight. A fancy of the Duke's assisted Blood. The coaches of that time were built with steps and boards, on which the page and footman rode; but Ormonde made his footmen run on foot, and spiked the board behind him to prevent his servants getting up. Their duty was to run beside his coach; but when the roads were foul they were to keep the pavement, and preserve their clothes from splash

of mud and rain. No one would be upon the coach except the driver, with his Grace inside. The men would run along the kerbs, and, warm with nut-brown ale from city cellars, would be more or less in rear. A dark night would be some excuse to them for loitering, and by help of agents Blood felt sure of stopping the footmen, one by one, and holding them back until the deed was done. With his own hand he meant to stop the carriage, force the door, and drag his Grace into the mire. By help of his son, he meant to lift his Grace on the giant's horse, to strap him tightly to the giant's body, and to lead him down Piccadilly and across the Park to Tyburn Gate, where he would string him up on the accursed tree.

At length a crash of wheels was heard coming up St. James's Street, on which the Colonel and his son slipt off their horses, and crept slowly down the road to meet it. Ormonde was alone; his footmen were not near. The carriage stopped; a masked face peeped through the window. In a second two strong hands were on the Duke, who cried for help, and fought with his assailants till his strength was spent. He was an old man, sixty years of age, in failing health, with five strong ruffians, armed with knife and pistol, on him. Binding his arms, and raising him behind the giant, they buckled the two men together, back to back, and scorning to maim the coachman, leapt to horse, and rode down Piccadilly towards Hyde Park.

So soon as they were free from houses, Blood, observing that his captive was confused and faint, pricked on for Tyburn, where he wished to fix the rope, and have things ready when the gang came up. Five minutes served to tie the end and slip the noose; and when the gallows was prepared, he started back upon his course, to see what kept his comrades on the road so long. They had not sped so well as he.

On driving into Clarendon House, the coachman roared out lustily that some villains had beset the

coach and carried off the Duke. A porter raised the house, and many of the servants rushed into the road, raising the neighbours as they pressed along, and shouting to all passers-by to help them. Near Hyde Park they heard a cry; a horse was standing near; two men were rolling, writhing, on the ground. A clang of hoofs was heard. When torches came, the persons struggling in the winter mud were seen to be buckled to each other, back to back; the first a giant, vast in bulk and loud of voice; the second but a faint old man, unable to articulate a word. They cut the straps which bound the giant to his mate; on which the huge thing shook himself, got up, and firing a pistol at his late companion, sprang to his horse and spurred into the night. Who was the second? Not his Grace, said some, who would have left him to his fate. His voice was gone, his face was black with mire; but one of his people felt about his coat and found the star upon his heart.

They took him up with care, and bore him back to Clarendon House, where he was put to bed. Some days elapsed before he could leave his room, and then he told the story of his singular escape.

When Ormonde felt himself buckled to the Irish giant, he began to feel that here was no case of violence for the sake of gain. Though Blood was masked, the Duke suspected him. What they were going to do he could not tell, but he had only too much cause to dread the worst. He knew the savage spirit of his country in affairs of blood. If he would save his life, he must be still and watchful, making no resistance where resistance would be vain; but obeying that safe instinct of the animal in danger which disarms suspicion by appearing stunned and lifeless. Blood was taken in; and thought he could safely leave his friends. Three others of the five soon left them, and the giant was proceeding slowly, when the Duke contrived to get his foot beneath the stirrup, and by twist and jerk dis-

mount him. Down into the mire they rolled; the huge thing cursing in his strength; but being tightly bound, and back to back, he could not free himself from the Duke. They struggled until lights were seen and voices heard. A second horseman fired at his Grace before he fled; and then his servants came, released him from the giant, and conveyed him to his house.

White Hall was lively with this tale next day; and Charles was forced in decency to proclaim the villains; but no search was ever made for Colonel Blood, though many must have known, and more suspected, that he was the guilty man. Buckingham was his friend, and Lady Castlemaine his friend. Not long before this period Buckingham had publicly accused the Earl of Clarendon and the Earl of Ossory (Ormonde's eldest son, with whom he had shirked the duel in Chelsea Fields, and suffered his imprisonment in the Tower) of having tried to poison him! The world made merry with the charge, as it was wont to do with Buckingham's challenges and accusations; but Ossory, having suffered from the comic Duke so much, believed this tale of secret poisoning was invented to prepare the public for some actual crime.

"My lord," said Ossory to Buckingham, one day at court, "I know you are at the bottom of this late attempt of Blood upon my father; and I give you fair warning. If my father dies by sword, or pistol, or by secret poison, I shall treat you as the assassin. I shall pistol you, though you stood behind the King's chair."

The King was standing near and heard this threat. "I tell you in his Majesty's presence," added Ossory, "that you may be sure I shall keep my word."

No fresh attempt was made on Ormonde's life; but Colonel Blood was soon engaged in a more singular, more romantic crime,



CHAPTER XLVI.

CROWN JEWELS.

ON the south wall of St. Peter's Church in the Tower stands a memorial slab to Talbot Edwards, Deputy-Keeper of the Crown Jewels; one who, when eighty years of age, acquired a lasting name.

This old man had a son, then absent in Flanders, whom he was expecting home ere long. A daughter, born in his autumn, and as yet unmarried, lived with him in the tower adjoining the Jewel-house. His wife, an aged creature, was the only inmate of his house besides this lassie and a servant-maid. By leave of Sir Gilbert Talbot, Master of the Regalia, Edwards kept the keys, and let such persons as would pay a fee go in and feast their eyes on Crown and Sceptre, Globe and Staff. This practice was a new one; but the King, whose officers were always in arrear of pay, allowed Sir Gilbert to exhibit the Regalia for his private gain.

One day a country pastor, dressed in band and cassock, with a wife to match him, knocked at Edwards' door, and asked, with rustic smiles, if he might see the royal Sceptre and the royal Crown. Edwards, keen for fees, invited this country parson and his country wife to enter. In they passed, and soon were face to face with all the jewels worn by English kings. A spasm seized the parson's wife—the Crown was too

much for her nerves—and poor old Mrs. Edwards ran to fetch a cordial, and to show the lady to her private room. A pleasant guest that country parson was; a round and portly guest; with open face, much marked by pock, black hair (a wig), and wringing voice just faintly touched with brogue. His chest was broad and manly, and his figure had the curve which comes from bending day and night in prayer. The parson talked with Edwards, and surveyed his house. It was a small place, in a lonely quarter of the Tower, with no guards near it, and the house without defence. A pair of pistols hung upon the wall; but kept, it seemed, for show, and not for use.

Mr. Edwards thought his visitors such nice people, that he welcomed Mr. Parson heartily when, some four days later, he returned to leave some gloves for Mrs. Edwards as a present from his wife. A message was sent back, to which the lady in her turn replied. If Mr. Parson told the truth, his lady talked of nothing else but “those good people at the Tower,” for whom she would never be able to do enough. Each day the parson seemed more kind to the aged couple and their child. At length he made an offer. This young lady was a pretty gentlewoman; he himself had a ward, who was his nephew; a young man with a good estate in land, worth two or three hundred pounds a-year at least. Could they not make a match? Delighted with their friend, the Edwardses invited him to dine, which he was glad to do. He spoke a long and earnest grace, and called down blessings on their meat, and on the King and Queen. Poor Edwards thanked his stars that he had come to know so good a man. The dinner ended, Edwards showed his guest about, when Mr. Parson took a fancy to the pair of pistols, which he tried to buy. At parting, he proposed to bring his nephew on a certain day, when they could be alone, and let the young folks see each other. Edwards named a day; and, with a blessing

on the house and company, Mr. Parson took his leave.

At the appointed hour, while Edwards and his wife were waiting to receive their guests, and Miss Edwards was engaged in putting on her gown, new made for this encounter with her swain, five horsemen rode to St. Catharine's Wharf, outside the Iron Gate; one of the five in full canonicals, the other four in citizen attire. The clergyman was Colonel Blood. His nearest comrade was Edward Parrot, who assumed the title of Lieutenant Parrot, once a Roundhead trooper, now a Government spy, hanging about the jails in which old Roundheads were confined, and earning dirty bread by telling odious lies. The third man was Tom Hunt, Blood's son-in-law, who was engaged with him in the attempt on Ormonde's life. Another was a rogue who knew the use of tools; the fifth, a young, fine-looking fellow, who might play the part of swain. All five were armed with sword-blades, sheathed in walking-canes, with good sharp poignards, and a brace of pistols charged and primed. These gentry knew their ground, for some of them had lodgings near the Tower, and all of them were guests of the neighbouring tavern, called the Rose and Crown. Each ruffian had his part to play. The youngster was to stand outside the door, and signal the approach of danger by a secret cry. Hunt was to hold the horses at St. Catharine's Gate. Blood, Parrot, and the Filer were to go inside, cajole the family, get into the Jewel-room, and seize their prey, according to the plans laid down. Blood was to hide the Crown beneath his cassock, Parrot the Globe in his capacious breeches, while the Filer was to break the Sceptre and secure the pieces in his bag. A file, a gag, a mallet, and an iron clip had been provided; and the four bold fellows, confident in their plan of action, passed the gate, the Wharf, the drawbridge, and the sentry, the Byeward tower and Water Lane,

and, walking through the archway of the Bloody tower, stood in the Inner Ward. A few steps brought them to the door.

Blood asked for Edwards in a bland, insinuating voice. The old man bade his visitors come in. Edwards and his wife, their daughter and their son's wife, with a serving-maid, were all the persons then at home; a man of eighty years, and four poor women, who were all aglow with the excitement of a match. The women were upstairs, and Edwards waited in the room alone. Blood offered some excuse for his wife, who would be there anon; and as the ladies were upstairs, he said the gentlemen would not go up until his wife arrived. Miss Edwards, who was eager to inspect her lover, sent her maid to scan the company for her; and this maid, who saw that none of these indoor could be the groom, ran back to say the young man standing at the door was he. Miss Edwards set her cap anew, and waited for the bridegroom to appear. While they were waiting for Mr. Parson's wife, Blood begged that Edwards would allow his friends to see the Crown; on which the deputy turned his key, went into the Jewel-room with them, and shut the door behind him. As he bent to lock the door inside, as he was bound to do by standing rules, one ruffian threw a cloak about his head, a second forced a gag into his mouth, a third stood over him and menaced him, if he raised his voice, with instant death. The old man screamed—three knives were at his throat. He strove to cough—a clip was pressed upon his nose. He fought—a mallet felled him to the ground. Then Blood informed the poor old man that they had come to steal the Sceptre, Crown, and Globe. If he lay still and raised no cry, they would not take his life. The old man screamed and coughed more feebly; but they feared the faintest noise, the women being so near; and beat him with their mallet till they fancied he was gone. One ruffian stooped to hear

if he still breathed, "I'll warrant him," he muttered, "he is dead!"

Some minutes had been lost in struggling with the fallen man; those minutes saved the Jewels. Blood had stowed away the Crown beneath his cassock—Parrot had the Globe in his breeches-pocket—and the Filer was at work upon the Sceptre, when a signal from without was heard. An incident, familiar on the stage, but seldom known in actual life, had just occurred outside, where Edwards the Younger, fresh from Flanders, had arrived in the very nick of time. "What would you?" asked the sentinel, whom Miss Edwards took to be her swain. Young Edwards eyed the man with care. "You are the stranger here," he said; "but if you wish to speak with my father, I will let him know." The man affected to fall in with this idea, and young Edwards ran upstairs through the empty room, and found the ladies waiting for the bridegroom to appear. His coming changed the scene; for Blood, who caught the signal from his chum without, gave orders to decamp at once, throwing down the Sceptre, which they could not break. Secreting the Crown and Globe, and wrapping their cloaks about them, they departed through the empty room and open door.

In haste of leaving, they forgot to glance at Edwards, whom they fancied they had killed; but he came round the instant they were gone. He got the fastening of his gag untied, and raised a scream which brought the family to his aid. Miss Edwards, seeing her swain depart in haste, and then his three friends after, ran down-stairs, and rushing to the open green exclaimed, "The Crown! the Crown is stolen!" Guards at once turned out; and warders ran from gate to gate. A cry of "Treason! treason! Stop them!" rose on every side. A clergyman, then going with a friend up Water Lane, assisted them by shouting, "Stop them! Stop the rogues!" The Tower

was in an uproar, and a piece was raised on every man who tried to run. Captain Beckman, starting with the first alarm, was taken by the soldiers for a thief. The squad were on the point of firing, when a trooper cried, "Forbear! he is a friend!" Young Edwards met a fellow splashed with blood, and ran at him, and would have stabbed him but for Beckman, who, still tearing on, exclaimed, "Hold! hold! he is none of them!" Parrot and Blood now felt the chase grow hot. As they were turning out of Water Lane, to gain the drawbridge leading to the Wharf, a warder, who had heard the cries above the wall, attempted to prevent them passing through the Byeward tower. Blood drew his pistol, fired, and shot him. On the bridge a sentry stood; but when the soldier saw his comrade fall, he dropt his piece and let the murderers pass. A crowd was gathering on the Wharf, and shouts of "Stop the rogues!" were heard from Raleigh's Walk and Water Lane. Blood joined in shouting, "Stop the rogues!" until the men in chase of him came streaming from the bridge. "Stop him!" shouted Beckman. "Who! the clergyman?" asked the crowd in wonder. "Stop him!" cried the Captain fiercely. Blood, now near his horses, turned on his pursuer, and discharged a pistol in his face. It missed; and Beckman had the parson by his throat. A fight for life took place. The Crown of England tumbled in the mire, and many of the gems fell out. The pearl was afterwards picked up by a street-sweeper; the diamond by an apprentice-boy. Some of the stones were never found. When Blood was overpowered, he yielded to the fate of war. Throwing off his clerical voice and aspect with his gown, he talked with reckless and amusing devilry of his luck. "It was a gallant deed," he cried, "although it failed: it was to gain a crown!" He was conducted as a prisoner to the Tower.

Parrot was taken by a serving-man; for Parrot was

no bravo of the Colonel's stamp. The Globe was found upon him, not much injured by his flight. The Ballas ruby had fallen out; but on his clothes being searched, the stone was found. This rogue was also brought into the Tower.

Tom Hunt, alarmed by the young fellow running back alone, and fearing that the game was up, got ready for his flight; and when the Filer came up breathless, with the news of Blood and Parrot having been surprised, with the jewels on their persons, Hunt leaped to his horse, and telling his chum to shift for himself, turned off into a maze of small and narrow streets. In one of these narrow streets Hunt rode against a pole, swerved, lost his footing, and upset a cart. A cobbler, coming from his shop to help the carter, recognised the rider. "This is Tom Hunt," he cried, "who was concerned in the attack on the Duke of Ormonde; let us seize him!" Hunt declared he was not Hunt; the cobbler swore he knew him; and, a constable coming up, they carried him to the house of Justice Smith. Smith, a local Shallow, was on the point of letting him go free, when news came in of the attempt upon the Crown, and Smith, alarmed by such a story, sent his prisoner back into the Tower.





CHAPTER XLVII.

KING AND COLONEL.

AN ignorant world supposed that Colonel Blood would ride, in no long time, from his prison-lodgings in the Tower to Tyburn tree. That ignorant world was much amazed one day to hear that Blood was sent for to White Hall; that the Lieutenant had conveyed him in a barge to the royal stairs; that Blood was even then in private audience with the King!

“The man need not despair,” said Ormonde to Sir Robert Southwell, who was with him when he heard this news; “for surely no King would wish to see a malefactor, but with intention to pardon him.” Blood felt the same and put on his most reckless airs. “This rogue will not be hung,” the pages whispered, with a knowing laugh. These pages could have told how many great ones in the closet were supposed to be the Colonel’s friends. Some of these pages shared a popular suspicion that those great ones in the closet had employed him in this plot to carry off the Crown.

The reason given by Charles for sending to the Tower for Colonel Blood was curiosity to see the boldest rogue in all his kingdom, and to question him about his course of crime. Had that been all, his curiosity would certainly have been repaid, for in his course of questioning he learned with no surprise, that his Irish visitor had once been nearly sending shots into the King himself.

Charles first inquired of Colonel Blood about the Duke of Ormonde. Was he principal in that affair? Blood answered with a swagger, that he was. Who were his associates in the deed? He would not tell. He "would never betray a friend's life, nor ever deny a guilt in defence of his own." What motive had he for attempting murder on the Duke? Motive! Why, his Grace had seized his land; had driven him from his country; had arrested many of his comrades, and had put them to a shameful death. The Duke had hung his comrades; he, and many of his sect, had bound themselves by oath to hang the Duke. That was his motive.

Charles came nearer home. He was aware, from the reports of William Leving, *alias* Leonard Williams, one of his shrewdest spies, that Colonel Blood had been concerned with John Atkinson the Stockinger, Captain Joannes otherwise known as Mene Tekel, Captain Lockyer, and some others, in attempts upon his life. These sectaries—Brownists, Anabaptists, Quakers—had been sworn of a conspiracy known as one of the hundred Risings in the North. A meeting of the sectaries had been held at the Rose and Crown, near the Tower, at which, as Leving told the Secretary of State, the conspirators had formed a plan for shooting the King, the Duke of York, the traitor Monk, and the Lord Chancellor Hyde. They were to hire some houses near the Palace, and some other houses near the Tower; from which they could watch the gates and gardens, and their marksmen pick these personages off with carbines fired from window, door, and roof. On Leving's information, Atkinson had been arrested, lodged in the Tower, and "squeezed;" the rest had not been taken; and though Arlington went down to question Atkinson in the Tower, he learned no more from him than Leving had already told him in his first reports. Would Colonel Blood inform his Majesty about that plot?

Without a moment's pause, the prisoner answered. He was one of several reckless persons who had sworn to kill the King. Once, at least, he had been near success. He noticed that his Majesty, who was fond of swimming, used to go up the Thames to bathe at Chelsea Reach. Now Chelsea Reach was then a lonely place, with aits and osier banks, in which the tame swans built their nests. Blood sought a spot in which he could lie among the reeds unseen; he took his carbine, charged with shot; and, nestling out of sight, lay down, until the King was in the water, under fire. But Majesty was stronger than himself. He could not raise his piece; his heart misgave him; nay, he could not fire upon the King. So great an awe came over him, that he repented of his sin, renounced his purpose, and persuaded his associates to renounce it also.

Flattery like Blood's was never lost on Charles, who knew what desperate actions had adorned the Colonel's life. One of these desperate actions, but a few weeks old, had made as great a talk as even his attempt on Ormonde's life.

Among the sectaries named by Atkinson when he was "squeezed," as being in London on the northern business, was Colonel John Mason, a Yorkshire gentleman of high repute. This Mason was arrested and committed to the Tower, in which he lay three months, and then was sent to York with a corporal's guard. To keep this Colonel Mason under watchful eyes, both on the road, and after he should come to York, a sham arrest was made of William Leving *alias* Leonard Williams, who was to be sent up north with him. A common order was drawn out for Corporal Darcy and six troopers to convey Mason and Leving to York Castle, and a common warrant was directed to the keeper of that Castle to receive these prisoners, and to hold them safe. The trick was so well done, that Mason never dreamt of his companion on the journey

being a spy. Near Darrington, in Yorkshire, in a narrow lane, the squad was fired upon by mounted men, who called on them to stay and yield their prisoner. Corporal Darcy wheeled about, and gave these gentry shot for shot. The troops were seven to six, with all the country at their back. But the assailants knew their trade, and one by one the troopers fell. Darcy got a slash across his hand and head. A second fell and lost his horse. In half an hour, the fight was over. Five of the squad were wounded, three had lost their horses, and the Corporal was compelled to yield. Leving, recognising two of the rescuers as Colonel Blood and Captain Lockyer, fled into the town, and raised a cry for help. A gentleman who rode up while the fight was on, got killed. The attacking party rode away with Colonel Mason in their train; and though their names were instantly reported by Leving to the Secretary of State, not one of them was taken for this triple crime of rescue, murder, and resistance to the King.

In answer to the question what he thought of his position, Blood declared that he was in the power of justice; that he was well aware how much he had deserved his fate; that he was ready for the worst, and felt no terror on his own account. His fears were for the King! Some scores of men, as reckless as himself, had bound each other by an oath to kill all persons who should bring the least among them to a violent end. This oath exposed his Majesty and all his councillors to daily dread of an assassin's shot. One only way, he said, was left to save the King. His Majesty must pardon and employ the nobler sort. To pardon some was to oblige the rest. His Majesty had learned what kind of men they were; and Blood could answer that his friends would be as daring for the crown in times to come as they had been against the crown in times gone by.

This Irish view of the affair was taken by the King,

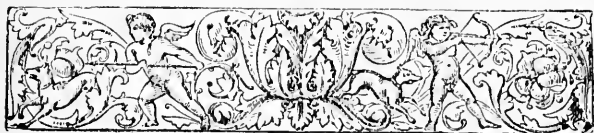
and Arlington was told that Parrot, Blood, and Hunt must be discharged from their imprisonment in the Tower. Men heard the news with wonder and alarm. What could it mean? But they were yet more puzzled when they heard that Charles was bent on granting Blood a pardon under the Great Seal. A pardon was more difficult to grant than a discharge. The rogue had such a list of crimes—rebellion, murder, treason, theft, abduction, burglary, assassination! Nor could Charles, in either law or decency, forgive the Irish ruffian for his enterprise against the Irish Duke, unless his Grace consented to forego his remedy at law. His Grace was not inclined to pardon his intending murderer, even to please a Secretary of State. Blood wrote a letter to the Duke, expressing sorrow for his guilty acts; an insincere and formal note, which hardened Ormonde's heart still more. But Charles entreated him to yield. He sent Lord Arlington to ask his Grace, in his Majesty's name, to overlook his wrongs and pardon Colonel Blood, whose death the King was anxious to prevent, for reasons which the Secretary was commanded to tell his Grace in private. "If his Majesty," said Ormonde, "can forgive him the stealing of his crown, I can as easily forgive him the attempt upon my life." Arlington was going into his reasons. Ormonde stopped him: "Since it is his Majesty's pleasure, that is reason sufficient for me. Your Lordship may therefore spare the rest."

The Irish Colonel left the Tower, and took up his abode at court. Five hundred pounds a-year were given to him—no man knew why. He almost lived in the royal apartments, and was daily at the tables of official people. Evelyn met him at the Treasurer's, in company with the Comte de Grammont, and some foreign noblemen; he wrote him down a spy, and spoke of his "false countenance," but described him as "dangerously insinuating." Blood was great with Lady Castlemaine, and those who came to court in search

of either place or pay soon found that this Irish bravo had more power to help than many Earls and Dukes.

For years, the Irish Colonel was a figure in the court of Charles; conspicuous for the mystery of his many crimes, and for the darker mystery of his forgiveness by the King.





CHAPTER XLVIII.

RYE-HOUSE PLOT.

IN the falling years of Charles the Second's reign, the public loathing of his vices broke into many plots and risings; notably into two conspiracies, unlike in aims and means, but which the artifice of Jeffreys jumbled into one affair, now known to us in plays and novels as the Rye-House Plot.

One of these movements was a scheme got up by statesmen, royal bastards, and political philosophers, to overthrow the government by a popular rising, to dethrone and drive away the King, and found a commonwealth, more or less Utopian, on the Thames. The second of these movements was a scheme got up by Roundheads, Levellers, and Anabaptists, to destroy the reigning house, to lop off Achan root and branch, and introduce a kingdom of the saints. One band of plotters hoped to achieve their ends in open fight, as Cromwell had achieved his ends; the second by a private crime, as Ravaiillac had achieved his ends. These two conspiracies were connected, through the weak and fussy Thomas, Lord Howard of Escrick, by a very slender thread.

Those who were seeking to upset the Government by force, were men of birth and mark, with popular names and vast estates—a duke, an earl, three barons, younger sons of peers, with gentlemen who lived with them on equal terms; while those who were seeking

to slay the King were men of mean condition—maltsters, cobblers, stable-keepers, glaziers, and itinerant preachers. Of the first were James, Duke of Monmouth, eldest of the many bastards owned by Charles; Arthur, Earl of Essex, son of that gallant Capel who had died for Charles the First; Charles, Lord Gerard of Brandon; Thomas, Lord Howard of Escrick, infamous grandson of the infamous Lady Suffolk; William, Lord Russell; Forde, Lord Grey of Werke, whose passion for his wife's beautiful sister was a leading scandal of the reign; Algernon Sydney, son of Henry, Earl of Leicester, and that Lady Dorothy who had lived so long in the Martin tower with the Wizard Earl; John Hampden, grandson of the famous patriot; Major John Wildman; "honest" Jack Trenchard, who was afterwards King William's Secretary of State. Of the second were Richard Rumbold, maltster; Richard Goodenough, under-sheriff; William Hone, carpenter; Captain Thomas Walcott; Josiah Keeling, vintner; Stephen Lobb, an independent minister; James Burton, cheesemonger; Thomas Green, a tavern-keeper.

Monmouth, a son of Charles by Lucy Walters, had been treated with such rare distinction by his father, that the youth conceived some hope of rising to the throne. He wore that royal purple which was worn by princes of the blood. He wore his hat where every one except the royal princes stood uncovered. As the Duke of York declined in public favour Monmouth rose. Though light of heart and slack of brain, he had some showy qualities which take all eyes. His face was handsome and his figure fine. A pleasant voice, an open manner, won all careless hearts. Unlike the members of his house, his faith was thought to be very sound; and in the wars abroad he gave such proofs of personal courage, as endeared him to a turbulent and warlike race. A story was invented for him which might help him to his father's crown. The youthful swain of Lucy Walters was reported to have

been her husband. Evidence of a private marriage was supposed to be concealed in a certain black box. That box was in the palace, in a secret place, and hidden out of policy; but truth was truth, and right was right; and when the truth was known, and right was done, the Duke of Monmouth, it was added, would be called the Prince of Wales.

Annoyed by Monmouth's folly, Charles not only told his son that there had been no marriage, and that no such papers were concealed in any black box, but drove him from his presence, and forbade his servants to have any intercourse with his Grace. Halifax, the Trimmer, was supposed to be the King's adviser, and his Grace was very bitter with the Earl. One Sunday noon, as Halifax was coming from St. Martin's Church, at Charing Cross, the Duke accosted him. "I hear, my Lord, that I am much obliged to your lordship for this late advice to his Majesty not to suffer his servants to correspond with me." Halifax was silent, and the young man added:—"The advice was needless for yourself, for I have no desire to hold any conversation with your lordship." Halifax said he was not bound to tell his Grace what happened in the Council, and he should not tell him whether he had given the King advice or not. "This is not the place," said Monmouth, with a foolish heat; "but I will find a better opportunity to discourse more freely on this subject." Galled with insult, Halifax answered no less fiercely, "When and where your Grace shall please."

The King, who heard of this encounter near his palace gates, convened a Council, forced Lord Halifax to report his conversation with the Duke, and caused an Order in Council to be published, warning every one in office to forego all correspondence with his Grace. From that hour Monmouth was regarded by the discontented people as a patriot; and wiser men than he was wont to live with, caught the fancy that

the bastard son of Charles might make a better king than James.

“The Duke of Monmouth and the Duke of York are all the same to me,” said Sydney. Howard of Escrick urged that a prince with a defective title was the prince for them; since such a man, aware of his defects, must shape his policy for the public good, in order to maintain himself in power. Howard of Escrick introduced the Duke to Sydney, by a trick. He knew that Sydney thought but poorly of the Duke’s abilities, and that Monmouth feared the great republican’s unbending pride. He smoothed the way to personal intercourse, by telling Sydney that the Duke proposed to come and dine with him alone, when they might talk in ease and privacy of public business; and by telling Monmouth that Sydney wished to see him very much, but that his age and temper would not suffer him to come and court his Grace. Hampden, Essex, Russell, and a train of high-born Whigs, were all engaged in plans for a general rising, when an incident occurred which brought them into brief and fatal junction with a plot, from all the purposes of which such men as Russell, Grey, and Sydney, would have turned with anger and disgust.

While these great peers and sons of peers were arming in the shires, and passing round the signals for a common start, three men, whose names were hardly known, except in taverns and conventicles—an Irish trooper, a Scottish preacher, and an English barrister—were whispering to each other in a chamber of the Middle Temple of a plan for lopping off the King and Duke of York. Rumsey, the Irish officer, was a tavern hero, with a broken fortune and a tarnished name. No one knew exactly how he lived; and some suspected that his means were drawn from quarters which he could not safely own. Ferguson, the Scottish preacher, had lost his church, his pulpit,



MARTIN TOWER FROM THE INNER WARD.

and himself. West, the English lawyer, was a professing atheist; a clever and loquacious fool, who chattered night and day of "lopping off" the royal house. The three men were supposed to know each other well, and each had reason to believe his neighbour was a cheat. But West and Rumsey, though a vain man and a bad man, were examples of manly virtue when compared against the Scot. Ferguson, the Judas of our greatest satire, has a chance of living, in immortal shame, so long as Dryden's verse is read:

"Judas, that pays the treason-writer's fee,
Judas, that well deserves his namesake's tree!"

Ferguson preached the word, and haunted taverns, and kept a school, and wrote lampoons, and sold his soul to every party; to the government, to the sectaries, to the Duke of Monmouth, to the ideal republicans, to the great Whig lords. He played the spy on all; received the wages of his shame from all. In this affair the rogue was nearly matched; for West and Rumsey were resolved to have an equal share in the price of blood.

These rascals sent for Richard Rumbold, once an officer in Cromwell's corps, and still a strict republican in soul. Rumbold was an Ironside of the hardest grit; a fellow who had fought his hundred fights. To him had fallen the risk of mounting guard before the scaffold at White Hall. When Monk betrayed the Commonwealth, Rumbold turned from soldiering and became a farmer, maltster, and the like; a brave man, staunch in his opinions, full of veteran fire, and ready to flame out on such a court and king!

They told this Ironside, that the time was come, that an uprising would take place at once, that many of the lords were arming day and night; but they expressed some doubts, as friends of a free commonwealth, whether these great lords were going the nearest way. It would be better, they declared, to "lop" the King

and Duke of York. The thing was easy, if a place were found. The royal brothers were at Newmarket; in a week they would return to London; riding by the great North road. A dozen horsemen only would be with them. What, then, could prevent a band of resolute men from setting on the royal guard, and riding England of that cursed brood? The men were ready. Rumsey would take the post of danger, and an Irish friend of his, Tom Walcot, would direct the enterprise. West told how he had broken ground among the city folk, where Robert Keeling, tavern-keeper, and Richard Goodenough, under-sheriff, were engaged to raise a band. At all times swift to risk his life for what he called the Good Old Cause, the Ironside Colonel told them he was willing to assist with house and horse. He understood the business as an open fight, and not a cowardly attack on unarmed men; a levying of such war upon the Crown as he had spent his youth in making, not a base attempt upon two royal lives. Rumsey and West were not disposed to clear up any of his doubts. They wanted him, and cared but little how he reconciled his conscience to the plot.

Rumbold held a farm—the Rye-House farm—two miles from Hoddesden, on the road which Charles and James must pass; a lonely farm, with wall and hedge, well screened from sight by scrub and trees. Close by there grew a copse, in which a troop of horse might easily lurk unseen. That farm, that copse, the Colonel placed at their disposal as a camp. Their plans were soon laid down. Hone, Keeling, Green, and Goodenough were to raise their bands; Rumsey and Walcot were to lead the charge. One party was to occupy Rye-House, a second party was to hold the copse; and when the royal troop rode up, a carter stationed near the farm—a bold and trusty fellow—should obstruct the road. Two or three comrades, placed behind a wall, should fire. The guard, no doubt, would rein and wheel, and then the horsemen in the copse could dash

upon the scene, disperse the guard, and free their country from an odious yoke.

West ran about the city taverns, from the Dolphin in Bartholomew Lane, to the Salutation in Lombard Street, where Rumbold met him with Hone the carpenter, Keeling the vintner, Goodenough the under-sheriff, and some more, who tossed off mugs of ale, and drank confusion to the kings and gods. Whig lords were seen with West and Goodenough. Howard of Escrick drank with them, and praised their wine, and hiccupped that their plan of lopping was the only way. But Howard of Escrick was as false a rogue as either Keeling, Ferguson, or West.

A fire which happened to break out among the stables is supposed to have saved the King and Duke, by causing them to leave Newmarket eight or ten days before the appointed time. But Charles was too well served by spies to be in ignorance of all these plots, and when the time was come for him to strike the liberal party, he arrested Keeling, West, and Rumsey, and on their confession swept a host of noble, and a few ignoble, prisoners to the Tower.

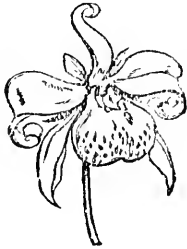
"I shall fall a sacrifice," said Russell to his chaplain Johnson. Johnson, a man of mark, had recently produced his *Life of Julian the Apostate*. Russell was sad but staunch; "Arbitrary government cannot be set up in England," he declared, "without wading through my blood." A messenger from the Council waited at his gate; but no one stood behind his house, and he could easily have fled from London. Lady Russell went about to speak with friends, who told her if my lord left town, his flight would be regarded as a proof of guilt. The wife had hardly reached her house before a messenger came to summon Russell to the palace, where the King was sitting with the lords.

"No one suspects your lordship of designs against my person," said the King to Russell; "but we have

evidence—good evidence—of your designs against my government.”

Russell was not bound to criminate himself; and Charles committed him to close imprisonment. “I am sworn against,” said Russell to his servant, Taunton; “they will have my life.” His servant hoped they would not have the power to do so.

“Yes,” he sighed; “the devil is loose.” And so that noble citizen passed into the Tower.





CHAPTER XLIX.

MURDER!

AT an early hour on Friday morning, July 13, 1683, the royal barge was darting down the Thames. Within it sat the King and Duke of York, two gentlemen of broken health who were not usually awake at seven o'clock. The barge dropped down the river, shot the bridge, and swept to shore at the Queen's Stairs. Landing on the Wharf, these royal brothers passed into the Tower, and went direct to the Lieutenant's house. Their trusty knave, Sir John Robinson, was gone; a not less trusty knave, Tom Cheek, who called himself Captain Cheek, was reigning in his stead. The King and Duke remained some time with Cheek; no one knew why—but Cheek gave out that they were come to see some guns.

A stir was visible in the Tower, to which a host of prisoners had been lately swept to keep Lord Russell company—Arthur, Earl of Essex; Charles, Lord Gerard, eldest son of the Earl of Macclesfield; John Booth, eldest son of Lord Delamere; Algernon Sydney, son of the Earl of Leicester; Major Wildman; "Honest" Jack Trenchard; Aaron Smith. Essex and Gerard were in lodgings near each other; Essex in the house of Major Hawley, Gentleman Porter of the Tower; and Gerard in the warder's house next door. Both houses looked upon the

Green. The work of death was just begun, and none could tell, except his Majesty, whose turn might come the next.

His Majesty, who laughed at most things, chose to jeer at this "Protestant Plot," as a comedy in which beggars were concerned for property, atheists for religion, bastards for succession; but the royal mood was far from jocular; and the mistresses and cynics who attended him could see that under his affected lightness he was burning with desire to have these great Whig lords, and sons of great Whig lords, destroyed without an hour's delay. His instruments were ready. Howard of Escrick, captured in a chimney, was conveyed to court, where he was housed near Rumsey in the palace of White Hall. These wretches were the King's chief witnesses: the peer against his brother peers and their associates in the Rising scheme; the officer against the dyers, carpenters, and tapsters in the Rye-House Plot. These prisoners must be quickly tried and hurried to their doom; for if amazement should have time to cool, no jury could be trusted to convict on such poor proof as Government could bring. Hone and Walcot had been tried the day before—tried at the Old Bailey—and condemned to death. A scent of blood was in the air; and Jeffreys had displayed such parts as marked him in the mind of Charles for quick promotion to the bench. The King and Duke were bound to strike, and strike at once.

The King had scarcely entered the Lieutenant's house before a guard drew up at Russell's door; the prisoner came into the open air; and after waiting for a little while, was marched away to Newgate; where he was to spend the last few days of his illustrious life on earth. Was this removal of Lord Russell from the Tower an explanation of the royal visit?

The King and Duke were sauntering to their barge, attended by Tom Cheek, when cries of "Murder!

Murder!" rose above the wall. Tom Cheek ran back; but Charles and James went their way. This cry of murder came from Major Hawley's servant-maid, and from the room then occupied by the Earl of Essex and his serving-man.

Essex had only been in custody three days. On his arrival at the Tower on Tuesday night, he slept in Captain Cheek's apartments. On the following day, by orders from the Court, he was removed to Major Hawley's house, which stood next door, between the Lieutenant's lodgings and the Beauchamp tower. He had the first room on the left hand, as you enter from the stairs; a part of the lodgings which had once been Lady Jane Grey's. A closet occupied one corner; and a window looked upon the Green. Two warders were assigned to him as keepers—Nathaniel Munday and Thomas Russell; one to stand at his chamber-door, if not within his room; the second at the stair-foot, with orders to prevent intruders speaking with the Earl, except in the presence of Captain Cheek. A serving-man, Paul Bomeny, was allowed to be with him. Wednesday and Thursday passed. The Tower was filled with bustle; messengers were coming every hour; and tragic passions were exciting every one; yet neither Captain Cheek nor Major Hawley had his notice drawn to the Earl of Essex. Clarendon, his brother-in-law, came to see him. Paul, his servant, sent a footman to his house for things—for food and wine, for change of clothes, for razor, brush, and soap. These things were brought into the Gentleman Porter's house. Lord Essex had his food prepared and carried up to him by servants, who were free to come and go, according to the general rules observed when prisoners were not ordered into close arrest. When Clarendon left the Earl on Thursday night he was a little grave, but well in health, and firm in spirit. Nothing suggested to Lord Clarendon the mood, the means, the motive, for an act of self-destruction.

Yet on Friday morning, as the King and Duke of York were leaving the Lieutenant's house to gain their barge, two boys, who happened to be staring at Lord Gerard's lodgings, saw a hand put out of the adjoining window and a razor flung upon the Green. These boys, whose name was Edwards, living in Mark Lane, were on their way to school at eight o'clock, when some one told them that his Majesty and the Duke of York were at the Tower. They ran to see the sight; and when the King and Duke were gone, they loitered on the Green to see Lord Gerard's lodgings, and were standing near his window when the razor was flung out. Going up to look at it, they saw the steel was red and wet with blood; but just as they were bending over it, a girl came running out of Hawley's house, crying "Murder! murder!" snatched the razor and ran back with it. A crowd of people gathered round the door; and those who were inside told those without, that the Earl of Essex had cut his throat with a razor in his closet, and that the bloody instrument was found, where he had dropped it, on the closet floor. This was the story told by those within the house; and in this version of material points the Government persisted to the end, in face of every difficulty raised by the attested facts.

The Earl was dead, whoever killed him. His throat was cut across from ear to ear; and cut in such a way as almost to behead him. Both the jugular veins were slashed; the windpipe and the gullet were cut through; the blade had struck into the spinal column. It was curious that a razor could have done the deed! A razor, notched and dripping, lay on the chamber floor, some three feet from the bed. The corpse was lying in the closet, lying on the face, an elbow near the face, and both the legs extending through the door into the room.

A coroner's jury met next day. Paul the serving-man, Russell the warder, two surgeons, Sherwood

and Andrews, gave their evidence. Munday, whose duty it had been to keep the door, if not to stand within the chamber, was not called, and neither Cheek nor Hawley ventured to appear. Edward Farnham, "coroner of our lord the king," convened a dozen good and trusty persons, living, as was usual in such cases, in the liberties of the Tower.

Paul was the first examined. He had served his lordship three or four years. When his lord first went to Hawley's house, which was on Wednesday morning, he desired him to procure a penknife to pare his nails. His lord was dainty with his nails, and often pared them with a knife. Paul wrote a note by the footman to his lordship's steward, asking him to send a knife with the linen, meat, and wine; but the steward answered that he had no penknife by him, but he would purchase one and send it to the Tower. "Where is the knife?" his lord asked; to which the witness answered, it would come next day. On Thursday morning he received a message from his lordship, through the warder Russell, asking if the knife were come! He went into the room, and told his lord the penknife had not come. "Give me one of the razors," said his lordship; "that will do as well."

He gave him one, with which he pared his nails. This witness left the room, and talked outside the door with Russell, after which he went down-stairs until the footman came with a basket of provisions, a penknife, and a note of three or four lines from the steward. Going into his lordship's room, he found it empty; trying the closet door he found that *shut*. Supposing that his lord would soon come out, he went down-stairs again, and chatted with the keeper ten or fifteen minutes. Going back into the room, and finding it still empty, he tapped three times at the closet door, and cried, "My lord!" On hearing no reply, he lifted up the arras, and, on peeping through the chinks, he saw some stains of blood and part of an open razor on the ground. He called for help to

Russell, who *pushed the closet door open*, and found the Earl lying dead, without his wig, and with the razor by his side.

Paul Bomeny was young in such affairs, and, in his haste to tell the story he was primed to tell, he made his lordship kill himself on Thursday, not on Friday; one of those cardinal mistakes which upset loads of what might otherwise look like proofs. Farnham, "coroner for our lord the king," perceived the blunder, and before the text was printed, he supplied the proper date.

Russell was examined next. He swore that on Friday morning, the 13th of July, at eight or nine o'clock, he was in Major Hawley's house, and heard Lord Essex call to his man, first for a knife and afterwards for a razor, to pare his nails. Paul carried him a razor, and he heard his lordship walking up and down the room, scraping his nails with a razor, till his lordship shut the outward door. Paul went down-stairs, and waited fifteen minutes, after which he passed into the chamber, peeped through a chink, and seeing his lordship on the floor, cried out for help, "My lord has fallen down sick!" He, Russell, went into the room, and opening the closet door, of which the key was in the lock *outside*, he found my lord in his blood, the razor by his side.

These stories could not both be true. Not only were the conversations of Lord Essex with his servant sworn for different days of the week, but nearly all the primary facts to which they testified were incompatible with each other. Paul swore that when he peeped through the chink he saw the razor and the blood, while Russell made him cry, "My lord has fallen down sick!" Paul represented Russell as forcing the closet door, while Russell declared that the door had not been locked.

Sherwood and Andrews testified that his lordship's throat was cut from ear to ear, that his arteries were parted, that the vertebræ of his neck were injured by the blade.

Farnham, the Tower Coroner, and his jury from the Tower Liberties, found that the Earl of Essex had fallen by his own malice; and on Monday morning Government was ready with "An Account how the Earl of Essex killed himself in the Tower of London, the 13th of July, 1683, as it appears by the Coroner's Inquest." This was followed by a scandalous sheet, entitled "Great News from the Tower;" in which Essex was held up as an "example to all that love their private interests before that of the public; that love only their King but as it is subservient to some private design; that make it their business, under the cloak of religion, to destroy kings and bring to utter ruin the best of governments."

Was the Earl of Essex murdered by his keeper while the King and Duke of York were waiting in the Lieutenant's house?

Much evidence has been taken on the subject, and the case has never yet been cleared on either side. One Lawrence Braddon, a fanatic in the cause of justice, spent some years in gathering evidence. He found the little schoolboys who saw the razor flung upon the Green. He proved their story by another witness, one Jane Loadman, who was also in the Tower that day, and saw a hand cast out the razor from Major Hawley's house. Some slight but curious links of proof were added by his sleepless care. A more important piece of evidence, if it could be trusted, was that of John Lloyd, a soldier, who had been on duty in front of Hawley's house. His orders were to suffer no one to go in except with Major Hawley and the warder Russell, who was stationed at the door. At half-past eight o'clock, he said, two strangers came to Hawley's door, knocked softly, and were admitted by the warder. Afterwards he heard a scuffle in the room above, and then a cry was raised, "My lord is dead!"

Braddon was sent to the Marshalsea, but held on

stoutly to his story. Lloyd was sent to Newgate, where he soon gave way so far as to admit that, whether his tale was true or false, he should have kept it to himself. The Earl's family were divided in opinion, and his prudent kinsmen thought it best to close the record with a doubt.

Paul, the serving-man, was pensioned by the King and Duke of York.





CHAPTER L.

A PATRIOT.

OF the dozen prisoners lodged by Captain Cheek in the Tower, the first in fame, in service, and in character, was Sydney; a Patriot whose name is linked for ever with the history of our freedom both in speech and thought.

A line of artists, from the days of Toland down to those of Meadley, have presented Sydney to the world in fancy dress; in toga, cloak, and sandals, like an ancient sage. His wisdom is the Grecian wisdom; his valour is the Roman valour. In his noble pride, and yet more noble virtue, they discern a pagan hero; and they paint his pride and virtue as of antique rather than of modern type. That love of country which was Sydney's passion, they derive from classic sources, and describe in classic verse. Yet nothing in the Patriot's life and writing justifies this picture. Sydney was no Roman stoic, in a modern guise. His genius was a Gothic genius, and his love of country was an English love. His highest aim on earth was that of living a faithful Christian life.

On both his father's and his mother's side he came of an illustrious race. His father, Robert, Earl of Leicester, was a grandson of Elizabeth's friend, Sir Henry Sydney, who, as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, won such love as English ruler in that country rarely wins; and left his name, as none but Sydney ever left

a name, to ten generations of Irish boys and girls. That father's uncle was Sir Philip Sydney; and his aunt that Mary, Countess of Pembroke, who, in Jonson's language, was "the subject of all verse." Earl Robert was a wise and learned man, who read and wrote with equal range, and spoke the French, Italian, and Castilian tongues, as natives speak them. Sydney's mother was the Lady Dorothy Percy, daughter of the Wizard Earl. His name of Algernon was a Percy name, then borne by Lady Dorothy's brother, Algernon, tenth Earl of Northumberland. Sydney's brother, Lord Lisle, was so accomplished, both in arts and arms, that he was held to have revived the glories of that Philip Sydney whose illustrious names he bore. Nor was his sister, Lady Dorothy, less renowned in verse than Mary Sydney had been. She was Waller's muse, and, in the guise of Saccharissa, holds a lasting place among the dames whom English poets have loved and sung.

Trained as became the heir of so much fame, he read, he thought, he travelled, he conversed with men, and laid up stores of observation for his future use. At twenty he had seen the world; having lived in Paris, Rome, Rensberg, London; talked with Richelieu, Urban, Christiern, Charles; and studied with his closest zeal the history of his country's progress from the Saxon times. At twenty, when the Earl his father was appointed to succeed the Earl of Strafford as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Sydney was a man in stature and in wisdom. In the field, no soldier bore a stouter heart; and when he joined the patriotic army under Manchester, the Fighting Earl at once appointed him to command a troop of horse. In seven weeks he fought his way from a company to a regiment, from the rank of captain to the rank of colonel. Charging at Marston Moor he fell to the ground, disarmed by many wounds, and would have either bled to death or fallen into the enemy's power, had not a trooper, fired

by his heroic temper, dashed from the line, driven off his foes, and borne him to the rear. "Your name, brave fellow?" gasped the wounded man. "Excuse me, sir," the trooper said; "I have not done this thing for a reward." He rode away into the fight, and Sydney never learned to whom he owed his life that day.

He fought with Fairfax, and he fought with Cromwell. On his banner he inscribed the motto:

"Sanctus Amor Patriæ dat Animum."

This holy love of country was a fire that never ceased to burn. He knew no doubt, he felt no fear; yet he regretted in his heart of hearts that English blood was shed by English hands. He helped to crush the King, but would not sit upon the bench that sentenced him to death. Like Blake he turned his face abroad, and in the Council of State he worked with Vane to find the ships and guns which gave to Blake the means of meeting and defeating Tromp. With beating pulse and glowing eyes he watched that sailor's high career. With noble pride he wrote of victories which he helped to win: "All the states, kings, and potentates of Europe, most respectfully, not to say submissively, sought our friendship; and Rome was more afraid of Blake and his fleet than they had been of the great King of Sweden, when he was ready to invade Italy with a hundred thousand men."

Yet Sydney was not dazed by military fame. He stood for law when law was overthrown by Cromwell, just as stoutly as he stood for law when it was overthrown by Charles. To him a general had no more right to govern wrong than kings. He broke with Cromwell when the victor of Naseby showed that he was aiming at a power beyond the law; and Cromwell, ere he ventured to disperse the House of Commons by his musketeers, was forced to drive him from the Speaker's side.

While Cromwell reigned, the Patriot either lived

abroad or in retirement; mostly at the Hague, where he conversed with De Witt; and at Penshurst, where he studied Milton and the Bible. When the fall of Richard Cromwell set him free, he took his place in Parliament, he argued for a Commonwealth, he voted for cutting down the army, and he went ambassador to the Swedes and Danes. The Restoration struck him to the heart; for he had never dreamt that such a land as his could sink into the arms of such a man as Charles. But Sydneys are not born in every house; the masses of mankind are swayed by trifles; and heroic virtue must not hope for allies on the village green. Monk offered him rewards, which he repelled with scorn. "Rewards of iniquity!" he called them. He remained abroad. "Where Vane, Lambert, Hazelrigg, cannot live in safety, I cannot live at all," he said to those who wished him to come back. Vane, Lambert, Hazelrigg, were all then lying in the Tower. He lived in Denmark; he lived in Germany; he lived in Italy; but he never faltered in his love for England—that great country, "which," he wrote, "if it were preserved in liberty and virtue, would truly be the most glorious in the world." For seventeen years he lived an exile's life; and only when his father was expiring could a license for him to return be got from Charles. Worn down with noble cares, he felt himself, at sixty years, an ageing man, and from his failing health and ripening wisdom was inclined to change his brilliant sword for a more brilliant pen. His fighting days were past. In his abode in Jermyn Street he gathered books, and set his mind on adding one more treatise to the Literature of Freedom and the Free.

He wrote to Penn about his colony, and drew up forms of Government for the city of Fraternal Love. He talked with all the liberal leaders, who resorted to his house as that of an unerring sage. Essex and Russell were his friends. The Duke of Monmouth waited on him; and that wretch whom Evelyn calls

“a monster of a man,” Howard of Escrick, got admission to his house. While Sydney was discussing forms of government as a branch of science, Howard of Escrick was entangling him in plots, which he was but too willing afterwards to betray.

Sydney was dining at his house in Jermyn Street, at one o'clock, when writs for his arrest were brought to him ; and ere he rose from table, Lloyd, an officer from the palace, came to search his house. Lloyd took some papers from his desk, and from an open trunk, and putting these papers into a pillow-case, told him to seal them up ; but Sydney, who remembered a recent case in which a man had sealed a bag, not knowing what was in it, and the contents had been afterwards produced against him, was too wary to be caught. Lloyd sealed the bag with his own seal, and took it with him ; saying it should not be opened save in Sydney's presence. But the writer, though he pressed for it most warmly, was to see that bag no more.

Carried to the palace, where the Council was in waiting for him, Sydney was asked a score of questions, all of which he answered briefly ; saying if they had any charge against him he must clear himself in the proper place, but he could not oblige them with the proof they sought. No charge was made against him, for his bag was not yet searched ; but Jenkins, Secretary of State, committed him to the Tower. Cheek was to keep him safe, not close ; but Cheek knew better what his master wanted from him than the Secretary of State ; and Sydney was in close confinement from the first. Next day his goods in Jermyn Street were seized, as were all monies and securities in his banker's hands. His linen and his hose were taken, so that days elapsed before he could obtain a change of clothes. No friend was suffered to approach his cell. No servant save a warder of the Tower had access to him, till Joseph Ducasse, his French attendant, got Lord Halifax, his kinsman, to procure an order from the Secre-

tary of State for him to wait upon his lord. All these indignities were heaped upon him in the hope that such a Roman spirit would disdain to live.

Not many hours elapsed before some members of the Council were in Sydney's cell, with question and cross-question, cut and dry ; but they returned no wiser than they came ; for neither Jeffreys, who had charge of the legal points, nor Jenkins, who had charge of the public policy, could make much capital of the papers seized and sealed by Lloyd, and other evidence against the prisoner there was none.

These papers were of moment, not the less ; for they contained the chapters of a book, which, in its reach of thought and force of style, has very few equals in the English tongue.

In the year 1680 (the year in which the printing of pamphlets and newspapers was declared to be illegal ; in which King Charles refused to receive petitions for assembling Parliament ; in which the Exclusion Bill was introduced), a little work was issued from the press called *Patriarcha* : or the Natural Power of Kings. It is a curious little work, and looks in modern eyes like one of those fossil shells of unknown date which children find in rocks that have been rent by force. The writer was Sir Robert Filmer, one of those Royalists of the Civil War whose notions of the kingly power went far beyond those of the King himself. In Filmer's eyes Liberty was the Original Sin. His object in the *Patriarcha* was to rescue princes from an odious doctrine held, he said, by Levellers, Jesuits, democrats, and blasphemers—that the common herd of men has any right to judge anointed kings.

His principles were few, yet covered all his ground : (1.) The King, he said, was first a father, and his subjects were his children. God had made him master, and his offspring could not take from him an order and precedence given by God. The right to rule came down from sire to son, in natural series ; each succeed-

ing to the other by divine, unalterable rule. As Adam governed, kings now govern. Adam left his power to patriarchs; patriarchs left their power to judges; judges left their power to kings. All rights of government are derived from Adam—from the father of our race; and if the first man were alive, and dying, he would have one heir, and only one, who could succeed him in his place as lord and king. (2.) It is, he said, against the rule of nature for the people either to govern or to choose their governors. Adam owed none of his power to Cain and Seth. All those who talk of natural freedom are at fault. Aristotle gives the lie to Plato. Saurez and Bellarmine are sophists. Saurez pretends that Adam had an economical not a political sway among his sons, and only while these sons were not yet free. But when were Adam's sons made free? Bellarmine contradicts Saurez, even as Aristotle contradicts Plato, and these modern Jesuits count for no more than ancient Greeks. The only rights men have are those which they can exercise against each other. In a council, a majority may compel the rest, because a council is a human institute, and those who sit in it derive their power from man. But kings derive their right from nature, and to trench upon these rights is mutiny in the sight of God. (3.) Law itself, he said, does not infringe upon the natural and paternal power of kings. Royal right is older than public law. Adam was before the covenant. The Kings of Judah and Israel were not bound by law. It is an open question whether laws were made to bridle tyrants; but a king, though bound to carry out the laws, is not himself bound by the laws. He is the head of all. He may not be resisted, even when he is wrong. No man can judge a King. Should he command his subject to commit a crime, that subject must obey. It is a sin to pause. A subject must not ask if what he is told to do is just. The guilt, if guilt there be, will lie upon his master's head. The matter must be left to God.

This book was not the idle product of a dreamer's brain. It was a great political fact. The King accepted it. The Duke of York swore by it. A party strong at court, and stronger still at Oxford, laid it on their tables as a new-found gospel. All the sticklers for prerogative adopted Filmer's inference, even when they could not, out of shame, adopt his facts. Since Gauden wrote the spurious *Icon Basilikon*, no book had stirred so deep and wide a circle in the Church.

With what delight an athlete of the intellectual strength of Sydney would put forth his arm against such slavish nonsense, no one need be told. Poor books have often called up great rejoinders, such as Milton's *Defence of the People of England*, and Locke's great *Essay on Toleration*; and with these magnificent compositions Sydney's *Discourses concerning Government* have every claim to rank.

Sydney makes short work of Filmer's theories. He shows that Adam was no king, and never ruled by kingly power. He shows that patriarchs and judges were not kings; and that parental power is not akin to royal power. The first king ever mentioned, Nimrod, was a tyrant; and a government by kings was given to Israel as a punishment for their sins. If kings derive from Adam, and if only eldest sons succeed, no prince on earth has any right to reign. But where, in Scripture, is the rule laid down in favour of the eldest son? The power of Adam fell to a younger son; the power of Noah fell to a younger son. If any principle of succession could be drawn from Scripture, it was hostile to the eldest son. Abraham was not a first-born son; Isaac was not a first-born son; Jacob was not a first-born son; Judah was not a first-born son. Nor is the rule of primogeniture to be found in later times. Moses was not an eldest son; David was not an eldest son; Solomon was not an eldest son. Neither is the rule observed

in other monarchies. No English prince derives his blood from these Jewish kings, nor has the practice of this country been to respect the line of descent from sire to son. The doctrine broached by Filmer, and accepted by the Oxford Tories, made usurpers of a dozen English kings. By swift and pitiless logic Sydney swept these cobwebs from his path, and then laid down in clear, imperishable words, the true philosophy of states. "Man is naturally free," he writes; "he cannot justly be deprived of his liberty without a cause; and does not resign it, or any part of it, unless it be in consideration of some greater good." To these great doctrines he was constant first and last; but not content with citing, as most writers do, examples from the histories of Israel, Greece, and Italy, he struck a new and yet more popular vein. He turned to our own Saxon fathers. He recalled the Gothic principles of freedom, and supported English rights by reference to the rights of Danes and Swiss. Our liberties were older than our laws. For Magna Charta did not make us free; it only cited and confirmed our ancient rights. Kings have no power except what they derive from law, and when they break the laws by which they live, all citizens have the duty to recall them to the violated rule.

All these great doctrines sound so true—nay, trite—to us, that we can only guess how differently they sounded in the reign of Charles, on finding that for putting them on paper the illustrious Patriot lost his head.





CHAPTER LI.

THE GOOD OLD CAUSE.

WHILE Charles and James were carrying to White Hall the tale of Essex's sudden death, a messenger from Captain Cheek was riding with the news to Newgate, where Sir Francis Pemberton was sitting down to try Lord Russell for his life. Jeffreys made good use of this ghastly news; for while Howard of Escrick was in the witness-box, shuffling and trifling with the truth, he whispered in that miscreant's ear that his accomplice in the Tower had cut his throat! Lord Howard fainted in the box. His colour fled; his tongue refused its office. "Raise your voice, my lord," said Pemberton from the bench. But Howard had no voice to raise. "We cannot hear," the jury cried. But Howard only stared and reeled beneath the blow; his haggard look gave evidence of his guilt, beyond such proofs as Jeffreys had to show. King Charles was well aware how much he owed that day to this surprise. "The jury could not have condemned my lord," the Duchess of Portsmouth afterwards told Lady Russell, "if my Lord Essex had not died as he did." By four o'clock the scene was closed—that scene in which Rachel Russell acted as her husband's clerk—and Charles supped pleasantly that night; aware that Russell was condemned, that Essex was a corpse. The palace gates were shut; the park was closed; a

double guard was placed at Charing Cross ; but in the royal chambers feasts were spread, for George of Denmark was in London, courting Princess Ann ; and junketings were heard at court the very night before a batch of Rye-House plotters were to die. Russell was slain the following day ; like Raleigh, for the Good Old Cause.

Four months elapsed ere Charles was ready to go on ; for more than one of his prisoners sued the judges, got his Habeas Corpus, and was suffered to go out on bail. Hampden was one of these ; and when he left the Tower he sent to Sydney's cell to ask if he might come and see him. Sydney begged him not to come. He knew that he was marked for death ; his portion in the Civil War had been too great for Charles to pardon ; and he would not drag a younger man, of famous quality, into his circle. Jeffreys, now become the leading agent for the Crown, was constantly about, and Cheek would certainly have sent him news of Hampden's visit to his friend. Jack Trenchard got his liberty on bail ; but nothing to their purpose could be got from "honest Jack." Sir Leolin Jenkins, Secretary of State, Sir Robert Sawyer, Attorney-General, and Sir Heneage Finch, Solicitor-General, came to question Sydney in the Tower, but the great Patriot's tone soon told them they had come in vain. They read a list of questions which they were to ask him. "Pardon me," he answered ; "ere I speak to such things you must let me see the charge and my accusers." When they pressed him further he was silent. "You seem to want evidence," in effect he said, "and come to draw it from my own mouth ; you will not gain it from me." Then they turned elsewhere. A lawyer, Aaron Smith, who had been sent to Scotland by the great Whig lords, was lying in a cell near Sydney ; and the Government offered him a free discharge, if only he would give such evidence as would compromise his neighbour's life. The lawyer would

not swear a lie. "I cannot tell you anything," he answered, "that would touch one hair of Sydney's head."

No evidence being at hand, yet Sydney's death being necessary to the King and Duke of York, no course was left save that of a judicial murder; and a murder by the forms of law required some radical changes on the bench. Pemberton could not be trusted. He was not a popular judge; so far as he could strain the law he strained it; but Pemberton was a lawyer, not a butcher; and the work before the Council needed a more brazen brow and a more stony heart than his. The Government resolved that Sydney should be brought to trial; not in the Old Bailey, where Russell and the others had been tried, but in the Court of King's Bench; a court in which the judges, witnesses, and jurors, would be more directly under influence from the Crown. Yet much remained to do ere Sydney could be slain by form of law. The court must be completely changed, by raising Holloway and Walcot, two obsequious lawyers, to the bench, and putting Jeffreys at their head. But little could be done with witnesses, since Smith had scorned to buy his liberty by lies. Howard was in custody, and Rumsey was prepared to tell them all he knew; but Howard was unworthy of belief, and Rumsey was a stranger to the prisoner. Evidence might be gained by cross-examination from the papers seized in Jermyn Street by Lloyd. The main thing was the jury. Twelve bad men were wanted who would yield a verdict under Jeffreys' orders, let the proofs be what they might. To find such jurors in the city was not easy; to expect them on an ordinary panel was absurd. They must be sought in slums and dens not known to every man, and in this search the Government must be able to depend on those whom it employed. The first step was to name the under-sheriffs, who would have to draw the panel. Now the under-sheriffs were appointed by the sheriffs; the sheriffs were appointed

by the wards. These popular appointments must be set aside, if Sydney was to be destroyed by legal forms. The city franchise was attacked. Dashwood and Daniel were appointed sheriffs by the King. These nominees of the court appointed Rouse and Hargraves as their under-sheriffs; wretches who were but too glad to earn their wage by any act which Jeffreys might dictate. They drew a jury list as they were told.

With an unscrupulous advocate, a venal jury, and a slavish bench, the Lord Chief Justice hoped to have his way. Yet much would turn on the indictment, for the more corrupt a jury is the less it likes to answer a plain question, yea or nay. The court should be enflamed, the public puzzled, by a world of hints and doubts. A masterpiece of jumbling and confusion was drawn up. The prisoner was accused of drawing the subject's love from his natural prince, of plotting to disturb the public peace; of aiming to stir up war against the King, to overturn the Government, to deprive the Sovereign of his crown, to put his Sacred Majesty to death. All these offences he was charged to have committed on the thirtieth day of June, in the year 1683, and in the parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields. To bring about these ends, he was accused of having, there and then, in company with other traitors, sent one Aaron Smith to Scotland to raise up rebellion in that kingdom; and of also having, on the thirtieth day of June, in the said parish of St. Giles, composed a libellous and seditious book, in which he traitorously declares that kings are subject to God and to the law.

Not a clause of this indictment could be proved. Sydney had not conspired to stir up war on the thirtieth of June, in the parish of St. Giles. He had not sent Aaron Smith to Scotland on that date and from that place. He had written no book on the day and in the place alleged. It is a rare thing to be able, by decisive evidence, to show that every word of an indictment is

manifestly false ; but Sydney was in a position to show as much. He had only to call up Captain Cheek, to prove that on the thirtieth day of June, so far from plotting, writing, and conspiring in St. Giles's parish, he was then a prisoner in the Tower !

On Tuesday, November 6th, Cheek came to his prison cell and told him he must go next morning early to the Court of King's Bench. "To be tried?" "Yes, to be tried." "Has a true bill been found by the grand jury?" No grand jury, Cheek well knew, had yet been called. "How could a man be tried until that jury had been called?" Cheek could not say ; he only knew that he was ordered to produce his prisoner in Westminster Hall by nine o'clock.

Next morning Sydney was conveyed to Palace Yard by Captain Cheek. The court was not yet ready ; for a bill had not been found ; and Sydney was taken to an inn close by, and kept an hour until the jury could be forced to find. A line of Household guards was drawn across Palace Yard—the men in strange, wild habits of the Polish fashion—through which line of troops the Patriot was hurried, when the bill was found, with halberds and the gleaming axe. When he was placed before Jeffreys, he said he could not plead to that indictment. Here, he was going on to say, was a heap of crimes, distinct in nature and in law. "You must not argue," roared the Lord Chief Justice ; "you can only plead. Guilty or not guilty?" "If he will demur, my lord," observed the obsequious Sawyer, "we will give him leave." But Sydney knew that to demur was, in effect, to leave the matter with the court, and he would not demur. He then objected to the jury, who were not his peers. Some were petty traders and mechanics ; some were lackeys of the Court and servants of the King ; but Jeffreys overruled his pleas. Refused on every side, he made a last appeal. He begged to have a copy of the charge, but was again refused.

A fortnight later he was tried for life. Jeffreys sat in the chair of Lord Chief Justice, with the judges of his choice upon his right and left. Wythins was drunk. A tailor, a cheesemonger, three carpenters, and a groom, were in the jury-box. Howard of Escrick told his tale. Then twelve good witnesses—beginning with the Earl of Anglesey, and ending with one Blake, a draper, gave this wretched peer the lie. No second witness was produced; but Jeffreys ruled that Lloyd might prove his seizure of the papers in Jermyn Street; and if the authorship were traced to Sydney, that these papers might be given in evidence. Lloyd was sworn, but what he had to say was fatal to the Crown. He proved that in the parish of St. James, and on the twenty-sixth of June, he had seized the very papers which the prisoner was accused of having written in the parish of St. Giles, and on the thirtieth of June! The authorship of these papers was not proved. The date of composition was not proved. Publication was not proved. Yet Jeffreys told the jury they must find a verdict for the Crown; and when the jurors left the court, he followed them, on pretence of drinking a horn of sack, into their room, and gave them fresh reminders of their duty to the King. In half an hour the carpenters had come to terms with the cheesemonger and tailor, and the twelve bad men returned a verdict for the Crown.

Then Cheek stood up; his prisoner was a dead man now; the headsman turned his axe.

But Sydney never blanched. Not like a Roman stoic, but like a Christian martyr, Sydney raised his eyes from that ferocious judge and that polluted bench; he raised his eyes to heaven, and prayed:—"Why then, O Lord, sanctify, I beseech Thee, these my sufferings unto me; sanctify me through my sufferings; sanctify me through Thy truth; Thy word is truth; impute not my blood unto this nation; impute it not to the great city through which I shall be led to the

place of death!" Jeffreys broke upon this prayer with mock concern, pretending that his prisoner was distraught in mind. The Patriot turned to him and said, "My lord, feel my pulse, and see if I am disordered. I bless God, I never was in better temper than I am now." Captain Cheek was ordered to remove him to the Tower.

In these last days of his imprisonment, Sydney wrote a brief apology for his life. A fortnight later he was taken to Tower Hill and put to death, with all the forms of violated law. Among his last words were, "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" but he shrank from the parade of priests and prayers in his dying hour. He was alone with God. "I die," he said, "for that Old Cause;" and so the Patriot passed to his eternal rest.





CHAPTER LII.

JAMES, DUKE OF MONMOUTH.

FERGUSON was suffered to escape, and after a little time was found at the Hague; the residence of William, Prince of Orange, who had now become the hope of every party in the state—save one. The Duke of Monmouth followed him. Armstrong was also at the Hague; and soon this knot of discontented men were joined by Forde, Lord Grey, a fugitive from the Tower.

Henry Denham, one of the King's messengers, having taken Grey on a royal warrant, brought him to the Tower. The gates were shut; and as the keeper's orders were extremely strict, in consequence of the plot, he could not yield his prisoner up to Captain Cheek. Close by the gates stood Petty Wales, a nest of sheds and taverns, used by soldiers, watermen, and keepers of the Tower. To one of these taverns Denham took Lord Grey. Grey could not go to bed in such a place; and so, to pass the night, he called for wine, was free with money, and was soon rewarded for his pains by seeing Denham flush with drink. The time was summer, and the dawn came early; but before the daylight came his guard was fast asleep. All night, beside the empty glasses, Grey revolved the chances of escape. He dared not force the tavern door; for persons were about, and an attempt would

put them on their guard. Outside his prison paced the sentries of the Tower, who knew he was in waiting there. His plan was to be calm, to seem resigned, to treat his capture as a jest, to talk of having his freedom in the morning, but to keep an eye on every side, and seize such chance as fortune threw into his way.

A gun was fired; the sun was rising; and the gates swung back. The tipsy messenger awoke, and shaking off his stupor, stepped into the street. An open place; a sentry at the gates, a second sentry on the wall; a keeper here and there; some watermen of the Tower about; the situation offered him no chances of escape. To run was vain; the spot was overlooked and closed on every side; a shot would rouse the district; in a minute half the liberty would be up in hue and cry. He smiled and sauntered through the outer gates, disarming all suspicion of the guard by gentle words and ways. He said he was unjustly charged; he gave himself freely up; he only asked to see his old friend Captain Cheek. The Captain was not stirring; it was hardly dawn; but he would soon be up, and Grey would have to be his guest. Crossing the moat, they passed below the archway of the Byeward tower, which happened to be empty at the time, when Grey, who knew the place of old, turned suddenly to his right into a passage, found the strong doors leading to the drawbridge open, passed beyond them, and merged upon the Wharf. The sentry had no reason to suspect him; in a moment he was on the Queen's Stairs; a wherry lay alongside; in a second moment he was off. Ere Denham missed him, he was gone!

Grey got away to sea, and so in time to Holland, where he found so many of his countrymen in exile. Charles was so vexed by Grey's escape that he committed Denham to the charge of Captain Cheek, and half a year elapsed before the tipsy messenger got his freedom from the Tower.

With the design, as it would seem, of giving Ferguson a higher place among the exiles, Government put him in their proclamations in the leading rank; classing him with Monmouth, Grey, and Armstrong. The great reward of £500 was offered for his person; while but £100 were offered for the capture of such men as Rumbold, Goodenough, and Wade.

When James succeeded to his brother's throne, the situation of the leading exile, Monmouth, was so greatly changed that any one who told him England called him, and would rise for him, and crown him with his father's right, found easy access and a willing ear. William of Orange was no longer able to receive him; and a lovely woman, who was not his wife, induced him to decline an offer which William made him to serve in Hungary against the Turks. This woman, Henrietta, Lady Wentworth, was his good and evil genius. She was fond of him with all a passionate woman's fondness, and she exercised upon his vain and empty heart the fascinations that belong to beauty, youth, and money. She was rich in house and land, in high connexion, in ancestral fame; and all these things she gave him when she gave herself, her maiden fame, her overpowering love. The Duke had left his wife and three young children in their London home. At no time true to the fair Scotch lassie who had crowned him with a ducal coronet, a fine estate, and a legitimate heir, and was the only woman who had yet been true to him, he had of late years treated her with all but open scorn, asserting that his union with her was no marriage in the eyes of God and man. He was united to her as a child; his leave was never asked; and though he lived with her, and she had given him boys and girls, no less than six in all, he could not love her as a man should love his wife. He therefore claimed the freedom to make love elsewhere. A dozen paramours had shared his heart; and one of these dozen women, Nelly

Needham, bore him several children ; but to Lady Wentworth he was constant in a way that made the foolish wonder and the knowing smile. Her money, like her company, was pleasant to a banished man, whose pension had been stopped by James. She had no offspring of her own ; and Monmouth paid her the whimsical compliment of naming after her another woman's child. Yet Lady Wentworth was not happy in her lot. She wished her lover to be king. Like some of those who had no love to lead them wrong, she took the story of his mother's marriage to be true, and felt that if her Duke were on the English soil, some evidence of the fact might yet be found. The black box should be sought. The person who was said to have married Charles and Lucy was alive ; and though he had denied, most solemnly, while Charles was living, that the Prince had been united to his love by him, the death of Charles and the accession of a Popish prince might lead him to see his duty in another light.

When Ferguson proposed to Monmouth that the exiles should return in arms, one party making for the Scottish Highlands with Argyle as chief, the other making for the west of England, with the Duke as general, Lady Wentworth gave him her support ; and two small expeditions left the Zuyder Zee and Texel, with the Earl and Duke on board. Argyle was first to land ; to fight, and fail ; to suffer on the block. Rumbold fell with the Highland chief. Monmouth followed him ; with Ferguson preaching in his camp, and Grey commanding his troop of horse. A broadside, hardly fit in matter and in language for a country fair, was written by Ferguson, and issued in the ducal name. The Duke of York was said to be a traitor, a usurper, and a murderer. He had set the town on fire ; he had cut the throat of Essex ; he had poisoned his brother Charles. He wished to make of England a fief of Rome ; the English people a tribe of slaves.

He was not king. The only king was Monmouth, who could prove his right of blood. A few days later, pressed by Ferguson and Grey, the Duke assumed the rank of King,—King James the Second, by the grace of God. As king he fought at Sedgemoor, lost a battle, fled with Grey, and was arrested by the victors in a field.

The other James the Second sat in grim and silent mood until the battle of his crown was fought and won; but when he heard that Monmouth was his prisoner, he despatched a messenger to his London house, that house which he had left so long ago, with orders to arrest his three young children, James, Earl of Doncaster, Lord Henry Scott, and Lady Anne Scott. These little ones were taken from their mother, the afflicted Duchess, and conveyed by James's order to the Tower.

Four days after these poor innocents were lodged in the Lieutenant's house, the Duke, their father, was brought in. Grey followed him next day. The Duke was much cast down, for he had sinned past hope of pardon; and the King, his uncle, was the last man living to forget such crimes as his. Lord Grey was calm and jovial; chatting with the easy sparkle of a hero on the stage. His sin was not less great, his chance of pardon not less faint, yet he was still the same frank fellow who had drunk with Denham and deceived the sentry on the bridge. He talked of horses, dogs, and guns, and made his pleasant jokes about Jack Ketch. Some instinct may have told him that his race was not yet run.

Monmouth's last chance of life lay in a personal interview with James; and when his captors came near London, he despatched a message to the King, imploring him to give his penitent captive leave to throw himself on the ground before him, to confess his faults, and give his Majesty some information of the highest moment to his future peace. A second

message was despatched by Monmouth to the Queen-Dowager, who had often acted as his friend in his disputes with Charles. The King, who hoped to glean from Monmouth a confession that would help him to destroy some other and more prudent enemies, consented to his wish. But studied insults met the captive Duke. He was taken to Tom Chiffinch's rooms; his arms were tied with cords behind his back; he was detained until the King had dined. When he was brought into the presence Monmouth fell upon his knees, crawled forward on the ground, and tried to touch and kiss his Majesty's feet. He wept, he screamed, he begged for life. "I am your brother's son; and if you take my life, you shed your own blood." No mercy could be shown to him; for he had nothing to confess. "He did not behave," James wrote next morning to the Prince of Orange, "as one ought to have expected from one who had taken upon him to be king." A warrant for his death was drawn; it lay upon the table; only waiting for the royal signature. James instantly took up his pen, and signed.

Arrived at Traitors' Gate, he was received and lodged in the Lieutenant's house, but did not ask to see his boys and girl. Two years had passed since he had looked on their young faces, and the girl was still so young as hardly to recall his figure to her mind. She was frightened at the Tower, and sinking into low and fitful moods. The Duke was too much busied with his own affairs to mind such weaklings. Could not some one save him yet?—"I know, my lord," he cried to Dartmouth, "that you loved my father. For his sake, for God's sake, try if there be room for mercy!" It was useless. "Tell the King," he muttered, "I am willing to become a Catholic if he will but let me live." This offer was sent on to James, who only sneered, "It is to save his life, and not his soul."

Next day the Duchess sent to say that she would

like to see her husband if he would allow it. He consented, in the hope that she could save his life; but when she entered his apartment with the Earl of Clarendon, and brought no hope of a reprieve, he turned his face from her, as from a stranger to his heart, and spoke about his pardon to the Earl. Two bishops, Ken and Turner, passed the night with him in earnest prayer, and no less earnest talk. They wished to waken in his heart some sense of his iniquities, some feeling of repentance for his conduct towards his sovereign and his wife. They met with no response. He could not see, unless the King should open his eyes with mercy, that in levying war upon the Crown he was doing any wrong. Nor could he see that in abandoning his wife and children for a paramour he was guilty in the sight of God. He held that Lady Wentworth was a pious woman, whose connexion with him had been right and good. No argument could touch him on these points; the Bishops dared not give him the bread and wine; and morning dawned, the last he was to see on earth, and yet the prisoner was not reconciled to God.

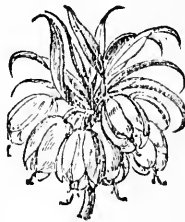
With dawn came Tenison, the Vicar of St. Martin's Church, his old acquaintance; but the Vicar was unable to prevail with him on either point. If Tenison fell short of Ken and Turner in his theories of non-resistance, he was clear that such a rising as the Duke's was criminal in the last degree. He utterly rejected Monmouth's pleas in Lady Wentworth's favour. But his time was thrown away. The Duke declared that he had thought it over; he had prayed for guidance in the night; he had not changed, and should not change, his mind. In that opinion he had lived, in that opinion he would die.

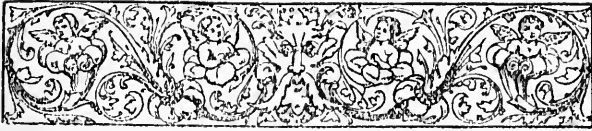
At nine o'clock the Duchess came to him again, accompanied by her children, who were still detained as prisoners in the Tower. The Duke was civil, but as cold as stone. He cared for no one in the world, save Lady Wentworth; and he called on every one

who saw him to convey his dying love to her. The Duchess wept, and fainted at his feet. His children cried. But Monmouth was himself unmoved.

At ten the coach came for him, and he rode through files of soldiers to his doom. The prelates in attendance warned him that he was about to die, but not in fitting frame of mind; and when the axe was falling, they exclaimed with fervour, "God accept your repentance!" "God accept your imperfect repentance!" "God accept your general repentance!"

His sons remained in prison three months longer, and were then released, and sent to school. The year was hardly out before a vault was opened in a Bedford hamlet, and a place was made for Lady Wentworth—the object of a passion which had overcome the sense of shame, the fear of death. Monmouth was buried in the church of St. Peter-in-Chains; the ashes of this grandson of Charles the First mouldering near the grave in which all that was mortal of Eliot lay!





CHAPTER LIII.

THE UNJUST JUDGE.

HANG him! Hang the villain! Hang him at once!"

"Hang him only? Never! Hang all those who cry out hang him! 'Tis too good for him!"

"Heu! Ya! Stone him! Stab him! Rend him limb from limb!"

These shouts go up from Eastcheap, Tower Street, Barking Church; a hiss and roar of maddened men, repulsed from seizing on their prey. Two companies of the City bands, with sabres drawn and pieces charged, are marching on the Tower; and deep within their lines a coach—a lord-mayor's coach—with one inside not like an ordinary prisoner of the State. A common sailor he appears to be; a sailor from the north; a collier all adust with grime and coal. This fellow is the strangest hero of a tumult ever known in London streets. His clothes are worn to rags; his face is black with filth. A blotched and drunken visage has been rendered still more hideous by the shaving of his eyebrows. Two ferocious orbs glare fitfully on the crowd, who handle clubs and knives, and yell around his coach for blood.

"To hell with him! Let him not live to pray and die! Let him be damned!"

He shrieks with mortal fright: "For God's sake,

keep them off! For God's sake, gentlemen, keep them off!"

"Halt!" cries the captain of the troop. The soldiers halt. "Form—front—prepare!" The crowds fall back, still yelling like a pack of wolves. "Tear him to pieces! Let him be devoured alive! A leg for me! His heart for me! He's fleshy—Faugh!" Amidst this roar of tongues and rush of feet the coach rolls on; the gate is reached; the mob is pressed aside; the prisoner is within the Tower.

Surging and swarming round the gates, now closed, the maddened people, baffled in their thirst for blood, still rail against that grimy figure in the coach—"Let him not die like a man! Let him be torn to pieces! Let him not lie in a grave!" And when these fiery passions have been somewhat spent, grim humour seizes on the crowd. "Let's rend the rogue, and sell him bit by bit! Ha! ha! How much for such a pair of bellowing lungs? We'll sell his heart to the Pope! A show, a show! The rogue would make his money by the show!" Some companies hold the gates and push the people back. The coach drives heavily through the Bye-ward tower, up Water Lane, and pauses by the steps at Traitors' gate. Above the grimy figure frowns the Bloody tower—his future home; but he is so far cowed by yonder mob, that but one feeling stirs with his veins,—a sense that he is still alive, that in a moment more he will be safe—alive and safe, although a prisoner in the Bloody tower.

This grimy wretch, in collier's sack, with shaven eyebrows, blackened face, and writhing lips, is George Jeffreys, Lord High Chancellor—the Unjust Judge! The date is Tuesday, December 12, 1688; five years and five days only since the morning when, as Lord Chief Justice, he had murdered Sydney by his form of law.

Great things have just been done in England; things

which may change the history of Europe and the world. The Catholic King has run away. The Prince of Orange has arrived at Windsor Castle. A committee is in council at Guildhall. A band of citizens have surprised the Tower. The tyrant's creature, Colonel Skelton, has been driven away, and Lord Lucas made Lieutenant in his place.

Three nights ago—a Saturday night—his Catholic Majesty sent to Jeffreys' house in Duke Street, bidding him bring the Seals, and all the writs which had been signed for summoning the new Parliament. His Majesty flung the writs into the fire; the Seals into the Thames. Deprived of power, the Unjust Judge walked back to Duke Street, where he met a friend. "What are the heads of William's Declaration?" asked this friend. "My head is one of them, no doubt," said Jeffreys, passing into his house.

No longer doubting that the King would fly, he put on a disguise, and, quitting Duke Street in the early dusk, he crept to a lodging near the river, where a servant hid him, while a skipper, who would undertake to carry him for a tempting purse to some foreign port, was sought. A collier from the North was landing coals at Wapping, and the skipper of this boat agreed to take him off. Last night, in long tarpaulin sack, big boots, and worn sou'-wester cap, the Chancellor went on board. The mate, who guessed his secret, put ashore and gave a hint to some who were already on the watch for him. These fellows ran to a justice of the peace and begged from him a warrant of arrest. This justice asked them what they meant to swear against him, and on hearing that they had no charge to swear he bade them go their way. They ran still faster to Guildhall, procured a warrant of arrest, tore back to Wapping, pushed on board the collier, searched her hold, and found the bird was flown!

Too great a rogue to put his trust in skippers, Jeffreys left the collier after dark, and sought a

lodging in a second craft, where no one knew that he was flying from the land. At dawn he left this craft to come on shore for drink, and landing at King Edward's Stairs, he saw an ale-house sign—the Red Cow, in Anchor and Hope Alley—went in, sat near the window, and ordered a pot of ale. While swallowing his morning draught, he saw a pair of eyes fixed on him from the street; the eyes of an old suitor in his court, who had been so frightened by the scowl and terror of the judge's face that no disguise could cloak it from him. Jeffreys saw his victim cross the street, come in, and look more narrowly at his face. He turned to the wall, and covered his visage with a pewter pot; but the alarm was given, a crowd soon gathered round the door, and loud debates arose among the mob. "A poor man having his morning drink," said some. The suitor stuck to his text; he was no other than the Unjust Judge. A voice cried out, "To the Lord Mayor! To the Lord Mayor!" They put him in a coach, and with a hundred stoppages they bore him towards the Mansion House.

At twelve o'clock they came before the Lord Mayor's door. Sir John Chapman, lately elected to the chair, was sitting down to dinner when the rabble broke upon him. He was horrified at seeing a Lord High Chancellor in the hands of cobblers, sailors, and such scum; and with a hundred bows and scrapes, he begged his lordship to excuse and pardon his presumption in asking his lordship to sit down and dine. Jeffreys smiled assent. Sir John began to lead the way, when some one cried, "The Lord Chancellor is the Lord Mayor's prisoner, not his guest; to harbour him is treason!" Chapman fainted on the floor, was carried to his room, and never left his bed alive. The Lord Mayor having swooned, what could they do? "Let us take him to an Alderman!" cried some. Stout hands were laid on him, and pressed him towards the private stairs. He begged they would not force him to the street. He

dared not face that mob again. They might, he urged, commit him to the Tower without a warrant; if they doubted whether that was lawful, he would draw one up and sign it! Then they put him, with his grimy sack and cap, into a coach, and sending for two regiments of the City bands, they led him through the mutinous crowds, here threatening him with whip and cord, there yelling for his limbs and entrails, to the Tower.

Late at night, Lord Lucas gets from the Lords in Council a commitment duly signed. On the morrow, Wednesday, Grey, Ossulston, and Chandos, come to the Tower and question Jeffreys. "What have you done with the Great Seal of England?"—"I delivered it to the King on Saturday, at Mr. Chiffnel's house, no one else being present, and have not seen it since."

"Have you not sealed the writs for a new Parliament; and if so, what have you done with them?"—"To the best of my remembrance, all the writs were sealed and delivered to the King."

"Have you sealed the patents for the coming year?"—"I have sealed the patents for the new sheriffs, but cannot charge my memory with the particulars."

"Have you any license to leave the kingdom?"—"I have several licenses to go beyond sea, which were delivered to Sir John Friend."

Grey reads the answers over, and demands if they are true?

"Yea; they are true," the caitiff answers; "on my honour as a peer."

Not a word he says about the King having flung the writs for a new Parliament on the blazing fire.

For two or three days the prisoner falls into dark and sullen moods. Lord Lucas treats him well, and he is safe from popular fury; but the Bloody tower is lonesome to a man who has lived in taverns, sat up late of nights, and been a king of clubs. No friend comes near him. No one sends to him. A mob in

Water Lane and on the Wharf yells night and day against him; and his sleep is broken by a mortal fear that some day they will crush his guard, invade his cell, and rend him into shreds. On Sunday he is cheered by news and presents. James, he hears, has suddenly come back to London; he is actually at White Hall; he dines in public; and a Jesuit says the grace. While he is comforted with this good news, he also learns that unknown hands have sent him a keg of oysters—known to be his favourite food. "I see I have some friend still left," he says, on taking in this keg. But his illusions are short-lived. Next night the King retires from London, never to come back, and Jeffreys breaks the keg, to find in it a coil of rope, prepared with knot and noose!

At forty years of age, a prisoner in the Bloody tower, this man can look back on a course as strange as any of his race has ever run. Ten years ago he was an Old Bailey brawler—a Finsbury pettifogger—speaking with a loud and brazen voice on five-shilling briefs, and glad to get them. He appeared condemned by faults of nature and of education to live obscure and die unknown; but he was ready to sell his soul for place and pelf, and lived in times when souls like his were worth their price. He rose, through treachery and murder, to the highest seat a man can ever reach by law. For his betrayal of the city he received his price; for his sentence on Sidney he received his price; for his action in the Bloody Assizes he received his price. From nothing he became Recorder, Lord Chief Justice, Lord High Chancellor, Baron Jeffreys of Wem, in the county of Salop, President of the Court of High Commission, Lord Lieutenant of two English shires, a fugitive from justice, and a prisoner in the Tower. He sold his soul for pelf and place, and now his Evil One has come to claim the bond.

Yet men outside the Tower are busy with events; and days, weeks, months, crawl slowly past; but

Jeffreys lies untried. Pains rack his body ; stone and gravel fret him ; he can neither eat nor sleep. One solace only he is sure of—brandy!—which he drinks more recklessly than ever, though it fires his blood and burns into his brain. But brandy, which was once his comfort, has become his need. He cannot live without it, and it saps his vital powers. The guard is strictly kept ; yet kegs of brandy get into his room ; and visitors whose presence may inflame his passions, come with a suspicious freedom to the Bloody tower.

One such visitor is John Tutchin, a poor poet, whom he tried at Dorchester for speaking foolish words, and sentenced to be kept in prison for seven years, and to be whipped in every market-town in Dorset once a-year ; a sentence which implies a public scourging every fourteen days ! The savage sentence was not carried out ; for Tutchin sickened, and the Unjust Judge, afraid lest he should lose his harvest, sold his family a pardon for a sum which all but beggared them. This bitter enemy of his merciless judge breaks on him much as Prynne had come upon the sleep of Laud. The prisoner is abashed for once. "How are you, sir?" he mutters to the poet ; "I am glad to see you."

Full of rage and scorn, the poet answers, "I am glad to see your lordship in this place."

"I served my master ; I was bound in conscience to do so," whines the abject prisoner.

"Conscience!" cries his victim ; "where was your conscience when you passed that sentence on me in Dorchester?" The reptile crawls and fawns. "It was set down in my instructions that I was to show no mercy to men like you—men of parts and courage. When I came back to court I was reprimanded for my leniency." Tutchin retires in pity from the Bloody tower.

Dean Sharp and Prebendary Scott come down to see him and to pray with him. He will not pray. Given up to every lust, he cannot see what hideous

stains he leaves on English life. "I have no trouble on my conscience," he declares, "except the death of Lady Lisle. I was too merciful to her."

When they reprove him for his lust of blood and lust of drink, he peevishly replies, "They call me cruel when I served my master, and they call me drunken when I take some punch to soothe my pain."

The fiery demon does its work. In three months, Jeffreys, who was fat and full of strength when brought into the Tower, is like a ghost. The Bloody tower is damp and cold. A wintry fog lies heavily on the Thames, when, racked with pain, he flies to the keg of brandy for relief. He dares not eat. His strength is gone. No food will pass his stomach; only sack—hot sack—and brandy will go down. No skill can save him for a public death. One day he craves a little fish—a salmon, once his favourite food; but nature will not answer to his call. He droops and faints; his mind gives way; he gulps more liquor; and his flesh being well-nigh wasted from his bones, he drinks more brandy, shivers in his bed, and dies.

A hole is dug near Monmouth's grave, and stealthily, on a Sunday night, in fear lest angry crowds should stop the burial by a sudden inroad, some of his keepers push him in. But four years later, by an order from the King, his ashes are removed to Aldermary Church; and so the noble dust of Anna Boleyn, Thomas Cromwell, Philip Howard, and John Eliot, is not polluted by the presence of the Unjust Judge.





CHAPTER LIV.

THE SCOTTISH LORDS.

THE first of those great risings of the Scottish clans in favour of the uncrowned Stuarts, which enriched our book of ballads with so many passionate songs,—the passion high and lovely, even when the politics were base and foolish,—brought a list of prisoners to the Tower.

The Prince who wore the white cockade, and called himself—in France, Chevalier de St. George, in Scotland, James the Eighth, was careful to abscond the moment there was danger in the field. This Knight of St. George was loutish, silent, fond of drink. When some of his Highland partisans proposed to place him in the centre of their ranks, to fight for him so long as they could wield a blade, and die for him, and with him, to the last man, this Prince of the white feather shrank from his brave companions, sent a rider to Montrose to hire a ship, and stealing from his camp at night, attended by the Earl of Mar, removed himself and his cockade to France.

Among the prisoners brought into the Tower in consequence of this rising, were the English Earl of Derwentwater, the Scottish Earls of Wintoun, Nithisdale, and Carnwath, the Scottish Viscount Kenmure, and the Scottish Barons Widdrington and Nairn. They were received into the Lieutenant's house, in which they dined in common, though each prisoner

had his private room. Wintoun was separated from the rest.

General Compton was Lieutenant of the Tower; but, since the flight of James the Second, this great officer of State was not expected to reside in Government house. The post was given to some old soldier, like a regiment of Guards, as his reward for service; and the duties fell upon either a Deputy-Governor or a Major of the Tower. Colonel D'Oyly was the Deputy, and he had charge of these seven rebel lords.

In our political annals there is not a passage more dishonouring to the Crown and public justice than the trial of these Jacobite lords. They rose against the King; they took their chances in a desperate game; they lost the throw on which they staked; and it was fair that they should answer with their lives. But Government was bound in justice to proceed by proof; to try them for their actual crime, and not for their imputed creed; to deal with them in open court, and by the usual forms of law; to lay no traps to catch confessions which might help the Crown; to give them time to call in witnesses; and, more than all, to make no promise, either open or implied, affecting the defence, unless they meant to keep it. But from a Chancellor like Cowper—high in temper, fierce in zeal, unscrupulous in means—the Catholic rebels had no mercy to expect; but they were not allowed a public trial, even under such a Chancellor, in a proper court. Instead of being tried they were impeached. Instead of answering to their peers, according to the rules of law, they were compelled to plead before a court of knights and burgesses, according to the revolutionary code. But Catholic lords were then beyond the pale. A club of Whigs, who called themselves the Roebuck Society, started from the Roebuck tavern in Cheapside, with figures of the Pope, the Pretender, and some of the Scottish leaders, which they burnt at Charing Cross, amidst a frantic mob, with officers of the House-

hold troops and gentlemen of quality looking on from Young-man's Coffee-house, and other taverns, drinking healths to all good Protestants, and damnation to all monks and priests. As members of the House of Commons, these good Protestants took upon themselves the task of judging and condemning the imprisoned lords. They sentenced them unseen, unheard. No evidence of their guilt was laid before the House; no proof of their identity was given; mere rumours of the events at Preston were accepted as sufficient proof. The terms on which the lords surrendered were ignored; and these proceedings of the House of Commons were conducted with such haste as made the absence of all legal forms more galling and injurious to the lords. But Walpole, sure of his majorities, was anxious to inflict a punishment that should scare and cow the Highland clans.

On Monday, January ninth, Lechmere, a sturdy Whig, proposed that Derwentwater, Wintoun, Nithisdale, Carnwath, Widdrington, Kenmure, and Nairn, should be impeached, instead of being tried in the usual way of such offenders. Walpole's pack hurrah-ed and voted; in an hour they were impeached by name before the bar. That night the Articles of Impeachment were agreed upon and laid before the House of Lords, and messengers despatched to the Deputy-Governor of the Tower, commanding Colonel D'Oyly to bring up his prisoners, with the axe before them, borne by the Gentleman-Jailer, to the House of Lords next day. No time was to be lost. Lord Chancellor Cowper, who was named High Steward for the nonce, received the prisoners with a scowl. The Earl of Derwentwater and the Earl of Nithisdale were marked for death; for these great Catholic Lords were men of high connexions, good abilities, and boundless wealth. Lord Derwentwater was a grandson of Charles the Second by his comic flame Moll Davis of the Duke's theatre; and from his relation to the

royal house was thought to be a dangerous man. The Articles were read ; and Cowper asked the prisoners, one by one, if they had anything to say ; and telling them that if they had any favour to request they ought to ask it then. They begged for time ; and what they asked for was a fair request. A dozen counties stretched between them and their nearest fireside ; deep snow lay on the ground ; the posts had ceased to run ; communication with the north was stopped ; their witnesses could not be reached in less than three or four weeks. Lord Cowper told them they should have four days ! It was now Sunday ; they should have a copy of the Articles ; they might see their counsel, under proper regulations, in the Tower ; but on the Saturday Colonel D'Oyly must return with them, attended by his headsman, to the bar.

In mockery of justice, Cowper ordered that a summons should be sent to any witness whom the rebel lords might wish to speak in their defence ; as also that such witness should be free to come and go, under the high protection of that House, so long as the trial lasted. D'Oyly was then requested to remove his prisoners to the Tower.

On Thursday, Wintoun wrote a petition to their Lordships, asking leave to see his counsel and for longer time. He was an ignorant man, he said, on points of law ; he was restrained from use of books and the advice of friends. The peers had pity on him, and the Government allowed him, and his fellow-prisoners, seven days more, in which to answer for their lives.

On Thursday, January the nineteenth, Colonel D'Oyly and the axe-bearer brought their prisoners up once more, no nearer to the means of a defence than they had been the previous week. Most persons who had seen them in the Tower advised that they should not deny their guilt and put the Crown to proof. The King, they had been told, was just ; but he should not be vexed by a denial of his rights. A plea of Guilty

would appease the royal breast. A dutiful submission would incline the royal heart to mercy. Thus, the lords, with one exception, were induced to yield; to answer with a plea of Guilty; and to trust their lives and fortunes to the Crown. Lord Cowper ordered the six lords who had pleaded guilty, who had thrown themselves upon the royal mercy, to come up for judgment at the bar on Thursday, February the ninth.

The peer who would not plead was Wintoun; an ingenious man, who had lived abroad, and was a master in many crafts. Wintoun put no trust in the boasted clemency of George the First. He felt his cause was right, and would not stain that cause. A plea of Guilty was a full confession of his crime, and he was not prepared to own that anything he had done was wrong. But more than all, he had a file concealed about his person, and his window bars, though he could work upon them only in the dead of night, were yielding to the pressure of that file. He therefore begged their lordships to excuse him, since he was a stranger, ignorant of their method, and not ready with his answer "yea" or "nay." He asked to have two advocates and two solicitors assigned to him, with leave to be attended in his cell by one George Heriot, a minister of the English Church.

The peers indulged him in his wishes, on the sole condition that the Rev. George Heriot should be shut up with him day and night, and never leave him while he lodged within the Tower. On one point only they were stiff, the point of time. On Monday he must answer to the charge.

On Saturday he begged for more delay; the House of Lords rejected his petition; and on Monday D'Oyly carried him up to Westminster, where he again declared he was not ready, and could not plead. The peers were firm; and then he handed in a parchment scroll, on which his plea, Not Guilty, was engrossed. Friday, the sixteenth, was appointed for his trial at the bar;

appointed and rescinded, and a fresh appointment made ; but Wintoun, who was busy with his pen all day, and with his file all night, invented such excuses for delay, that Derwentwater and Kenmure were executed long before the day was fixed.

In pleading guilty to the charge, the six complaisant lords imagined they had bought their lives by what they could not help regarding as an act of shame. Few persons, save the ministers, thought they would be put to death ; the House of Lords petitioned in their favour ; and the court was thronged with ladies of the highest rank, who waylaid George, and begged him not to shed their penitent blood. The King replied to the House of Lords that he should act according to his judgment of what was best for the dignity of his crown and welfare of his people. In the House of Commons there was less compassion ; but some knights and burgesses, content with having vindicated what they called the great Whig principle of impeachment, were inclined to mercy. Walpole and his Chancellor were firm. They must inflict the penalty of death. They must adorn the City gates with heads. If such rank traitors were to live, they would not answer for the public peace and safety of the Crown.

“ I am moved to indignation,” Walpole said, “ to see that there are members of this great body so unworthy as without a blush to open their mouths for rebels and parricides.” But Walpole could not turn the current of opinion. In the House of Commons he escaped by a majority of seven ; but in the House of Lords, where Cowper strenuously opposed the motion for *reprieve*, his government was defeated by a majority of five.

“ We must give up one half,” Sir Robert said ; and then the question rose of which must die. Their guilt was equal, their submission equal, as regarded George ; but Derwentwater, Nithisdale, and Kenmure, were thought to be stricter Catholics than Carnwath, Wid-

drington, and Nairn ; and those three noblemen were told that they must die. On Thursday, February twenty-third, Lord Cowper signed the warrants for their execution on the following day.

Next morning Colonel D'Oyly, having got his orders, waited on his prisoners in their rooms. To Carnwath, Widdrington, and Nairn, he brought the news of their reprieve. Kenmure and Derwentwater heard that they must die. When D'Oyly came to Nithisdale's room he found it empty. Nithisdale was gone !





CHAPTER LV.

THE COUNTESS OF NITHISDALE.

YES, thanks to his devoted Countess, Nithisdale was gone. The previous night he walked through lines of guards and keepers, crossed the Green, and passed the outer gates unseen; the place, the means, the agents of escape being all the work of his contriving wife.

Lady Winifred Herbert, daughter of William, third Marquis of Powis, was a pale and delicate girl, with light-blue eyes and auburn curls when she was courted by the brave Scotch Earl; but she got hardened in the fire of life; and at the age of twenty-six, when Nithisdale was taken prisoner, she was equal to any strain. Her race was ancient, Catholic, and loyal. One of her sisters, Lady Lucy Herbert, was a nun; the abbess of a nunnery in Bruges. So far as women may, she entered into every plot in favour of the exiled prince, who was to her not only a descendant of our ancient kings, but an obedient pupil of her spiritual chiefs. Her loyalty was strong, and her religion made it doubly strong.

The Countess was at Tarregles, her husband's country seat on the river Nith, with her young children, when the news came flying over Solway Frith that the invading army of the Scots was overthrown at Preston, that the Earl of Nithisdale was taken prisoner, that the English general was a man of

stone, and that Nithisdale and the captured lords were being escorted to the Tower. She lost no time in tears. A Roman Catholic, she said, who lived in the border country, and was recognised by a powerful party as their chief—a man whose family had been famous for devotion to the Stuarts—who was the sole support of Catholics in those parts against the Whigs—would have no justice from his neighbours, and no mercy from his prince. The Whigs, a noisy party in Dumfries, would clamour for his blood the instant they should hear that he was in their power. The Maxwells were a loyal race. Old Nithisdale, her husband's grandsire, was detested by the populace for his obstinacy in defending his castle of Carlaverock against them. What could she expect from his vindictive and victorious foes? A traitor's death. But Lady Nithisdale, who could not see that fighting for her natural prince and holy Church was treason, though the men in power would say so, fired into quick and stern resolve that he should yet be saved. But how? The time was short; she had few friends in London; and a journey to the South was long and hard. For snow lay deep in every field, the roads were blocked with drift and ice, and many of the public posts were stopped. Yet, if the Earl were to be saved, she ought to start at once.

Long used to seeking strength above, she knelt and prayed for guidance in her stress of mind. She knew that in His hands are all the threads of life and death. She prayed that God would interpose, not by His general mercy to His suffering saints, but by a special and particular act of grace *to her*. She rose refreshed in faith, and feeling that her prayer was answered. "I confided in the Almighty God," she wrote to her sister, the Lady Abbess, "and trusted Him, that He would not abandon me, even when all human succour failed me."

Assured of the Divine assistance, she collected from

her trunks and cabinets all the papers of importance; burnt all those which were on State affairs, and put aside all deeds and grants affecting house and land. Alone, unseen, she stepped into the garden, sought a fitting corner, dug with her own hands a hole, put in the deeds and grants, pushed back the earth, and saw the traces of her footsteps covered by the falling snow. She then slipped back into the house, and called her maid; a stout Welsh girl, named Evans, who had served her from her teens, and loved her with the blind fidelity of a dog. To this girl she told her tale, and bade her pack her things, and ask the groom to get three horses saddled—for they must away that night. The girl obeyed, for though she was not used to riding, she was in no worse a plight than her young mistress, who was thought too tender for such exercise. Afraid to take the nearest line, through Lancaster and Lichfield, as the county palatine was much disturbed, they crossed the border-lands to Newcastle, where they took the coach for York. At York the driver paused. The snow was three feet deep, his wheels stuck fast, and neither whip nor cry could make his horses move. No post from London had arrived, no post was going out that night; in fact, the roads were stopped. But Lady Nithisdale could not rest in York. Her husband's voice was in her ear, her husband's figure in her eye. She knew he was alone, and in the Tower. How could she wait and wait? By offers of high pay she got a man to lend his horses, and, attended by her maid and groom, she pushed into Yorkshire wolds, and through the Midland fens; a ride of many days through fields of snow and ice, in which her horse was sometimes struggling to the girth in snow, and sometimes all but buried in the drift.

On reaching town, where two or three Scottish ladies of the highest rank—the Duchess of Buccleuch, the Duchess of Montrose—received and pitied her, she learned that Nithisdale was in the Tower, in

Colonel D'Oyly's house, and dying to behold her face. She heard there was no hope. Some others might be spared in answer to the public cry for mercy, but the Earl was not to share that act of grace. The Duchesses would not explain why Nithisdale must be struck, while Carnwath, Widdrington, and Nairn, were left; but Lady Nithisdale detected what they tried to hide. It was his Church; she felt assured it was his Church. Inspired with yet more daring courage, she contrived a plan for his escape. She told her maid, in strictest secrecy, what she meant to try, and Evans, though she saw the thing was full of peril, entered into all her schemes.

The first point was to gain admission to the Tower; to see the Earl; to learn how he was lodged, and who his keepers were. Walpole would not let her see the Earl, unless, like Heriot in Lord Wintoun's chamber, she was willing to remain locked up with him till his confinement closed. This hard condition she refused; for if the keys were turned upon her, though she might inflame his zeal, she could do nothing to preserve his life. She tried the keepers, and her good red gold, assisted by her comely face, soon made an interest for her with those warders and their wives.

When she had won her way, she found the Earl, her husband, in a small apartment leading from the Council chamber in the Lieutenant's house. Her heart might well have fainted as she looked around. His window gave on Water Lane, the ramparts, and the Wharf. The aperture was high and barred. A sentry paced the wall in front. The Bye-ward tower stood near; the height was sixty feet. No chance, then, of escape by dropping into Water Lane! Her only way was through the door, the Council chamber, and the passages and stairs of D'Oyly's house. But here, again, the obstacles were great. A warder, with his halberd, kept the door; two sentries paced the floor with loaded guns and bayonets fixed; a squad of keepers held the passages and stairs; two other sentries held the outer door.

A fort, however, is no stronger than its weakest side, and Lady Nithisdale was quick to see and seize the weakest part of D'Oyly's fort.

His house, a prison in a prison, was so strong, that no one dreamt of an escape; and D'Oyly's servants paid but scant attention to the prison rules. The keepers' wives and children came and went about the place at will. A mob of them were standing in the Council chamber when she passed. Here lay a hint, which she imparted to her maid, and afterwards to her lord. She meant to dress him up in cap and skirt, to paint his face, to wreath his brow with curls, and pass him, as a woman, through the sentries, with their loaded guns and bayonets fixed! The Earl could only smile. Where could he find the female skirt and cap, if he were willing to adopt so flimsy a disguise? A strapping fellow, with a soldier's walk and bearing, how could he expect to pass the guard in female gear? The Countess told him where and how. She had been making friends for him, not only in St. James's Square, but Drury Lane. One friend was Miss Hilton, whom she knew through Evans; a devoted girl, who would not fail them in their need; a second was a Mrs. Mills, with whom she lodged in Drury Lane. Hilton was tall and slim, while Mills was tall and stout. A riding-hood for Mills would fit the Earl, and could be worn by him at dusk without much fear. The Earl must pass for Mills. Of course, it was not easy. Mills's hair was red, the Earl's was dark; then, he must wear a wig. Her eyebrows were but faint, the Earl's were thick and black; then he must paint them out of sight. Her face was round and fair, the Earl's was long and dark, with manly beard; then he must rouge his skin and shave his chin. She pulled a head-dress from beneath her gown, with sandy locks of hair; a box of chalky paste to smear his flesh; a pot of rouge to touch his cheeks; a razor to remove his manly beard.

Lord Nithisdale would not listen to such stuff. A

soldier, how could he put on such gear? With sword in hand, he might not scruple to attack the guards; but how could he confront them in a gown and wig? She coaxed him to be good, and let her have her way for once. He would not promise; but he let her leave in his room the head-dress and the pots of paste and paint.





CHAPTER LVI.

ESCAPED.

THE Earl had not yet given up hope. He thought the King must melt, if only a petition could be placed in his royal hands. The Countess knew that they were wasting time; but then she could not cross and worry him with her fears. If he would have the paper drawn, she undertook that it should reach the King.

But no one could be got to hand it in; his Majesty having given strict orders that no paper, no petition from Lord Nithisdale, should be received. She drove from house to house, but no one dared to disobey the King. Her Duchesses were kind, and yet they could not give her hope. The King was bitter in his heart against her husband, on account of his religion. George the First could see no reason why in a country where a Catholic Prince was not allowed to reign, a Catholic Earl should be allowed to live. Then Lady Nithisdale resolved to see the King herself.

Arraying herself in black, as if in mourning, she desired Miss Hilton, who knew the King by sight, to go with her to court and see the drawing-room. A second lady joined them, and they got into a public room, between the King's apartment and the drawing-room proper, where they waited for his Majesty to come. A door flew open, and the King appeared. "I am the wretched Countess of Nithisdale," cried the

prostrate woman at his feet—in French. His Majesty recoiled, and would have moved away, rejecting the petition in her hand; but she was armed with her immortal love, and would not let herself be flung aside. She caught him by the skirt, and held him fast, while in her eloquent French she poured her misery at his feet. He tried to push her back; he strove to loose her grip; but she was strong as death, and would not let him shake her off. The King, now frantic in his anger, dragged her along the floor, from the middle room to the drawing-room door, where some of his officers seized her by the waist, unclasped her fingers, and released the King; while she, exhausted by her efforts, fell back fainting to the ground.

Nithisdale hoped that good might come to him from the House of Lords, in which Lord Pembroke, who was of his name and kindred, was to speak in favour of the prisoner. Again, the Countess drove from house to house. The Duke of St. Albans promised to present a petition, but he failed to keep his word. She got the Duke of Montrose to take his place. She went to the Lord's lobby, with a bevy of her noble friends, and prayed the peers, as they went in, to spare her lord. Lord Pembroke, though he begged that Lady Nithisdale would not come to him, declared that he would serve her to his utmost strain. He nobly kept his word. But Lady Nithisdale found no comfort for herself in Pembroke's victory; for one of the peers explained, that what they pressed upon the King was nothing but the exercise of mercy towards such of the imprisoned lords as should deserve his grace. Her lord, she knew, would never beg for life; nor would she have him live, unless in honour worthy of her love.

It now became her to be quick and wary in her work. She drove at once to the Tower, and, in a gladsome vein, she told the guards and keepers that the Lord's petition in favour of the prisoners had been passed. No doubt, his Majesty would listen to that prayer, and

all would soon be well. Supposing that the lords would now be pardoned and released, the keepers offered her their best respects, which she accepted with a feigned delight, made pleasanter to them by gifts and thanks. She told her lord the bitter truth, and got his promise that he would be ready to escape next night. No time could now be spared. Next day was Friday, when the King would answer the address. On Saturday, such lords as he was not disposed to spare would suffer death.

Next morning she arranged with Evans all the details. In the dusk of evening Hilton came to her in Drury Lane, and Lady Nithisdale told her what she meant to do, and asked her help. The Countess also spoke to Mills. Both women offered to go with her and to do what they were told.

They were to try a scheme of baffling, personation, and disguise. Miss Hilton was to play the part of Mrs. Catharine, Mrs. Mills to play the part of Mrs. Betty. They would drive, with Evans and herself, at dusk of evening, to the Tower. Evans would wait near D'Oyly's door, but not so near as to excite attention from the guard. The other women should go in and see the Earl. Miss Hilton, who was slim, should wear two riding-hoods; her own and that of Mrs. Mills. She would go in as Mrs. Catharine; drop her extra clothes, and leave as quickly as she could. Mrs. Mills, who was rotund and full, should then go in as Mrs. Betty; wearing a riding-hood to fit the Earl. Hilton was to step in light and jaunty; Mills was to mop in drowned in tears, and with a kerchief at her face. Hilton was to slip away unnamed; but Mills, having shrunk in size and changed her dress for that in which Hilton entered, was to leave as Mrs. Catharine. Everything would turn on Lady Nithisdale being able to confuse the guards and sentries as to who had passed, both in and out.

A coach was standing at the door; the three got in



PRISON IN THE BELL TOWER.

and drove away; her ladyship talking loud and fast, lest either of them should have time to think. On coming to the Tower, and entering Colonel D'Oyly's house, they found some girls and women in the Council chamber, who had come to see her pass; for many of the keepers' wives and daughters feared, in spite of the report of pardon, that their charming lady would not see the Earl alive next night. The presence of these women filled the room with noise, and helped to turn the sentries from their careful watch. Lady Nithisdale took in Hilton first, presenting her as Mrs. Catharine. Miss Hilton shed the extra-clothing to be worn by Mrs. Mills; and then retired, accompanied to the staircase by her ladyship, who said to her aloud, at parting, "Send my maid to me; I must be dressed at once, or I shall be too late with my petition." Mrs. Mills came up the stairs; a tall, stout woman, great with child; who held her kerchief to her eyes, and seemed to be half dead with grief. The Countess called her Mrs. Betty. In Lord Nithisdale's room she changed her clothes, and stayed some time; and then went out with a lighter step, and head held up, attended by the Countess, who was saying to her: "Go, my dear Mrs. Catharine; go in all haste, and send my maid; she certainly cannot reflect how late it is; she forgets that I am to present a petition to-night. I shall be on thorns till she comes!" The women sobbed with her, and one of the sentries, chatting with these women, opened the door for Mills to leave.

Now came the moment of her life: the moment of two lives in one. Unless the guards and keepers in the outer room were much confused about the persons who had come and gone; about the slim lady and the stout lady, the pert lady and the weeping lady, the lady who had come in as Mrs. Betty and gone out as Mrs. Catharine; all her labour would be lost. How far they had been puzzled could be only learned on trial. It was nearly dark, and keepers might come in

with lights. A candle would unveil them; they must act at once. The Countess, therefore, shook down all her petticoats save one, and tied them round her lord. Too dark to shave, he thrust his chin into a muffler; and his cheeks being painted red, his ringlets twisted round his brow, his petticoats and hood put on, she raised the latch and led him by the hand, as she had done the woman, but with deeper misery of voice exclaiming, "For the love of God, my dear Mrs. Betty, run, and bring her with you. You know my lodgings, and if ever you made despatch in your life, do it at present. I am almost distracted with this disappointment." The sentries let them pass, and one of these sentries ran and opened the chamber-door. The Countess slipped behind her husband in the passage, so that no one looking after them could see his manly stride. "Make haste, make haste, and bring my maid!" she went on crying in a piteous tone, until they passed the outer door and sentries. Evans, who was waiting for the Earl, now took him by the sleeve, and led him to a house near Drury Lane.

The Countess, fearing to be absent for a moment, lest some keeper, entering the room, should find her husband gone, and raise a cry before he passed the outer gates, returned in feigned distress, and passing to her husband's chamber, shut the door, and strode about the room, and made a noise, and spoke to him, and answered for him in a manly voice. When she thought he must be clear, she raised the latch, and standing in the door-way, so that all could hear, she bade her husband an affectionate good-night; saying that something more than usual must have happened to Evans; that she saw no remedy but to go herself; that if the Tower were open, she would come again that night, when she had done; that anyhow she would be with him early in the morning, when she hoped to bring good news. While she was speaking to the empty room, she

drew the latch-string through the hole, and pulled the door to with a snap. "Do not disturb my lord," she said, in passing, to his servant. "Let the candles wait until he calls for them. My lord is at his prayers."

The guards saluted her with sympathy; and taking coach, she drove to see the Duchess of Montrose, who heard her tale, and thought her miseries had driven her mad. The Duchess went to court next day, to hear what people said of Nithisdale's escape. At first the King was angry; but he soon began to laugh; and when the comedy of the situation broke upon him, he exclaimed, "For a man in my lord's situation, it was the very best thing he could have done."

In the dress of a servant to the Venetian agent, Nithisdale left the country, and the Catholic heroine took up her abode in Rome.





CHAPTER LVII.

CAUSE OF THE PRETENDER.

THE morning after Nithisdale's escape from Colonel D'Oyly's house, the Earl of Derwentwater and Lord Kenmure were carried from their prison to the hill outside the gates, and put to death. Derwentwater, as a grandson of King Charles, had many friends at court, and Lady Derwentwater moved them all to save her lord; but Derwentwater was a Papist, and the King, who might have pardoned him his royal blood, could not forget his creed. "I die a Roman Catholic," said this grandson of Moll Davis and King Charles, a moment ere his neck was chopped. "I am in perfect charity with all the world. I thank God for it! I hope to be forgiven the trespasses of my youth by the Father of infinite mercy, into whose hands I commend my soul." Kenmure had felt so sure of being pardoned, he had not provided the usual suit of black to die in, and he came upon the scaffold in his gay attire. He would not make a speech; for he had nothing more to say. His rising was a lawful act, his plea of guilty a mistake. "God bless King James!" he cried, and then his head was in the crimson cloth.

The pardoned rebels—Carnwath, Widdrington, and Nairn—were suffered to depart.

Lord Wintoun, left alone in D'Oyly's charge, was watched more closely after Nithisdale's escape. Lord

Cowper could not make him out; he sometimes thought the Earl was mad; but Wintoun, by his importunities, put off his trial day by day. Kenmure and Derwentwater had been dead for weeks before Lord Wintoun was condemned. By this time he was ready to escape. His file had cut the window bars; he got into the open ward; he passed the sentries unobserved. The Government were perhaps not sorry that he got away. The thirst for blood was wholly slaked, and Walpole saw that nothing could be gained by further waste of life. D'Oyly was not punished by the loss of his important post.

Francis Atterbury, known as one of that pleasant band of humourists who shed such glory on the reign of Anne, was in his own time less considered as a writer than a party man. And justly so; for writing was to him a means and not an end. His pen was like a sword, a weapon of attack and of defence. Of art as art, the Bishop never dreamt; nor is there in his vast array of books one hint that he had any sense of that delight in noble effort nobly made which is the writer's gift and sign. He wished to wound, to worry, and to scare opponents, and he wrote as well as spoke, because he found that caustic steeped in ink burns deeper into human flesh than any caustic ever dropped from tongue. The party which he served was Tory and High Church. That party made him Bishop of Rochester. His patron was a Tory peer; his torch was lighted at the tomb of Laud. Not many of his friends believed that he was honestly attached to the English Church; and nearly all his party foes pretended that he was already reconciled to Rome.

While the Chevalier de St. George was still in Perth, the bench of English Bishops made a declaration against him. Atterbury would not sign that document. When Nithisdale and Wintoun stole away from the Tower, he openly rejoiced in their escape. Not only was he active for the exiles in the House

of Lords, but entered into several plots for their recovery of the crown by force. The Government, too well aware of his designs, arrested him in August 1722, and in the midst of warm debates in coffee-house and tavern, where his wit had made him friends, they sent him under escort to the Tower. D'Oyly, who was still the deputy, received him. Four weeks later, one of his tools, a barrister named Christopher Layer, was taken; ran away from the King's messenger; dropped through a window two stories high; took boat, and crossed to the Surrey side. Retaken by the hue-and-cry, and carried to the Tower for safety, he was ordered to be chained and weighted; but D'Oyly had no fetters in the Tower; such things had never been in use, and D'Oyly had to send for them to Newgate. Nine days later, Charles, Earl of Orrery, and William, Lord North and Grey, were also brought into the Tower. When opening Parliament in October, George informed the country that a dangerous conspiracy had been formed in favour of a Popish Prince, that some of the conspirators were in the Tower, and that others were still at large. Within a fortnight, George Kelly, *alias* Johnson, was arrested; and the next day Thomas, fourteenth Duke of Norfolk, was committed to the Tower.

In November, Layer was condemned to die; and he was hung at Tyburn, and his head exposed on Temple Bar.

On Thursday, April 4, 1723, while Atterbury was at dinner in his chamber, Colonel Williamson, who had now succeeded D'Oyly in his post of Deputy, came in with Serjeant, the Gentleman-Jailor, and two warders, took the prelate's servants into custody, and put them in a lower room apart. Williamson told the Bishop he must search him. "Let me see your warrant, sir," said Atterbury. "I have full authority," replied the Colonel, "as I hope to be saved." "You shall not search me till you have shown the warrant." "My

order is a verbal order," answered Williamson. "From whom?" The Colonel would not say from whom, but called the keepers, seized his prisoner, turned his pockets inside out, and took away his papers and his seals. Atterbury begged the Lords to interfere; but Government was too strong in the Upper House for anything to be gained by such a prayer. Proceedings were commenced against the Bishop, who denied that he was secretly a Catholic, and appealed in proof to one of his early books. But Parliament deprived him of his see, declared him incapacitated for either civil or ecclesiastical employments, and condemned him to perpetual exile. Atterbury went to France; became the soul of the Pretender's cause; was badly used by the Popish prince; and died of something like a broken heart. The only echo of a trial that once shook these kingdoms is the parody by Swift.

Loud rose the cry, "No popery!" when news arrived in London that Charles Edward was in Borodale; and when the "golden-haired laddie" was at Derby, it became a roar. A royal proclamation called upon all justices of the peace to hunt for Jesuits and Popish priests, and offered a hundred pounds reward for every one brought in. The hue-and-cry ran quickly through the land. Sharp eyes were set to watch the foreign embassies, and the Venetian embassy most of all, for every one now knew that Nithisdale had gone abroad in the Venetian agent's livery. One of this agent's footmen was arrested. When the fight was over, and the Lancashire Catholics were spiked on Temple Bar three Scottish lords were brought into the Tower as traitors: George, Earl of Cromartie; William, Earl of Kilmarnock; Arthur, Lord Balmerino; all of whom were lodged in the Lieutenant's house. Williamson still held the post of Deputy, but he was now a General, with a wife and daughter by his side. The Earls had chambers on the upper tier, with windows giving on the Thames. Lord Balmerino had a room on the

lower tier. Cromartie pleaded guilty, and his life was spared. Kilmarnock also pleaded guilty, but the King could not forgive them all, and he was chosen for the axe. One Foster, a Dissenting pastor, waited on him, and composed his spirits. He was penitent, yet hopeful to the last. When General Williamson came up into his room to say the Sheriff had arrived, he rose to greet him, saying, "I am ready, General." On the first-floor landing he met his countryman, Lord Balmerino, who was going to die with him, and held his hand out quietly.

"I am heartily sorry," said Balmerino, pressing it, "to have your company in this expedition."

Three months after they were gone, a more romantic personage came into the Tower, in that Charles Radcliffe, younger brother of the Earl of Derwentwater, who was now the titular Earl. Charles had been taken prisoner with his elder brother, brought to London, lodged in Newgate, tried by a special commission, and condemned to die. But he had broken prison, fled to France and Italy, and as a grandson of King Charles (and Moll) was deep in every plot for the recovery of his crown. In France the titular Earl of Derwentwater met his future wife, the Lady Newborough, by whom he had a son. When the Pretender sailed for Scotland, Charles was at his side; and hung about the country after Culloden, unable to escape; until he fell into the hands of justice. With him was a handsome boy, who was supposed to be Charles Edward's son, and was committed by the Council to the Tower.

Short shrift was given to this convicted rebel. Thirty years ago he had been tried and sentenced; all the Government needed was the proof of his identity, and then they could proceed to lop him off at once. A week sufficed, and then this grandson of Moll Davis and King Charles was cleft in twain.

Simon, Lord Lovat followed Charles Radcliffe,

titular Earl of Derwentwater, into the Lieutenant's house, and from it to the block. This fat and quaint old fellow, known to every one by Hogarth's famous print, had, in his course of eighty years, seen many changes ; and his life had been itself a constant change. He had been a Protestant ; he had been a Papist ; he had been a prisoner in the Bastile ; he had been a soldier of fortune ; he had been a pupil of the Jesuits ; he had been a confessor among the Jansenists ; he had been a patriot ; he had been a rebel. One idea had been fixed in his jocular and flighty brain. He was a Highland chief ; and he would never pardon man or woman who presume to say that any law should come between a Highland chieftain and his faithful clan. He made a gallant fight for life, though he despised it more than most men ; smoked his pipe, and cracked his joke, and sang his song, and flouted cowards, till the axe fell on his neck. "I die," he wrote in his last moments, "a true but unworthy member of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church."

The three Scotch lords were buried in St. Peter's, in a single grave. A stone, with three rude circles carved upon it, marks the spot.





CHAPTER LVIII.

REFORMERS AND REFORM.

THE crash of church and throne in France—the onset of a neighbouring race on feudal things and feudal notions—gave a new direction to the force of discontent, and brought new classes of offenders to the Tower. High treason had to be defined afresh to meet these cases; for it is not obvious at a glance that clamouring for the rights of man is levying war upon the king. The term “constructive treason” was of old invented by a wily lawyer, and admitted by a servile bench; and this offence was charged against persons who could not have been attainted in the usual way. One notable and early victim of constructive treason was the famous John Horne Tooke.

The cry of “No Popery” gave place to “Civil and Religious Liberty,” and the ideal freedom of “The Good Old Cause” to practical, every-day “Rights of Man.” Societies, which roused the splendid ire of Burke, proclaimed the natural equality of men, the claim of all to full and perfect freedom, with the right to change their governors and their institutions when they pleased. “No Church and King” succeeded to the cry of “Church and King.” One great association was the Corresponding Society; a second was the Society for Constitutional Information. These societies were democratic, if not revolutionary, and they sprang

up in the wake of French events. Paine was a member and a hero of these bodies; and his "Rights of Man" was read and praised by them with an applause not given to the great idealists, from Harrington back to More.

These ardent clubs, though counted by the hundred, were not dangerous to the public peace, until the government of Pitt extended them by two great blunders; first, by the issuing of a proclamation against seditious meetings, where "The Rights of Man" were read aloud; and, secondly, by arresting many of the leading members and committing them to the Tower.

Before this proclamation Paine was hardly known beyond the republican clubs, and in these clubs he was beginning to be suspected as a trimmer, if not a traitor. In the French Convention he had voted for sparing the life of Louis Capet, commonly called Louis the Sixteenth. He had been expelled from the Assembly as a foreigner. He had been arrested by Robespierre, and was then a prisoner in the Luxembourg. But Pitt's denunciation of "The Rights of Man" revived the public curiosity in a weak and windy book, excited interest in the author, and prepared an audience for the "Age of Reason," which Bishop Watson's lame "Apology for the Bible" only helped to swell.

On the 12th of May, 1794, Dundas, the unpopular Secretary of State (ennobled by the King as Baron Melville, and degraded by the House of Commons as "Embezzler of Public Moneys"), brought down a message from the King, asserting that seditious practices were carried on in certain clubs in London; that the books and papers of these clubs were seized; that in these books and papers there was evidence of a plot to overturn the Constitution, to convene a National Assembly, and to introduce the anarchy which was devouring France. He laid these documents on the table, asking Parliament to note them, and adopt such measures of defence as they saw good.

Next day, the House being well prepared, Pitt moved for a secret committee of twenty-one members, chosen by the ballot, to inspect these papers; and in three days more he brought up his report. The two seditious bodies were the London Corresponding Society and the Society for Constitutional Information, which were said to have branch societies in many towns, in free communication with the democratic leaders in New York and Paris. They had sent, said Pitt, their delegates to the Convention; they had fraternised with the Jacobin clubs; and in the war then raging they had taken part with France. They hoped, he said, to overthrow the Government, to call an English Convention, to dethrone the King, and wrest from Parliament the functions which they held from the people and the constitution. To repress these bodies he asked leave to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, and introduce a bill which should give his Majesty power "to secure and detain such persons as he might suspect" of conspiring against his person and government. It was a French, and not an English bill; a bill to punish men for being suspected of bad intentions. Only the worst of ministers under Charles and James had ever dreamt of such a bill; yet in eleven days this monstrous bill had passed the Houses, and was English law.

A small but noble band of patriots raised their voices in denunciation of these measures; none more loud and eloquent than Lord Stanhope, who recorded his solemn protests in the House of Peers against the introduction of foreign soldiers into England, and against the bill suspending the Habeas Corpus Act.

Secure in his majority of votes, Pitt would not wait until his bill was law. A day was hardly passed since he announced his measure in the House of Commons ere he swooped upon the secretaries of the two societies, Thomas Hardy, a shoemaker, and Daniel Adams, recently a clerk in the Audit Office. They were much

amazed to find themselves charged with being the officers of two secret and seditious bodies. How could those societies be secret when they lived in public, printed their proceedings, and appealed to their associates through the press? The matters pressed against them were in print.

While Stanhope was protesting in the House of Lords, and Bedford, Albemarle, Lauderdale, and Derby, were supporting him with powerful arguments, Pitt made a second and more important seizure in the person of Lord Stanhope's private secretary, the Rev. Jeremiah Joyce. Next day he sent his messengers to arrest Thelwall, Bonney, Richter, and Lovatt, members of Reform Societies, in which they were supposed to read Tom Paine and prate about the Rights of Man. His net was not yet full; and on the 16th, while his bill was passing through the House, he took into custody a more important clergyman than Parson Joyce—the Rev. John Horne Tooke; a great offender in his day, according to the creed of Pitt and George the Third, and notable in these later times as a delightful critic and amusing wit.

Joyce, Tooke, Thelwall, Bonney, Richter, and Lovatt—persons of higher rank than Hardy the shoemaker and Adams the clerk—were brought before the Privy Council on a charge of treason. Pitt was doubtful of the law; but Loughborough, then Lord Chancellor, and Attorney-General Scott (afterwards Lord Eldon), told him they could prove the prisoners guilty of “constructive treason;” and the judges who were present at the sitting as Privy Councillors, having stated that the Chancellor and Attorney-General were correct in their interpretation of the law, these six Reformers were committed to the Tower.

Poor old General Vernon was Lieutenant of the Tower; a soldier who had slept in safety at his post for one-and-thirty years; in which time only four commitments had been made,—John Wilkes in 1763,

Henry Laurens and Lord George Gordon in 1780, Francis de la Motte in 1781. His great command was fading to the shadow of a shade. This aged General lived in town, and seldom showed his uniform at the Tower. His duties were discharged by Colonel Matthew Smith, who held the rank of Major of the Tower. Head-jailer Grauz (successor to the Gentleman-porter) had the care of Joyce, whom Pitt affected to consider as the first offender. Joyce was lodged in the Gentleman-porter's house, in rooms where Lady Jane had talked with Father Fakenham, and Arthur, Earl of Essex, was supposed to have cut his throat. The Second-jailer, Kinghorn, had the care of Tooke, and lodged him in his house, next door to Joyce; in rooms once occupied by Lord Gerard, the friend of Russell and Sidney. Thelwall, who alarmed the keeper by his violence, was locked in the Strong room of the Belfry, which was commonly called (from some confusion in the popular mind with Margaret) the prison of Mary, Queen of Scots. Richter and Lovatt lay in the Keep; and the remaining prisoner, Bonney, in the Salt Tower, on the eastern wall. Each prisoner had two warders in his room, two soldiers at his door, besides the jailer in whose charge he lay. The rules were strictly carried out. Full rations were allowed; but no one was to see the prisoners, saving by a warrant from the Secretary of State. A week after his bill against suspected persons had received the royal signature, Pitt committed Adams the clerk and Hardy the shoemaker to the charge of Colonel Smith: an innovation in the stately etiquette of public justice which was soon to bring commitments to the Tower into as much contempt as those to Newgate and the Fleet. Nor was his tale yet full. Another week saw Kyd and Martin added to the list of prisoners in the Tower.

In spite of Pitt, Horne Tooke, not Jeremiah Joyce, was his offender of the foremost rank. This man, who

seemed to have been born for an Old Bailey counsel, had been forced against his will into the Church, of which his learning was the glory and his conduct was the shame. He scoffed at holy things, and made a desperate effort to escape from what he called the "contagion" of a bishop's hands. In intellect he had few equals, and no masters. Eldon feared his genius. Johnson's reputation as a scholar withered in his scorn. A friend of Wilkes, he was the only man of whom that demagogue was afraid. An adversary of Junius, he was the only foe for whom that Shadow feigned respect. He founded a society for supporting the Bill of Rights; and afterwards became a leading member of every club and coterie that opposed the Tory principles of George the Third.

Some months elapsed before the Government were ready to begin the trials. Pitt was doubtful of his policy; but Loughborough felt sure about the law; and in the midst of an excitement in the country, which alarmed all friends of order, and disposed some persons near the King to hope that Pitt would fail to get a verdict, the proceedings were commenced. The case of Hardy was taken first; since Hardy was the Secretary, and his signature was found on all the papers. Public sympathy was with him, and with those who helped him. Erskine, his counsel, was a popular hero. Every evening, when the court adjourned, he was saluted by a shout of welcome from the Old Bailey to his door; while the Attorney-General Scott was received with hoots and yells, and with occasional showers of cabbage-stalks and rotten eggs. On Hardy being acquitted by the jury, England broke into such raptures as she had not shown since Charles and Buckingham returned from Spain; and when that sturdy shoemaker left the Tower he was the most popular man alive.

Yet Pitt was not content with one defeat, though it was crushing in its weight. A Middlesex grand jury

had found a true bill against all the prisoners in the Tower—one bill against them all; for the offence alleged against them was the same, the evidence was the same, the prosecution was the same. The case is hardly known to our courts of law in which a second prosecution has been attempted under similar circumstances, where a first had failed. Yet Scott advised, and Pitt consented, to try again. They carried Tooke from Second-jailer Kinghorn's house, and put him in the dock, in the Old Bailey court.

Never, perhaps, has such a scene been witnessed in a court of law as now arose; for this ripe wit and scholar, who was put on trial for his life, was more than equal to the fight; and even Erskine, in the zenith of his power and fame, could listen with admiring ears to every word that fell from Parson Tooke.

"Guilty or not guilty?"—"Not guilty."

"How will you be tried?" Tooke searched the court with a peculiar eye, and then said dryly, "I would be tried by God and my country; but . . ." He said no more. The court was asked if he might have a chair beside his counsel, and Justice Eyre, who tried the cause, a thorough courtier, said he should have that indulgence. "If I were judge," said Tooke, "that word Indulgence should never come from my lips. My lord, you have no indulgence to show. You are bound to be just." He tripped the counsel up at every turn, and kept the jury in a pleasant mood. Scott never could forgive himself one trip. In speaking of the King the Attorney-General said, "He ought to lose his life rather than govern contrary to his coronation oath." "What!" cried Tooke, as quick as thought, "the Attorney-General is talking treason! Did you say the King ought to lose his life?"

Poor Scott was bothered by the nimble wit. "It is really difficult," he mumbled, "to decide whether this interruption is or is not proper."—"I ask pardon of the learned gentleman," said Tooke, with his provoking

sneer ; “ I only wished to know whether, in prosecuting me for high treason, he has said intentionally something far worse than he has proved against me.” When the jury brought him in Not Guilty, he observed with his most withering gaiety, that if he should ever be again indicted for high treason, he would plead guilty, since hanging and quartering were nothing to Sir John Scott’s harangues !

Amidst increasing public mirth, John Thelwall was arraigned, defended, and acquitted, at the Old Bailey sessions. Even Loughborough and Scott were satisfied they could do no more ; and the remaining prisoners in the Tower were set at large.

The King was no less mortified than Pitt by these great failures. When George met Loughborough he exclaimed, with scant civility : “ You have got us into the wrong box, my lord ; you have got us into the wrong box. Constructive treason won’t do, my lord ; constructive treason won’t do.”

It would have saved King George much trouble if he had remembered his own words in after times.





CHAPTER LIX.

REFORM RIOTS.

“**A** FREE government has nothing to fear from a free press and a free people,” were the words in which a young, accomplished Baronet announced to the House of Commons the advent of another champion of popular rights. The speaker was Sir Francis Burdett, a friend, a neighbour, and a pupil of Parson Tooke; but those who heard Sir Francis speak perceived that here was one of those dangerous men who actually believe that what they say is true. Pitt saw Burdett would go great lengths, and those who took their cue from Pitt began to watch and thwart the fearless orator, who was a close disciple of Parson Tooke.

Tooke lived at Wimbledon, where Burdett had a villa. Tooke was fond of company, on which he shed such radiance that his rooms were filled—especially on a Sunday afternoon, when he received the world—with men of every class. Lord Thurlow came to dine with him, and Hardy came to dine with him. The parson, loving contrast, put the Chancellor on his right, the shoemaker on his left. Burdett was drawn to Tooke by love of Horace rather than of Danton; but a man of brilliant parts, who knew the world, and had the reputation of a martyr, was too sure of swaying an elastic and impressionable youth. In speaking of the forces which were likely to attach Burdett to Tooke, we must remem-

ber that on all the high political questions of that day the parson was invariably in the right, his persecutors in the wrong. He wrote against our driving the Free Colonies into war; and every one regrets that this advice was thrown away. He voted for a reform of the House of Commons; and Whigs and Tories have consented to great measures of reform. He wrote in favour of Free-trade; and afterwards this principle became the creed of every school of politics in the land.

Burdett was an epitome of English life. A man of family—he could trace his lineage to a Norman town; a scholar—he had spent his youth at Westminster and Oxford; a student—he had travelled much and seen the world; a politician—he had entered the House of Commons early; and a landlord, born to large estates—he had chosen for himself a wealthy bride. In generous youth, he was a burning democrat; in middle age, he was a Friend of the People; and in sober age, he was the fine old English Gentleman. It is the common course. We start with Sydney, and we end with Pitt. We learn to doubt, and fancy we are learning to be wise. We change, and hope that change is growth. Sir Francis has the merit of not changing his opinion till his work was done.

In his early days, although the country was engaged in fighting France, with half of Europe at the back of France, there was no pause in the popular demand for Parliamentary Reform. It was an old cry, though it sometimes took new forms. It was "the Good Old Cause," and meant an increase of the popular power, but rather as against the "ruling families" than against the Crown. It showed itself in secret clubs, seditious pamphlets, monstrous gatherings, and inflammatory harangues. It led to many riots, many trials, many executions. Manchester, denied the franchise, rose upon the land-lords and the cotton-lords. Birmingham was disturbed by popular risings. Leicester, Leeds, and Glasgow, took to burning mills. London was

astir in every part; and hundreds of public-houses, from the Crown and Anchor and the Merlin's Cave, to the Nag's Head and the Horse and Groom, were occupied by patriotic clubs. A vast association of reformers, having branches in every county, took the name of Hampden; and the progress of the Hampden Clubs was watched by Government with a just alarm.

These Hampden Clubs, of which the handsome Baronet was chairman, had adopted for their platform a most sweeping set of principles. They asked for universal suffrage; and defined this universal suffrage as the right of every lad of eighteen years to have a voice in the election of his representative. They asked for a general election once a year. They asked for vote by ballot. They asked for equal districts, so that each man's vote should have an equal weight. They asked that people should be free to choose their members; that no property qualification should be necessary to a seat; and that the member chosen should be paid for service. These demands were made in loud and menacing tones, and Government professed to know that in the manufacturing counties—Lancaster, Leicester, Notts, and Derby—other and yet more revolutionary projects were debated in the Hampden Clubs. These clubs were said by spies to have discarded Church and King. They wanted a republic; and they meant to get their own by threats of physical force.

A second series of political clubs, with social and agrarian features—nearer to the Jacobin Clubs in Paris than the Hampden Clubs in London—bore the name of Spence.

Spence kept a Yorkshire school, in which he loved his species in the world at large, and whipped and starved the boys on whom he lived. He was a leveller of an ancient type. To him the root of every evil in the State was private property in land. We must grub out that root, he cried; the earth belongs

to God; and no man with a heart could claim to own it. Spence proposed a Plan for seizing all the land, for reaping all that grew upon it, for dividing into equal parts that bounteous growth, and giving every one his equal share. When Spence proposed this Plan for making all men happy, France was a republic, and her armies were in Holland, Egypt, Italy; and a government, which looked upon him as a Jacobin at least, was blind enough to prosecute him, and extend a knowledge of his principles far and wide. From York the news of his arrest was brought to Manchester, to Birmingham, to London. Spence became a martyr; and societies of men who bore his name were found in many pot-houses, in many towns, to carry out his plans as those in power resisted him, by force.

Burdett soon made himself feared by the ministry, not only for his Radical speeches at the Crown and Anchor, but his vigorous opposition to their conduct in the treatment of political prisoners. Aris, governor of Coldbath Fields, the county prison, commonly called the Bastile, was the object of attack. This Aris was believed to have treated gentlemen committed to his charge with a severity which would have been extreme in the case of burglars and murderers. The Middlesex magistrates defended him, and Mr. Mainwaring, their chairman and their county member, made himself the willing mouthpiece of this praise. A new election offered the public their revenge. Burdett was asked to stand against the chairman; and in 1802 began the series of electoral contests which disturbed the town with "Burdett Riots" for more than twenty years.

Byng polled 3848 votes, Burdett 3207 votes, Mainwaring 2936 votes. Burdett had a majority of 271. His partisans rang the bells, and lit their houses, and smashed the windows of their enemies. But the Government, having laboured to keep him out, was not yet beaten; and a scrutiny being demanded by

the Tories, a committee, after long delays, reported the election void. Mainwaring, having lost the seat through treating, could not stand again; the party, therefore, asked his son to take his place. "What money have you got to spend?" the youngster asked. "Five thousand pounds," they said. "It will not do; I cannot stand on that." A second call was made upon the party, and a larger sum being banked, the fun began. The poll was open for a fortnight, and riots kept the town awake for fifteen days and nights. Mainwaring was assailed with brick-bats, and his windows in Weymouth Street were broken; while the elder Mainwaring's house in Tenterden Street was only saved from pillage by the troops. Burdett's house in Piccadilly—a large stone house, with balcony along the front, and facing the Green Park—was guarded by a mob. The votings were—Burdett, 2823; Mainwaring, 2828; Conservative majority of *five*. A scrutiny being demanded, a Committee of the House reported that a true return had not been made; Mainwaring was unseated, and Burdett replaced. But ministers, so far from sitting down to their defeat, put out their force against the followers of Burdett. Going back as far as the election in 1802, they arrested Sir William Rawlins and Mr. Cox, the sheriffs of that year, and sent these gentlemen to Newgate, on a charge of having suffered some voters to poll whose names were not upon the lists. They brought up William Jenkins, Thomas Price, and Matthew Cruce, three of the Burdett electors, on a charge of perjury; and the Court of King's Bench condemned these free and independent electors to a month's imprisonment in Newgate, and to seven years' transportation to Botany Bay! They got a new committee named; and carried on the war of scrutinies and trials, till the purse and patience of Burdett were both exhausted. Nineteen months after date, and on the eve of a new election, this committee gave the seat to Mainwaring by a

majority of *one*. This contest cost Burdett a hundred thousand pounds.

In the new elections (those of 1806) Burdett supported Paull, a Radical candidate for Westminster, in opposition to Fox, whom he regarded as a mere official Whig. Fox died soon after his return, and in the flush of public feeling on his death, the men who had abused him had to hide their heads. The freeholders forsook Burdett, and in the county he was beaten by an unknown man. The Hampden Clubs, however, stuck by him, and as the seat for Westminster was vacant by the death of Fox, they asked him on every side to stand. Some delicate regard for Paull, and some disgust with public life, withheld him for a time from yielding to this pressure, till a comic incident removed his feeling of reserve. While he was doubting, Paull announced himself as candidate, and advertised a dinner of his friends at the Crown and Anchor, with Sir Francis in the chair! Burdett, who had not heard of such a dinner till he read his own name in the papers, was amazed, and wrote to Paull (and the electors) bitterly complaining of his wrongs. Paull put a paragraph in the papers, stating that Sir Francis had consented to preside; and at the same time sent a challenge to his friend. They met at Comb Wood, near Wimbledon, at nine o'clock, with Bellenden Ker and John Cooper as their seconds; fired (with Paull's own pistols) twice; and having wounded each other in the leg, returned to town in Burdett's coach together; each repenting of his heat, and swearing an eternal friendship. Both were badly hurt. Lampoons and ballads numberless were issued; but the Radicals of Westminster consoled the wounded Baronet by returning him to Parliament, and smashing everybody's glass who would not vote for him. A triumphal car was built, on which Britannia, wearing a cap of liberty, was placed in front; behind and over her rose a pedestal and a Gothic chair of state, on which

Sir Francis sat, his lame leg resting on a purple pillow, whilst a pasteboard "Monster of Corruption" writhed and twisted at his feet. This car was drawn by four white horses, and was followed by a train of carriages, from the Baronet's house in Piccadilly to the Crown and Anchor in the Strand, where some two thousand free and independent voters dined at his expense. Burdett received the seat "for life," and actually held it for thirty years.

In 1809 he roused the bitter animosity of ministers by his project of Reform, and when he wrote, in the following year, his sturdy Letter to his Constituents, on the case of Gale Jones—a delegate of the Corresponding Society, who had been lodged in Newgate by a vote of the Tory majority for a "libel" on the House of Commons—they resolved to crush him by a public arrest, a charge of treason, a commitment to the Tower.

Burdett's Letter, printed in "Cobbett's Weekly Register," asserted that the House of Commons had no power to imprison the people of England; citing Magna Charta, Coke's Institutes, the Bill of Rights, the practice of Parliament, and the common law, against that revolutionary power of holding men in jail untried. The Tory knights and squires responded but too promptly to the ministerial hints. Burdett avowed the writing of that Letter; and the House of Commons, having voted it a libel, passed an order for arresting him. The sitting lasted through the night, the House not rising until half-past seven; but ere he went to bed, the Speaker, Abbott, signed a warrant, which he placed in Colman's hands, with an instruction to proceed with care, to serve it on Burdett, and carry him quietly to the Tower.



CHAPTER LX.

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT.

ROGER O'CONNOR and Jones Burdett remained all Thursday night in the House of Commons, listening to the debate, and drove to Wimbledon the moment it was over, to acquaint Sir Francis with his fate. They found him in the garden of his villa, where his wife and girls were with him, in the midst of books and flowers. On hearing the result, he called his groom and rode to town; his two friends following in the chaise. His course was clear. The warrant was illegal. Thousands, no doubt, would help him to resist it; and the Ministers were not sure of the soldiers, even of the Household troops. But his resource was Law. He meant to try the case; and his respect for Law forbade him to resist the Crown. He had to make a protest; to renew his stout assertion that the House of Commons had no power to imprison the English people; he could, therefore, only yield to force. If Government would arrest him, they must bear the odium of their acts.

On reaching Piccadilly, he found a note from Colman, Serjeant-at-arms, saying that he held a warrant to arrest and carry him to the Tower, and asking when he might wait on him to serve it. Colman added that he wished to show the member for Westminster all respect; he would be happy if Burdett would ride to the Tower; he would be there to meet him at the

gates. Burdett replied that he would be at home next day at twelve o'clock. Before this answer reached him, Colman called in Piccadilly, showed his warrant, and was told to come next day at noon. He bowed, apologised, and withdrew.

At seven o'clock that Friday night O'Connor went to the Tower, and held an interview with Colonel Smith, who told him that the Warden's house, next door to his own (the house which Sackville, Earl of Thanet, occupied in his imprisonment), was being prepared, and that his prisoner would be treated with the utmost courtesy and respect. At eight o'clock, the Serjeant and a messenger arrived in Piccadilly to arrest Burdett. The Speaker, Colman said, had rated him for not arresting, and remaining with, his prisoner; and he hoped Sir Francis would at once submit. "On more consideration," said Burdett, "the Speaker will not blame you; for it was not in your power to stay with me; as—let me say it without offence—I should not have permitted you in my house."

"Then, sir, I shall be obliged to resort to force," retorted Colman, "as it is my duty to execute the warrant."

"If you bring an overwhelming force," replied Burdett, "I must submit. But I dare not, from my allegiance to the King and my respect for his laws, yield a voluntary submission to such a warrant. It is illegal."

Colman begged for leave to stay in the house. "You must quit my house, sir," said the Baronet; "I have written a letter to the Speaker; you may take it to him; it contains my resolutions to his warrant." Colman dared not take the letter, which was sent by young Burdett; a school-boy who was then at home. A stormy scene occurred in the House of Commons, and a still more menacing tumult filled the streets. A mob broke many windows; and an ominous snap of arms was sometimes heard at night.

Next day (Saturday) Burdett went out to breakfast with O'Connor in Maddox Street ; and after breakfast rode in the Park alone ; but on returning to his house, he found Lord Cochrane and a number of his friends assembled in the drawing-rooms—three rooms which open on the balcony—while a messenger was waiting for him in a room below. “Let him come up,” said Sir Francis. “Well, my good friend, what is your business ?”

“Sir,” replied the messenger, “I am desired to show you the order of the House of Commons, upon which the warrant is issued ; to serve that warrant upon you ; and to remain with you.”

“My friend, this is not a sufficient warrant. You may return and inform the Speaker that I will not obey it.”

“Sir, it is my order to remain with you ; I must obey, unless I am forced to withdraw.”

“You must instantly withdraw,” returned the Baronet, and O'Connor showed the messenger down-stairs. “You must use force, sir,” said this messenger to O'Connor. “There,” replied the Irish gentleman, “is the door open for you—you must go.” He bowed and passed into the street. At one o'clock, a troop of the Life Guards rode up, dispersed the people, who were gathering fast, and held the line of Piccadilly from Dover Street to Bolton Row. The crowd grew thicker, fiercer, every moment ; raising cries against the minister, and hooting the police. All day, the Baronet's house was in a state of siege. Lord Cochrane stayed with him to dine. Burdett sent off a letter of complaint to Sheriff Wood, who, after waiting on the Speaker, came to him in Piccadilly, and sharing Burdett's opinion that the warrant was illegal, forced the soldiers to fall back, and placed some officers in the house to guard the Baronet from an arrest by force.

That Saturday night was long remembered by the London citizens, and a collision of authorities seemed

at hand ; for Wood, a resolute man, was clear about his duty, and his officers could be trusted with their work. All London knew that meetings of the Cabinet and the Privy Council had been called, and whispers ran along the street, that every regiment within a hundred miles was marching into town. "Lights, lights!" cried some one in the crowd, and instantly a hundred streets were lighted "for Burdett." The troops received an order to put out these lights. A war of shouts and yells began. "Lights, lights!" "No lights, no lights!" But those who put their candles out, in answer to the military, had their windows smashed. A dozen fights took place. The soldiers, hustled, bruised, and stoned, assailed the mob, and all the hospitals were filled with persons badly hurt.

With Sunday came a little calm. The troops still kept their ground, a good way off. A mob of Westminster electors held the space in front of Burdett's house ; and forced the occupant of every carriage to unbonnet as he passed. If any Tory peer refused, they pelted him with mud.

On Monday morning, just as Burdett had finished breakfast in the drawing-room, with Lady Burdett, his children, and some ladies, and was listening while his boy of fourteen translated Magna Charta for the ladies, a hand was seen on the balcony, outside the window ; the hand of a man who was scaling the house from Piccadilly. O'Connor rushed upon him. "Do not hurt the man," Sir Francis called to his impulsive friend ; on which O'Connor closed the window-frame, and pressed him out ; but looking down into the street and park, he saw the space in front of him, as far as eye could reach, a red array of troops—horse, foot, and guards ; all under arms and ready, at a word, to open fire. A crash was heard ; a crash of breaking glass and bursting doors. O'Connor ran down-stairs, and met some twenty officers, who had broken into a lower room, and were already masters of the house.

“What do you want?”—“Sir Francis Burdett. Is he at home?”

“He is at home. What do you want with him?” They pushed O'Connor to the wall, and tore up-stairs, with Colman at their heels.

“Sir Francis,” cried the Serjeant-at-arms, “you are my prisoner!”

“By what authority do you act? By what power, sir, have you broken into my house in violation of the laws of the land?”

“The warrant of Mr. Speaker,” answered Colman.

“I contest the authority of such warrant. Where is the sheriff? where is the magistrate?”

“Sir Francis, my authority is in my hand.”

“It is no warrant,” said the Baronet; “if you have a warrant from his Majesty, or from a proper officer of the King, I will pay instant obedience to it, but I will not yield to an illegal order.”

“Then I must call in force;” and Colman bade the officers take the gentlemen, Burdett, his brother, and O'Connor, whom they forced down-stairs, and pushed into a coach, around which two strong squadrons closed. O'Connor was drawn back; the word to march was given; the company trotted off. Avoiding Westminster and the City, they drove him by a northern route, along the New Road, Moorfields, and the Minories, to the Tower; yet, in despite of these precautions, many thousands were assembled at Tower Hill to hoot and yell. These crowds were so excited that they looked as if the slightest signal would induce them to attack the guards.

Lord Moira, Constable of the Tower, was at the gates to meet his prisoner. Vernon was too old for duty, and his function fell upon the Major, Colonel Smith. Sir Francis was conducted to his prison, on the southern wall; a house with windows looking on the Green, and other windows at the back, which peeped above the ramparts towards the Wharf, the

river, and the Kentish shore. Two warders were detailed to watch him, and two sentinels were stationed at his door; but otherwise both Smith and Moira treated him with much respect.

In trotting back, the troopers who had brought the popular member to the Tower were met by roused and almost maddened people. "They have torn him from his home! they have locked him in the Tower!" men cried, in agony and shame. "Burdett for ever! Down with the red-coats!" Mud and brick-bats greeted the returning guards at every corner. In the front of Trinity House the soldiers lost their patience, drew their swords, and charged the mob. The space was cleared, but many of the wounded strewed the ground. Up Fenchurch Street they fought their way through angry crowds, here prodding with their swords, there firing from their carbines. Two poor men were killed, and many more were hurt. That night the devil was let loose in London. All the ministers' houses were attacked by mobs, who broke the glass, put out the lamps, and shouted for Burdett. As Percival, Chatham, Yorke, Montrose, and Dartmouth, were supposed to be his bitter enemies, their houses suffered most. Two days and nights the town was in a state of anarchy; the soldiers were of dubious temper; and the regiments at the Tower were thought to be unsafe. At last a flood of rain set in; a steady, drenching flood, that cleared the streets. On Tuesday every skin was soaked, and all the patriotic fire put out.

For ten weeks Burdett lay a prisoner in the Tower. At first he had the use of pen and ink, the right to see his friends, and liberty to walk upon the wall and on the Green. Lady Burdett, who took a lodging near the Tower, was with him nearly all her time, within the prison walls; and thither came to cheer his rooms his bright young daughters, Susan and Sophia (Angela was not born as yet), together with his boy who was translating *Magna Charta* when the officers

broke into his house. The soldiers looked upon him as their friend, and he not only dropped them gentle greetings, but occasionally harangued them on the Rights of Man. Smith had to speak with him about these speeches. Soldiers, it was said, were flogged for raising what were called seditious cries; and while the prisoner was taking his exercise on Raleigh's Walk, he saw them lashed; on which he spoke so loudly in denunciation of that brutal sight, that he was not allowed to walk upon that wall again.

Lord Cochrane, as his colleague in the representation of Westminster, fought his battle in the House of Commons; making enemies in the governing circles, who repaid that noble sailor for his love of freedom by the longest and the harshest persecution on the records of our time. The Sheriff Matthew Wood, a noble sire of yet more noble sons, stood stoutly in the front, and by his action in the city, kept the Ministers in check.

When Parliament was prorogued, the warrant lost its power; the prisoner was discharged. A great committee had been formed to take the member for Westminster from his lodgings in the Tower, to carry him through the city in procession, and attend him to his violated home. Half London promised to be in the streets, and Ministers were trembling for the public peace. Two murders and a multitude of wounds attended his arrest; but who would answer for the tale of killed and wounded if a hundred thousand angry men were met at any point by the public force?

At first, Burdett accepted the ovation offered to him by this great committee; but on listening to Mr. Friend, who came to see him, and who knew the town, he changed his mind. A minute after Parliament was prorogued, the news was telegraphed to the Tower; the Baronet was free, and went to Government house, to thank the Major for his kindness. "You had shown a better sense of that kindness," said the blunt old soldier, "if you had refrained from addressing the troops

in garrison." "I only wished to tell them," answered the popular idol, "how much I feel their sympathy in my trouble." "You should have told them through their officers, sir."

Burdett, attended by his comrades, crossed the draw-bridge, gained the Queen's stairs, took a boat, and while the hundred thousand friends were shouting for him in the streets from Cheape to Piccadilly, he made his way by the Thames to his suburban home.





CHAPTER LXI.

A SUMMONS TO THE TOWER

BURDETT was borne away to ride triumphal cars, to eat fresh dinners, and to found New Hampden Clubs, and then commenced the scenes which were to close, with something like burlesque, the ancient and romantic annals of the Tower.

A little after noon, on Monday, the 2nd of December, 1816, a cripple, leaning on a stick, attended by a mob of tailors, labourers, and weavers, stood with his crutch before the outer gates, and called on those within to yield the Tower into his hands. This cripple leaning on his stick, was Tom Preston, rope-winder; his chief supporters were John Keen, tailor, and James Hooper, labourer. The rope-winder was a philanthropist; the trail of weavers, cobblers, tailors, were philanthropists; and in the name of philanthropy they called on those within the gates, beefeaters, sentries, garrison, to yield at once, and spare those torrents of human blood which an indignant philanthropy, directed by a crutch, might otherwise cause to flow. These men were pupils, not in the school of Howard, but in that of Spence.

One of the Spencean Clubs was held in a tavern called the Nag's Head, Carnaby Market; a second at the Mulberry Tree, Moorfields; and a third at the Cock, in Grafton Street, Soho. The cripple was a leader in these clubs, where tinkers and weavers put

their heads together, over pots of beer and twists of pig-tail, on all "subjects calculated to enlighten the human understanding." By the side of Preston, cripple and cordwainer, sat some men of nature still more reckless, and of character still more dubious; Arthur Thistlewood, James Watson the elder, James Watson the younger, John Castle, and many more; some honest zealots, dreaming of a golden age; the larger number gamesters, bankrupts, perjurers, and spies.

Among these pot-house patriots, Arthur Thistlewood, a ruined gambler, played the parts of Captain and of Gentleman; for he had seen the world, had borne his Majesty's commission, had spent a private fortune, and had known the oracles of the Jacobin Club.

The Watsons, father and son, were also gentlemen at the Nag's Head and the Merlin's Cave. James Watson the elder was a surgeon in good practice, till his public appearance as an agitator frightened his patients from him. Loss of income drove him into shifts for money, and the pressure of his private duns embittered and inflamed his public zeal. His son, who also bore his name of James, was under age; not more than twenty, though a dark complexion, yellow skin, black teeth, and raven hair, made people set him down at twenty-five. A surgeon also, though he had not passed the College, he had served on board a Greenland ship. He lodged in High Street, Bloomsbury, and his politics were those of a public school; a ring, a stand-up fight, and let the best man win.

John Castle was a wretch of infamous habits, who had sold his services to the Government, and was in daily intercourse with the police.

Among the subjects which these philanthropists debated in the Nag's Head and the Mulberry Tree, as tending "to enlighten the human mind," were—a community of goods, an abolition of power-looms and steam engines, a French republic, a plan for barricad-

ing London Bridge, a Provisional Government of twenty-four, a scheme for seizing on the Bank and Tower, an abolition of churches, kings, and gods. They named a Secret Directory of Five:—and Thistlewood, the elder and younger Watsons, Castle, and Tom Preston, were those Five. No topic stirred so much debate in these societies as a plan of the Tower. Thistlewood had got a sketch of the fortress, with a detailed drawing of the more important parts; the entrances and sally-ports, the Governor's house, the prison lodgings, the Jewel-house, the Guard-room, and the magazine of arms. They dwelt upon this plan of the Tower as lovers dwell upon the features of their brides. They bent above it with a daily hunger of the heart. How could they make the Tower their own? They thought of guile, and thought of force. They dreamt of treachery within, they dreamt of a surprise without. A combination of the two might answer. Soldiers are but men, and men may be seduced by praise and drink. At length it came to be understood at the Cock and the Nag's Head, that the Tower garrison was to be seduced by words and promises, and that Preston, who was not a fighting man, should have the duty of seducing them.

A meeting of reformers had been called in Spa Fields, in front of the Merlin's Cave, at which Orator Hunt was asked to speak. But long ere Hunt arrived a waggon-load of philanthropists drove up, took ground in front of the Merlin's Cave, flung out two flags—a black flag and a red-white-and-blue flag; and began to rouse the mob by an appeal to arms. Young Watson, like a schoolboy, shouted to the crowd beside his waggon, many of whom had clubs and sword-sticks in their hands,—“If they will not give us what we want, shall we not take it?”—“Aye; we'll take it.” “If I jump down among you, will you come and take it?”—“Aye; we'll go and take it.” Watson raised his republican flag—the red-white-and-blue—and with the help of Tom

Cashman, a common sailor, marched on the Bank; while Preston, being a cripple, was despatched to seize the Tower!

Francis, General Lord Hastings, was the Constable, and General Loftus his Lieutenant of the Tower; but these great men were not in residence; and Preston fancied he had only to display his French cockade, and all the garrison would come out and yield. He tried his arts upon the sentries. He, Tom Preston, said he was the soldier's friend; he knew their wrongs; and would avenge them on their tyrants. In the new age of philanthropy the rank and file should all be officers, and the officers should all be rank and file. The soldiers laughed, and told him to shut up. He limped away upon his staff; but cripples are not swift of foot; and when the hue-and-cry was raised, the lame philanthropist, with Hooper the labourer, and Keen the tailor, were arrested, and brought back as prisoners to the Tower.

Young Watson, Cashman, and their party, stormed Snow Hill, and breaking into a gunsmith's shop demanded arms. A gentleman named Richard Pratt, who happened to be standing in the shop, said something of the law, on which young Watson drew his pistol, fired into that gentleman's face, and saw him stagger back and fall. No sooner was the weapon fired than the fanatic sobered down. "I am a surgeon," he exclaimed, forgetting that his words would give the clue by which he might be traced, and throwing himself upon his bleeding victim, he essayed to staunch the wound his slugs had made. Poor Pratt was not past help, but leaders of rebellion cannot wait on wounded men. An effort of some passers-by, to seize young Watson as a murderer, roused his followers. He was rescued in a moment; and the word being given to march upon the Bank and Tower, John Castle led a party through St. Paul's Churchyard and by Cheapside, upon the Mansion House, while Watson led his

party towards the Minories, where many gunsmiths lived, in hope of finding weapons, and supporting Preston in his onset on the Tower.

In Cheapside, John Castle met with Orator Hunt, who was driving tandem to the meeting at Spa Fields, and begged the Orator to go forward with the patriots; telling him that his meeting was dispersed, the City up, the country rising round them, and the Tower already in their hands. Hunt, suspecting Castle, drove away, and saved his neck. The mob pushed forward, firing off their guns and pistols; firing into windows, firing at church-steeple, firing into empty space. Sir Matthew Wood, Lord Mayor, himself an old Reformer, angry and amused at this burlesque of Freedom and Philanthropy, met the crowd, and coolly pressed them back. An alderman of Portsoken Ward assisted Wood, and these two City magistrates, with help of five or six constables, broke up the front, laid hands on pole and banner, tore the French republican flag, and, with the aid of Castle, trapped a number of the leading men.

Young Watson, Cashman, and the clubbists, swarmed into the Minories and around Tower Hill, and plundered several shops before the soldiers and police were on them. Here they learned that Preston had not gained the Tower, that horse and foot were marching from all quarters, that the movement everywhere had failed. At once the mob broke up. "Let every man look to himself!" was the cry; and in the dusk of a winter night the philanthropic army melted into dens and slums.

Except the cripple, all the Five escaped that night; but the pursuit was hot, and proclamations, offering great rewards for the arrest of Thistlewood and the Watsons, father and son, appeared on every wall. Cashman was caught. The elder Watson was arrested in a house at Highgate; not without a blow, for he was armed with a philanthropic sword-stick, which he thrust into a luckless wretch named Joseph Rhodes. The

surgeon was committed to the Tower, and kept in close confinement. Each of the prisoners had a separate cell. An order was procured by Watson's solicitor to see him twice a week, in presence of a keeper; but this courtesy was only shown him, over all the rest, because Lord Sidmouth fancied Watson might be hung for an attempt at murder in resisting Rhodes. But Rhodes could not assert that Watson tried to kill him. The time was night, the place was dark, and in achieving the arrest of Watson he was hurt. The jury said "Not Guilty;" and the Government had to try a second course.

They laid a charge before the grand jury of conspiracy and riot, against the four prisoners then in custody, Thomas Preston, cordwainer, James Watson, surgeon, John Hooper, labourer, and Thomas Cashman, sailor. More obliging than a petty jury, the gentlemen of the grand jury found true bills against the prisoners; all of whom were then removed in strictest custody to the Tower.





CHAPTER LXII.

ARTHUR THISTLEWOOD.

FIVE hundred pounds each were offered for the capture of Arthur Thistlewood and the younger Watson, who were charged in a royal proclamation with high treason, so that it was death to harbour or conceal them. Thistlewood lived in Southampton Buildings, out of Chancery Lane; but he had not come home since that December night when Watson murdered Pratt and Preston called upon the Tower to yield. Lord Sidmouth knew, from the informer, Castle, every detail of the Nag's Head plot. He knew that Thistlewood and Watson were the leaders; but he was not sure that juries would convict for treason; and he wished to trace young Watson, since he knew that evidence could be given of his having fired on Pratt. Yet weeks elapsed ere Thistlewood was taken; and the frantic boy who fired on Pratt, and instantly repented of his crime, was never heard of more. No doubt he changed his name, and found a home in the United States.

When Thistlewood was fast in the Tower, Lord Sidmouth changed his course. The grand jury had found true bills against Watson the elder, Hooper, Cashman, and Preston, for conspiracy and riot, and the starless sailor, Cashman, had been tried, condemned, and hung for breaking into the gunsmith's shop. But now Lord Sidmouth aimed at higher things; for by

the side of this fantastic scheme of pot-house philanthropy, there was a steady rising of the populous towns in favour of political reform, which he was anxious to put down. He wished to pass repressive bills; he wished to suspend existing laws. To gain his ends, the country must be thoroughly alarmed. The Nag's Head must be pictured as a Jacobin Club, with Watson as a second Danton, and his colleague Thistlewood as a new Marat. The pistol fired at Pratt must be represented as the first shot in a general massacre, and Preston's summons to the Tower as levying war against the King.

In a public document, signed by the Prince Regent, Thistlewood was accused of treason; and this charge of treason was preferred against him and his comrades in the court of King's Bench. Young Watson was included in the list. A bill against Keen the tailor was thrown out, and Keen was told to go; but bills against Arthur Thistlewood, gentleman, James Watson, surgeon, James Watson, the younger, surgeon, Thomas Preston, cordwainer, and James Hooper, labourer, were duly found.

A fortnight after these true bills were found, Watson the elder was arraigned at the King's Bench, before Lord Ellenborough, on a charge of high treason. Copley (afterwards Lord Lyndhurst) was his counsel; Castle, the spy, was his accuser; and for seven days these proceedings held the nation in suspense. If every one knew that Sidmouth paid spies, the public were not willing to believe that spies like Castle were employed by the police to get up plots in order to betray their dupes. A storm of hatred rose against the Government; the jury brought the prisoner in Not Guilty, and the surgeon was discharged in open court.

Next morning Preston, Thistlewood, and Hooper were removed from the Tower by warders to the court of King's Bench, where Ellenborough, seated in the chair

of justice, called on them to plead. A jury was empannelled, and proclamations made, on which the Attorney-General rose to tell the court he should not call in evidence against the prisoners. "Gentlemen of the jury," said Lord Ellenborough, "as no evidence is brought against the prisoners, it will be your duty to find them Not Guilty." They were found not guilty, and discharged in open court.

Three of these four prisoners sank at once into obscurity; but Thistlewood was made of fiercer stuff; and this imprisonment stamped him a conspirator for life.

This man, who bears in history the fame of being the last State Prisoner in the Tower—a tall, stiff fellow, ashy pale, with hazel eyes, arched brows, wide mouth, and slender figure, like the shabby captain in a comedy—was the son of a Lincolnshire farmer, one of Lord Harrowby's principal tenants. From his school-days he had been an idle lad—morose and fitful, fond of drink and cards. His father meant him for a farmer; but he scorned such work as grazing sheep and growing swedes; and when his county raised a supplementary body of militia, he began to drill, and got a Lieutenant's sword. Arrayed in uniform, he sought a rich old maid, named Worsley, with ten thousand charms in a bank; and, being a handsome, worthless fellow, he obtained her hand, her money, and her house. For three or four years he lived in clover; but the lady died, he spent her fortune, and his means being gone, he took to living by his wits. Bad luck at cards soon threw him down in debt; his fellows pressed him for their winnings; in despair he left his house in Lincoln; got a commission in the West Indies, which he could not keep; and, having lost it, visited New York. From cards and dice he turned to politics; and when his stars were cross he swore at George the Third, and talked of hanging priests and kings.

Not finding field enough at home, he crossed to Paris, where he raked the gaming hells, and listened at the Jacobin clubs. A faro-table was his magnet; but he lived for higher things, and watched with something of a gambler's zest the progress of events in France. He heard the Jacobins rave for blood; and saw the guillotine devour her daily feast of heads. But fortune, though he wooed her roughly, fled him, till he turned his eyes once more upon the softer sex. A butcher near his native village had a daughter with two thousand pounds. He put the question, and the lady answered yes. Thistlewood was encumbered with a son not born in wedlock; but the lady, not being able to undo the past, forgave the lad his luckless birth, and took him to her house and heart. Thistlewood joined the Hampden Clubs; he joined the Spence Philanthropists. A Crown and Anchor and a Nag's Head was the same to him; a tavern in which he might get his drink and find his dupes. Among his comrades at the Nag's Head and the Cock he was a Captain; and would have had no rival in their love had he been able to indulge their patriotism with mugs of beer. Unluckily, this Captain who had served abroad, and seen the guillotine at work, was usually in want of half-a-crown.

But he had spirit if he had not pelf, as the Spencean Clubs soon saw. On passing from the court of King's Bench to freedom, he drew a cartel to Lord Sidmouth, whom he held responsible for his sufferings in the Tower, and challenged him to fight. It was a time of duels. Some great men, and even some good men, fancied that pistols and ten paces were the proper means of settling points on which the laws were deaf and dumb. Within a few years Castlereagh had fought with Canning, Lieutenant Bognall had been pistolled by his friend Lieutenant Stewart, D'Esterré had been shot by Daniel O'Connell. But instead of fighting, Sidmouth sent for the police. Instead of giving

Thistlewood the satisfaction of a gentleman, he cited him before the courts of law, and got him mulcted in a heavy fine and sentenced to a year's imprisonment in Horsham jail.

While Thistlewood was serving out his year in Horsham jail, the country was tormented by the rising passion for Reform in conflict with the Tory policy of Church and King. Coming out of jail to hear of Peterloo, a massacre of unarmed men, he would not listen to the tongues which counselled peace. "Hunt is no better than a spy," he said; "and Cobbett is a dupe, and possibly a tool." To prate about reform was fudge; they must begin afresh; they must pull down before they built. "Let the lives of the instigators be the requiem to the souls of murdered innocents." Let the whole cabinet—Wellington, Canning, Harrowby, as well as Sidmouth, Eldon, Pole, and Castlereagh—be put to death!

While Thistlewood was in this mood of mind, he met, in Preston's house, George Edwards, a modeller and pedlar, who appears, in spite of his homely names, to have been of foreign blood.

This scoundrel's trade was that of an Italian image-maker, and he claimed to be the son of a German baron. Once he lived in Picket Street, Strand, in a cheap and dirty hole, from which he was expelled because he fell into arrears of rent. But he had fallen on better times; and coming to see his landlord, dressed in the latest fripperies of the park, he told that person he had found good friends in Castlereagh and Sidmouth, who were well acquainted with his story, and had lent him money to support his rank. He had removed his trade to Eton, where he kept a shop in High Street, vending images of Dr. Keate, head-master; making money by the sale, since every Eton boy was bound to pelt and smash at least one copy of his chief. But making images was not his main affair, nor had he come to live at Eton for the

fun of modelling Dr. Keate. His business was the business of a spy, and he was lodging in the High Street to be near the King and court. The title of a German baron would have kept him from the scenes in which he was to earn his bread. A working man, he went among the Spenceans in their public-houses, and enchanted toppers at the Cock and Merlin's Cave by the decision of his words. This Edwards cared for neither priests nor kings. He talked of burning London with a smile, and seemed to think no more of George the Third than Eton boys appeared to think of Dr. Keate. When Thistlewood first met him he affected to be poor; yet not so poor but he could raise some pounds to help a patriot and a Captain in distress. Now Thistlewood was a patriot and a Captain in distress; and Edwards not only lent him "a few pounds" to go on with, but suggested schemes for glutting his revenge. He introduced him to jolly fellows, who would act with him, and under him, in ridding England of her tyrants. The shabby Captain and the image-vendor slipped into public-houses, where they drank and mused, and swore that ministers should not live to murder innocent men.

Thistlewood hired a lodging in Stanhope Street, Clare Market, to which Edwards came with men whom he picked up in drinking-kennels and on cobblers' stalls. He brought in Brunt, a cobbler out of work, who lived in Fox Court, Gray's Inn Lane—a rookery of drabs and thieves. Edwards had given him meat and drink when he was deep in want, and was so good a friend that Brunt could not refuse to follow Edwards into any plot. As Brunt describes the matter on his trial, he was "seduced" by Edwards over cuts of bread and cheese washed down with mugs of ale. Brunt hired two rooms in Fox Court; which rooms became their council chamber, and their magazine of arms.

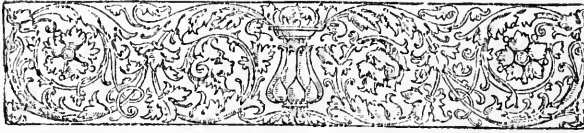
Then Edwards brought in Ings, a butcher, who had kept a shop in Baker Street, and failed. Ings was in

deep distress ; his wife was clothed in rags ; his children wanted bread. In his despair the image-maker found him, plied him with drink, and carried him to Thistlewood's rooms, as one of those patriots who would act with him, and under him, in ridding the world of tyrants. Ings could read and write, and Thistlewood made him secretary of state and captain of the guard.

One Davidson, a negro, living in Wellington Cottages, near the Alpha Road, was also brought into the plot by Edwards ; likewise Tidd, a cobbler lodging in Hole-in-the-Wall Passage, Leather Lane. These men were out of work and out of luck—a prey to hunger, cold, and debt. As members of Spencean clubs, they had been noted for the fierceness of their zeal ; the negro even more than Tidd ; for while the pale face was content to march in procession and shout "Bravo !" to Orator Hunt, the negro bore a black flag aloft, inscribed with "Liberty or Death !"

These plotters drank and talked in many beer-shops, but their house of call was the White Hart, Brooks' Market, Leather Lane—a pot-house, kept by a philanthropist named Hobbs. This pot-house had a backyard and offices, in one of which they hired a private room ; and over mugs of ale and pipes of shag, the ruined gambler and his comrades pottered, through the forming hints of Edwards, into that scheme of wholesale murder which conducted Thistlewood to his cell in the Bloody tower.





CHAPTER LXIII.

A CABINET COUNCIL.

AT two o'clock, in the afternoon of Tuesday, February 22, 1829, Lord Liverpool and the members of his Cabinet were waiting in the Council Office for Lord Harrowby to arrive. A man of close engagements, who but seldom kept his colleagues waiting, Harrowby's absence, even for a moment, was remarked as something strange.

Lord Liverpool's Cabinet was not a strong one. Liverpool was a Tory, and nothing more. Harrowby, Lord President of the Council; Westmoreland, Lord Privy Seal; Mulgrave, who enjoyed a seat without an office; Bathurst, Secretary for War and the Colonies, were Tory earls, and nothing more. Sidmouth, Home Secretary, and Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, were Tory viscounts, and little more. Sidmouth was a follower in the wake of Pitt, but with a difference in the bulk!

Pitt was to Addington
What London is to Paddington.

Melville was a well-worn hack, whose life had been a struggle, a successful struggle, for the highest place and largest pay within his reach. The bitters had been mingled with the sweets. He had been censured by the House of Commons for appropriating public funds; he had been driven from office by an outraged

people; he had narrowly escaped impeachment and the Tower. Vansittart, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Robinson, Treasurer of the navy, and President of the Board of Trade; Pole, Master of the Mint; and Bathurst, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, were Tory gentlemen who had enjoyed the confidence of George the Fourth while George the Third was still alive. Four men sat with these cyphers; Arthur, Duke of Wellington, Master-General of the Ordnance and Commander of the forces; John, Lord Eldon, Chancellor; Castlereagh, Foreign Secretary; and George Canning, President of the Board of Control.

The business on their list was long and pressing. George the Third was dead. The King lay in bed, so sick in heart and frame that he was likely to die uncrowned; yet this foul spectre of a king was urging them to prosecute his wife, Queen Caroline, and to get him a divorce. The ministers, who would have strained the law for him as far as subject ever strained the law for sovereign, told him, each for each, and all for all, that such things could not be. No charge of treason could be pressed against the Queen. No court of law could grant him a divorce. The scandals of a public trial would disturb his peace and undermine his throne. Morose and angry, George was bending to his Cabinet, but with sullen fits and furies which they dreaded more than speech. Five days ago a royal message had been sent to the House of Commons, begging them to make provision for the public wants, and then adjourn. The writs for a new election must be drawn and signed. The towns were holding meetings, and the counties lighting fires. The massacre of Peterloo was rankling in every heart. The prisoners of that field of blood were still untried. Burdett and Hunt were in arrest once more. A thousand Hampden Clubs were burning to avenge their President; a thousand bands of Radicals and Philanthropists were seeking to avenge their Orator; and

yet these followers of Hampden and Spence were not so dangerous as the plotters whom no club would own. Such plotters were at large in London. They were watched by spies, and tracked by agents of police; but no one could be sure of them; for they were poor and reckless, and their plans were changed with every pot of beer.

As President of the Council, Harrowby had asked his fourteen colleagues to a Cabinet dinner at his house in Grosvenor Square. His cook was good, his wine was old, and men were glad to dine with him; but only members of the Cabinet were to eat his meat and drink his wine next day. His Countess and his son would be away from home. The Countess had a ticket for the oratorio, and Lord Sandon was engaged at Almacks to a dance. But ere the Cabinet met to feast they were to hear the King's last whims about his wife; to fix the sum that might be paid her while she lived abroad; to order the omission of her name from prayers in church. But when the Earl came in, all flushed and quivering, with a fearful tale upon his lips, these things were hushed aside, and every man was thrown into a state of self-defence. Since Cecil read the letter of Monteagle to his friends, no stranger story had been told in Council than Lord Harrowby was now to tell. He was to tell the Duke of Wellington, Lord Eldon, Canning, and their colleagues, that they had been marked for death; that the conspiracy of which their spies had spoken much of late was ripe; that all their throats were to be cut, and many of their houses fired, on the ensuing night!

On leaving home that morning to attend the Council he was followed to Hyde Park by Thomas Hiden, one of the informers paid by Castlereagh. The fellow stopped him in his ride near Grosvenor Gate, and handed him a letter for Lord Castlereagh. Knowing the man by sight, Lord Harrowby spoke to him, and heard his tale; and having heard it, bade him come

again next morning to the King. Castlereagh perused the note, which Sidmouth narrowly compared with his reports from Edwards and from other spies. The stories hung together but too well; and some of those who had been used to smile at Sidmouth's image-maker, felt that what he had been saying, day by day, for six months past, was something more than an informer's dream.

A plot to murder all the fifteen members of the Cabinet had been formed; a method of procedure had been framed; the agents had been chosen for the task; a magazine of weapons had been made; an order of the day in which the post of every man was marked, had been adopted; and the ruffians, with their plans completed, were but waiting for the hour of doom to strike.

For six months Edwards had been telling Sidmouth that Arthur Thistlewood, once a prisoner in the Tower, and afterwards in Horsham jail, was bent on mischief. He was leader of the gang. Next to Edwards stood James Ings, the butcher, who was acting as his Secretary of State and Captain of the Guard. Ings would cut a throat as readily as he would fell an ox. The negro Davidson stood next; a big, morose, and hungry fellow, who believed that the existence of a Tory Cabinet was the only cause of his little darkies wanting bread. A spy reported that this negro used to spend his evenings at the Sun, a Radical pot-house in the Barbican; that he would sit for hours absorbed in gloom; and start from reverie when some toper named the ministers of the day: "D—— 'em!" he would shout, spring up, and leave the room. Brunt, a trusted comrade of the White Hart chamber, was a cobbler with a firm belief in prayer, who told his friends that if they wished to do their job completely, bagging all the ministers at a brush, they must implore the Lord to send them to the feast in Grosvenor Square. Robert Adams, once a private in the Blues, but now

a cobbler, living in Hole-in-the-Wall Passage, Leather Lane, was much esteemed by Thistlewood, as a fellow who could cut and thrust; as also Thomas Dwyer, an Irish patriot, living in Gee's Court, in Oxford Street. Edwards was not yet aware that Adams and Dwyer were his fellow-spies.

The tales which this informer had been telling were too true. How far he had been told to lead the plotters on remains a secret; but no doubt was ever felt that Edwards, either with Lord Sidmouth's knowledge or without it, egged them on by violent speeches, introduced them to each other, and supplied them cans of ale and timely loans. But plot undoubtedly there was in the White Hart Yard. The work went slowly on, for though the great man talked of great men yet in rear, these nobler spirits never came to either Gray's Inn Lane or Leather Lane. The Captain told his circle that money made men cowards, so that no one who was worth ten pounds was worth a rap. He wanted lads with nothing in the world to lose. Yet money must be got. Guns, pistols, pikes, and fireballs, were not found in streets. A pistol cost five shillings, and these patriots could not raise so much among them; but the image-maker was at hand, with loans of a few pounds; which pounds were quickly spent in powder, pikes, and beer. No little of the money went in bread and cheese.

George Ruthven, a Bow Street officer, was set to watch their movements, and his agents followed them, unseen, from court to alley, and from pot-house to pot-house; from Fox Court to Hole-in-the-Wall Passage, from the Black Dog in Gray's Inn Lane to the Horse and Groom in John Street, Edgware Road. Ruthven watched their chief, and held him like a bloodhound on the trail. "I know him," said that officer, "as I know my own father; having followed him for days and nights together."

Hobbs, the landlord of the White Hart, was troubled

in his mind. Detectives were about his house and yard, and he might lose his license if the poles and pikes were found. Brunt, therefore, hired a back room in Fox Court, in the name of Ings; an upper storey of the house in which Brunt lived; and in that upper room they stowed their pikes and poles. Thistlewood, Edwards, Ings, Tidd, Adams, Davidson, and others, came in twice a-day, to taste some gin, to hear the latest news, to fasten pikes on poles, to twist up powder into fire-balls. They were not alone. Besides the spies within, police were watching them from windows on the opposite side. Suspicion smote them. Were they watched? Some thought they were; but Brunt was not of that opinion; and he scorned to send his shafts and hand-grenades away. Yet Thistlewood and Edwards saw the need of care; and Harris, an old soldier, was employed to find a shed in some more distant part of the town. He found the thing they wanted near their house of call, the Horse and Groom, in John Street, Edgware Road.

All these events the Ministers had heard from time to time, without paying much attention to them; but the note from Hiden warned them that the men of Fox Court were now about to act. "We are too poor to wait," cried Thistlewood; and his comrades, pale with cold and want, agreed that they must fall to work. The play was read, the parts were cast, the night of destiny was fixed.

A dozen of the biggest houses, such as Apsley House and London House, were to be fired. On each a bill was to be posted, so that those who threw the brands should not mistake their lots. A party of armed men was to fall on each of the fifteen Ministers, and to kill him in his house. These deeds of blood accomplished, they were to seize two guns in Gray's Inn Lane, fling barricades across London Bridge, set fire to King Street Barracks, seize all the money in the Bank, and take possession of the Tower. But Edwards,

who was always full of news, informed them that a Cabinet dinner would be held on Wednesday night at Harrowby's house, 39 Grosvenor Square, at which the fifteen Ministers would be gathered in one room—a small room, with a narrow entrance, and a single door; in fact, a perfect trap! Thistlewood swore it was not true; so great a piece of luck was not for them; while Brunt put up a prayer that God would send the Cabinet to the shambles, one and all. On sending for the *New Times* they saw that Edwards was correct; and thereupon they changed their plan once more. Some trusty fellows were to watch by night and day, to see if either soldiers or police were brought into Lord Harrowby's house. If no defence were made, a score of men well armed, and carrying fire-balls and grenades, should march on Grosvenor Square, should mingle with the crowd, and wait their opportunity to strike. Ings was to knock at Harrowby's door with a letter, push inside, and let in all the rest; who were to knock the servants down, to pass through the outer hall to the dining-room door, to throw it open, to hurl their fire-balls at the guests, and stab and shoot all those whom the exploding bombs might spare. James Ings, the butcher, was to cut off Castlereagh's and Sidmouth's heads, and carry them in a bag from Grosvenor Square.

How were the Cabinet to act? They dared not try a premature arrest. No jury would believe the story they would have to tell; and Thistlewood had been a prisoner in the Tower on charges which the Crown had failed to prove. The plot must still go on. Lord Castlereagh was of opinion that the dinner should come off; that every one should dress himself for fight; that if the rascals kept their word they should defend their lives like gentlemen. The Duke would go much further; tempting them to their fate, and netting them alive or dead, but in the very act. He would have let them enter Grosvenor Square, and then have sealed up all the avenues of escape with guards. He would

have armed the servants, barricaded stair and passage, filled the rooms with soldiers, and enclosed the villains in a fence of steel. Lord Liverpool was too timid for such work ; and out of deference to his wish the Cabinet took a middle course.

The dinner should be cooked, the table spread, the drawing-room lighted up. No hint of a postponement should be dropped. The Countess should go to hear her music, and Lord Sandon to his dance. Each Minister whose house was to be marked and fired should arm his servants, get a couple of policemen in, and eat his meat at home. A body of Bow Street officers, accompanied by Birnie, the experienced magistrate, should march upon the rendezvous at eight o'clock, the moment the conspirators were about to start. A squad of Coldstream Guards should be at hand. The gang secured in Bow Street, Ministers could meet, on summons, later in the evening, at Lord Liverpool's house.

The Cabinet adjourned.





CHAPTER LXIV.

CATO STREET.

AT seven o'clock next night two Bow Street runners call at Portman Barracks, Oxford Street, and ask to see the officer on duty. Captain Fitzclarence is that officer; and the Bow Street runners hand him an order from Lord Sidmouth to proceed, with thirty men, to Cato Street, near Edgware Road, and lend assistance to a body of police in seizing certain persons, then and there engaged in practices against the Crown. It is not usual for the Coldstream Guards to get their orders through a Bow Street runner; but the warrant is in form, and signed; the Captain hears the case is urgent; and an officer may not trifle with instructions from a Secretary of State.

The runners leave him; begging he will make all haste. Serjeant Legge is sent for, and the thirty men are told for duty. Not a word is said about the object of their march, but whispers pass along the ranks that they are sent for to put out a fire.

At twenty minutes to eight they quit the barracks, pass through Portman Square, and, working by their left, are soon entangled in a maze of dark and narrow streets. Fitzclarence hardly knows the district. The police, who know it well, have only told him to march on Cato Street, near Edgware Road. The night is dark; the streets are empty; no one knows the spot.

He halts, not sure what he shall do. By chance, a groom comes up, a man who was once his servant. Yes; the groom knows Cato Street, and will conduct him to it. Off the Coldstreams start; they trot, for time has now been lost, and they may come upon their ground too late. In Queen Street, running from the Edgware Road, they halt. "Fix bayonets! Not a word!" The squad obeys, and waits, with loaded gun and glittering steel. Fitzclarence, glancing round, and listening for a signal, passes into a narrow passage, leading, as it seems, into a yard, and appears to be once more at fault.

His march has brought him to a maze of lanes and yards of classic names, which form a delta thrown up by the New Road, where it pours the tides of traffic flowing from the City into Edgware Road. Cato and Homer lend their names to two obscure and filthy lanes. The Stoic's name is given to an alley, narrow at the ends, and entered by a covered way, connecting Queen Street on the south with John Street on the north. In Cato Street, so called, his mission lies that night; for in this hidden nest of slums and stables Harris had hired from Frith a loft and coach-house at a rent of five shillings a-week, which served them for a rendezvous and magazine of arms. The first door on the Captain's right, on turning down the alley, should be the stable-door; the officers from Bow Street should be there. Lights and bustle ought to mark the spot; but nothing of the kind is seen. The first door on his right is not a stable-door; no sound of pattering feet is heard; no lights are burning in the window-panes.

A pistol-shot is heard! The crack comes up the yard, and from the farther end. Fitzclarence sees his error; he is posted at the wrong end of Cato Street. "Quick march! double!" cries Fitzclarence, turning towards the shot, and tearing over filth and slush, his rank and file upon his heels. A narrow passage and a covered way lead out to John Street; but within the

open yard, upon his left hand, in the corner, stands an open door, a stable-door, from which a man, with belt and pistol, darts as the squad come up, and tries to run through the covered way. Fitzclarence throws himself in front; the fugitive lifts his weapon, aims, and fires. Legge strikes him, turns his pistol, grasps the muzzle, and receives the contents in his own right arm. That fugitive is Tidd. Above the stable stands a loft, with windows giving on the street. A noise is heard in that upper room; a noise of trampling feet, of angry voices, of contending steel. Some shots are fired inside, and some come rattling through the window-panes; mere random shots, it seems, for not a soldier standing in the street is hurt. The lights are suddenly put out. A shriek, a groan, are heard; soon followed by a crash of glass, a fall of tiles, a patter of escaping men. "Advance!" the Captain shouts. A negro holds the door, a brawny negro, with a cutlass in his grip. Fitzclarence springs upon him. "Let us kill the red-coats," yells the negro to his friends inside; "we may as well die now as at any other time." He thrusts his point at the Captain's breast; a trooper turns it with his firelock; in an instant he is pushed aside. A click is heard, a flash is seen; a pistol aimed at him explodes and misses, and a voice is heard to whine, "Don't kill me, and I'll tell you all." That second sentry is secured, the stable is their own.

But still the scuffle rages overhead; a shout, a groan, a curse, the tone of sharp command, the yell of demoniac hate, all deepened by the sobs and moans of men in mortal pain. How can the Coldstreams reach them? Lights, ho! lights! A light is got; a ladder is observed; a trap-door leads into the loft. "Men, follow!" cries Fitzclarence, with his foot upon the rung. An instant, he is in that upper room, the room of blood, the room of death; a second instant, and such strength is at his back, as makes escape unlikely, and resistance vain.

This loft, consisting of two rooms—one small one

large—is full of wounded men, though many of the plotters have escaped. The larger room is held by Ruthven and a party of police; the smaller room by such of the conspirators as scorn to fly. Some men are lying on the floor; one bleeding freely, and a second dead. The dead man is an officer of police, named Smithers, who has fallen by the sword of Thistlewood himself.

Birnie and his party of police from Bow Street came upon the spot, in threes and fours, some thirty minutes ere the Coldstream Guards arrived. Taking up ground in John Street, near the Horse and Groom, Ruthven and another officer went in, and found a pike-staff had been left that evening in the ale-house, by two fellows who had called and drunk a pint of beer. “No military yet!” said Birnie to Ellis; “half-an-hour too late! They must have missed their way.” By this time most of the police had learned what they were next to do. “How many are there?” Birnie asked, referring to the gang. “A dozen, I should think, sir,” answered some one. “And how many of us?” “A dozen, sir,” was the reply. “We will proceed to business,” said the magistrate. “We’ll do our best, sir,” answered all the men. “If there are forty of them,” added Smithers, “we will take them all.”

Ruthven, called from the Horse and Groom, led on to the covered passage, turned, and marched into Cato Street. The first door on their right hand was the stable, with an upper chamber, lit with an unusual glow. A click of flint and steel, a clash of sabres, and a tramp of feet, were heard. “In there!” cried Birnie.

Ruthven, Ellis, and Smithers rushed upon the door, through which some men were passing in and out. A negro, tall and belted, with a musket on his arm, a sabre by his side, was pacing to and fro on guard. “The pass,” he bawled to Ruthven. “We are officers: seize him!” answered Ruthven. Ellis wrenched his firelock from his arm, and then rushed past him, thinking those who followed would secure him.

“There! up there!” cried Ruthven, with his feet upon a ladder, leading to the open trap. Ellis was on his heels, and Smithers in his wake. The noise increased as he emerged into the loft, from which he saw some fellows dropping through a window, and some others breaking through the roof. Not less than twenty-five were in the room when first he saw them, standing round a table (or a joiner’s bench), on which lay pistols, pikes, and guns. Thistlewood was standing in the midst, distributing arms to each in turn. Some dregs of supper lay upon the bench, some crumbs of bread and rinds of cheese, with broken glass and stains of beer. A reek of gin and powder filled the chamber.

“We are officers,” said Ruthven, coming forward; “we have warrants to arrest you. Lay your arms down! Surrender!” With a curse they answered, “Never!” Each man snatched a weapon from the bench, and brandishing the steel retreated, fighting, on the inner room.

“Seize them!” shouted Ruthven to his men, and rushed himself upon the chief, when Thistlewood raised his point, a long sword, forty-six inches long, and made a pass at Ruthven, who was pressing close, but Smithers, pushing to the front, received the weapon in his breast. “My God, I am done!” he groaned, fell down and bled to death. Then Ellis fired at Thistlewood, but missed his aim, and lodged his bullet in the wall.

“Put out the lights!” cried some one, and the lights were instantly dashed out. “Kill the rascals! Pitch ’em downstairs!” was shouted in the dark; and Ruthven, who was in the press, cried also, thinking they would take him for a friend, “Ay, kill ’em! kill ’em all!”

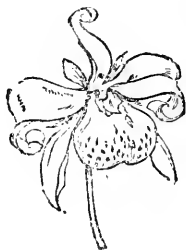
A scuffle then began in that dark room, with pistol, pike, and gun. A dozen shots were fired, a hundred thrusts were made. A crash of breaking glass and falling tiles told Ruthven that some fellows were escaping from the room. He could do nothing to prevent their flight. Ellis was pitched through the trap into the room below.

Smithers was groaning out his life. Westcote, who ran at Thistlewood when he stabbed his mate, received the contents of a pistol in his side. Brooks had his clothes shot through, his shoulder grazed. Biggs and Wright were stabbed in the body. Sarmon was wounded in the head. Birnie, the justice, though he stayed in the street below, was fired at thrice, and felt himself lucky to escape unhurt. The officers, though their pluck was high, were not in force for such a fight, and they were dropping round the bench by unseen blows. Though armed, they were afraid to strike, lest they should kill a friend. "I dared not fire," said Ruthven, "in the dark." Retreat was out of the question, for the ladder and the room below were held by Davidson and Tidd, whilst all the yards and sheds behind them were unknown, and might be held by the conspirators in force. If succour had not come, they might have fallen to a man.

Ellis, lying on the stable floor, much stunned and dazed, was startled by a cry of "Stop him! stop him!" Springing to his feet, and giving chase, he caught his prey in John Street, fell upon him, and received a sword-cut in his leg, below the knee. But he secured his man, and lodged him in a shop in John Street. In the stable Westcote had a fight with Ings, who tried to draw a pistol, but was knocked down by that officer, by a blow on his right eye and cheek. Westcote was trying to handcuff Ings, when Thistlewood stepped upon the ladder and discharged a pistol at him. Westcote turned to this new foe, when Ings got out into the yard, and fled, while Thistlewood and Westcote fought. Thistlewood grazed Westcote's skin with fire; and Westcote struck down Thistlewood with his dirk. Cut-and-thrust, ping-pang, they kept on in the dark. Westcote was wounded in the hand, and Thistlewood gained the yard, still fighting with the officer, who chased him down some streets, till, faint with pain, he stopped pursuit.

Three prisoners are secured in the loft. Fitzclarence sends for surgeons, but poor Smithers is already dead. They carry him to the Horse and Groom. Sarmon is too badly hurt to be removed. Biggs, Westcote, Ellis, Brooks, and Wright, receive the surgeon's care. The Guards take up the pikes, guns, fireballs, hand-grenades, and pistols, which are scattered through the loft; and then the three prisoners captured in the upper room, and six who have been taken in the streets, are marched to Bow Street, where their names are taken and their persons searched.

Not one of these nine prisoners has a farthing in his purse!





CHAPTER LXV.

PURSUIT.

THE dinner is prepared in Grosvenor Square, and Lady Harrowby drives out to hear her music. Lights are burning in the rooms all night. His lordship, dressed for company, waits till eight o'clock, and then goes out, just saying to his servant that he shall not dine at home. His cook is overwhelmed; so great a dinner to be thrown away! He pulls his cap off, flings it on the floor, and stamps on it in comical despair. Lord Harrowby drives to the Prime Minister's house, where Castle-reagh has just arrived, and there they dine and wait for news. From nine to ten o'clock the other ministers drop in, but it is late ere Birnie comes to tell them that their middle course has failed, and that the chief conspirators are fled. A long debate sets in. The first thing is to capture Thistlewood, and, not aware how well the image-man is toiling for them in the dark, they draw a proclamation, offering a thousand pounds for his arrest, and send this proclamation instantly to press. A dozen messengers are running to and fro all night. In every barrack men are under arms. An escort carries Ings, Tidd, Davidson, and their fellows, from the Bow Street station to Coldbath Fields prison. Melville sends down messages to warn Norwich, Dover, and other ports, to stay all ships from sailing till their holds are searched. Liverpool summons the

commander of the Life Guards to his house, and bids him hold his troop in readiness to march and fight. Of all the ministers Lord Eldon feels the deepest terror at his danger, and the highest pleasure when the night is past. That Cabinet Council sits till three o'clock.

Edwards joins his chief the moment he is clear of Westcote. On they push, through streets now filling with excited crowds. The Captain dares not venture to his house in Stanhope Street, Clare Market, for his instincts tell him his address is known to the police; and he has hired that very morning, in a distant part of town, a lodging that is only known to Edwards and himself. Before he joined the gang that day he went to White Street, Chiswell Street, in Finsbury, where he saw, in No. 8, a bill of lodgings for a single man. On knocking to inquire, he learnt from Mrs. Harris, the landlady, that the lodgings to be let were half a bed, at half-a-crown a week. It was a common lodging-house, in which eight men and women lived; and Thistlewood hired this bed, of which he was to have his share that very night. His forethought is rewarded now. Unable to sleep at the Mansion House, the chief of a successful rising, he is fain to move on White Street. Edwards keeps beside him, whispering, as they pass good houses, that they ought to carry out their plan, and set the town on fire.

All night, and all next morning, Ruthven, Ellis, and their fellows, hunt through the cobblers' shops and drinking dens, in which they have been watching for so many weeks. Brunt is arrested in his lodgings, where the pikes, grenades, and fire-balls are discovered. Brunt is carried to White Hall, examined by the Cabinet, and remitted, under escort, to the prison in Coldbath Fields. He has no money in his pockets, not a single coin. An early search is made in Stanhope Street, but nothing of importance is picked up. From Stanhope Street the officers run to the White

Hart, the Black Dog, the Nag's Head; but Thistlewood has not been at any of his favourite haunts. They drive to Preston's house, where Thistlewood first met Edwards, and take the cripple into custody; but the cripple, who is sure they have no charge against him, rates them in his saucy speech, and hopes they will send him back to his heroic lodgings in the Tower.

At noon some information is received at Bow Street from the source which never fails. A party of ten officers is called, with Ruthven and Bishop at their head, and sent with an instruction how to act. In Chiswell Street they halt, divide their party, and arrange their plan. Three officers go round to the rear of No. 8 White Street, to prevent escape; three others double to the front, and seal the house up there. Bishop and three officers go in. The chamber doors are open, all save one, which Bishop tries, and finds locked. "The key of this door!" he whispers to a woman in the opposite room. Mrs. Harris will not fetch it, till the officers declare that they will force the door in if it be not brought. He turns the key—turns softly, not to wake the murderer till his grip is on his throat, his pistol at his head. The room is dark the shutter closed, but Bishop sees a bed in one corner, and he stealthily draws near. A blanket moves, a pair of eyes peep out, and then a head lifts slowly from the pillow. Bounding on his captive, Bishop grips him tight, and aims a pistol at his face. "Mr. Thistlewood, I am a Bow Street officer! you are my prisoner!" Bishop is alone; but Thistlewood lies still. "Ha, Bishop, is that you? I shall not resist," is all he says. "Where are your pistols?" asks the Bow Street officer. "I have got no pistols," he replies. Then Ruthven and two others enter, search his pockets and his room. He has no money. A black belt, a military sash, a flint, and some few cartridges, are found upon him. Sleeping in his

socks and trousers, he is not long dressing ; but while putting on his clothes he says he hopes the man whom he had murdered over-night was Stafford, clerk of the police at Bow Street ; but he hears without emotion that the man was Smithers, and is now a corpse at the Horse and Groom.

A bit of paper is picked up ; a bill made out by Otley, landlord of the Crown and Anchor, in the Strand, addressed to Dr. Watson, for the dinner given to Orator Hunt. Poor Watson could not pay the bill ; his fellow patriots would not help him ; and the Stony Otley, wanting to be paid his due, has locked him up. Watson is now in Whitecross Street jail—a debtors' jail—and seems to have sent this bill to Thistlewood, in some vague hope that he would pay it. Otley's stony heart has probably saved the doctor from a deeper crime and a more tragic fate.

Thistlewood is carried in a coach to Bow Street, where the officers swear to him, and thence to Sidmouth's office, where he undergoes a close examination. All the foremost plotters are in custody—Thistlewood, Brunt, Ings, Davidson, and Tidd, with nearly twenty others of the rank and file, including two tailors, Wilson and Hall, and two old soldiers, Harrison and Adams. Edwards only is at large. One puzzling fact is now explained : how men who have no money in their pockets—not a shilling in the whole—were able, on the previous day, to purchase arms. The negro, it is found, had gone to the Mendicity Society as a carpenter, compelled by want of bread to pawn his tools, and saying he had got a chance of work, if only he could get them out of pledge. They gave him thirty shillings, which he spent in buying a blunderbuss and procuring a supply of gin.

The Duke of Wellington, Lord Eldon, Canning, Sidmouth, Peel, and a dozen more assemble ; and their order of proceeding is, for each offender to be called



THE QUEEN'S HOUSE, TOWER OF LONDON.

in separately, examined, and committed on a special charge. While these great councillors are sitting in the room above, a crowd of persons, burning with desire to see the plotters, is allowed to pass through the room below. Thistlewood is the man first sought; then Ings, the butcher; after him Davidson and Brunt. Ings bears the marks of his fight with Westcote in the stable, for his eye is bloodshot, and the flesh around it black; he wears a common butcher's jacket, with a top-coat over it. The negro wears a blue coat, light breeches, and top-boots. Brunt has a sallow face, of weak and thoughtful cast. Hall and Wilson look like what they are; two ordinary tailors, out of luck. Tidd is sober; but his face looks pinched and old. "A shabby lot!" the passer-by remarks; and goes his way, protesting that such criminals should be sent to Bedlam rather than to the Tower.

Among the prisoners waiting in this lower room is Preston, hoping to be called before the Cabinet. He has got a speech, he says, to make, and he will let their lordships know his mind. The officers in charge are much amused; for while the men are called up one by one, he keeps exclaiming that his turn is come. When Thistlewood comes down, committed on the double charge of murder and high treason, he demands to be taken up. When Ings comes down, morose and dark, he undertakes to beard the tyrants in their pride. Each time the door flies open he leaps up and cries that he must go. Pressed back into his chair he roars, "Oh, how I long to go up! My *genus* is so great just now! No man alive has so great a *genus* as mine at this moment!" When Hall and Wilson—two mere tailors—go before him, he is lost in wonder. Limping round the room he shouts, "If it be the will of the Author of the world that I should perish in the cause of freedom, His will, not mine, be done!" Then, throwing his arms about him, he exclaims, "It would be quite a triumph to me—quite a triumph to me!" Hearing Thistle-

wood say to Ings that he is sorry he has not asked the Minister for leave to see his wife and son, he tells them to be easy in their minds, as *he* will not forget them in his speech. At length, on finding that his friends are all going up, but not himself, he breaks into a furious protest. Why is he not called? Why is he treated with contempt? The officers cannot say; but he can tell them. Ministers are afraid of him! "I gave 'em such a taste afore, they do not like me to come up again."

More than three hours the prisoners wait in that lower room. At length an Under Secretary of State (the young gentleman who is afterwards to "foam into a Reformer," and "subside into Newgate") comes downstairs, and tells the officers in charge that eight of the prisoners—Thistlewood, Brunt, Ings, Davidson, Tidd, Wilson, Monument, and Harrison—are committed to the Tower; the rest are to be sent once more to Cold-bath Fields.





CHAPTER LXVI.

LAST PRISONERS IN THE TOWER.

CAPTAIN ELRINGTON, Major of the Tower, received his prisoners at the Home Office, and despatched an orderly for a troop of horse.

The eight conspirators were handcuffed two and two; four hackney-coaches were drawn up; and guards surrounded them on every side. A crowd of people pressed about the doors to see them off; but hardly any cries were raised against them. Many still believe the plot a sham; a trick of the police to cover the offence of Peterloo; for these men could not readily imagine that a dozen tailors and cobblers from Leather Lane, led on by a penniless gambler from Clare Market, could have dreamt of fighting the Duke of Wellington, at the head of an English army. Elrington gave the word, and off the escort rode by Westminster Bridge, the Borough, and London Bridge, to the Minories, leaving the valiant cripple at the Home Office, flourishing his stick, and yelping that he would be sent to his lodgings in the Tower.

A message had already reached the Lieutenant's house that eight State prisoners were coming in, and separate lodgings must be found for each. At once the gates were closed, the soldiers called to arms. Since Thistlewood and Watson left the Tower the staff of warders had been lowered to ten; but fifty more were added in an hour. The Iron Gates were shut.

When Elrington arrived the cells were ready, and each man was marched at once to his appointed home. Thistlewood, as the captain, had the place of honour—in the Bloody tower. Brunt was lodged in the Bye-ward tower. Ings and Davidson were left in the Water gate. Tidd was put in the Seven-gun battery. Harrison had a room next door to Brunt.

Not one of these prisoners—save Thistlewood, on occasion of his former residence in the Tower—had ever been so housed and fed. They fell, as prisoners charged with treason, under certain rules, not framed for butchers and cobblers out of work, and were entitled to the State allowance given to men of birth. A cosy fire, good beds, and plenty to eat and drink, made life seem merry after the fare and housing in Fox Court and Hole-in-the-Wall. Attendants served their food, and swept their rooms, and lit their fires. The lads who went to Coldbath Fields were thought to be unlucky; and the cripple, who was left at large, complained of being an injured man. What dignity was theirs! To live upon the Crown was something; but to lodge in rooms where Raleigh wrote and Eliot died was more. Jack Cade was not so honoured in his day as Brunt, nor was the fate of Wat the Tyler comparable to that of Ings. Ings had the cell from which the royal Seymour had escaped, in which the sixteenth Baron Grey had pined to death.

Two warders kept each prisoner company day and night. A sentry paced in front of the prison door, and every care was taken that the cobbler should not send a message to the butcher, that the white man should not whisper to the black. No man could see them, save by orders from the Secretary of State. General Loftus had to see these rules observed, while Captain Elrington was ordered to be always on the spot. But people out-of-doors could find no gravity in these proceedings of the Crown. The men, no doubt, were guilty; and the lowest mob cried shame

on men who could propose to cut up a minister, and take his head home in a bag. Such fellows, if their plot was not invented for them, might be hanged, and there an end of them ; but they should not be raised into the line of heroes by imprisonment in the Tower.

The prisoners laid their crime at Edwards' door. Edwards had come to them ; they had not gone to him. Edwards had drunk with them in the White Hart, the Black Dog, and the Horse and Groom. Edwards had paid for meat and drink ; Edwards had egged them into discontent ; had lent them money ; had inflamed their courage ; had excited them with words and promises of help. Why was not this great criminal in the Tower ? A host of men besides the prisoners asked this question. Sidmouth would not answer, save in general terms. The man was in his service. He was useful to the Crown. Of course, he could not say much for him, save that he was not a traitor. Well, he was a spy ; but then a spy was not a traitor ; since his object was to watch and snare his fellows. Why should such a man be troubled with the form of an arrest ? If Government could not stir against him, no one else had power to stir. Sir Matthew Wood made strenuous efforts in the House of Commons to compel the Cabinet to prosecute this wretch ; but all his efforts failed ; the modeller in clay and bastard German baron disappeared from his usual haunts. Some thought he had gone to France, and some to the United States, to live under a new and unstained name upon the price of blood.

A feeble and despotic government resolved to kill a number of the victims whom their agent had ensnared. No one can doubt that all the men were guilty in a certain sense, and that the chief was guilty in a legal sense. Thistlewood was a murderer ; but many persons, who were not republicans, were doubtful whether Ings and Brunt, and still more Davidson and Tidd, were guilty of such acts as fairly

brought them under penalties of the law. The Cabinet were clear that they must die; if but to cover the offence of Peterloo, to justify repressive measures, and to stifle the demand of towns like Manchester to have a share in governing the realm.

Major Elrington received an order to carry his prisoners from the Tower to Newgate, where Thistlewood, Brunt, Ings, Davidson, and Tidd, received sharp trial, brief respite, and traitors' doom. With clang of steel and flash of hoof the escort rode up Cheape and Cornhill, carrying with them, through a grinning and incredulous crowd, the last of our State prisoners from the Tower.

The crime of treason did not stop at Cato Street; State trials did not end with those of Thistlewood, Ings, and Brunt; the reign of George the Fourth was hardly less disturbed by riots than the reign of George the Third; yet such a storm of ridicule had swept around the Water gate and Bloody tower, as places of imprisonment for traitors, that no government could face a repetition of that storm. Three months had not elapsed after Thistlewood's committal ere the Queen returned, in spite of every threat held out against her; and a trial was commenced, the like of which had not been heard in London since Henry the Eighth had put his wife, Queen Catharine Howard, to the axe. A dozen precedents would have justified the King in sending Caroline to the Tower; but he had lost his chance of gaining the immense advantage of committing her, when he lodged such men as Preston, Brunt, and Ings, in those high and tragic cells. A man committed to the Tower was always doomed aforethought in the public mind. This sense of coming doom was the tradition of an endless series of recorded facts; for since the earliest Norman reigns, the eye goes aching back from age to age, through roll on roll of crime, to find a single case

of one committed to the Tower on charge of treason, yet acquitted by his peers in any court of law. The Queen was left at large ; the trial failed ; although the evidence of her guilt was stronger than the evidence which had sent Queen Catharine to the block. King George grew chary of State trials, and the feeling passed to his brother, William the Fourth. Their father would have lodged O'Connell in the Tower ; and after him Lord Kenyon, Colonel Fairman, and the Duke of Cumberland. Their niece, Queen Victoria, had to face her share of outrage, rising, and sedition. Frost, Jones, and Williams "levied war upon the Queen" in Wales, were tried for treason, and condemned to death, O'Brien, Meagher, and Mitchell, with their comrades, "levied war upon the Queen" in Ireland, were convicted by a jury, and condemned to death. Her royal person was not safe. One crazy wretch, named Oxford, fired a pistol at her ; then a second crazy wretch, named Francis, fired at her ; and these were followed by other attempts upon her life. Elizabeth would have sent such criminals to the Tower. But manners had been softened by the lapse of time, and George the Third had set his house the fine example of regarding a thirst for royal blood as evidence of disease. These wretches were not honoured with the Tower. Oxford was sent to Bedlam ; Francis was condemned to transportation ; a third, Bean, was sentenced to a prison ; and then a bill was quickly passed through Parliament which enacted that in future all such rascals should be whipped.

It was the glory of Elizabeth's reign, that for the first twelve years no man was put to death for a political offence. It was the merit of Queen Anne that in her reign of just twelve golden years no man was put to death for a political offence. It was the larger happiness of Queen Victoria, that in her long reign no man

suffered death for a political offence. In her serene and prosperous days—serenity but rarely broken by domestic strife, prosperity but seldom checked by foreign war—the darker usages of power, with all the passions they excited in the past, faded from the habit of our thought. The wheel, the maiden, and the boot are gone. The block is an antiquity. The axe, the lanthorn, and the sword are hung on racks; and a prison lodging is now a place for daily crowds to pass through.



INDEX.



- ABBOTT, Archbishop, charges Father Garnet with being an habitual drunkard, i. 257; interest taken by him in Buckingham, ii. 2-6; receives William Monson into the Anglican Church, 18; part taken by him in bringing Cranfield to justice, 162; his reply when insolently threatened by Buckingham, 171; accidentally shoots a man, *ibid*; is suspended for refusing to license Sibthorp's sermon on obedience to princes, 183; is succeeded in his archbishopric by Laud, 219.
- Abbott, Charles, Speaker of the House of Commons, signs a warrant for the apprehension of Sir Francis Burdett, ii. 424.
- Abington, Mr., builds Hendlip Hall as a place of concealment for priests, i. 382; assists his wife in concealing Father Garnet and others, 383-385; is taken prisoner and conveyed to Worcester jail, 385; from thence to the Fleet, 386-389.
- Abington, Mrs., a sister of Lord Montague, conceals Garnet, and the other priests, in Hendlip Hall, i. 382-384.
- Adams, Daniel, his seizure on a charge of being an officer in a seditious society, ii. 412; his commitment to the Tower, 413; is discharged, 417.
- Adams, Robert, a government spy, ii. 449; takes part in the Cato Street conspiracy, 451.
- 'Adventure,' war-ship, pursues and overtakes Lady Arabella Stuart, i. 433.
- Agincourt, battle of, i. 34-36.
- Alabaster, Dr., his preaching declared by Cromwell to be flat Popery, ii. 203.
- Albrecht, Cardinal, his comments on the plot of King James, Prince Charles, and Buckingham, against the Dutch Republic, ii. 82.
- Anglo-Spanish plot, i. 253-259; its insurgents and object, 254; the plots it gave rise to, *ibid*.
- Angus, Archibald, Earl of. *See* Douglas.
- Anne, Queen (consort of James I.), Abbott overcomes her aversion to Villiers, who at her request is knighted in her bedroom, ii. 7.
- Anne, Queen, no man put to death for a political offence during her reign, ii. 471.
- Apprentices of London, assault Gondomar, ii. 62; their severe punishment, *ibid*; attack Dr. Lamb in the public streets, 189.
- Apsley, Lucy, daughter of Sir Allan Apsley, her early life passed in the Tower, ii. 164; is married to Colonel Hutchinson, *ib*.
- Apsley, Sir Allan, Lieutenant of the Tower, receives orders to release his prisoners, ii. 150, 151; is called upon to give a report on the fortifications of the Tower, 154; his domestic life in the Tower, and the kindness of his family to the prisoners, 164; his reluctance to give up Raleigh into Sir T. Wilson's charge, i. 249.
- Aquaviva, Claudius, General of the Jesuits, i. 277.
- Arabella plot, so-called, i. 224-230, 300; a real, 417-423. *See* Stuart, Lady Arabella.
- Archie, King James's fool, i. 454. ii. 20; presents to the king a petition from Sir Thomas Lake, 24; his remark on the king giving permission to Prince Charles to go to Spain, 111; accompanies Charles to Spain, 142; his popularity with the ladies of the Spanish court, *ib*.
- Aremberg, Count, indicted by Coke as concerned in the Spanish Treason, i. 298; charges against him withdrawn, 299.
- Argyll, Duke of, heads an expedition to Scotland in favour of the Duke of Monmouth, ii. 372; his failure and death, *ib*.
- Aris, governor of Coldbath Fields prison, his severity in the treatment of politi-

- cal prisoners, ii. 421; is attacked by Burdett, and defended by Mainwaring, member for Middlesex, *ib.*
- Arlington, Lord, Secretary of State, presides with Clarendon at the trial of Buckingham for treason, ii. 288; arrests William Penn, and commits him to the Tower, 306; the legality of Penn's arrest impugned, 306, 307; his examination of Penn, 307; his character, 308; his committal of Penn approved by the king, 310; desires Bishop Henchman to entertain the charge of blasphemy against Penn, 311; his jealousy of Vice-Admiral Penn, 313; receives instructions to release Blood and the other prisoners confined for their attempt to seize the crown jewels, 335.
- Armada, Spanish, i. 204, 210, 211.
- Armoury, the, i. 3.
- Armstrong joins the Prince of Orange at the Hague, ii. 369; reward offered for his apprehension, 371.
- Arrests by officers of state, their arbitrary nature, ii. 128, 129.
- Arundel, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, his enmity to the Lollards, i. 59; cites Sir John Oldcastle to appear before him at Canterbury, *ib.*; his crafty conduct after the escape of Sir John from the Tower, 63.
- Arundel, Earl of. *See* Fitzalan and Howard.
- Arundel, Lady, vainly endeavours to procure the release of her confessor, Father Weston, i. 280.
- Ashby, St. Leger, arrival of the Powder Plot conspirators at, i. 368.
- Ashton, Lady, her endeavours to procure the liberation of her brother, James Harrington, ii. 254, 263, 264.
- Aske, Robert, is forced to be captain of the Pilgrims of Grace, i. 80; advances on Pomfret Castle, 83; is confronted by the Duke of Norfolk at Doncaster Bridge, *ib.*; joins the second Pilgrimage, 88; is captured by Norfolk, and executed, 94.
- Aston, Ann, the match between her and Buckingham broken off, ii. 26.
- Atkinson, John, sent to the Tower for being concerned in a plot against the life of King Charles, ii. 332.
- Atterbury, Francis, Bishop of Rochester, active part taken by him in behalf of the Jacobite lords, ii. 405; is sent to the Tower, *ib.*, 244; is searched by Colonel Williamson, lieutenant of the Tower, 406; is deprived of his see, and condemned to perpetual exile, 407; goes to France, *ib.*
- Audley End, a seat of Lord Northampton, i. 452.
- Aylesbury, T. (Buckingham's clerk), interest taken by him in the release of Eliot, ii. 132.
- BACON, Francis, Viscount St. Albans, i. 2; his friendship with Sir Walter Raleigh, 217; conferences on the legislative union of England and Scotland between him and Lord Advocate Hamilton held in Vinegar House, 335; his high opinion of the Earl of Northumberland, 407; his character of Sir Thomas Overbury, 457; his acknowledgment of the kindness of Carr, 458; is mentioned as one able to fulfil the duties of Secretary of State, 459; is the Attorney-General at the trial of Lady Somerset, 478; his intercourse with Buckingham, ii. 2, 6; is appointed Lord High Chancellor, 36; refuses to assist Chief-Justice Coke in the recovery of his daughter, 37; and thereby rouses the enmity of Lady Compton, 42, 57; his associations with York House, and his reluctance to yield it, when required, to Buckingham, 41, 42, 55; conspiracy formed against him headed by Williams, 42; difficulty of reaching him, 44; his enemies seek to impeach him, 45; advises the king to call a parliament, *ib.*, 46; presses the king to abolish unpopular patents, 50; charge of receiving bribes when Chancellor raised against him, 52; his impeachment, *ib.*; his arrest, and commitment to the Tower, 54; his release, and banishment from London, 55; York House wrested from him, and his retirement to Coney Court, *ib.*; is succeeded in the Seals by Williams, *ib.*
- Badger, Tom, one of King James's fools, ii. 13, 20.
- Bailey, John, ii. 129.
- Bailiff, Thomas, murders the Earl of Northumberland, i. 195-197.
- Bailly, Monsieur Charles, employed by the Bishop of Ross as his agent in the treasonable correspondence with the Catholic powers, i. 173; is seized at Dover, 178; his examination, 179; is sent to the Marshalsea, 181; his correspondence with the Bishop of Ross intercepted, *ib.*; is sent to the Tower, 182; is racked, 183; is induced by an ingenious stratagem to confess, *ib.*; his revelations, *ib.*; memorials of him in the Tower, 182, 185.
- Baldwin, William, a Jesuit priest, i. 280.
- Balfour, Sir William, receives instructions from King Charles to raise a mercenary guard, ii. 184; is appointed Lieutenant of the Tower, 213; his harsh treatment of Sir John Eliot, *ib.*; Prynne placed in his charge, 217.
- Baliol, John de, King of Scotland, is confined in the Banqueting floor of the White tower, i. 28, 31; his household

- life in confinement, 32; is released by the Papal nuncio, *ib.*
- Ballium wall, i. 409.
- Ballot, advocacy of, by Harrington in his 'Oceana,' ii. 251; the king's objection to it, 261.
- Balmerino, Arthur, Lord, is sent to the Tower, ii. 407; his execution, 408.
- Baltimore founded by Secretary Calvert, ii. 172.
- Banbury, Countess of, her notoriety, i. 451.
- Bancroft, Archbishop, his seizure and release of Father Watson, i. 290; receives information from the Jesuits of the Priests' Plot, 296; the Earl of Northumberland intrusted to his custody prior to his committal to the Tower, 410.
- Banqueting-hall, i. 31.
- Barbican, the, built by Henry III., i. 13-15.
- Barcroft, John, serjeant-at-arms, his pursuit of Buckingham, ii. 286.
- Barebones, ii. 256.
- Barkham, Sir E., Lady Purbeck placed in his custody, ii. 175.
- Barneby, Father, is instructed by the Jesuits to give information of the Priests' Plot to Archbishop Bancroft, i. 296; is committed to the Clink prison, 298; is restored to liberty, 305.
- Barnet, East, escape of Lady Arabella Stuart from, i. 435-437.
- Barnet, conference of Catesby and Tresham at, i. 359.
- Barons, their opposition to King John, i. 31.
- Barton, Elizabeth, 'Maid of Kent,' fiercely denounces the divorce of King Henry VIII. from Queen Catherine, i. 69; is committed to the Tower, and executed at Tyburn, 70.
- Bastwick, John, cited by Laud before the Star-Chamber, ii. 220; is heavily fined and punished, *ib.*
- Bates, Tom, serving-man to Catesby, is admitted to the Powder Plot, and takes the oath of secrecy, i. 342; makes confession to Father Greenway, *ib.*; is told by the priest that the cause is good, *ib.*; is sent to Fathers Garnet and Greenway with the intelligence of the discovery of the Plot, 370; deserts Catesby at Holbeach, 371; is taken prisoner, 373; confessions wrung from him in the Tower, 373; is hung near Paul's Cross, 380.
- Bath, conferences of Catesby and Percy at, i. 342.
- Bathurst, Lord, Secretary of War, ii. 446.
- Baxter, Richard, his 'Holy Commonwealth,' written in answer to Harrington's 'Oceana,' ii. 251.
- Baynes, Adam, committed to the Tower on a charge of Treason, ii. 287.
- Baynham, Sir Edmund, is sent by Father Owen to prepare the Roman Court for the consequences of the Powder Plot, i. 340.
- Bean fires at the Queen, ii. 471; his punishment, *ib.*
- Beauchamp, Thomas de, Earl of Warwick, his tastes and pursuits, i. 53; is appointed by the Commons governor to Richard of Bordeaux, *ib.*; is dismissed by Richard, 54; his employments at Warwick Castle, *ib.*; his seizure and committal to the Beauchamp tower, 55; his trial, 56; is sentenced to be hung, drawn, and quartered, 57; Richard imprisons him in the Isle of Man, *ib.*; is restored to his liberty and estates by Henry Bolingbroke, *ib.*
- Beauchamp tower, i. 8, 53, 409; ii. 347; received its name from Thomas de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, i. 53; also called 'Cobham Tower,' *ib.*, 60; noble prisoners confined therein, 198.
- Beaumont, Mary, her low origin, ii. 3; her marriage, firstly, to Sir George Villiers, 4; secondly, to Mr. Rayner, *ib.*; thirdly, to Sir Thomas Compton, *ib.*; her dissolute character, 5; her nefarious transactions with Dr. Lamb, *ib.* 6; her views with regard to the future fortunes of her children, *ib.*; desires to provide George with a rich wife, 26; is created Countess, 33; her search for wives for her sons John and Kit, 34, 75; her enmity to Chancellor Bacon, 37-42; her greed and pride, 173; her quarrels with Lady Hatton and Queen Henrietta, 174; her interview with Raleigh, i. 237.
- Bedford, Lord, King Charles in his troubles desires to avail himself of his services, ii. 235.
- Bedingfield, Sir Thomas, committed to the Tower, ii. 239.
- Belfry, the, i. 3, 8, 12, 211, 253, 308; ii. 241, 414.
- Belvoir Castle, the seat of the Earl of Rutland, ii. 27, 28.
- Benefit of clergy and peerage claimed by Lord Morley, ii. 218.
- Bennet, Father, his celebration of Mass in the Tower, i. 211.
- Bennett, Sir John, Judge of the Prerogative Court, bids thirty thousand pounds for the Seals, ii. 42.
- Best, Captain, takes the command of the 'Garland,' ii. 117; is prevented from giving chase to the pirate Nutt by Secretary Calvert, 118.
- Bexley, Abbot of, put in the stocks by Lady Wyatt, i. 50.
- Bigod, Sir Francis, is one of the leaders of the Second Pilgrimage of Grace, i. 92; is executed, 94.
- Bill of Rights, ii. 187.

- Bingley, Sir Richard, appointed Admiral of the Narrow Seas, ii. 117.
- Bird, Captain, is killed in a duel with Sir Thomas Compton, ii. 5.
- Birnie, Mr., the magistrate, heads the Bow Street officers in the capture of the Cato Street conspirators, ii. 453, 457, 459.
- Bishop, a Bow Street officer, captures Thistlewood, ii. 463.
- Blackwall, Arabella Stuart's disappointment at not finding William Seymour there, i. 435.
- Blackwell, George, Catholic archpriest, papal breve addressed, but not delivered, to him, i. 323; denounces the Powder Plot to the Catholic clergy, 373.
- Blague, John, marries Lady Arabella Stuart and William Seymour, i. 423; is committed to the Gate-house in Westminster, *ib.*
- Blake, Admiral, ii. 355.
- Blasphemy, charge of, brought against William Penn, ii. 312.
- Blood, Colonel, his unsuccessful attempt to surprise Dublin Castle and the Duke of Ormonde, the lord-lieutenant, ii. 318; his manifold character and his wild career, 319; is patronised by the Duke of Buckingham and Lady Castlemaine, 320, 326, 335; his daring plot to way-lay, seize, and hang Ormonde in London, 317-319; its failure, 322; his desperate attempt to seize the crown jewels, i. 411, ii. 324-329; is seized and committed to the Tower, 330; has a private audience with the king, 331-336; acknowledges to the king that he had taken part in a plot against his life, 333; informs the king that he must pardon him, 334; is released, 335; is forgiven by the Duke of Ormonde on the entreaty of the king, *ib.*; receives a pension, and lives at court, *ib.*
- Bloody Assizes of Judge Jeffreys, ii. 382.
- Bloody tower, the (Gate house, originally called Garden tower), i. 4, 9, 41, 118; the princes Edward V. and the Duke of York murdered in, 40, 41; Cranmer in, 148; Courtney, 154; Northumberland, 192; Raleigh's second and third imprisonments, 217, 253; Garnet and Oldcorne confined in the, 253, 387, 395; Sir Thomas Overbury poisoned in, 254, 467; Lord and Lady Somerset prisoners in, 254, 476, 480; ii. 135, 163, 195, 211, 212, 241, 378, 382, 383, 384, 445, 468, 470.
- Bloom, Charles, Earl of Devon, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, one of the lords commissioners appointed by King James to examine Guy Fawkes in the Tower, i. 314.
- Blount, Lady, ii. 128.
- Blount, Sir Michael, Lieutenant of the Tower, i. 215.
- Bocking, Father, the chief instructor of the Maid of Kent, i. 69; is executed at Tyburn, 70.
- Bohemia, Elector of. *See* Frederick, Elector Palatine.
- Boleyn, Anne, her reception by Henry VIII. at the Tower, i. 17, 18; her committal to the Tower and her reception there by Sir William Kingston, *ib.*; ii. 472.
- Bomeny, Paul, servant to the Earl of Essex, his evidence respecting the violent death of his master in the Tower, ii. 348-350; is said to have received a pension from the king and the Duke of York, 352.
- Bonney, a Reformer committed to the Tower on a charge of treason, ii. 413; is acquitted, 417.
- Booth, John, his confinement in the Tower, ii. 345.
- Bothwell, Earl of, murder of Darnley on the Kirk of Field, i. 326.
- Bowyer tower, the, i. 8.
- Brackenbury, Sir John, Lieutenant of the Tower, has charge of the two princes, Edward V. and the Duke of York, i. 42; refuses to murder them, 44.
- Braddon, Lawrence, evidence obtained by him respecting the murder of Lord Essex, ii. 351; is sent to the Marshalsea, *ib.*
- Bradshawe, Mrs., accompanies Lady Arabella Stuart in her escape from East Barnet, i. 435, 436, 437.
- Brandon, Charles, Duke of Suffolk, his marriage to Mary, the daughter of Henry VII., i. 100.
- Brass Mount, i. 9.
- Brentford, battle of, ii. 237.
- Brentford Farm, illicit meetings between Carr and Lady Essex at, i. 462, 463, 474.
- Brett, Ann, niece of Lady Compton, married to the Earl of Middlesex, ii. 47.
- Brett, Captain, ii. 128.
- Brick tower, the, i. 8; the scene of Sir Walter Raleigh's first and last imprisonments, 246; Lord Grey imprisoned in, i. 253; hired by the Earl of Northumberland as an occasional residence for his son Algernon, 414.
- Bristol, Earl of. *See* John Digby.
- 'Britannia' of our coins, the Duchess of Richmond the model for, ii. 267, 272.
- Broad Arrow tower, i. 8.
- Bromley, Sir Henry, is ordered by the Council to search Hendlip Hall for the priests concealed there, i. 382; his discovery of them, 382-385; his treatment of Garnet and Oldcorne, 385.
- Bromwich, Captain, a follower of Lord

- Morley, ii. 273; assists him in his attack on Hastings, 274, 275; verdict of murder being brought against him, is confined in the King's Bench, 276; is released and goes abroad, 280.
- Brooke, Christopher, ii. 128.
- Brooke, George, is induced by Father Watson to join him in the Priests' Plot, i. 293; his interviews with Lord Grey, 294, 295; is committed to the Tower, 297; charges of treason against him, 298; is condemned to die, 300; his execution, 301.
- Brookesby, Bartholomew, his devotion to the Jesuits, i. 285; is employed by them to act as a spy on the instigators of the Priests' Plot, 293; is taken prisoner and carried to Winchester, 300; is condemned to die, *ib.*; is pardoned and restored to his position, 305.
- Brookesby, Mrs. Helen, daughter of Lord Vaux, her connexion with Father Garnet, i. 255, 293.
- Browne, Anthony Maria, Viscount Montague, is apprehended and committed to the Tower, i. 400; his examination before the Star Chamber, 402; his accusations and explanations, 400, 401; his condemnation and imprisonment, 402.
- Bruce, David, son of Robert Bruce, is taken prisoner by Queen Philippa, i. 32; is lodged in the Banqueting-hall, *ib.*
- Brunt, a cobbler, one of the Cato Street conspirators, ii. 444, 449, 451; his capture, 462; is taken to White Hall and examined by the cabinet, *ib.*; is committed to Coldbath Fields prison, *ib.*; is sent to the Tower, 466, 468; his trial and execution, 470.
- Brydges, Sir John, Lieutenant of the Tower, receives Lady Jane Grey, i. 106; fires upon Wyatt's men, 131; his reception of Wyatt, 134; of Latimer, 150; induces Wyatt to implicate the Princess Elizabeth in his plot, 153; is created by Queen Mary Baron Chandos, *ib.*; his conduct at Wyatt's execution, 154.
- Brydges, Thomas, Deputy-Lieutenant of the Tower, attends Lady Jane Grey at her execution, i. 147.
- Bucleuch, Duchess of, her friendship with the Countess of Nithsdale, ii. 394.
- Buckingham, Duke of. *See* George Villiers.
- Buckingham, Duke of. *See* Stafford.
- Buckingham, Lady. *See* Lady Catharine Manners.
- Buckingham, Duchess of. *See* Mary Fairfax.
- Builders' prices in the reign of Edward I. i. 6.
- Bull-fight given by the king of Spain in honour of Prince Charles, ii. 141.
- Bulmer, Sir John, joins the Pilgrims of Grace, i. 85; his connexion with Madge Cheyne, 86; is hung at Tyburn, 95.
- Bulmer, Sir Ralph, joins the Pilgrims of Grace, i. 85; is taken prisoner, 94; is pardoned and his estates restored to him, 95.
- Burdett, Sir Francis, his friendship with Horne Tooke, ii. 418; his position as a scholar and a politician, 419; is the chairman of the Hampden club, 420; opposes the government in their treatment of political prisoners, 421; contests between him and Mainwaring for the representation of Middlesex, 422; fights a duel with Paull, 423; is returned to parliament for Westminster, *ib.*; holds the seat for thirty years, 424; writes a letter to his constituents in the case of Gale Jones, *ib.*; the House vote the letter a libel, and pass an order for arresting him, *ib.*; disputes the legality of the warrant, 425-429; force being invoked, he yields, and is conveyed to the Tower, *ib.*; his popularity, and riots in consequence of his imprisonment, 430; lies in the Tower for ten weeks, 244, 430; his intercourse with the soldiers there, 431; is discharged, *ib.*; declines the ovation proposed for him by his friends, *ib.*; quietly returns to his home at Wimbledon, 432; is again arrested, 447.
- Burghley, Lord, William Cecil, his opposition to the marriage of Darnley with Mary Queen of Scots, i. 163; employs the Earl of Lennox as English agent to the Scottish court, 164; counteracts the plots of the Bishop of Ross and Mary Queen of Scots, 179, 181; is present at the trial of Philip the Confessor, 212; his frailties, ii. 20.
- Burgundy, Duke of, pays the ransom of Charles of Orleans, i. 38.
- Burke, Edmund, ii. 410.
- Burley, Sir Simon, seized by the barons, tried and executed, i. 54.
- Burnell, Captain, a spy in the pay of Cecil, i. 264.
- Burnet, Bishop, ii. 243.
- Burton, Henry, cited by Laud before the Star-Chamber, ii. 220; is fined and cruelly punished, *ib.*
- Burton, James, is concerned in the Rye-House Plot, ii. 338.
- Butcher, Row, the oath of secrecy administered to the Powder Plot conspirators in a house in, i. 333.
- Bye Plot, the, i. 300.
- Bye-ward gate, the, i. 4, 15, 409, 439.
- Bye-ward tower, the, i. 9; ii. 370, 378, 468.
- CADE, Jack, ii. 468.
- Cadiz, expedition to, ii. 201
- Cæsar's tower, its antiquity, i. 2, 3; used

- by the Norman kings as a royal residence, *ib.*; its contents and associations, 4; is now called the White tower, *ib.*
See White tower.
- Calvert, George, appointed Secretary of State, ii. 48, 65; his character, 66; joins the Catholics, *ib.*; his subserviency to the Court of Spain, 67, 115; instigates Captain Nutt to attack the enemies of Spain, 102; founds a colony of Catholics in Newfoundland, 105; sends pardons from time to time to Captain Nutt, 106; protests against the conduct of Mervin and St. John when accompanying Admiral De Soubise on his return to Rochelle, 116; puts them out of commission, 117; again sends a royal pardon to the pirate Nutt, *ib.*; thwarts the purpose of Conway when desiring to send a ship against Nutt, *ib.*; sends Sir John Eliot to the Marshalsea, 128, 129; calls upon Sir Henry Marten to report on the charges of Nutt against Eliot, 130; sells his secretaryship, 172; gives his plantation in America the name of Baltimore, *ib.*
- Calvinists, ii. 115.
- Campion, Edmund, a Jesuit priest, his treasonable letter to the Privy Council, i. 279; his imprisonment in the Tower, and execution, 280.
- Canning, George, his duel with Castlereagh, ii. 442; is present at a cabinet meeting at Lord Harrowby's, 447.
- Cardinal's hat, the object of Williams' ambition, ii. 56, 65; offer of a, to Archbishop Laud by Pope Urban, 217.
- Carew, Sir Henry, Comptroller of the Household, ii. 48.
- Carew's residence in the Brick tower, tenanted by Lord Grey, i. 305; hired by the Earl of Northumberland for his son Algernon, 414.
- Carisbrook, the king's confinement in, ii. 240.
- Carlaverock, castle of, ii. 393.
- Carlisle, Lady, effect of her attractions on Wentworth, ii. 224.
- Carlisle, Lord, the chief favourite of the king after the death of Buckingham, ii. 224.
- Carlton, Sir Dudley, his courtly counsel to the House of Commons, ii. 181.
- Carnwath, Lord, is committed to the Tower for having taken part in the Jacobite rebellion, ii. 245, 387; pleads guilty, 389; is reprieved, 391, 404.
- Caroline, Queen, trial of, ii. 447, 470.
- Carr, Lady Ann, the daughter of the Earl and Countess of Somerset, the mother of Lord William Russell, i. 480.
- Carr, Robert, Viscount Rochester, his arrival in London, i. 456; in what manner introduced to King James, *ib.*; the King's attachment to him, *ib.*; is knighted and created Viscount Rochester, 457; contracts a friendship with Sir Thomas Overbury, *ib.*; follows the good advice of Overbury and attains popularity, 458; after the death of Cecil the King desires to make him Secretary of State, 459; Northampton, to compass his own wicked ends, casts in his way Lady Essex, 461; his familiarities with Lady Essex, 461, 464; Overbury remonstrates with him on his conduct, 464; his forgetfulness of Overbury when committed to the Tower, 466; the extent of the part taken by him in the murder of Overbury uncertain, *ib.*; is created Earl of Somerset, 471; marries Lady Essex, *ib.*; Sherborne Castle is granted to him, 243, 443, 471; the Countess of Shrewsbury appeals to him in vain on behalf of Lady Arabella Stuart, 433; begs Sir Robert Cotton to seek the largest pardon ever granted by a sovereign, 473; draws up a pardon for himself, and prevails on the King to sign it, but which Ellesmere refuses to pass, 474; proofs of his complicity in the poisoning of Overbury laid before the King, 475; the King's reluctance to commit him to the Tower, *ib.*; his behaviour there, 476; his trial and re-committal, 479; is liberated, 480; passes the remainder of his life in obscurity, *ib.*
- Carteret, Sir George, is sent by the king to examine Harrington in the Tower, ii. 254.
- Cashman, Thomas, one of the Spencean clubbists, accompanies Watson to the Mansion House, ii. 437; is taken, *ib.*; is committed to the Tower, 432; is tried for plundering shops and hung, 439.
- Castle, John, a spy in the pay of government, ii. 434.
- Castlemaine, Earl of. See Roger Palmer.
- Castlemaine, Countess of. See Barbara Villiers.
- Castlereagh, Foreign Secretary, his duel with Canning, ii. 442; is present at a cabinet meeting at Lord Harrowby's, 447; his advice respecting the capture of the Cato Street conspirators, 452.
- Catesby, Robert, his reasons for joining the Jesuits, i. 274; his intercourse with them at White Webbs, 288; Father Garnet shows him the secret papal breves, 323; sends agents to Spain, *ib.*; the idea of blowing up the King and Parliament enters his mind, 325; communicates it to Jack Wright, 328; and to Tom Winter, *ib.*; considers the Vinegar House suitable for his purpose, 331; his endeavours to gain possession of it, *ib.*; induces Percy to engage in the Plot, 332; oath administered to him and the

- rest of the conspirators by Father Gerard, 333; power given to him by his fellow-conspirators, 341; conferences between him and Percy at Bath, 342, 343; engages to seize the Princess Elizabeth at Combe Abbey, 342, 345, 349; induces Stephen and Humphrey Littleton to join the Powder Plot, 343; Ambrose Roke-wood, *ib.*; Sir Everard Digby, 344; is troubled respecting the fidelity of Frank Tresham, 344, 352; perplexing reports reach him, 349; is informed by Winter that the Plot is discovered, 357; sends Guy Fawkes to inspect the vault, *ib.*; his conference with Tresham at Barnet, 359; tests the fidelity of Tresham, 360; hears that the King has instituted a search of the vault, 361; starts for Dun-church, 362; is informed by Rokewood of the seizure of Guy Fawkes, 367; his arrival at Ashby, 368; counsels an appeal to the Catholic population of Wales, 369; interview between him and Father Greenway, 370; reaches Hol-beach House in Staffordshire, *ib.*; is injured by an explosion of powder, 371; is mortally wounded, *ib.*; his cruel death, 372; his body exhumed and hung, 373.
- Catesby, Sir William, with his sons, Robert and Francis, converts of Father Persons, i. 279.
- Catharine of Aragon, her divorce fiercely denounced by the monks, i. 69; part taken by Cranmer in procuring her divorce, 150.
- Catharine of Valois married to Henry V., i. 36.
- Catholics, English and Roman, i. 278.
- Catholic League, ii. 15, 57, 67.
- Catholic priests, the Powder Plot not to be ascribed to them, i. 374.
- Cato Street conspirators, their designs, ii. 451, 452; information of their meetings revealed to government by means of paid spies, 450; are attacked by police and soldiers, 455, 456; are pursued and captured, 461-466; are committed to the Tower and Coldbath Fields prison, 467, 468; their life in the Tower, 468, 469; are tried and executed, 470; are the last prisoners put to death for political offences, *ib.*
- Cats, annuities left to, by the Duchess of Richmond, ii. 272.
- Cecil, Lady Anne, the Earl of North-umberland disapproves of his son, Algernon, marrying her, i. 415.
- Cecil, William. *See* Burghley.
- Cecil, Sir Robert, Earl of Salisbury, i. 254, 259; leads the peace party at the death of Queen Elizabeth, 260; his secret correspondence with the Scottish Court, *ib.*; his subserviency to Spain, 260, 261, 307, 354; his hatred of Raleigh and Lord Cobham, 305; shows favour to Lord Grey, 305, 306; receives bribes from Spain, 307; is one of the commissioners appointed to examine Guy Fawkes, in the Tower, 314-321; confessions made to him by Guy Fawkes after he had been racked by Waad, 321; reports by his spies of the movements and plans of the Jesuits, 353; adopts measures of pre-caution against them, 354, 355; Mont-eagle informs him of the mysterious letter, 356; baffles the plans of the conspirators, 357, 358, 373; Ben Jonson offers him his assistance, 375; his design, not only to destroy the the English Jesuits, but to ruin the Earl of Northumberland, *ib.*; employs spies to over-hear the private conversations of the prisoners in the Tower, *ib.*; his jealousy of the Earl of Northumberland, 408; his watchfulness over the matrimonial prospects of Lady Arabella Stuart, 418; letter from Sir William Monson informing him of the escape of a prisoner of state from the Tower, 427, 428; obtains for Lady Ara-bella some relaxation of the prison rules, 442; difficulty of the King in obtaining a Secretary of State to supply his place after his death, 458, 459.
- Chambers, George, a servant of Oldcorne, i. 283; his concealment with Little John in Hendlip Hall, and discovery, 383; is committed to the Tower, 386.
- Champernoon, Sir Arthur, Vice-admiral of Devon, ii. 10.
- Chapman, Sir John, lord mayor, his re-ception of Judge Jeffreys, ii. 380.
- Charles, Prince (afterwards Charles I.), is present in Parliament when Buckingham is attacked by Yelverton, ii. 53; his views of the match between him and the In-fanta of Spain, 60; gives a secret pledge to Gondomar that he will go to Spain, 63, 69, 78; is inveigled by Gondomar to join with the king and Buckingham in a plot against the Dutch, 79, 81; reluctance with which the king consents to his going to Spain, 109; adventures during his journey, 111-114; his arrival at Ambassador Digby's house, 114, 136; the joy of the Spanish court on his arrival, 137, 138; his treatment by the king, 139; swears the Escorial oath, 144; writes a letter to the Pope, *ib.*; signs the mar-riage treaty, 145; returns to England leaving a proxy in Digby's hands, 146; the people, ignorant of the cause of his return, receive him with acclamation, 147; his accession to the throne, 170; imprisons Lord Arundel for marrying his son without his consent, 179; is com-pelled by the Peers to release Arundel, *ib.*; arrests and commits to the Tower Digges and Eliot, 180; is forced to

- release them, 132; dissolves Parliament, *ib.*; solicits in vain loans from the nobility, *ib.*; issues writs for a new Parliament, and orders the liberation of all prisoners, *ib.*; his remark to Harrington on kissing the pope's toe, 248; issues orders for raising a foreign guard, 184; threatened with a Bill of Rights, seeks counsel from Williams, 187; Williams' evasions not being successful, he prorogues the Parliament, 188; induces Wentworth to forsake the popular side, *ib.*; threatens to withdraw the City charters, 189; engages in a war with France, 190; his remarks to Buckingham on the signs of the enmity of the people, 191; on hearing of the assassination of Buckingham, suspects Eliot of being an accomplice of Felton, 195; orders Felton to be committed to the Tower, *ib.*; the judges pronounce against his commands to employ torture on Felton, 198; calls again a Parliament, 201; Laud's advice, 202; his policy of deception, *ib.*; levies a rate on shippers and merchants, 203; the Parliament's hostility to him, *ib.*; declarations against his right to levy tonnage and poundage, 204; commits nine leading members of the House of Commons to the Tower, 207; his severity towards Eliot, 212; appoints Sir William Balfour Lieutenant of the Tower, 213; refuses to give up Eliot's body to his family, 214; his personal appearance and character, 215, 216; unpopularity of his ministers, 217; rules the land without a Parliament, *ib.*; his lofty views of monarchical power, 226; is obliged to call the Parliament together, 229; endeavours to save Wentworth from execution, 233; Williams' counsel to him, *ib.*; signs the death-warrant of Wentworth, *ib.*; is advised by Williams to call to his councils popular members. 235; his policy of deception continued, 236; attempts to arrest popular members, 237; is defeated by the Puritans, *ib.*; his flight from London, *ib.*; his adversities in the civil war, and execution at White Hall, 240.
- Charles II. commits Harrington to the Tower for writing the "Instructions," ii. 253; Harrington's sister, Lady Ashton, importunes him to liberate her brother, 254, 263, 264; sends commissioners to examine Harrington, 254; his amours with Frances Stuart, 268; surprises the Duke of Richmond in the chamber of Frances Stuart, and commits him to the Tower, 271; releases the duke, *ib.*; is reconciled to the duchess after her runaway match, 272; is present at the trial of Lord Morley for murder, 278; orders the arrest of Buckingham for plotting against his crown, 286; is present at the trial of Buckingham, 288; pardons Buckingham through the intercession of Lady Castlemaine, 288; his amours with Lady Castlemaine, 292, 293, 295; witnesses the christening of Lady Castlemaine's first-born son, 294; owns four of her children as his, 296; orders that Lord Castlemaine should be kept a 'close' prisoner in the Tower, 297; approves of Lord Arlington's sending William Penn to the Tower, 310; sends his chaplain Stillingfleet to visit Penn, 315; his audience with Colonel Blood, 331-335; gives instructions to Arlington to release the prisoners concerned in the attempt to seize the crown jewels, 335; induces Ormonde to forgive Blood for the attempt on his life, *ib.*; pensions Blood, *ib.*; plots and risings in his reign, 337; Rye House plot, 337-343; Protestant plot, 346; his mysterious visit to the Tower with the Duke of York, and the death of the Earl of Essex, 345-352; orders the bones of the young princes, murdered by Richard III., to be deposited in the chapel of Henry VII., i. 46.
- Charles, Duke of Orleans, marries Isabella of Valois, i. 34, 35; on her death, Bona, daughter of the Count of Armagnac, 35; is captured by King Henry V. at Agincourt, 34, 36; is lodged in the Banqueting floor of the White Tower, and a ransom of 300,000 crowns fixed on his head, 34, 36; remains a prisoner twenty-five years, 37; his prison-life, *ib.*; the Duke of Burgundy pays his ransom, 38; his wife Bona being dead, he marries Mary of Cleves, *ib.*
- Charles, Duke of York, son of James I., designs of the Powder Plot conspirators respecting him, i. 342, 349.
- Charles Edward, the Pretender, at Boro-dale and Derby, ii. 407; at Culloden, 408.
- Charles, Monsieur. *See* Bailly.
- Cheek, Captain, Lieutenant of the Tower, ii. 345, 357, 362, 366, 367, 370.
- Chesterfield, Earl of, the first lover of Barbara Villiers, ii. 291.
- Cheyne, Margaret, or Madge Cheyne, her parentage, 185; her bitter enmity to the Duke of Norfolk and Cromwell, 86; her enthusiasm in the cause of the Pilgrims of Grace, 87; is captured and sent to the Tower, 94; is burnt in Smithfield, 95.
- Chillingworth, Dr., Harrington one of his pupils, ii. 247.
- Churchill, John, Duke of Marlborough, ii. 245.
- Clara Isabel, the Infanta of Spain, her rash vow, i. 270.
- Clarence, Duke of, said to be drowned by

- the Duke of Gloucester in a butt of wine, i. 39.
- Clarendon, Henry, Earl of, son of the historian, ii. 244.
- Clarendon, Lord Chancellor, draws up charges against Harrington, ii. 262; presides at the trial of Lord Morley in Westminster Hall for murder, 277; and at the trial of Buckingham for treason, 288; is accused by Buckingham of trying to poison him, 323; visits the Earl of Essex in the Tower, 347; and the Duke of Monmouth in the same place, 375.
- Clarendon House, the residence of the Duke of Ormonde, ii. 322.
- Clarke, William, a Catholic priest, his opposition to the Jesuits, i. 290; writes a reply to Persons' 'Manifestation,' *ib.*; joins Father Watson in the Priests' Plot, 291; is arrested and confined in the Tower, 253-297; is condemned, hung, and quartered, 300.
- Claypole, Lady, the manuscript of the 'Oceana' returned to Harrington through her, ii. 250.
- Clement, Pope, death of, i. 346.
- Clifton, Lord, committed by the king to the Tower for his threats against Lord Chancellor Bacon, ii. 44; commits suicide, *ib.*
- Clink prison, the, i. 207, 208, 256, 280, 297.
- Cloncurry, Lord, ii. 245.
- Clopton, the seat of Lord Carew, i. 349.
- Cobham, Lord, i. 298, 300, 301; reprimanded at Winchester, 304; is sent back to the Tower, 305. *See* Oldecastle.
- Cobham, George, Lord, intercepts the correspondence forwarded by Kidolfi to the Bishop of Ross, i. 179.
- Cobham, Henry, Lord, espouses the claims of Arabella Stuart, i. 223-225; is committed to the Tower, 225; implicates Sir W. Raleigh, *ib.*; retracts his accusations, 226; his trial at Winchester, 230.
- Cobham, Thomas, of Couling, one of the leaders in the rising of the men of Kent, i. 126, 127, 133; is captured and committed to the Tower, 134; inscriptions by him, 62.
- Cobham tower, a name given to the Beauchamp tower from the 'good Lord Cobham' having been imprisoned there, i. 60.
- Cochrane, Lord, advocates in the House of Commons the cause of Burdett when confined in the Tower, ii. 431; persecution of, for his love of freedom, *ib.*
- Cock Tavern, ii. 435.
- Coke, Sir Edward, Chief-Justice, ii. 242; indictment drawn up by him against those concerned in the Priests' Plot, i. 298; endeavours to include Lord Grey in the so-called Arabella Plot, *ib.*; is instructed by Cecil to withdraw the indictment against Count Aremburg, 300; and to suppress the charges against Lady Arabella, *ib.*, 226; judges and condemns the Priests' Plot conspirators, 300; examines Guy Fawkes in the Powder Plot room, 319-321; examines the other conspirators in the Tower, 375; Garnet, 286, 388; Ann Vaux, 296; Lady Arabella Stuart appeals to him, 430, 431; receives instructions from the King to prosecute the murderers of Sir Thomas Overbury, 473; sends proofs to the King showing that Somerset was privy to Overbury's death, 475; out of office, ii. 35; temptations offered to induce him to wed his daughter to Sir John Villiers, *ib.*; contests between him and his wife, Lady Hatton, for the person of his daughter, 37, 38; his jealousy of Lord Bacon, 42; obtains a seat in Parliament for Liskeard, 47; joins in the charge of bribery against Lord Bacon, 51, 52; on the instigation of Spain is committed by the king to the Tower, 64, 70; his release, 111; joins the popular party in Parliament, 158, *et seq.*
- Coke, Frances, daughter of Chief-Justice Coke, her hand sought in behalf of Sir John Villiers, ii. 35; repugnance of her mother, Lady Hatton, to the match, 36, 38; is said to have made a contract of marriage with the Earl of Oxford, 36; her husband created Viscount Purbeck and Baron Stoke, 38; her scandalous life, 174; her dealings with Dr. Lamb, 175; her conduct before the magistrates, 170; is condemned to stand in a white sheet in the doorway of Savoy church, *ib.*
- Coke, Roger, a member of the Rota club, ii. 251.
- Coldbath Fields, prisoners sent to, ii. 466, 468.
- Colman, serjeant-at-arms, circumstances attending his arrest of Sir Francis Burdett, ii. 425-429.
- Combe Abbey, proposal to seize Princess Elizabeth at, i. 342, 345, 349.
- Commons, House of, impeach Chancellor Bacon, ii. 52; their opposition to the Spanish match, 60; petition King James to attack Spain, 63; the king's threat and their protest, *ib.*; their protestation torn out of their journals by the king, *ib.*; are dissolved, and leaders punished, 64; are summoned by King Charles, 158; adopt the motion of Sir Edward Giles staying suits against Sir John Eliot, 159; Eliot's first speech, *ib.*; claim liberty of speech, 161; their opposition to Spain, *ib.*; impeach the Earl of Middlesex, 162; vote supplies for war with Spain, *ib.*; raise questions respecting Buckingham and his family, 177; articles

- of impeachment against Buckingham accepted by them, 180; Digges and Eliot arrested by orders of the king, and its effect on them, *ib.*; the members' release, 182; frame the Remonstrance against Laud and Buckingham, 184; pass the Bill of Rights, 187; Williams' saving clause in the Bill rejected, 188; the king's policy of deception towards them, 201; first appearance of Oliver Cromwell, 203; reception of the king's invitation to pass the bill for levying rates of tonnage and poundage, 204; their declaration respecting the interpretation of the Articles of religion, *ib.*; declaration made against the king's right to levy tonnage and poundage, *ib.*; the Speaker forcibly held in the chair till the resolutions are passed, 205, 206; arrest of nine of the leading members by the king, 207; petitions against their seizure, 209; summoned after eleven years' interval, 215, 223, 229; character of the leading members, 230; impeach Finch Windebank, Wentworth, and Laud, *ib.*; refuse to yield to the king's desire to spare the life of Wentworth, 233; their proceedings against the bishops, 237; failure of the king's attempt to arrest the popular members, *ib.*; release of Prynne, 238; contest between the Parliamentarians and Royalists *ib.*; execution of the king at White Hall, 240.
- Common Pleas, Court of, its site in the Tower determined, i. 11.
- Compton, General, Lieutenant of the Tower, ii. 386.
- Compton, Lord, created Earl of Northampton and President of Wales, ii. 33.
- Compton, Lord, receives instructions from Cecil to hold reviews of men and arms in Warwickshire, i. 354.
- Compton, Lady. *See* Mary Beaumont.
- Compton, Sir Thomas, the third husband of Lady Villiers, ii. 4; his unhappy married life, *ib.*; his duel with Captain Bird, and its fatal result, 5.
- Coney Court, ii. 55.
- Conferences between Garnet and Oldcorne in the Tower, i. 391-393.
- Constable of the Tower, his duty and fees, i. 47.
- Constable's tower, i. 8, 9, 47.
- Constitutional Information, Society for, ii. 410.
- 'Constructive treason,' what is implied in the term, ii. 410.
- Conway, Sir Edward, Secretary of State, his politics and religion opposed to those of Secretary Calvert, ii. 117; his desire to send a ship against the pirate Nutt frustrated by Calvert, 118; instructs Sir John Eliot to seize Nutt, 110.
- Conyers, Thomas, his cottage at East Barnet, hired for Lady Arabella Stuart, i. 432.
- Cooke, Sir John, Secretary of State, ii. 204.
- Cooper, Anthony Ashley, Earl of Shaftesbury, ii. 243.
- Cope, Sir W., is created Master of the Armoury, ii. 16.
- Copley, Anthony, his early life passed amongst the Jesuits, i. 292; leaving them, he joins Father Watson in the Priests' Plot, 293; is denounced by the Jesuits to Bishop Bancroft, 296; his arrest and confession, 298; his condemnation, 297; is pardoned and set at liberty, 305.
- Copley, Lionel, ii. 244.
- Copley, Lord Lyndhurst, ii. 440.
- Coronation-stone, brought from Scotland by Edward I., i. 31.
- Corresponding Society, ii. 410.
- Corvé, Captain of the barque in which Arabella Stuart attempts her escape to France, i. 437; his vessel overtaken, 438; is sent to Newgate, 440.
- Coryton, his commitment to the Tower, and his release, ii. 208.
- Cotesworth, William, ii. 245.
- Cotton, the antiquary, searches for a large pardon for Carr, i. 214.
- Coughton, Throckmorton's house, meeting of the Powder Plot conspirators at, ii. 349, 362.
- Council-room in the Lieutenant's house, ii. 242, 395, 401.
- Courtney, Edward, a descendant of Edward IV., i. 102, 135; his early life, *ib.*; is cast into the Tower when twelve years of age, 137; his prison amusements, *ib.*; is released by Queen Mary, 138; his reception by her at the Tower gates, *ib.*; aspires to her hand, 139; on Mary's contract with the prince of Spain, he looks to the Princess Elizabeth, *ib.*; is recommended, at the instigation of Renard, to the Tower, 140, 152; is removed to Fotheringay castle, 155; his release, and death at Padua, *ib.*
- Courtney, Henry, Marquis of Exeter, the Yorkist party anxious to make him their leader, i. 136; is called the White Rose of York, *ib.*; is committed to the Tower by Henry VIII. and executed, 137.
- Cowper, Lord-Chancellor, indecent haste shown by him in urging on the trial of the Jacobite lords, ii. 386, 387.
- Cradle tower, built by Henry III., i. 6, 9, 15.
- Cranborne, Lord, his marriage with Lady Catherine Howard, i. 249.
- Cranfield, Sir Lionel (Earl of Middlesex), position held by him at the court of King James, ii. 15; his obsequiousness

- to the Villiers family, 47; his marriage to Ann Brett, *ib.*; is returned for Andover, *ib.*; numerous offices in the state filled by him, *ib.*; is created Earl of Middlesex, 48; joins in the charge of bribery against Lord Bacon, 52; is impeached for peculations in office, 162; is heavily fined, and imprisoned in the Tower, 163.
- Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, supports the cause of Lady Jane Grey, i. 115; is committed to the Tower, 123, 149; his character, *ib.*; reasons for Mary's enmity towards him, 150; his conferences with Latimer and Ridley, 150; his recantation and subsequent martyrdom at Oxford, 151.
- Creswell, Joseph, a Jesuit priest at the Spanish court, i. 280.
- Crew, Sir Randall, Chief Justice, his examination of Sir John Eliot in the Tower, ii. 131.
- Croft, Sir James, court physician, his reports on the illness of Arabella Stuart, i. 432; is committed to the Fleet, on suspicion of helping in the escape of Arabella Stuart from Barnet, 440; is discharged, *ib.*
- Cromartie, George, Earl of, is sent to the Tower, ii. 407; his life is spared, 408.
- Crompton, Hugh, is present at the marriage of Lady Arabella Stuart and Seymour, i. 423; is committed to the Marshalsea, *ib.*; Lady Arabella Stuart procures his liberation, 430; is permitted to share the banishment of his mistress when she is ordered to the north, *ib.*; accompanies her in her escape from East Barnet, 435, 437; when captured by the 'Adventure' is sent to the Fleet, 440; is brought to the Tower, and examined, 441; again contrives a plan of escape for her, but fails, 446; his imprisonment, *ib.*
- Cromwell, Oliver, his first appearance in the House of Commons, ii. 201, 203; letter to him from Archbishop Williams claiming his help, 240; returns the manuscript of 'Oceana,' and permits its dedication to him, 250; commits the Duke of Buckingham to the Tower for marrying Mary Fairfax, 283, 284; his relations with Algernon Sydney, 355, 356.
- Cromwell, Richard, releases Buckingham from the Tower, ii. 284.
- Cromwell, Thomas, Earl of Essex, is hated by the monks for the part taken by him in the seizure of monasteries, i. 80, 87, 88.
- Crown and Anchor Tavern, ii. 421, 423.
- Culloden, battle of, ii. 408.
- Culpeper, Thomas, i. 27, 125, 127, 134.
- Cumberland, the Duke of, ii. 471.
- DACRE, Anne, wife of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, her separation from, and reconciliation to, her husband, i. 201; her endeavours to procure his release, 207; resolves to have mass performed in the Tower, 210; corrupts the daughter of the Lord Lieutenant, 211.
- Daborne, the poet, ii. 91, 98, 128.
- 'Damned Crew,' the, i. 265.
- Danby, Thomas, Earl of, ii. 244.
- Dangerfield, Captain, his loose character, ii. 300; Lord Castlemaine incites him to murder the king, 301.
- Darcy, Lord, of Darcy, is captured at Pomfret castle by the Pilgrims of Grace, i. 83; is appointed one of their leaders, *ib.*; is taken prisoner and executed, 94.
- Darley, Henry, Lord, marries Mary Queen of Scots, i. 166; his murder, 168; his death on the Kirk of Field, 326.
- Davenant, Sir W., ii. 242.
- Davidson, a negro, one of the Cato Street conspirators, ii. 449, 451, 459; his capture, 459, 464; is committed to the Tower, 466; is executed, 469, 470.
- Davis, Moll, ii. 263, 387.
- Dee, John, the astronomer, a visitor of the Earl of Northumberland in the Tower, i. 414.
- De la Motte, Francis, a Reformer, is committed to the Tower, ii. 414.
- Denbigh, Earl of. See William Fielding.
- Denham, Henry, arrests Lord Grey, ii. 369; Lord Grey escapes from him, 370; is imprisoned in consequence by the king, *ib.*
- Derby, Mr., is arrested for printing Penn's 'Sandy Foundation,' ii. 306.
- Derwentwater, Earl of, a grandson by Moll Davis of Charles II., his commitment to the Tower, ii. 245, 387; pleads guilty, 388; is condemned, 390; his execution, 391.
- Desborough, General, his confinement in the Tower, ii. 287.
- Develin tower, the, i. 8, 118.
- Deventer, in Flanders, treacherously given up by Sir William Stanley, i. 281.
- De Vere, Henry, Earl of Oxford, is reported by Lady Hatton to have contracted a marriage with Frances Coke, ii. 36; his descent, 71; his early life, 72; his hatred of Spain, 72; is committed, through Gondomar, to the Tower, 73; is released by Buckingham, *ib.*; is appointed Admiral of the Fleet against the pirates, but throws up the service, *ib.*; his revenge on the Villiers family, 74, 76; his release from the Tower at the general pardon of King James, 151; marries Diana Cecil, daughter of the Earl of Exeter, *ib.*
- Devereux, Lady Frances, the second wife of William Seymour, i. 447.

- Devereux, Robert, Earl of Essex, when a boy is married to Lady Frances Howard, i. 450; goes abroad with his tutor, 451; on his return finds his wife's affections alienated from him, 451, 461; their contrary dispositions, *ib.*; various schemes adopted by his wife to get rid of him, 463; after their divorce, his wife marries the Earl of Somerset, 471.
- Devereux tower, i. 268.
- Digby, Sir Everard, is induced by Catesby to join the Powder Plot, i. 344; attends the rendezvous at Dunchurch, 367; informs Garnet that the conspiracy has failed, 369; leaves the conspirators at Holbeach, 370; is taken prisoner, 373; his examination and confessions in the Tower, 376; is hung near Paul's Cross, 380.
- Digby, Sir Kenelm, his commitment to the Tower, ii. 239.
- Digby, Sir John, Earl of Bristol, Ambassador at the court of Spain, part taken by him in the 'Matter of Holland,' ii. 80; his reception of Prince Charles and Buckingham on their arrival in Madrid, 114, 136; receives from Prince Charles when returning to England a proxy to conclude the marriage with the Infanta, 146; determines to return to England, 166; Buckingham's opposition to his return and accusations against him, 167; offers made to him by the King of Spain to remain declined, *ib.*; on his arrival in England is seized and committed to the Tower, 168; popular hostility to him for having taken Sherborne House from Raleigh's orphans, *ib.*; is released from the Tower by Buckingham, 169; reveals the true story of the Spanish match, 172; charges Buckingham with high misdemeanours, 179; is committed by the king a second time to the Tower, 180; his release, 184.
- Digby, Sir Robert, joins the Catholic squires at Dunchurch, i. 368.
- Digges, Sir Dudley, his position in the court of King James, ii. 49; his connexion with the popular party, 63, 64, 172; his arrest by the king and commitment to the Tower, 180; his release, 181; counsels Eliot to be silent in the House, 204.
- Donne, his appreciation of the kindness of Carr, i. 458.
- Dorchester, Henry, Marquis of, his quarrel with Buckingham, and his committal to the Tower, ii. 285.
- Douglas, Archibald, Earl of Angus, marries during the lifetime of his first wife Queen Margaret, i. 99; is divorced from Margaret, 100; his child is declared legitimate by the Pope, *ib.*
- Douglas, Margaret, sister of James IV., i. 417, 440, 444, 447; ii. 241.
- D'Oyly, deputy-governor of the Tower, 386, 388, 389, 391, 394, 395, 400, 401, 405.
- Drake, Admiral, ii. 8, 96.
- Dryden, John, ii. 267, 303, 318.
- Dudley, John, Duke of Northumberland, President of Council at death of Edw. VI., i. 102; espouses the claims of Lady Jane Grey to the throne, *ib.*; marries her to his son Guilford, 103; endeavours to seize the Princess Mary, 105; is appointed to take the command against Mary, 110; his departure from London, *ib.*, 111; desertion of his fleet and army, 113; is arrested by Lord Arundel at Cambridge, 118; is taken to the Tower, *ib.*; is tried in Westminster hall, and sentenced to death, 120; abjures his religion, 121; is executed on Tower hill, 122.
- Dudley, John, Earl of Warwick, i. 97, 108, 111, 117, 119, 120, 121.
- Dudley, Lord Guilford, son of the Duke of Northumberland, is married, through the intrigues of his father, to Lady Jane Grey, i. 103; is committed to the Tower, 118; is executed, 146.
- Dudley, Lord Robert, sent by his father, the Duke of Northumberland, to seize the Princess Mary, i. 104; is unsuccessful, 108; desertion of his troops, 109; is committed to the Tower, 118; memorials of him in Beauchamp tower, 119; proposed as a husband to Mary Queen of Scots, 164, 165.
- Duels, frequency of, ii. 442, 443.
- Dugard, William, his house searched for Harrington, ii. 246; gives a bond for the appearance of Mr. Edwards, *ib.*; leaves his house, *ib.*; printed the chief Royalist books of the time, 247; service rendered to him by Harrington, *ib.*
- Dunchurch, proposed hunting party at, i. 342, 345; the rendezvous of the Catholic squires after the failure of the Powder Plot, 367-369.
- Dundas, Henry, Baron Melville, brings before the House of Commons papers proving the existence of a plot to overthrow the constitution, ii. 411; a committee of the House appointed to report on them, 412.
- Durham House, the marriage of Guilford Dudley and Lady Jane Grey celebrated at, i. 103; the residence of Raleigh, 217.
- Dutch, the, attempts of Spain to crush, ii. 15, 67; plot against them contrived by Gondomar, and joined in by King James, Prince Charles and Buckingham, 78, 79; their successes in the East, *ib.*; plan of campaign formed against them by those engaged in the "Matter of Holland," 81, 82; Admiral Penn's expedition against them, 273, 280; they surprise Chatham and Sheerness, 281, 303.

- Dutch Republic acknowledged by Spain, i. 307.
- Dwyer, Thomas, a spy in the pay of government, his connection with the Cato Street conspiracy, ii. 450.
- EASTON, Captain, a pirate chief, builds his lair on the Isle of Lundy, ii. 99; retires from pirate life, and his after career, 104.
- Edgehill, battle of, ii. 237.
- Edmund, Sir Thomas, Treasurer of the Household, ii. 48.
- Edward I. rebuilds St. Peter's Church on Tower Green, i. 6; John de Baliol yields his crown to him, 31; brings the coronation-stone from Scotland, *ib.*
- Edward II. and Queen Isabella hold their court in the White tower, i. 33.
- Edward IV., his profligate life, i. 43.
- Edward V. and the Duke of York murdered in the Bloody tower by Richard III, i. 40; historic doubts respecting their murder, 40, 41; are smothered by Tyrrell and two associates, 44, 45; are interred behind a stair in the Keep, 40, 45; their bones discovered in the reign of Charles II., and deposited by him in the chapel of Henry VII., 46.
- Edward VI., his death at Greenwich Palace, i. 104.
- Edwards, George, obtains a livelihood by acting as a government spy, ii. 444, 449, 450; his connection with the Cato Street conspiracy, *ib.*; entraps Thistlewood, 463; the demand that he should be tried with the other conspirators not attended to, 469.
- Edwards, Talbot, deputy-keeper of the crown jewels, memorial to his memory, ii. 324; attack made on him by Blood and his associates in their attempt to seize the crown jewels, 327.
- Effingham, Lord, his rapacity, i. 234.
- Eldon, John, Lord Chancellor, ii. 447.
- Elinor of Provence, or La Belle, a scene in her life, i. 17.
- Eliot, Sir John, his 'Monarchy of Man' written within the Tower, i. 2, ii. 242; present at Raleigh's execution, i. 251; ii. 1; his friendship in early life with Buckingham, i. 8, 9, 13; their respective characters, 8; his affection towards Raleigh, *ib.*; his quick temper, *ib.*; his encounter with John Moyle, 9; his education and early life, *ib.*; his marriage, and election to a seat in the House of Commons, *ib.*; his predilections for a sea life, 9, 10; is appointed by Buckingham Vice-Admiral of Devon, 13; his domestic life, 83; his duty as Vice-Admiral in the Western ports, 84, 103; receives instructions from Secretary Conway to seize the pirate Nutt, 119; captures Nutt, and places him in prison, 122-124; sends Nutt to London to be tried, 124; his answer to Spurway, mayor of Dartmouth, when demanding that the private prizes should be rendered to him, 127; is summoned by Calvert to London, is arrested, and sent to the Marshalsea, 128; measures taken for his release by Aylesbury and Conway, 132, 133; by the machinations of Calvert he is retained in prison, 134, 135; is released by the general act of grace, 151; his stirring speeches in the House of Commons, and their effect, 159, 160, 161; his antagonism to Wentworth, 159; denounces Buckingham, 180; is arrested by the king, and committed to the Tower, 180, 181; his examination in the Tower, *ib.*; his release, 182; is again arrested, and confined in the Gate-house, *ib.*; is deprived of his offices, *ib.*; his release, 184; frames the Remonstrance against Laud and Buckingham, *ib.*; denounces Buckingham as the Great Delinquent, 188; the king and Laud endeavour to implicate him in the assassination of Buckingham, 195, 198; his speech on the fall of Rochelle, 203; presents to the House of Commons his Declaration against the king's right to levy rates of tonnage and poundage, 205; his arrest and commitment to the Tower, 207; is lodged in Raleigh's cell, 211; his prison life, 211, 212; works written by him during confinement, *ib.*; his letters, his children, and his friends, *ib.*; his petition to the king for liberty, how received, 213; his death, 214; the king refuses to allow his body to be interred in the family vault, *ib.*; is buried in St. Peter's Church, *ib.*
- Elizabeth, Queen, daughter of Henry VIII, and Anne Boleyn, Edward Courteney aspires to her hand, i. 140, 155; is committed to the Tower, by her sister Mary, 20, 153, ii. 241; her views respecting the marriage of her cousin Mary Queen of Scots, i. 163; her opposition to the marriage of Darnley with Mary, 163-166; places her cousin Margaret in the Tower, 165; after the murder of Darnley she releases Margaret, 168; frequent plots against her crown by Queen Mary, 170-175; sends the Duke of Norfolk to the Tower, 173, 175; papal bull launched against her, 177, 178; her visit to Kenning Hall, 202; spares the life of Philip the Confessor, 212; obliges Raleigh to marry Bessie Throgmorton, 221; no man put to death for a political offence during the first twelve years of her reign, ii. 471; divisions in her Council at the time of her death, i. 260; reli-

INDEX.

- gious sections during her reign, 272; papal breves respecting the succession to, received by Garnet, 323; remark by, concerning Lady Arabella Stuart, 418.
- Elizabeth, Princess, daughter of James I., proposed seizure of, at Combe Abbey, by the Powder Plot conspirators, i. 342, 345, 349; is married to the Elector of Bohemia, ii. 68; flees for refuge to the Low Countries, *ib.*; Lord Southampton's friendship towards her, 72; is driven with her husband from Prague, 139.
- Ellenborough, Lord, ii. 440.
- Ellesmere, Lord Chancellor, ii. 3, 29, 41; refuses to pass Somerset's general pardon, i. 474; is one of the commissioners appointed to inquire into Overbury's death, *ib.*; sends proofs to the king of the guilt of Somerset, 475; asks for a verdict at the trial of Somerset, 479.
- Erlington, Captain, Major of the Tower, takes the Cato Street conspirators to the Tower, ii. 468.
- England, its sympathy with the Huguenots, ii. 115; its opposition to the Spanish match, 133; its rejoicings on the return of Prince Charles and Buckingham at the supposed rupture of the Spanish match, 147; its readiness to go to war with Spain, 152; its joy at the acquittal of Hardy, looke, and others when charged with high treason, 416; its continental wars, 419; its demands for parliamentary reform, *ib.*; its secret clubs and monstrous gatherings, *ib.*; riots in Manchester and other large towns, 419, 420; Reform gatherings and riots, 429, 430; the massacre at Peterloo, 443, 470; public feeling at the accession of George IV., 447; its demand that the prosecution of the Cato Street conspirators should include Edwards not attended to, 469; rising in Wales by Frost, Jones, and Williams, 471; in Ireland by O'Brien, Meagher, and Mitchell, *ib.*; serenity and prosperity of, at the present time, 472.
- Enfield Chase, the head-quarters of the English Jesuits, i. 265, 281.
- English Catholics, their opposition to the Roman Catholics, i. 272, 275, 276; their nationality and patriotism, 273-275.
- English Jesuits, their secret mission to the Duke of Lerma, i. 323; their treasonable designs at the accession of King James, 277-279, 325.
- Equivocation, two treatises on, found in Tresham's house, i. 377; Garnet's opinion of, 387.
- Erskine, Thomas, defends Hardy, Tooke, and others on a charge of high treason, ii. 415; his popularity in consequence, *ib.*
- Essex, the Earl of, warned by Lord Grey of the dangers of his course, i. 263; ~~see~~ also Robert De.
- Essex, Arthur, Earl of, ii. 340; his commitment to the Tower, 242, 345; mysterious circumstances connected with his death, 346-351.
- Essex plot, ii. 27.
- Evans, maid to the Countess of Nithsdale, ii. 394, 396, 400.
- Everard, Dr., ii. 129.
- Exeter, Lady, accusations raised against her by the Lakes, ii. 23, 24; her appeal to the king and its results, *ib.*
- Excommunication, Garnet's doctrine of the Pope's power of, i. 387.
- Explosion of powder at Holbeach, i. 371.
- FAIRFAX, Mary, Duchess of Buckingham, her marriage to the duke, ii. 282; objections to the marriage by Cromwell, 284.
- Fairfax, General, ii. 355.
- Fairman, Colonel, ii. 471.
- Falstaff, Sir John, and Sir John Oldcastle, i. 66.
- Familiars, ii. 15.
- Fane, Henry and Thos., i. 27, 125, 127, 134.
- 'Farm of Plymouth,' seized by Tuscan pirates, ii. 87.
- Farnham, Edward, coroner in the investigation into the mysterious death of the Earl of Essex, ii. 349-351.
- Fawkes, Guido, his seizure in Parliament Place, and his examination before King James, i. 314; letter signed by Elizabeth Vaux found on his person, 315; is examined in the Powder Plot room by the lord commissioners, 319-321; is put to the rack by Sir William Waad, sends for Cecil, and makes confessions to him, 321; his previous history, 322-325; is mentioned by Tom Winter to Catesby as one able to carry out his project of blowing up the King and Parliament, 328; his services engaged by Tom Winter, 329; assumes the name of James Johnson, 330; oath of secrecy administered to him by Father Gerard, 333; is taken by Percy to Vinegar House, 334; finds that it is not suitable for his design, and transfers the powder, &c., to the adjoining vaults, 337, 338; his conferences in Flanders with Father Owen and Stanley, 339; on his return he takes up his abode in Vinegar House, 347; his conferences with his fellow-conspirators, *ib.*; on the news of the discovery of the plot, Catesby sends him to inspect the vault, 357; reports that it has not been opened, *ib.*; is present in the vault when it is inspected by Lords Suffolk and Montague, 363; rides to Isleworth, apprises Percy with the inspection, and returns to the vault, *ib.*; is apprehended by Sir

- Thomas Knyvet, 364; confessions extorted from him in the Tower, 375, 376; is drawn, hung, and bowelled, 380.
- Feckenham, Father, confessor to Queen Mary, his endeavours to persuade Lady Jane Grey to abjure the Protestant faith fruitless, i. 141, 142, 143; induces the Queen to delay Lady Jane's execution, 143; discussion with Lady Jane on the Real Presence, 144; attends Lady Jane at her execution, 147; his controversies with Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, 151.
- Feilding, Sir William, his marriage with Susan Compton, ii. 34; is created Earl of Denbigh. *ib.*
- Felton, John, stabs Buckingham at Portsmouth, ii. 193; his reasons for the act, 194; is sent by the king to the Tower, 195; his reception in London, 196; his appearance, character, and previous life, 197, 199; his answer to Laud when threatened with the rack, 198; his trial and execution, 200.
- Ferguson, a Scottish preacher, his despicable character, ii. 340, 341; his connection with the Rye-House plot, 341, 342; flees to the Hague, 369; large reward offered by government for his capture, 371; returns to England with the Duke of Monmouth, 372; writes the proclamation published by the duke on his landing, *ib.*
- Ferne, Bishop, his 'Pian Piano,' written in answer to Harrington's 'Oceana,' ii. 251.
- Ferrers, Henry, Vinegar House in his possession, i. 332.
- Field, the actor, in the Marshalsea, ii. 128.
- Fielding, Beau, his marriage to Lady Castlemaine, ii. 302.
- Filmer, Sir Robert, his 'Patriarcha, or the Natural power of Kings,' ii. 358; doctrines advocated, 358-361; effect produced by the book, 360; it is answered by Algernon Sydney, 360, 361.
- Finch, Sir Heneage, Solicitor-General, at the trial of Lord Morley, ii. 277; his examination of Algernon Sydney in the Tower, 363.
- Finch, Sir John, Speaker of the House of Commons, attempts to adjourn the House, ii. 205; is forcibly held in his chair while the resolutions against tonnage and poundage are passed, 206; his noxious character, 217; cruel sentence passed by him on Frynne, Bastwick, and Burton, 221; is impeached by Parliament, 231; flees to the Hague, 229, 231.
- Fines, how compounded for by political prisoners, i. 404, 405.
- Fisher, Cardinal, Bishop of Rochester, is charged with aiding and abetting the Maid of Kent, i. 69, 70; is committed to the Tower, 71; is lodged in the Strong Room of the Belfry, *ib.* ii. 241; his prison-life, i. 72, 73; Pope Paul III. sends him a cardinal's hat, 72; his execution, 73.
- Fisher, Father, a Jesuit priest, ii. 58; receives his instructions from Father Garnet, i. 281; is a frequent visitor at White Webbs, 287; is committed to the Keep, 253, 389.
- Fisher, William, breaks into the Tower and liberates the good Lord Cobham, i. 63; sentence pronounced upon him, 65.
- Fitz Alan, Richard, Earl of Arundel, one of the barons who put Sir Simon Burley to death, i. 54; is seized by Richard II., tried, and executed, 56.
- Fitz Alan, Henry, Earl of Arundel, his enmity to the Duke of Suffolk on account of his separation from his sister, i. 101; recognises the claims of Lady Jane Grey to the throne, 105; his hypocritical conduct, 106; deserts to Queen Mary, 116; is sent by Mary to arrest the Duke of Northumberland, 117; seizes the Duke at Cambridge, 118; is appointed Constable of the Tower, *ib.*; calls in citizens to witness the apostasy of the Duke of Northumberland, 121; grandfather of Philip Howard, 198; reconciles Philip to his wife, 202; leaves much of his estate away from Philip, *ib.*
- Fitzwalter, Lord, father of Maud the Fair, resents the conduct of King John to his daughter, i. 31; his flight to France, *ib.*; his return to England on the murder of his daughter, *ib.*; heads the revolt of the barons against King John, *ib.*; joins the Crusaders, *ib.*; his death, *ib.*
- Fitzclarence, Captain, commands the military at the seizure of the Cato Street conspirators, ii. 454.
- Fitzroy, Charles (afterwards Duke of Southampton), circumstances attending his christening, ii. 294.
- Flambard, Ralph. *See* Ralph, Bishop of Durham.
- Flamsteed, the astronomer, employs a turret of the White Tower for an observatory, i. 28.
- Fleece Tavern, ii. 273, 304.
- Fleet, i. 386, 389, 440, 453, 468.
- Fleming, Sir Thomas, Lord Chief Justice, Lady Arabella Stuart appeals to him for justice, i. 430, 431.
- Flint tower, the, i. 8.
- Flodden Field, battle of, i. 99.
- Floyd, Griffith, a Jesuit agent, is sent to inquire into the life led by Father Garnet at White Webbs, i. 286.
- Fludd, Henry, a Jesuit priest in Lisbon, i. 280.
- Ford, his history of the life and death of Overbury, i. 477.

- Foreign guard, secretly raised by the king, ii. 184; hatred of the people towards the, 190.
- Forman, Sir Simon, the sorcerer, his dealings with Lady Essex, i. 461, ii. 6, 17, 22, 58.
- Forsett, one of Northampton's spies, overhears and reports the conversations of the prisoners in the Tower, i. 375, 391-393.
- Fortescue, Sir John, supports the war policy of Lord Grey, i. 260.
- Fotheringay Castle, Edward Courtney confined there, i. 155.
- Fox, Charles, his death, ii. 423.
- Frances, Princess, daughter of Mary and the Duke of Suffolk, a claimant of the throne of England on the death of Edward VI., i. 100, 101; is married to Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset, *ib.*
- Francis fires a pistol at the Queen, ii. 471; is sentenced to transportation, *ib.*
- Franklin, James, an apothecary, is employed by Lady Essex to poison Overbury, i. 469; is arrested, 473; confesses his crime, 474; is hung, 475.
- Frederick, Elector Palatine of Bohemia, is driven from Prague, ii. 139; is compelled to accept a truce, 145.
- Freschville, Lord, at the trial of Lord Morley, ii. 278.
- Friend, Mr., advises Sir Francis Burdett not to accept the ovation offered to him when discharged from the Tower, ii. 431.
- Frobisher, Sir Martin, brings back Sir W. Raleigh, i. 222.
- Frost, Jones, and Williams, their rising in Wales, ii. 471.
- GAGE, Sir John, Constable of the Tower, and the Princess Elizabeth, i. 20.
- Galleyman tower, built by Henry III., i. 6, 9, 15.
- Garden house, the, i. 68; Latimer and Raleigh prisoners there, 241, 253, 306, 476, 480, ii. 165.
- Garden tower. *See* Bloody tower.
- Gardiner, Bishop, his release from confinement in the Tower at the accession of Mary, i. 138; becomes Mary's chief councillor, 152.
- Garnet, Henry, Prefect of the English Jesuits, i. 253, 255, ii. 242; his numerous names and houses, 255, 282, 284; his loose character and great abilities, i. 255, 256; was the chief instigator of the Anglo-Spanish Plot, 255, 257; his opposition to the secular priests, 265; his life at White Webbs, 283-288; obtains intelligence of the Priests' Plot, 293; sends information thereof to Bishop Bancroft, 296; papal breves forwarded to him by Father Persons from Rome, 323; sends in consequence a secret mission to the court of Spain, *ib.*; on the accession of King James destroys the papal breves, 324; at the time of the Powder Plot takes his position in the midland shires, 348; conducts a pilgrimage to St. Winifred's Well, *ib.*; receives intelligence of the failure of the Plot at Coughton Hall, 369; care taken by the prisoners in the Tower not to implicate him in the Plot, 375; statements and retractions respecting him by Frank Tresham, 377; is proclaimed by Cecil, 378; escapes from Coughton to Hendlip Hall, 381, 382; his concealment in a crevice of the wall during the search by Sir Henry Bromley, 383-385; his discovery through information supplied by Humphrey Littleton, 384, 385; his kind treatment by Bromley, 385; is lodged in the Gate-house near Whitehall, 386; his examinations by Cecil, Northampton, and Coke, 386, 388; is committed to the Tower, 387; his communications with Ann Vaux, 388, 389; his conferences with Father Oldcorne overheard by spies, 391-393; is again examined by the Commissioners in the Powder Plot room, 397; his denial of the interlocutions, *ib.*; is threatened with the rack, *ib.*; his confessions, *ib.*; is tried by a special commission in Westminster Hall, *ib.*; is condemned, and hung in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, 259, 397; his declaration respecting Ann Vaux, 397; his last words, *ib.*
- Garrett, Robert, mayor of Dover, ii. 129.
- Gates, Sir John, executed on Tower hill for his adhesion to Lady Jane Grey, i. 122.
- Gate-house, ii. 12, 148, 150, 182, 210, 217, 314. *See* Bloody tower.
- Gate-house at Westminster, i. 326, 423, 440.
- Gaunt, John of, presides over the trial of the Earl of Warwick, i. 56.
- Gauden, author of the 'Icon Basilicon,' ii. 360.
- George I. shows no clemency to the Jacobite lords, ii. 389, 398; refuses to receive the petition of the Countess of Nithsdale, 399; his antipathy to the Roman Catholic creed, 404; informs the House of the existence of a conspiracy in favour of a Popish prince, 406.
- George III., his observation to Loughborough on his want of success in obtaining a verdict against Hardy, Tooke, and others, ii. 417; his death, 447.
- George IV., his accession to the throne, ii. 447; prosecution of his wife Queen Caroline, *ib.*; State trials in his reign, 470.

- Gerard, Father, a Jesuit pries his instructions from Father Garnet, ii. 281; at White Webbs, 287; administers the oath of secrecy to the Powder Plot conspirators in a house in Butcher Row, 333; avoids the snare laid for him by Lady Markham, 379; escapes from England, 380.
- Gerard, Charles Lord, his imprisonment in the Tower, ii. 338, 345.
- Gerau, Don, Spanish Ambassador, assists the Bishop of Ross in manufacturing forged letters, i. 181.
- Gibbins, Gideon, porter of Vinegar House, i. 334; is taken into the service of Percy, 335; his arrest, 364.
- Gibbs, John, a Scotch lad, is employed by James I. to convey the reprieve to the condemned prisoners at Winchester, i. 303.
- Giffard, Captain, a Free Rover, ii. 89, 96.
- Gifford, Father, his treacherous conduct, i. 204.
- Giles, Sir Edward, his motion, that the suits against Sir John Eliot should be stayed, carried in the House of Commons, ii. 159.
- Gill is arrested for his verses in honour of Felton, ii. 197.
- Glanville, Captain, a Free Rover, ii. 89, 96.
- Gloucester, Duke of. See Richard III.
- Glyn, John, ii. 244.
- Goathurst, Bucks, the seat of Sir Everard Digby, is used as a hiding-place for priests, i. 344, 348, 362.
- Gondomar, Spanish ambassador, ii. 17, 22; sends Lord Roos on a foolish errand to Spain, *ib.*; his instructions from the Spanish court respecting the match between Prince Charles and the Infanta of Spain, 59, 60; opposition to him by the House of Commons, 61, 63; is attacked in the streets by the apprentice lads, 61; his cruel revenge, *ib.*, 62; his advice to King James respecting the Parliament, 63; provokes the king to dissolve the Parliament, 64; his designs to bring back England into the Catholic Church, 67; induces Prince Charles to go to Spain, 68, 69, 73, 109; his intrigues with the commanders of the English fleet, 70; leaves England for Spain, *ib.*; engages the king in a secret treaty, 78; contrives the plot called the 'Matter of Holland,' *ib.*; is unable to check the Free Rovers, 89; informs Olivarez of the arrival of Prince Charles and Buckingham in Madrid, 137; his interview with Digby, 139, 140.
- Goodenough, Richard, his connection with the Rye-house Plot, ii. 338, 342, 343; reward offered for his apprehension, 371.
- Goodman, Abraham, is imprisoned in the Tower for troubling Buckingham, ii. 287.
- Gordon, Lord George, his commitment to the Tower, ii. 413.
- Government House. See Lieutenant's house.
- Grandison, Viscount, father of Barbara Villiers, ii. 290; is killed at the siege of Bristol, 291.
- Grant, John, of Norbrook, is drawn into the Powder Plot by Catesby, i. 340, 341; is taken prisoner at Holbeach, 372; is hung at Paul's Cross, 380.
- Grately, Father, the spiritual guide of Philip the Confessor, i. 203, 204, 206.
- Great hall, i. 8, 11, 41.
- Green, Thomas, his connection with the Rye-house Plot, ii. 338.
- Greenway, Father, a Jesuit priest, receives his instructions from Father Garnet, i. 281; a frequent visitor at White Webbs, 287; is sent on a secret mission by Father Garnet to the Court of Spain, 323; confession of the Plot made to him by Tom Bates, 342; his approval thereof, *ib.*; leaves London for Goathurst and Cough-ton, 362; his interview with Catesby at Huddington, 370; is proclaimed by Cecil, 378; his seizure in London and escape, 380; reaches Flanders, *ib.*
- Greenwich, death of Edward VI. at, i. 104; Lady Arabella Stuart and William Seymour secretly married at, 422, 423; interview between King James and Sir George More at, 478, 479.
- Grey, Henry, Marquis of Dorset, separates from Lady Catherine Fitz-Alan, and marries Princess Francis, a descendant of Henry VII., i. 101; provokes the enmity of Lord Arundel by his separation from his sister, *ib.*; is created Duke of Suffolk, *ib.*; with Lady Jane Grey in Tower, 110; begs her to descend from the throne, 115; a prisoner in Tower, 143.
- Grey, Henry, ii. 245.
- Grey, Lady Jane, daughter of Frances, a descendant of Henry VII., and the Duke of Suffolk, is one of the claimants to the throne on the death of Edward VI., i. 2, 48, 100; through the arts of the Duke of Northumberland is married to his son Guilford, 103; her unwillingness to be proclaimed queen, 105, ii. 472; takes possession of the regal apartments at the Tower, i. 106; her surprise when she heard Lord Guilford was to be crowned king, 107; defections from her, 114; quits the throne, 115; is kept a prisoner in the Tower, 119, ii. 244; attempts made to cause her to conform to the Catholic faith, i. 124; is condemned to death, 142; her resignation when informed by Feckenham thereof, *ib.*; Queen Mary's

- bitterness towards her, 143; her father, the Duke of Suffolk, sent for, *ib.*; her contentions with Feckenham respecting Catholic tenets, 144; writes a farewell letter to her father, *ib.*; her kindness and gentleness, 145; sees her young husband led forth to execution, 146; circumstances of her execution, 146, 147.
- Grey, Lord Arthur, Lord Deputy of Ireland, the friend of Spenser, i. 267; takes Fort Del Oro, *ib.*
- Grey, Lord Thomas, of Wilton, position taken by him at the death of Queen Elizabeth, i. 260; is opposed by Cecil, 260-262; machinations against him, 265; his birth and character, 266-268; joins the army in the Low Countries, 268; warns the Earl of Essex of the dangers of his mad career, *ib.*, 269; his encounter with Lord Southampton, 269; his opposition to the court of Spain, *ib.*; forces his way to the closed port of Ostend, 271; his religious views, *ib.*; his splendid prospects, *ib.*; Cecil endeavours to entangle him in a conspiracy, 272; refuses to listen to the overtures of Markham and Brooke, 294-296; leaves England for Sluys, 296; his arrest at Sluys, and imprisonment in the Tower, 298; charges against him, *ib.*; his trial, condemnation, and defence, 301; his behaviour when about to be executed, 304; is reprieved by James, *ib.*; is re-committed to the Tower, 305; is placed in the Brick tower, *ib.*; his prison-life, 305-308; his letters to his mother, 306, 307; his interview with Lord Northampton, 307; is transferred to the Watergate, 308; is falsely accused of intriguing with Lady Arabella Stuart, *ib.*; is more closely confined, *ib.*; his death, *ib.*; his descendants, *ib.*
- Grey of Werke, Forde, Lord, is arrested by Denham, and brought to the Tower, ii. 242, 338, 340, 369; his clever escape, 370; joins the Prince of Orange, 369, 370; returns with Monmouth to England, is captured, and is again consigned to the Tower, 372, 373.
- Griffin, Prince of Wales, confined in the Banqueting floor of the White tower, i. 28, 33; endeavours to escape, 33; his unsuccessful attempt and death, *ib.*; sad fate of his son, *ib.*
- Guise, Duc de, the terms to be observed with heretics, ii. 116.
- Gundulf the Weeper, a Benedictine friar, i. 5; his employments at the monastery of Bec, *ib.*; rebuilds the cathedral of Rochester, *ib.*; one of the chief architects of the Tower, 5, 28.
- Gunpowder Plot. *See* Powder Plot.
- Gurney, Sir Richard, committed to the Tower, ii. 239.
- Gwynne, Nell, ii. 268.
- HABEAS corpus, ii. 264; is suspended by Pitt, 412.
- Hagley House, i. 349.
- Hall, Bishop, ii. 243.
- Hall, a tailor, connected with the Cato Street conspiracy, ii. 465.
- Halliday, Sir Leonard, Lord Mayor, one of the commission appointed to try Father Garnet, i. 397.
- Hall tower built by Gundulf, i. 5; Henry III. builds in it a private chapel, 6; Henry VI. stabbed to death there, 6, 12; afterwards called the Record tower, 12; now used as the Jewel house, 5, 39.
- Halsey, Captain, a Free Rover, is thrown into Exeter jail, ii. 97; his fate, *ib.*
- Hamilton, Lord Advocate of Scotland, his conferences with Lord Bacon respecting the legislative union of England and Scotland held at Vinegar House, i. 335, 336.
- Hamilton, Count, ii. 267.
- Hampden clubs, object of, ii. 420.
- Hampden, Sir John, ravages the coasts of Spain, ii. 100; is taken by a Spanish cruiser and condemned to the chain, *ib.*; is reclaimed by his friends, 104; his friendship with Eliot, 212; letters written to him by Eliot in the Tower, *ib.*; his visit to Eliot, *ib.*
- Hampden, John, ii. 338, 340; desires to visit Algernon Sydney in the Tower, 363.
- Hardy, Thomas, is seized on the charge of being an officer in a seditious society, ii. 412; is committed to the Tower, 413; his trial and acquittal, 415.
- Hariot, Thomas, i. 234.
- Harley, Robert, Earl of Oxford, ii. 244.
- Harrington, Lord, author of 'Nugæ Anti-quæ,' ii. 247.
- Harrington, Sir James, under the name of Edwards lies concealed in Mr. Dugard's house, ii. 246; (*see* Dugard); his capture not effected by Captain Short, 247; seizure of his property, *ib.*; his early life, 248; his attachment to King Charles, *ib.*; his 'Oceana,' 249; his manuscript of the work seized, *ib.*; it is returned to him through the interposition of Lady Claypole, 250; Cromwell permits its dedication to him, 251; effect of 'Oceana' on the public mind, *ib.*; his remark on the opinion of the philosophers respecting the work, *ib.*; founds the political club called the 'Rota,' *ib.*; on the restoration of Charles II., writes 'Instructions for the King's Use,' 252; is in consequence arrested and committed to the Tower, 247, 252; his examination by commissioners sent by the king, 254-259; exertions of his sister, Lady Ashton, in his behalf, 254, 263, 264; charges brought against him by Clarendon, 262;

- is secretly taken from the Tower, 264; is confined on a rock in Plymouth Sound, 265; is permitted by the king to live in Devon with his brother, *ib.*; his return to London, and death, 266.
- Harris, Captain, follows the fortunes of Captain Ward, ii. 94; is captured, 96.
- Harris, Sir Christopher, Vice-Admiral of Devon, ii. 10.
- Harrison, one of the Cato Street conspirators, ii. 451; is committed to the Tower, 466.
- Harrowby, Lord, President of the Council, ii. 446; a cabinet dinner at his house, 448; unfolds the tale of a conspiracy, *ib.*
- Harsnett, Roger, serjeant-at-arms, arrests the Duke of Richmond, ii. 271; Lord Morley, 276.
- Hart, Father, a Jesuit priest, confesses and grants absolution to Catesby and the other conspirators, i. 370.
- Harvey, Sir George, appointed Lieutenant of the Tower in place of Sir John Peyton, i. 228; keeps back the statement of Lord Cobham clearing Raleigh from having taken any part in the Arabella plot, 230; his harsh treatment of Lord Grey, 306.
- Harvey, Sir Sebastian, refuses to give his daughter in marriage to Kit Villiers, ii. 74.
- Hastings, Harry, his quarrel with Lord Morley and its fatal result, ii. 273-276.
- Hastings, Francis, General Lord, Constable of the Tower, ii. 436.
- Hastings, Lord, beheaded by Richard III. on the Tower green, i. 43.
- Hatton, Lady, her aversion to the marriage of her daughter, Frances Coke, with Sir John Villiers, ii. 36.
- Hatton, Sir Christopher, part attributed to him in the murder of the Earl of Northumberland, i. 195, 196; makes an inquiry into the doings of Philip the Confessor in the Tower, 211, 212.
- Hawkins, Sir Richard, Vice-Admiral, of Devon, his connivance of the practices of the pirates, ii. 100.
- Hawley, Major, his house in the Tower occupied by the Earl of Essex, ii. 347.
- Hay, James, one of the favourites of King James, i. 455; is created Earl of Carlisle, 455, 456; his marriage with Lady Lucy, daughter of the Earl of Northumberland, disapproved by her father, 415; is sent for by Somerset when confined in the Tower, 476; conducts the negotiations between the King and Somerset, 478.
- Hayman, his commitment to the Tower, ii. 207; his release, 208.
- Hayward, Sir John, ii. 242.
- Hazelrigg confined in the Tower, ii. 356.
- Heath, Sir R., Attorney-General, defends Buckingham against the charges of Lord Derby, ii. 48, 179; examines Eliot in the Tower, 181; presides at the trial of Felton, 200; counsels the king to bring the arrested members of the House of Commons to trial, 209.
- Helwyss, Sir Gervase, a creature of Lord Northampton, appointed Lieutenant of the Tower in place of Waad, i. 467; his complicity in the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury, 469, 470, 471; his arrest and examination, 473; is hung in chains on Tower Hill, 475.
- Henchman, Bishop of London, declines to entertain the charge of blasphemy brought against William Penn, ii. 312.
- Hendlip Hall, i. 362, 370; built by Mr. Abington and Little John as a hiding-place for priests, 382; instructions for the search of the priests there, *ib.*; Sir Henry Bromley discovers Garnet and Oldcorne, 382-385;
- Henri the Great, King of France, remark to Sully concerning Lady Arabella Stuart, i. 418.
- Henrietta Maria (consort of Charles I.), ii. 170, 172, 174.
- Henry III., his architectural works, i. 5; additions to the Tower by him, 6; builds the Traitor's gate, *ib.*; his perseverance in constructing the Wharf, 15, 16.
- Henry V., his rivalry with Charles of Orleans, i. 34; his early life, 35; invades France, 36; gains the battle of Agincourt, and takes Charles prisoner, *ib.*; his reasons for retaining Charles as a prisoner, 37; his march on Paris and his marriage with Catherine of Valois, 36; in early life intimate with Sir John Oldcastle, 58; commits his friend to the Tower, 60; on Sir John's escape takes no steps to recapture him, 62; in consequence of demonstrations by the Lollards, sets a reward on the capture of Sir John, 65.
- Henry VI. stabbed to death in the private chapel in the Hall tower by the Duke of Gloucester, i. 6, 12.
- Henry VIII., his reception of Anne Boleyn at the Tower, i. 17, 18; condemns the Duke of Norfolk to death, 51; commits the Maid of Kent to the Tower, 70; his reply when informed that Pope Paul III. had sent Bishop Fisher a Cardinal's hat, 72; prevents the marriage of the Princess Margaret with Lord Thomas Howard, 160; his wife, Catharine Howard, ii. 470.
- Henry, son of James I., designs of the Powder Plot conspirators with regard to him, i. 350; grand masque given in his honour when created Prince of Wales, 422; Northampton desires to marry him to Lady Essex, 453; statement by Ann

- Turner, that he was poisoned with a bunch of grapes, 473.
- Herbert, William, Earl of Pembroke, espouses the cause of Lady Jane Grey, i. 105; joins Queen Mary, *ib.*; leads the troops against Wyatt, 129.
- Herbert, one of the favourites of King James, i. 455; is created Earl of Montgomery, 456.
- Heriot, assistance given him in his astronomical studies by the Earl of Northumberland, i. 407; sundial fixed by him on Martin tower, 411; the companion of the Earl of Northumberland in his confinement in the Tower, 414; his correspondence with Kepler, 416; is a constant visitor at Petworth, *ib.*
- Herllie, W., deceives Mons. Charles, i. 181; betrays Norfolk, 188.
- Hertford, Lord, allows his son William Seymour fifty pounds a quarter for his maintenance in the Tower, i. 424.
- Hidden, a paid spy, gives information to Lord Harrowby of the Cato Street conspiracy, ii. 448, 451.
- Highgate, Arabella Stuart's residence there, i. 432.
- High treason, ii. 410.
- Hilton, Miss, assistance rendered by her in the escape of the Earl of Nithsdale, ii. 396, 400, 404.
- Hobart, Miles, committed to the Tower, ii. 205, 207; is confined in the Gatehouse near White Hall, 209.
- Holbeach in Staffordshire, the house of Stephen Littleton, i. 370; explosion of powder at, 371; the Powder Plot conspirators determine to make a stand there, *ib.*; is assaulted by Sir Richard Walsh, *ib.*; conspirators killed and captured there, 371-373.
- 'Holland, the Matter of,' the plot so called, contrived by Gondomar, ii. 78, 136, 145.
- Holles, Denzil, forcibly holds the Speaker in his chair until the remonstrance against tonnage and poundage is passed, ii. 205, 206; is committed to the Tower, 207; his sentence by the King's Bench, 209; his release, *ib.*; joins Pym in the impeachment of Wentworth, 230, 231.
- Holmby, battle of, i. 240.
- Holt Castle, i. 349.
- Hone, William, is connected with the Rye-house Plot, ii. 338, 342; his trial and condemnation, 346.
- Hooper, James, ii. 433; takes part in the Nag's Head Plot, 438; a true bill found against him, *ib.*; is discharged, 441.
- Hopton, Sir Owen, Lieutenant of the Tower, i. 194, 195, 197, 211.
- Hopton, Mistress, bribed by the Countess of Arundel, i. 211.
- Horse and Groom Tavern, ii. 420.
- Hothams, committed to the Tower, ii. 239.
- Howard, Charles, Earl of Nottingham, Lord High Admiral, his policy at the death of Elizabeth opposed to that of Cecil, i. 261, 293; one of the examiners of Guy Fawkes in the Powder Plot room, 314-321; is with Cecil when Monteaigle brings his mysterious letter, 355; one of the special commission appointed to try Father Garnet, 397; his indignant answer to Sir Lewis Stukeley, ii. 11; resigns his office in favour of Buckingham, and receives a pension from the king, 13.
- Howard, Sir F., succeeds Monson as Admiral of the Narrow Seas, ii. 16, 70; is required by Buckingham to resign his office, 25.
- Howard, Henry, Earl of Surrey, ordered, by Henry VIII. on his death-bed, to be beheaded, i. 51.
- Howard, Henry, son of Lord Surrey, is made Earl of Northampton at the accession of King James, i. 257; his life in Italy, 258; his ignoble character, 285, 259; accepts the policy of Cecil, and panders to his passions, 259, 260; prominent part taken by him in the Powder Poisonings, 257, 259; receives bribes from the Spanish court, 299; ii. 70; his interview with Lord Grey in the Tower, i. 308; one of the commissioners appointed by the King to examine Guy Fawkes, 314-321; is with Cecil when Monteaigle brings his letter, 356; gives instructions to Sir Thomas Knyvet to prepare for a secret service, *ib.*; orders the bodies of Catesby, Percy, Jack, and Kit Wright to be exhumed and hung, 373; examines the captured prisoners in the Powder Plot Room, *ib.*; his hatred of the Earl of Northumberland, 375; employs spies to overhear the conversations of the prisoners Garnet and Oldcome, *ib.*; one of the special commissioners appointed to try Garnet, 397; his speech against the Jesuits at the trial of Garnet, *ib.*; his jealous watchfulness of Lady Arabella Stuart, 418; places her in the custody of Lord Knyvet, 421; resists the appeals of the Countess of Shrewsbury in behalf of Lady Arabella Stuart, 433; his examination of the prisoners connected with the escape of Lady Arabella Stuart and Seymour, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444; Lady Arabella's plaintive letter to him, 446; his large possessions and emoluments, 451; Northampton House at Charing Cross built by him, 452; his ambition to be lord high treasurer, *ib.*; his various intrigues, 453; desires to marry his niece, Lady Essex, to Prince Henry, 453; on the

- failure of that scheme, he directs her to the favourite Carr, 454, 460; his jealousy of Overbury, 459; resolves on the death of Overbury, and procures his arrest, 465, 466; refuses to Overbury's friends permission to speak to him, 468, 469, 470; his deceitful interview with Overbury, 469, 470; his instructions to Helwyss about Overbury's body, 471; is troubled with a loathsome disease, 259, 472; his death, 448, 472; his unpopularity at the time of his death, 472; his death saves him from arrest for murder, 259, 448, 472.
- Howard, Thomas, third Duke of Norfolk, suppresses the Pilgrimage of Grace, i. 83; enmity to him by the monks, 88; marches a second time against the Pilgrims, 91; captures the leaders, 94; is placed in the Tower by King Henry VIII., 51; is condemned to die, *ib.*; is saved by the death of the King, *ib.*; is confined until the death of Edward VI., *ib.*; glimpses of his prison life, *ib.*, 52; is kept a prisoner in the Tower by the Duke of Northumberland, 110; is released on the accession of Queen Mary, 138; is restored to his former position of Lord High Steward, and pronounces sentence of death on the Duke of Northumberland, 120; is sent by Mary to quell the insurrection of Wyatt, 128; desertion of his troops, *ib.*
- Howard, Thomas, fourth Duke of Norfolk, one of the commission sent from London to inquire into the conduct of Mary Queen of Scots, i. 172; is induced by Mary to espouse her cause, *ib.*; desires to wed Mary, 174; his interview with Queen Elizabeth, 175; retires from court, *ib.*; is committed to the Tower, *ib.*; is liberated through the solicitations of the Bishop of Ross, 177; treasonable letter to him from Ridolfi intercepted, 178; re-committed to the Tower, 184; is sentenced to be executed, 190; dies denouncing the Pope's religion, *ib.*
- Howard, Lord Thomas, is committed to the Tower by Henry VIII. to prevent his marriage with Princess Margaret, i. 160, 161.
- Howard, Philip, Earl of Arundel, called the 'Confessor,' i. 198, 199, 257, 258, 273, 275; his early life and character, 200, 201; his family life, 201, 202; his hatred of the Jesuits, 202; visit of Queen Elizabeth to his seat at Kenning Hall, 202; his reconciliation to Rome, 203; is captured on his voyage to Philip of Spain, 205; is committed to the Tower, 206; is examined before the Star-chamber, 208; celebrates mass in the Tower, 211; is tried for high treason, 212; is condemned to death, but is spared by Elizabeth, 213; his ascetic life, 215; his death, *ib.*
- Howard, Philip, Lord Arundel, interest taken by him in Villiers, ii. 6; carries to Lord Bacon an ungracious message, 53; his unwillingness that Yelverton should be heard in explanation of his offending speech, 54; is committed to the Tower for refusing to retract his insulting words to Lord Spencer, *ib.*; his release, *ib.*; marriage of his son, Lord Maltravers, without King Charles's consent, 178; his arrest and commitment to the Tower, 179; his arrest resented by the Peers, *ib.*; the king is constrained to release him, *ib.*
- Howard, Sir Robert, his association with Lady Purbeck, ii. 176; is excommunicated, *ib.*; his accusations against Admiral Penn, 305.
- Howard, Edward, Lord, ii. 244.
- Howard, Queen Catharine, ii. 470.
- Howard, Lady Catharine, is married to William, Lord Cranborne, i. 449.
- Howard, Thomas, Earl of Suffolk, i. 258; one of the examiners of Guy Fawkes, 314-321; is with Cecil when Montague brings his letter, 355; inspects the vaults under Parliament House with Lord Montague, 363; his conversation with Guy Fawkes, *ib.*; is one of the judges of Father Garnet, 397; Constable of the Tower, 404; requires his daughter to live in her husband's house, 461; is made lord high treasurer, 477; ii. 14; receives bribes from Spain, 14, 166; is regarded by the Catholics as their chief, 15, 16; accusations of corruption and embezzlement brought against him, 24; attempts to bribe Buckingham, 25; is fined and committed to the Tower, *ib.*; his release, *ib.*; moves the impeachment of Lord Bacon, 53; seeks to ingratiate his party with Buckingham, 17.
- Howard, Thomas, of Escrick, his connection with the conspiracies in the reign of Charles II., ii. 338; introduces the Duke of Monmouth to Sydney, 340; his connection with the Rye-house Plot, 343; his capture, 346; gives evidence against peers stated to have been concerned in the Rye-house Plot, 346; effect produced on him by the news of the sudden death of Lord Essex, 362; gives evidence in the trial of Algernon Sydney, 367.
- Howard, Thomas, fourteenth Duke of Norfolk, is committed to the Tower, ii. 406.
- Howard, Sir Thomas, Master of the Horse, ii. 14; is obliged by Buckingham to resign his post, 25.
- Howard, Lady Elizabeth, is married to William, Lord Knollys of Greys, i. 449; her notoriety as the Countess of Banbury, 451.

- Howard, Lady Frances, daughter of Lady Suffolk, i. 449; is married in early life to Robert, Earl of Essex, 449; her impure training, 450; her great personal attractions, 450, 451; is surrounded by pernicious counsellors, 451; her uncle Northampton dreams of an alliance between her and Prince Henry, 453; that failing, he instigates her to look to the favourite Carr; her intercourse with Ann Turner the White Witch, and with Simon Forman, 460, 461; her aversion to her husband, 461; her illicit intercourse with Carr at Paternoster Row and Brentford Farm, 462, 468, 474; attempts to get rid of her husband, 461-464; her dealings with Mary Wood, 463, 464; endeavours to procure a divorce, 464; Overbury's opposition to her designs on Carr, *ib.*; resolves on the death of Overbury, 465; endeavours to bribe Sir David Wood to murder him, 466; Overbury having been committed to the Tower, determines to poison him, 467; changes the officers in the Tower, 468; sends to Overbury a present of poisoned jellies, 469; is divorced, and is married to Carr in the royal chapel at Whitehall, 471, 472; is implicated in the murder of Overbury by the confessions of Waad and others, 473; is taken prisoner and committed to the Tower, 475; her trial at Westminster Hall, 478; pleads guilty, and begs for mercy, 479; the misery of her latter years, 480; her only child, Lady Ann Carr, becomes the mother of Lord William Russell, *ib.*
- Howards, their power in the state, i. 477; frequent changes of their faith, 199, 200.
- Howard, William (Belted Will), is committed to the Tower, i. 206.
- Huddington, Robert Winter's house, i. 340, 343, 349; interview between Catesby and Greenway at, 370.
- Hues, Robert, frequent visits paid by him to the Earl of Northumberland in the Tower, i. 414.
- Huguenots, ii. 115; their successes, *ib.*; sympathy shown to them by England, 116, 117, 190.
- Hume, one of the favourites of King James, i. 455; is created an Earl, *ib.*
- Hunt, Orator, ii. 435, 437, 445, 447.
- Hunt, Thomas, assists Blood in his assault on the Duke of Ormonde, ii. 320; and in his attempt to seize the crown jewels, 326; is arrested and sent to the Tower, 330; is released, 335.
- Hurlstone, Henry, a Catholic squire, invited to join the hunting party at Dunchurch, i. 345.
- Hutchinson, Colonel, ii. 243.
- Hyde, Chief Justice, his advice to the king on the retention in the Tower of the members of the House of Commons, ii. 209.
- 'ICON BASILICON,' and other Royalist works, printed by Mr Dugard, ii. 247, 361.
- Impeachment, instances of, ii. 45; of Lord Bacon, 52; of Cranfield, 162; of Buckingham, 180; of Finch, Windebank, Laud, and Wentworth, 231.
- Infanta of Spain, proposed match between her and Prince Charles, ii. 59, 60; her views respecting Charles, 60; her interview with him in Madrid, 141; hindrances to her marriage interposed by the Spanish court, 143-145.
- Ings, a butcher, one of the Cato Street conspirators, ii. 444, 449, 451, 452; is captured, 464, 465; is committed to the Tower, 466; his trial and execution, 470.
- Inner Ward, one of the two main divisions of the Tower, i. 8; built by Gundulf, *ib.*; buildings contained within it, 8, 9; was specially the royal quarter, 9.
- Innocent, Pope, his reception of Lord Castlemaine, ii. 301.
- Inscriptions on the walls of the Tower, i. 75, 119, 183.
- Ireton, Clement, in the Tower, ii. 287.
- Irish chieftains detained in the Tower at the time of the general pardon by King James, ii. 151.
- Irongate tower, the, i. 9.
- Isabel the Infanta, a descendant of Princess Philippa and John of Gaunt, a claimant to the throne of England on the death of King Edward VI., i. 102.
- Isabella of Valois, widow of Richard II., is married to Charles of Orleans, i. 34; her death, and grief of her husband, 34, 35.
- Isabella, wife of Edward II., gives birth to a child in the White tower, i. 33; disgraceful condition of her apartments there, *ib.*; receives visits from Roger Mortimer, then a prisoner in the Tower, *ib.*; her guilty life, *ib.*
- JACOBIN clubs, ii. 412, 434.
- James I., King of England, his peace policy, i. 261; political and religious factions at his accession, 260-263, 275; yields himself to the guidance of Cecil, 262; his treatment of the Catholics on his accession to the throne, 291; goes to Wilton Court to watch the trial of the conspirators concerned in the Priests' Plot, 300; his singular mode of relieving the prisoners condemned at Winchester, 303; inscription by him on the panels of the Powder Plot Room, 311, 312; his instructions to the lords commissioners in the examination of Guy Fawkes, 314-319; his scheme for the legislative union of the two kingdoms,

335; wishes his Council to adopt the 5th of August as his sacred day, 353; on his return from hunting in Royston the letter to Monteaule is shown to him, and its effect, 361; is present at the trial of Garnet, 397; honours conferred by him on the Earl of Northumberland on his accession to the throne, 408, 409; his reply to the appeals of the Countess of Northumberland for the release of her husband from the Tower, 414, 415; grants Northumberland's release to Lady Lucy Percy, on her marriage to his favourite Hay, 416; his coarse language respecting Lady Arabella Stuart, 419; his displeasure at her marriage with William Seymour, 423; after the visit of Lady Arabella to Seymour when confined in the Tower, orders her to be placed in the custody of the Bishop of Durham, 427; permits Lady Arabella Stuart to rest for a month at Barnet, prior to her journey to the north, 432; her letters to him, 433, 445; orders, after her attempted escape from Barnet, that she should be committed to the Tower, 440; Sir William Seymour's letters to him, 444; is present at the marriage of Robert, Earl of Essex, and Lady Frances Howard, 450; impure character of his court, 454; his attachment to handsome favourites, 455; his partiality to Carr, 456; honours conferred by him on Carr, 457; his mind poisoned against Overbury, whom he arrests and commits to the Tower, 466; is present at the marriage of Carr and Lady Essex, 471; appoints a commission to inquire into Overbury's death, 474; reluctantly permits Carr to be arrested, 475; his exertions to save his favourite, 478; introduction of George Villiers to him, ii. 3; is captivated by his appearance, and bestows on him the name of 'Steenie,' 6; his stern answer to Sir Lewis Stukeley, 11; creates Villiers Lord High Admiral, 13; venality of his court, 15; his refusal to receive Monson at court, 18; desires a Spanish match for his son Charles, *ib.*; sentence pronounced by him on the Lake family, 24; his anxiety to marry Buckingham to a rich heiress, 26-32; and to espouse the fortunes of the house of Villiers, 33; his treatment of Wallingford and Yelverton, 40, 41; his observation to Buckingham on the impeachment of Bacon, 45; is unable to govern the country without a parliament, 46; Lord Bacon advises him to call a parliament, 46; Lord Bacon's warning to him, 52; his message to the Peers respecting the language of Yelverton, 54; permits the fall of Lord-Chancellor Bacon, 54; desires the match between Prince Charles and the Infanta of

Spain, 59; insists on the punishment of the apprentice lads for their attack on Gondomar, 62; his anger with the Commons at their petition to attack Spain and wed his son to a Protestant wife, 63; Gondomar's letter to him on the attitude of the Commons, 63; threatens to punish them for their liberty of speech, *ib.*; the protest of the Commons, *ib.*; tears the protestation from the journals of the House, *ib.*; punishes the leaders, and prorogues the House, 64; his ineffectual attempt to provide a rich wife for Kit Villiers, 75; is entangled in the plot called 'the Matter of Holland,' 78, 81; English maritime affairs in his reign, 84; proclaims the English Free Rovers outlaws, 90; shuts against them the English and Irish ports, 95; his remark when informed of Prince Charles's and Buckingham's intention to go to Spain, 109, 110; reports made to him of the piratical doings of Nutt, 117; his vacillating conduct, 119, 124; his joy at the prospects of the Spanish match, 134; signs a second pardon for Nutt and his crew, *ib.*; account of his reception of the news of the rupture of the Spanish match, 149; is counselled to call a parliament, *ib.*; grants a general pardon, 149, 150; his objections to calling a parliament overruled by Buckingham, 152; his anger at the return of the 'Undertakers' to parliament, 158; objects to the impeachment of Cranfield, 162; his weak character, i. 222; desires to live in peace with Spain, 223; his treatment of Raleigh, 223, 226, 227, 228; orders his execution, 250.

James, Duke of York (afterwards James II.), accompanies Sir William Penn in the naval expedition against the Dutch, ii. 273, 279; sends Lord Castlemaine on an embassy to the Pope, 301; his account of the escape of the Dutch, 305; his mysterious visit to the Tower with his brother Charles, followed by the death of the Earl of Essex, 345; his accession to the throne, 371; stops the pension of the Duke of Monmouth, 372; places the children of Monmouth in the Lieutenant's house, 373; his interview with Monmouth, *ib.*; signs his death-warrant, *ib.*; his answer to the offer of Monmouth to become a Catholic if his life were spared, 374; flees from England, 379; burns the writs for the new Parliament, and casts the Seals into the Thames, *ib.*

James, William, Bishop of Durham, Lady Arabella Stuart committed to his custody with orders to take her to the north, i. 427; she refuses to go with him, 432.

Jeffreys, George, Lord Chief Justice, his cruelty as a judge, ii. 346; examines Sir

- Algernon Sydney in the Tower, 358; his unjust conduct while presiding over the trial of Sydney, 364-367; is pursued by a frantic mob, 377; his disguise, 378, 379; is taken to the Lord Mayor, 380; is committed to the Tower, 381; his examination by Grey, Ossulston, and Chandos, *ib.*; his previous history and his rapid promotion, 383; Bloody Assizes of, *ib.*; his bodily pains and his passion for drink, *ib.*; has a conversation with one of his former victims, John Tutchin, 383, 384; Dean Sharp, Prebendary Scott, and Tenison visit him, 383; his hardened conscience, 384; his painful death, *ib.*; his remains removed to Aldermary Church, *ib.*
- Jenkins, Sir Leolin, secretary of state, commits Algernon Sydney to the Tower, ii. 357; his examinations of Sydney, 358, 363.
- Jenning the upholsterer, goods supplied by him to William Seymour in the Tower, i. 425, 447.
- Jennings, Captain, a Free Rover, is tried on the charge of being a pirate, gibbeted and hung in chains, ii. 97.
- Jervaulx, abbey of, famous for its horses and cheese, i. 76, 78.
- Jesuits, the instigators of the Anglo-Spanish plot, i. 254; arrival of, on the accession of James I., 263; are watched by Cecil, 264; their contentions with the secular priests, 264, 274; are the tools of Philip of Spain, 254, 274; their teachings and machinations, 275-278; at White Webbs, 282-288; movements of, at the time of the Powder Plot, ii. 98, 99; release of, confined in the prisons at the general pardon of King James, 150.
- Jewel-house, i. 5, 8, 9.
- John, King, his heartless conduct towards Maud the Fair, i. 30, 31; is compelled by the Barons to sign the Magna Charta, 31.
- Johnson, James, a servant at White Webbs, i. 283, 285.
- Jones, Inigo, i. 450; his services required by Villiers in the reconstruction of York House, ii. 39.
- Jones, John, a Jesuit, i. 280.
- Johnson, Samuel, ii. 243.
- Johnson, Thomas, brought before the Council for being an unlicensed printer, ii. 314.
- Johnson, Rev. Mr., chaplain to Lord William Russell, ii. 343.
- Jonson, Ben, though a Catholic, offers his services to the Council in pursuing the Powder Plot conspirators, i. 374; his 'Masque of Hymen,' 449; his appreciation of the kindness of Carr, 438; his 'Golden Age,' 477; his mention of Captain Ward, ii. 58; Townley's hymn to Felton supposed to be written by him, 197.
- Jordan de Coventry destroys the kidels laid in the Medway, i. 23.
- Joscelyn, Parson, his sermons before Laud, ii. 238.
- Joyce, Rev. Jeremiah, his seizure and commitment to the Tower, ii. 413; is acquitted, 417.
- KAY**, Robert, one of the Powder Plot conspirators, prepares the powder and keeps the store, i. 335; leaves London on the discovery of the Plot, 362; is taken prisoner, 373; is hung, drawn, and bowelled on Tower Hill, 380.
- Keeling, Josiah, his connection with the Rye-House plot, ii. 338, 342, 343; his arrest, 343.
- Keen, John, is engaged in the Nag's Head plot, ii. 433; is taken and released, 440.
- Keep, the, i. 8, ii. 414, Guy Fawkes and his companions confined in the dungeons of, i. 253, 389.
- Kelly, George, is sent to the Tower, ii. 406.
- Keloway, Captain, captures Philip the Confessor when proceeding to the Spanish court, i. 205, 206.
- Kem, Parson, his sermons preached before Laud, ii. 238.
- Ken, Thomas, Bishop of Bath and Wells, ii. 244; visits with Bishop Turner the Duke of Monmouth in the Tower, 375.
- Kenning Hall, the Princess Mary proclaimed queen at, i. 108; entertainment of Queen Elizabeth by Philip the Confessor at, 202, 203.
- Kenmure, Lord, is committed to the Tower, ii. 245, 387; pleads guilty, 389; is condemned to die, 391; his execution, *ib.*
- Kentish Rising, the, i. 125-134; its object to oppose Queen Mary's Spanish marriage, 126.
- Kenyon, Lord, ii. 477.
- 'Kidels,' or weirs, placed in the river by the Tower warden, i. 22; destroyed by the people, *ib.*; Richard Cœur de Lion promises to discontinue them, 22, 23; special clause respecting them in Magna Charta, 23; in the Medway, destroyed by the citizens of London, *ib.*; judgment pronounced against those that had laid them there, 24, 25.
- Killigrew, Sir Robert, the physician, is cast into the Fleet for attempting to speak with Overbury, i. 468.
- Kilmarnock, William, Earl of, is sent to the Tower, ii. 407; his execution, 408.
- King's Bench, ii. 150, 209, 422, 440, 442; site of, in the Tower determined, i. 11.
- Kingston, Sir William, Constable of the

- Tower, receives Anne Boleyn as a prisoner, i. 18.
- Knollys, Lady, her secret amours and public frauds, ii. 14, 39; her notoriety as Countess of Banbury, 39.
- Knollys, William, Viscount Wallingford, is removed from his post as Master of the Wards, ii. 40; is reluctantly obliged to yield Wallingford House to Buckingham, *ib.*
- Knollys, Lord, of Greys, married to Lady Elizabeth Howard, i. 449; his opposition to the favourite Carr, 458.
- Knox, John, denounces Queen Mary at Amersham, Bucks, i. 113; inveighs against the marriage of Darnley and Mary, Queen of Scots, 166.
- Knyvet, Sir Thomas, receives instructions from Northampton to prepare for a secret service for the crown, i. 356; seizes Guy Fawkes in the vault under Parliament House, 364; arrests Gibbins the porter, and Father Roberts, at Vinegar House, *ib.*; gives intelligence to the King, *ib.*; is raised to the peerage, *ib.*; is intrusted with the custody of Lady Arabella Stuart, 421.
- Kyd, Mr., committed to the Tower, ii. 414.
- LAKE, Ann, her marriage to Lord Roos, ii. 21; her intercourse with sorcerers, 22; threatens to raise a scandal against her husband, 23; attempts to murder him, *ib.*; her false accusations of Lady Exeter, *ib.*; her sharp dealings with the leaders of the bar, 24; is fined, and imprisoned in the Tower, *ib.*
- Lake, Dr. Arthur, Bishop of Bath and Wells, ii. 15; the Countess of Shrewsbury placed under his charge when released from the Tower, 151.
- Lake, Sir Arthur, instigated by his sister, Lady Roos, to attack her husband, ii. 23; his punishment, 24.
- Lake, Sir Thomas, the King's Private Secretary, applies for a grant of Pipewell Manor, an estate belonging to Tresham, i. 376; one of those named as probably to be chosen Secretary of State, 459; is instrumental in procuring places for Villiers, ii. 6, 15; his early life and crafty character, 20; his marriage to Mary Ryder, 21; is in reception of a pension from Spain, *ib.*; is required by the king to resign his secretaryship, *ib.*; joins his wife in accusing Lady Exeter of intent to murder, 23; the king fines him four thousand marks, and imprisons him in the Tower, 24; his release, 25.
- Lake, Lady, her desire for rank in what manner gratified, ii. 21; falsely accuses Lady Exeter of intent to murder, 23; is fined and imprisoned in the Tower, 24; her unbecoming character, *ib.*
- Lamb, Dr., the sorcerer, his vile character, ii. 5; his transactions with Lady Compton, 6; teaches Villiers magical arts, 7; assists Lady Roos, 22; apartments in York House given to him, 65; is cast into the Marshalsea for having laid a spell on Lord Windsor, 152; his release by Buckingham, *ib.*; is convicted on a charge for rape, 155; is again released, 156; his transactions with Lady Purbeck, 175; his diabolical doings on the Thames, 179; is set upon and killed in the public streets, 189.
- Lambert, his confinement in the Tower, ii. 356.
- Lamburn, Adam de, the principal assistant to Henry III. in his architectural works, i. 5, 13.
- Lantern, the, i. 6, 8, 12, 41.
- Lapworth, Catesby's house, i. 349.
- Latimer, Hugh, once Bishop of Worcester, is committed to the Tower, i. 2, 123, 150; his conferences there with Cranmer and Ridley, 150; his martyrdom at Oxford, 151.
- Latimer, Lord, impeachment of, ii. 45.
- Laud, William, Archbishop of Canterbury, ii. 242; his personal appearance, 58; his views of church government, *ib.*; his connection with Lady Compton, *ib.*; is promoted to the bishopric of Bath and Wells, 171; assists at the coronation of Charles, *ib.*; is required by Buckingham to divide the clergy into 'Puritans' and 'Orthodox,' 173; with Hyde helps Buckingham to answer his impeachment, 182; his opposition to the Bill of Rights, 187; desires to implicate Eliot as an accomplice in the assassination of Buckingham, 198; is thwarted in his wish to put Felton to the rack, *ib.*; his advice to the king in the matter of his refractory Commons, 201; is promoted to the see of London, 202; is offered a cardinal's hat by Pope Urban, 217; his cruelty to William Prynne, 218; succeeds Abbott as Archbishop of Canterbury, 219; cites Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton before the Star-Chamber, 220; charges advanced by him against Williams, 221; his servility to the king, 226; his persecution of those opposed to him in ecclesiastical matters, 227; is attacked in Lambeth Palace by the populace, 228; the King's Bench broken into, *ib.*; is arrested by Sir James Maxwell, is impeached and committed to the Tower, 229, 231; faints at the sight of Wentworth on his way to execution, 234; his life in the Tower, 236; his comforts diminished, 236, 238; his powers sequestrated, 236; is reconciled to Williams, *ib.*; sermons preached

- in his presence, 237; ghastly apparition of Prynne, who seizes his papers, 238; his trial, 239; his execution, *ib.*
- Lauderdale, John, Earl of, one of the commissioners sent by the king to examine Harrington in the Tower, ii. 254, 255.
- Laurens, Henry, his commitment to the Tower, ii. 414.
- Layer, Christopher, is arrested, ii. 406; escapes, and is retaken, *ib.*; is conveyed to the Tower, *ib.*; is ordered to be chained and weighted, *ib.*; is hung at Tyburn, and his head exposed on Temple Bar, *ib.*
- Lechmere proposes in the House of Commons the impeachment of the Jacobite lords, ii. 387.
- Legge Mount, i. 9.
- Legge, Serjeant, leads the soldiers to Cato Street, ii. 454.
- Lely, Sir Peter, ii. 267.
- Lennox, Earl of. *See* Stuart.
- Lennox, one of the commission of inquiry into Overbury's death, ii. 474; urges the arrest of Somerset, 475.
- Lerma, Duke of, his reception of the secret mission from the English Jesuits, ii. 323; threatens to send an armada against England, 101.
- Leslie, John, Bishop of Ross, his subtle character, i. 170; instigates Mary Queen of Scots to plot against Queen Elizabeth, 171; assists Mary in her correspondence with the Continental Catholic powers, 173; employs as his messenger Monsieur Charles, *ib.*; obtains a list of English nobles favourable to the Pope forwarded by Ridolfi, 177; obtains the release of the Duke of Norfolk from the Tower, *ib.*; his plot for the dethronement of Elizabeth, 178; prematurely publishes the Papal bull against Elizabeth, *ib.*; hears that his agent M. Charles is taken at Dover, *ib.*; receives the intercepted letters through Lord Cobham, 180; with Gerau forges false letters, which are forwarded to Burghley, 181; his correspondence with Monsieur Charles intercepted, 182; his examination by Lord Sussex, 186; is committed by Elizabeth to the Bloody tower, 187; makes a full confession, 188; writes a letter to Queen Mary, *ib.*; memorials of him in the Tower, 189; statement made by him concerning Queen Mary, 191; is liberated and lives abroad, *ib.*
- Leslie tower, Garnet confined in, i. 337.
- Lesser Hall, i. 11, 28.
- Letters of marque refused by King James to English merchants, ii. 88; are taken out from Dutch free ports, *ib.*
- Leving, William, a spy in the service of the king, ii. 332.
- Ley, James, Earl of Marlborough, offers ten thousand pounds for the post of Attorney-General, ii. 40, 48; is elected member for Canterbury, 47; marries Jane Butler, niece of Lady Compton, and is created Earl of Marlborough, 48, 186; his subserviency to the Villiers' family, 48; is made Lord Chief Justice, 52; is appointed by commission to preside over the House of Peers, *ib.*; his report on the case of Dr. Lamb, 156.
- Lieutenant of the Tower, his salary and duties, i. 48; his house built by Henry VIII., 68.
- Lieutenant's house in the Tower, i. 254, 308, 309; ii. 54, 212, 231, 232, 233, 235, 236, 238; its architecture and its rooms, 241-245; eminent men who have been prisoners in, 242, 244, 271, 276, 374, 407, 467.
- Lieutenants of the Tower, Sir Allan Apsley, ii. 164; Sir William Balfour, 213; Sir Isaac Pennington, 237; price paid for the post of, 164. *See* Tower.
- Little Ease, one of the chambers of the White Tower, i. 26; inscriptions on its walls, 27; Guy Fawkes believed to have been confined in it, *ib.*
- Little John. *See* Nicholas Owen.
- Littleton, Humphrey, Catesby makes overtures to him to join the conspirators, i. 343; goes to Dunchurch, 368; leaves Dunchurch and sends a message to Father Oldcorne, 369, 384; is taken prisoner and lodged in Worcester gaol, *ib.*; is condemned to be hung, 385; obtains a respite by supplying information which leads to the discovery of Garnet and Oldcorne, *ib.*
- Littleton, Stephen, Catesby offers to him the captaincy of a Catholic regiment, i. 343; undertakes to raise money and men, *ib.*; goes with his brother to Dunchurch, 368; the conspirators advance to his house at Holbeach in Staffordshire, 370; is taken prisoner, 373.
- Lisle, Lady, death of, ii. 384.
- Liverpool, Lord, prime minister, meeting of his cabinet, ii. 446.
- Lloyd, John, his evidence respecting the death of Lord Essex, ii. 351; is sent to Newgate, 352.
- Lloyd, an officer of the palace, seizes Sydney's papers, ii. 357.
- Lobb, Stephen, his connection with the Rye-House plot, ii. 338.
- Lobel, a French apothecary, prepares a glistler for poisoning Overbury, i. 470.
- Locherson, one of Cecil's spies, overhears and reports the interlocutions of Garnet and Oldcorne, i. 391, 393.
- Lochleven Castle, i. 176.
- Loe, Thomas, the Quaker, effect of his preaching on William Penn, ii. 304.

- Loftus, General, lieutenant of the Tower, ii. 436.
- Lollards, cruel laws enacted against them in the reign of Henry V., i. 59; protected by Lord Cobham, *ib.*; demonstration by, 65.
- Longcastle, Captain, a Free Rover, is seized and hung in chains, ii. 97.
- Long is committed to the Tower, ii. 205; is indicted in the Star-chamber, and fined, 209.
- Lords, House of, their resistance to the king in committing Lord Arundel to the Tower, ii. 179, 182; six of their number refuse to lend money to the King, 186; their opposition to the Commons respecting the Bill of Rights, 188.
- Lovel, Sir Thomas, Constable of the Tower, and the Duke of Buckingham, i. 19.
- Lumley, Sir Martin, lord mayor of London, his answer to Gondomar, ii. 62.
- Lundy, Isle of, Sir Lewis Stukeley takes refuge in, ii. 12; a resort of pirate chiefs, 99.
- Loughborough, Lord-Chancellor, informs Pitt that Horne Tooke and other prisoners could be convicted on a charge of constructive treason, ii. 413.
- Lovat, Simon, Lord, is sent to the Tower, ii. 409; his adventurous life, *ib.*; his execution, *ib.*
- Lovatt, a Reformer, is committed to the Tower, ii. 413; his acquittal, 417.
- Lucas, Lord, lieutenant of the Tower, ii. 379, 381.
- Lydcot, a friend of Sir Thomas Overbury, endeavours to see him in the Tower, i. 468, 469, 471.
- Lytton, Edward, support given by him to the accusations of Buckingham by Turner, ii. 178; is appointed Lord Chancellor, 235.
- MACCLESFIELD, Thomas, Earl of, Lord Chancellor, ii. 245.
- Mackeller, Archibald, chaplain of the Tower, is deposed for simony, ii. 219; strange proceedings attending his deposition, 220.
- Magi, Northumberland's three, Heriot, Hues, Warner, i. 414.
- Magical arts, practice of, in the court of King James, ii. 15, 36.
- Magna Charta, i. 31.
- Main Plot, i. 300.
- Mainwaring, Mr., member for Middlesex, defends Aris against the charges brought against him, ii. 421; fierce contests between him and Burdett for the representation of Middlesex, 422, 423.
- Maltravers, Lord, is imprisoned by King Charles for having married without his consent, ii. 179.
- Manchester, Earl of, gives Algernon Sydney the command of a troop of horse, ii. 354.
- Mandeville, William de, Constable of the Tower, appointed keeper of Ralph of Durham, i. 29.
- Manning, Captain, engages in the pirate war, ii. 101; his adventures, *ib.*; is knighted, 104; becomes Lieutenant of Dover Castle, 112.
- Manners, Lady Catherine, desire of the king to marry her to Villiers, ii. 27; opposition of her father, the Earl of Rutland, to the match, 27, 31; is persuaded by Williams to renounce the Catholic faith, 29, 32; her marriage, 32; her insincere conversion, 58, 66; her reversion to the Catholic Church, 173.
- Mansion House, Judge Jeffreys taken there by a frenzied mob, ii. 380; is attacked by a mob, 436.
- Mansourie, a French chemist, the associate of Sir Lewis Stukeley in his vile practices, ii. 12; is imprisoned in the Marshalsea, *ib.*
- Margaret, daughter of Henry VII., is married to James IV., King of Scotland, i. 99; at his death marries Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, 100; leads a wretched life, *ib.*; procures a divorce from Rome, *ib.*; her daughter Margaret declared by the Pope to be her lawful heiress, *ib.*
- Margaret, Princess, daughter of Queen Margaret and the Earl of Angus, one of the claimants to the throne of England on the death of Edward VI., i. 99, 100; is appointed by Henry VIII. first lady of honour to the Princess Elizabeth, 160; is betrothed to Lord Thomas Howard, *ib.*; her marriage prevented by Henry VIII. *ib.*, 161; is married to the Earl of Lennox, *ib.*; her opposition to Queen Elizabeth, 162; projects a marriage between her son Henry Darnley and Mary Queen of Scots, 163; is consigned to the Tower by Elizabeth, 166; her prison-life, *ib.*; after the murder of her son, is released by Elizabeth, 168; dies in poverty, *ib.*
- Margaret of Salisbury, her death on Tower green, i. 7, 158.
- Markham, Sir Griffin, is induced by Father Watson to join in the Priests' Plot, i. 292; vainly endeavours to win over Lord Grey, 265, 294, 295; his arrest and imprisonment in the Tower, 297; charges against him, 298; is condemned to die, 300; his execution stayed by the mandate of the King, 303; is permitted to live abroad, 305.
- Markham, Lady, assistance offered by her to Cecil in discovering the hiding-places

- of the Jesuit fathers, i. 379, 380; lays a snare for Father Gerard, 380.
- Markham, William, accompanies Arabella Stuart in her escape from East Barnet, i. 435, 437; is taken, and sent to the Marshalsea, 440; his examination in the Tower, *ib.*
- Marshalsea, i. 423, 440; ii. 12, 128, 148, 150, 151, 217, 223; character of the prisoners confined in, 128, 129; release of prisoners from, 150, 151.
- Marston Moor, battle of, ii. 237, 239, 240, 354.
- Marston, Robert, the poet, writes a life of Lord Grey in verse, i. 268.
- Marten, Sir Henry, Judge of the Admiralty Court, ii. 243; sends instructions to Eliot to render the prizes of the pirate Nutt to Spurway, mayor of Dartmouth, 126, 127; is called upon by Calvert to report on the charges of Nutt against Eliot, 130, 131; his difficulty in making the report, 133; his letter to the king, 135.
- Martin, a Reformer, is committed to the Tower, ii. 414.
- Martin Tower, i. 8, 253, 411; ii. 338.
- Mary, daughter of Henry VII., marries Louis XII. of France, i. 100; marries Charles Brandon, *ib.*; leaves two daughters, Frances and Elinor, *ib.*
- Mary, daughter of Henry VIII. and Catherine of Aragon, her claim to the crown at the death of Edward VI., i. 98; is proclaimed Queen at Kenning Hall, 109; rising of the country in her favour, 112; is proclaimed Queen in London, 115; takes Renard, the Spanish agent of Charles V., as her adviser, 120; opposition to her marriage with Philip, 127; proclaims Wyatt a rebel, 128; liberates Courtney, Gardiner, and Norfolk from the Tower, 138; Courtney aspires to her hand, *ib.*; her match with Philip of Spain, 139; Renard induces her to re-commit Courtney to the Tower, 140; consents to put Lady Jane Grey to death, 141; her anger at Lady Jane's attachment to the Protestant faith, 143; lodges Cranmer in the Tower, 148; her enmity to Cranmer, 149, 150; humiliates Cranmer, 151.
- Mary Queen of Scots, her descent from Henry VII., i. 99; interest taken by Queen Elizabeth in her selection of a husband, 164; her marriage with Lord Darnley, and consequences, 166; murder of her husband, 168; flees to England, 169; position of Mary on her arrival in England, 169; plots against the crown of Elizabeth, 170; assistance rendered to her by Leslie, Bishop of Ross, 171; commission sent by Elizabeth to inquire into her conduct in Scotland, 172; seduces to her interests the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Northumberland, *ib.*; her correspondence with the Catholic powers, 173; hears of Leslie's defection, 188; buried in Westminster Abbey, 447.
- Maryland, so called from King Charles's queen, ii. 172.
- Mason, Colonel, rescued by Colonel Blood from the king's guard when being conveyed to York Castle, ii. 333, 334.
- Massinger the poet, ii. 128.
- Matthew Paris' *Historia Anglorum*, picture in, of the fall of Griffin, Prince of Wales, from the top of the White tower, i. 33.
- Maud the Fair (Maud Fitzwalter) confined by King John in one of the turrets of the White tower, i. 28, 31; refuses to listen to his disgraceful proposals, 31; is poisoned by him, *ib.*
- Mayerne, a French adventurer, the share taken by him in poisoning Overbury, i. 460, 470.
- Maynard, John, ii. 161, 244.
- Meagher, William, ii. 471.
- Medina, Don Juan de Taxis, Conde de Villa, Spanish ambassador, his lavish expenditure to corrupt the court of James, i. 299; acceptance by Cecil and Northumberland of his bribes, *ib.*
- Medway, destruction by the citizens of London of kideals laid in the, i. 23; Dutch in the, ii. 303.
- Merchants, seek redress from the king and Parliament for the piracies of Spain and Florence, ii. 85, 87, 88; being refused, they take out letters of marque from the Dutch ports, 88.
- Merlin's Cave, ii. 420.
- Mesc, Mr., one of the names by which Father Garnet was known, i. 282. *See* Garnet.
- Mervin, Sir Henry, appointed Admiral of the Narrow Seas, ii. 111; favours the Huguenots, 115; accompanies Admiral de Souboise on his return to Rochelle, 116; is put out of commission by the machinations of Calvert, 117; is confined in the Marshalsea, 129; his release, 151.
- Michell, Mr., is committed to the Tower for the abuse of patents, ii. 51.
- Middle tower, the, i. 9.
- Milburn, Thomas, placed in jail for printing the 'English Catholic's Apology,' ii. 296.
- Mills, Mrs., assists the Countess of Nithisdale in the escape of her husband from the Tower, ii. 356.
- Milton, John, ii. 243.
- Mint, the, i. 8.
- Mitchell, John, ii. 471.
- Mohun, Charles, Lord, ii. 244.
- Moir, Lord, Constable of the Tower, ii. 429.
- Mompesson, Mr., escapes punishment for

- his abuse of patents by leaving the country, ii. 51.
- Monasteries, opposition to their suppression in the north of England, i. 79.
- Monk, committed to the Tower, ii. 239; dissolves the Rota club, 251; offers rewards to Algernon Sydney, 356.
- Monmouth, James, Duke of, ii. 244; son of King Charles and Lucy Walters, 338; his appearance and character, *ib.*; private marriage said to have been celebrated between the king and his mother, 339; his encounter with Lord Halifax, *ib.*; his introduction by Howard of Escrick to Algernon Sydney, 340; declines the offer of the Prince of Orange to serve against the Turks, 371; influence possessed over him by Lady Wentworth, 371, 372; his neglect of his wife and family, 372; returns to England at the head of an expedition, *ib.*; his proclamation on landing, 373; assumes the title of king, *ib.*; is defeated at Sedgemoor, *ib.*; is arrested, *ib.*; his children are placed in the Lieutenant's house, *ib.*; his commitment to the Tower, *ib.*; seeks an interview with the king, *ib.*; his abject conduct, 374; his cruel treatment of his wife, 375; is visited by Earl Clarendon, Bishops Ken and Turner, and Tenison, *ib.*; his parting interview with his wife and children, *ib.*; his execution, 376; is buried in St. Peter's Church, *ib.*
- Monmouth, Duchess of, ii. 244, 372, 375, 376.
- Monson, Sir Thomas, receives instructions to accept Weston as keeper of the Bloody tower, i. 468; master of the Armoury, ii. 14; is in receipt of bribes from Spain, 15; his connection with Overbury's murder, 16; is deprived of his office and committed to the Tower, i. 473, ii. 16.
- Monson, Sir William, suspects the escape of a prisoner of state from the Tower, i. 427; measures adopted by him to prevent it, *ib.*; the war-ship ordered by him to pursue overtakes Lady Arabella Stuart, 438; Admiral in the Narrow Seas, ii. 15; is a pensioner of the King of Spain, 15, 70, 166; is deprived of his post and committed to the Tower, 16.
- Monson, William, son of the Admiral, is employed by Lady Suffolk to supplant Villiers, ii. 17; is not received by King James at court, *ib.*; affects to be converted to the Anglican Church, 18.
- Montagu Close, the seat of Lord Montagu, i. 401.
- Montagu, Lord. *See* Browne.
- Montagu, Sydney, ii. 244.
- Monteagle, Lord, his connection with Winter, one of the Gunpowder-plot conspirators, i. 322, 323; the papal breves shown to him by Catesby, *ib.*; his house at Hoxton, *ib.*; instructions given by him to Winter on his mission to Velasco, 329; receives a mysterious letter warning him not to go to the Parliament House, 356; shows the letter to Cecil, *ib.*; his solicitude that Catesby should be informed of the discovery of the Plot, 357; with Lord Suffolk inspects the vaults under Parliament House, 363; words heard by Kit Wright under his window, 365, 366; his name frequently mentioned by the prisoners in the Tower showing his complicity with the plot, 377; the Council desire to ignore his treasonable antecedents, *ib.*
- Montrose, Duke of, ii. 385.
- Montrose, Duchess of, ii. 397, 403.
- Monument, one of the Cato Street conspirators, committed to the Tower, ii. 466.
- Mordaunt, Henry, Baron Mordaunt, his character, i. 402; his friendship with Catesby, *ib.*; his examination before the Star-Chamber, 403; is committed to the Tower, *ib.*; his sentence and liberation, *ib.*
- More, Sir George, Lieutenant of the Tower, receives as prisoners Lord and Lady Somerset, i. 476; his instructions at the trial of Somerset, 477.
- More, Thomas, keeper of the Marshalsea, receives orders to release his prisoners, ii. 150.
- More, Sir Thomas, ii. 242.
- Morgan, Thomas, an agent of the Jesuits, offers to cut off Queen Elizabeth, i. 326; various plots in which he had been engaged, 327; his flight from London on the discovery of the Plot, 368, 371; is taken prisoner at Holbeach, 372.
- Morley, Sir Robert, Lieutenant of the Tower, places Sir John Oldcastle in Beauchamp Tower, i. 60, 61.
- Morley and Monteagle, Thomas, Lord, quarrels with and kills Harry Hastings, ii. 273-275; is arrested and committed to the Tower, 244, 276; during the plague is permitted to reside at his country house, *ib.*; is tried by his peers in Westminster Hall, 277, 278; is found guilty of manslaughter, 279; claims the benefit of his clergy and peerage, *ib.*; obtains his liberty, *ib.*; goes abroad, 280.
- Mortimer, Lord, assists the Earl of Warwick in the seizure of Sir Simon Burley, i. 54; escapes to Ireland, 56.
- Mortimer, Roger, is imprisoned in the Tower, i. 33; his guilty connection with Queen Isabella, *ib.*; escapes up the kitchen chimney, and crosses to France, *ib.*; rejoins Isabella, *ib.*; his career and death, *ib.*

- Moundford, Lady Arabella Stuart's physician, reports her inability to proceed from Highgate to the north, i. 432; is committed to the Gate-house for supposed complicity in the attempted escape of Arabella Stuart, 440; is liberated, *ib.*
- Mountjoy, Lord, i. 314.
- Mounts, the, i. 3, 9.
- Moyle, John, his encounter with Sir John Eliot, ii. 9.
- Mulberry Tree, the, ii. 434.
- Mulgrave, Lord, ii. 446.
- Munck, Levinus, secretary to Cecil, i. 355; gives instructions to Father Southwick to act as spy on the movements of the Jesuits, 356.
- Murray, Lord, remonstrates against the marriage of Darnley with Mary Queen of Scots, i. 166; revolts, *ib.*; is reconciled to Mary, 167; is assassinated, 168.
- Mynors, Sergeant, reports to the Council on the inability of Arabella Stuart to travel, i. 433.
- NAG'S HEAD, Club held at, ii. 420; plot formed at, 434, 435.
- Nairn, Lord, is committed to the Tower, ii. 245, 387; pleads guilty, 389; is pardoned, 391, 404.
- Nantwich, battle of, ii. 237.
- Naseby, battle of, ii. 240, 290.
- Naunton, Secretary, his instructions to Sir Thomas Wilson respecting the treatment of Raleigh, i. 247, 248.
- Navy Office, the residence of Admiral Penn, ii. 303.
- Neile, Bishop, ii. 203, 204, 227.
- Nevill, Lord Ralph, Constable of the Tower, takes charge of the Earl of Warwick, i. 55.
- Nevill, Charles, Earl of Westmoreland, joins the Earl of Northumberland in his conspiracy against Queen Elizabeth, i. 175; escapes to Flanders, 176.
- Nevill, Henry, a member of the Rota club, ii. 251, 256, 262.
- Neville's Cross, battle of, i. 32.
- Newbury, battle of, ii. 237.
- Newgate, Captain Corvé confined in, i. 440.
- Newport, Earl of, Constable of the Tower, ii. 234.
- Nicholson, Edmund, the armourer, sent from London, with a supply of pikes and guns, to Warwickshire, i. 355.
- Nithsdale, Earl of, his committal to the Tower for taking up arms in behalf of the Pretender, ii. 245, 387; pleads guilty, 389; is condemned to die, 391; escapes dressed in female attire, 400-403; leaves the country in disguise, 403.
- Nithsdale, Countess of, her family sup-
porters of the Stuart line, ii. 392; her attachment to the Catholic Church, 393, 394; resolves, with divine assistance, to save her husband, 394; her journey from Scotland to London, *ib.*; by bribing the keepers, is enabled to see her husband, 395; determines to dress her husband in women's clothes, and so escape, 396; presents a petition to the king, 398; its reception, *ib.*; prays the peers to spare the life of her husband, 399; by the aid of friends confuses the guards, while her husband escapes in female attire, 400-403; goes to Rome, 403.
- Norbrook, the house of Grant, i. 340, 349.
- Norfolk, Dukes of. *See* Howard.
- 'No Popery' cry, ii. 407.
- Norreys, Lady Bessie, her betrothal to Edward Wray, ii. 75; her father wishes to transfer her to Kit Villiers, 76; defeats the machinations of the Villiers family and marries Wray, 77.
- Norreys, Lord, his daughter engaged in marriage to Edward Wray, ii. 75; is created Earl of Berkshire, *ib.*; on the instigation of Lady Buckingham he is willing to transfer his daughter to Kit Villiers, 76; is driven mad by the Villiers family, and commits suicide, *ib.*
- North, Captain, committed to the Tower through the intrigues of Gondomar, ii. 70.
- North and Grey, Lord, is sent to the Tower, ii. 406.
- Northampton, Earl of. *See* Henry Howard.
- Northumberland, Duke and Earls of. *See* Dudley and Percy.
- Northumberland, Countess of, put away by her husband, i. 406; rejoins him when imprisoned in the Tower, 412; her dark associations with the Tower, 412; appeals to King James for the release of her husband, 413.
- Northumberland's family, i. 409.
- Northumberland's Walk, i. 411.
- Nottingham, Earl of. *See* Charles Howard.
- Nutt, Captain, receives, with a pardon, instructions from Secretary Calvert to attack the enemies of Spain, ii. 102, 104; assists Calvert in founding a colony of Catholics in Newfoundland, 105; makes prizes of Dutch, English, and French vessels, 106; his home at Tor Bay, *ib.*; defies the mayor of Dartmouth, *ib.*; his seizure of an English vessel, 122; is entrapped by Sir John Eliot, and placed in jail, 122, 124; is sent to London, 124; his trial at White Hall, and his accusations of Eliot, 125; a second royal pardon procured for him by Calvert, 134, 135; is restored to liberty, 135.
- Nun's Bower, the room in the Tower where the Maid of Kent was lodged, i. 70.

- OLDCASTLE, Sir John**, his life and character, i. 59; known as 'the good Lord Cobham,' *ib.*; protects the Lollards, *ib.*; excites the enmity of Archbishop Arundel, *ib.*; is cited by Arundel to appear at Canterbury, 60; refuses compliance, 61; is committed by the king to the Tower, *ib.*; is lodged in the Beauchamp tower, from him called the Cobham tower, 2, 60; his trial by a synod of monks, 61; is sentenced to be burnt, *ib.*; noble confession made by him, 62; is released from confinement by Fisher, *ib.*; his concealment in London, 63; his wanderings and dangers, 64, 65; is betrayed by a Welshman named Powis, 65; is re-committed to the Tower, *ib.*; is burnt in St. Giles's Field, *ib.*; his memory calumniated by monks and friars, 66; inquiry into the cause of Shakespeare's changing his name to that of Sir John Falstaff, *ib.*; pronounced by Shakespeare to have 'died a martyr,' 67.
- Oldcorne, Father**, a Jesuit priest, is known as Mr. Perkins at White Webbs, i. 285, 287; leaves London for Hendlip Hall, 362; induces Garnet to join him there, 382; his concealment with Garnet in a crevice of the wall, and his discovery, 383, 384, 385; his committal to the Bloody tower, 253, 389; his secret conferences with Garnet overheard by spies, 391, 393; is examined by the Commissioners in the Powder Plot room, 396; his confessions, *ib.*; is condemned and hung, 397.
- Oates, Titus**, gives evidence of a Popish plot, ii. 299.
- O'Brien, Smith**, ii. 471.
- 'Oceana,'** history of the work, ii. 249-251; its effect on the public mind, 251; pamphlets and books written in answer to it, *ib.*; principles inculcated in it, *ib.*
- O'Connell, Daniel**, fights a fatal duel with D'Esterre, ii. 442; trial of, 471.
- O'Connor, Arthur**, ii. 245.
- O'Connor, Roger**, his friendship with Burdett, ii. 425, 426, 428, 429.
- Old Bailey**, ii. 346, 364, 415, 417.
- Olivarez, Duque de**, informs Philip of the arrival of Prince Charles, ii. 137; his power over the mind of the king, 138; his views respecting the power of Spain and Austria, 138, 139; his insincerity in the match between Prince Charles and the Infanta, 142, 144, 145, 146.
- Orange, William, Prince of**, ii. 369; desires Monmouth to go to Hungary to serve against the Turks, 371; his arrival in England, and flight of James II., 379; attempt on the life of, 113.
- Orleans, Duke of**, *See* Charles, Duke of Orleans.
- Ormonde, Duke of**, attempt by Colonel Blood to seize him at Dublin Castle, ii. 319; Blood foiled in his attempt to seize and hang him in London, 320-323; Buckingham is threatened by his son with vengeance if his life is again attempted, 323.
- Orrery, Charles, Earl of**, is sent to the Tower, ii. 406.
- Orthodox clergy**, ii. 173.
- Ossory, Thomas, Earl of**, challenges the Duke of Buckingham, and is committed to the Tower, ii. 284, 285; threatens Buckingham with vengeance if the life of his father, the Duke of Ormonde, is again attempted, 323.
- Ostend**, besieged by the Spanish and Austrian armies, i. 270; its gallant defence by the Dutch and English troops, 270, 271; its capture, 307; escape of William Seymour to, 439.
- Outer Ward**, one of the two chief divisions of the Tower, i. 8, 9; buildings contained within it, 9; rights of the people to have free access to it, *ib.*
- Overbury, Thomas**, poet and politician, i. 456; ii. 242; his friendship with Carr, i. 456; is knighted, 457; possesses great influence in the state, *ib.*; is an enemy of Spain, 459; the austerity of his morals, *ib.*; his want of popularity, 464; remonstrates with Carr respecting his infatuated passion for Lady Essex, 464, 465; writes his poem called 'The Wife,' 465; Northampton and Lady Essex resolve on his death, *ib.*; Lady Essex endeavours to prevail on Sir David Wood to assassinate him, 465, 466; Northampton poisons the King's mind against him, 466; is committed to the Tower, *ib.*; his father and friends refused admission to him, 468; a present of poisoned jellies sent to him by Lady Essex, 469; Rochester vainly endeavours to send him a physician, *ib.*; receives a visit from Northampton, 470; a poisonous glister applied to him, *ib.*; his death, *ib.*; his memory vindicated, 472; his murderers punished, 473-475.
- Overbury's cell**, ii. 16, 211.
- Owen, Hugh**, a Jesuit priest, takes up his quarters at Brussels, i. 280, 325; part taken by him in the Powder Plot, 329; assistance given by him to Winter in engaging the services of Fawkes, *ib.*; promises to persuade Sir William Stanley to assist the conspirators, 340; Sir William Stanley induced by him to join the Powder Plot, 347.
- Owen, Nicholas**, a lay Jesuit, servant of Garnet, called 'Little John,' at White Webbs, i. 285; goes with his master to Hendlip Hall, 382; Hendlip Hall constructed in accordance with his plans as a place of concealment for priests, *ib.*;

his concealment with Chambers, and his discovery, 383; is committed to the Tower, 386; confessions wrung from him by torture, 394; commits suicide, *ib.*
Oxford, Earl of. *See* Henry De Vere.
Oxford fires a pistol at the queen, ii. 471; is sent to Bedlam, *ib.*

PALACE YARD, execution of Raleigh in, i. 1, 8.

Paine, Thomas, author of the 'Rights of Man,' ii. 411; is a member of the French Convention, *ib.*; is expelled from the Assembly as a foreigner, *ib.*; is arrested by Robespierre, *ib.*; is a prisoner in the Luxembourg, *ib.*; his 'Rights of Man' prescribed by Pitt, and the reading of it aloud in assemblies made a criminal act, *ib.*; writes the 'Age of Reason,' *ib.*

Palmer, Roger, Earl of Castlemaine, committed to the Tower seven times, ii. 290, 297, 299, 300, 301; his personal appearance, his devotion to the Catholic Church, *ib.*; falls in love with Barbara Villiers, 291; his marriage, *ib.*; goes to Holland, and offers assistance to Prince Charles, 292; his connivance at the prince's attentions to his wife, *ib.*; at the Restoration obtains the post of marshal of the King's Bench, 293; is created Earl of Castlemaine, *ib.*; birth of a son, *ib.*; quarrels between him, his wife, and the king as to the baptism of the child in the rites of the Protestant or the Catholic Church, 294; leaves his wife, lives abroad, and becomes a monk, 294, 298; returns, and is separated from his wife, 295, 298; writes the 'English Catholic's Apology,' 295; is arrested and committed to the Tower, 296; his release, 297; is again committed to the Tower for his connection with the Popish Plot, 299; writes there the 'Compendium,' 300; incites Captain Dangerfield to murder the king, 300, 301; is sent by King James on an embassy to Rome, *ib.*; his reception by the Pope, *ib.*; is denounced as a public enemy by the House of Commons, *ib.*; is sent by William of Orange again to the Tower, *ib.*; his retirement to Wales, 302.

Palmer, Sir Griffin, Attorney-General, at the trial of Lord Morley, ii. 277.

Palmer, Sir Thomas, executed on Tower hill for his adhesion to Lady Jane Grey, i. 122.

Palmer, failure of his attempt with Crompton to effect the escape of Arabella Stuart, i. 446.

Papal breves, i. 78, 177, 178; respecting the succession to Elizabeth, received by Garnet, 323; are shown to Catesby, Monteagle, and Tresham, *ib.*; on the

proclamation of King James, Garnet destroys them, 324.

Pardons sold to pirates, ii. 104.

Parham, Sir Edward, is induced by Father Watson to join the Priests' Plot, i. 295; his arrest, 298; his life is spared, 300.

Parker, William, reasons for his becoming a Roman Catholic, i. 273.

Parliament. *See* House of Commons.

Parliamentary reform, demand for, ii. 419.

Parrot, Edward, assists Colonel Blood in his attempt to seize the king's jewels, ii. 326; is taken and lodged in the Tower, 330; is discharged, 335.

Parry, Sir Thomas, Lady Arabella Stuart intrusted to his custody after her marriage with William Seymour, i. 423.

Patents, their unpopularity, ii. 50.

Paul V. despatches Father Roberts to England, i. 346.

Paull, Mr., fights a duel with Sir Francis Burdett, ii. 423.

Peele composes for the Earl of Northumberland a Poem, i. 407.

Pemberton, Sir Francis, sits as judge in the trial of Lord William Russell, ii. 362.

Pembroke, Earl of, his opposition to the Howard family, i. 477; his patronage of Shakespeare, 302, 477; his activity in bringing Overbury's murderers to account, *ib.*; interest taken by him in Villiers, ii. 6; communicates to Monson the king's message, 18. *See* Herbert.

Pembroke, Lord, endeavours to obtain the release of the Earl of Nithisdale, ii. 339.

Penn, William, effect produced on his mind by the preaching of the Quaker, Thomas Loe, ii. 304; is in consequence sent to France by his father, *ib.*; returns, and is arrested, *ib.*; passages in his 'Sandy Foundation Shaken' declared to be blasphemous, 306; avows to Lord Arlington his authorship of the book, and is committed to the Tower, *ib.*; his illegal detention there, 307; his examination by Lord Arlington, *ib.*; reasons urging the king to approve of Arlington's detention of him, 308, 310; his unflinching endurance, 311; charge of blasphemy brought against him, 312; writes 'No Cross, No Crown,' i. 2; ii. 314; is visited by Stillingfleet, 315; writes 'Innocency with her Open Face,' 316; is liberated on the prayer of his father and the Duke of York, *ib.*; Sydney's correspondence with him, 357.

Penn, Admiral, Sir William, his naval expeditions against the Dutch, ii. 273, 280; his relations with the Duke of York, 303, 304; his character, *ib.*; his residence at the Navy Office, *ib.*; attempts to eradicate the effect of the preaching of Thomas Loe on his son,

- ib.*; his answer to the accusations brought against him by Sir Robert Howard, 305, 306.
- Pennington, Sir Isaac, appointed Lieutenant of the Tower, ii. 237.
- Pepys, Samuel, the diarist, in the Tower, ii. 243; on the character of Lady Robinson, 262; his account of an evening with King Charles, Lady Castlemaine, and the Duchess of Richmond, 268; on the elopement of Frances Stuart with the Duke of Richmond, 271; on the fees received by Sir John Robinson, 285.
- Percy, Henry, sixth Earl of Northumberland, solicited to accept the leadership of the Pilgrims of Grace, i. 82; attempts to restrain his brothers in their course, 92.
- Percy, Thomas, seventh Earl of Northumberland, is induced by Mary Queen of Scots to plot against Queen Elizabeth, i. 172; heads an insurrection in the north of England, 175; on the advance of Sussex retreats to Scotland, 176; is seized by Murray and lodged in Lochleven Castle, *ib.*; is sold by Sir William Douglas to Lord Hunsdon, 190; is executed at York, *ib.*
- Percy, Henry, eighth Earl of Northumberland, is induced by the Jesuits to conspire against Queen Elizabeth, i. 192; his interviews with Paget and Shelley at Petworth, 193; is committed to the Bloody tower, 194; his murder by Bailiff, 195-197.
- Percy, Harry, ninth Earl of Northumberland, his military and naval engagements, i. 406; his violent temper, 406, 407; is separated from his Countess, *ib.*; his patronage of men of literature and science, *ib.*; at the accession of James finds himself in antagonism with Cecil, *ib.*; his defence of Raleigh, 408; offices in the court conferred upon him, 408, 409; Sion House settled upon him, 408; retires disappointed from court, and consoles himself with the delight of study, and with his family, 409; his imprudent dealings with Thomas Percy, the conspirator, 409, 410; is committed to the Tower, 410; his accusations before the Star-chamber, *ib.*; his condemnation, *ib.*; occupies the Martin tower for sixteen years, 411; from his studies and occupations receives the name of the 'Wizard Earl,' *ib.*; his conduct while a prisoner, 412; his Countess rejoins him, *ib.*; his property seized by the crown, 413; his protestations against this act, 413, 414; has hopes of a reprieve, *ib.*; hires the Brick tower for his son Algernon, *ib.*; his intercourse with Raleigh, Dee, and Heriot, *ib.*; his displeasure with the marriage of his son Algernon with Lady Anne Cecil, and that of his daughter Lucy with the favourite Hay, 415; his reluctance to accept the pardon obtained for him by Lady Lucy Hay, 415, 416; departs from the Tower under a salute of guns, 416; his pride still dominant, *ib.*; takes up his residence at Petworth, *ib.*
- Percy, Algernon, tenth Earl of Northumberland, his boyhood in the Tower, i. 409; the Brick tower hired for his residence by his father, 414; his marriage with Lady Anne Cecil not approved by his father, 415.
- Percy, Lucy, daughter of the Earl of Northumberland, her great beauty, i. 409, 415; her marriage with James Hay, earl of Carlisle, disapproved by her father, *ib.*; obtains from King James the release of her father from the Tower, 416.
- Percy, Lady Dorothy, the mother of Algernon Sydney, ii. 354.
- Percy, Thomas, his character and history, i. 274, 332; Catesby explains his project to him, 332; eagerly enters into the Plot, 333; the oath of secrecy administered to him by Father Gerard, *ib.*; gains possession of Vinegar House and the adjoining vaults, 334, 337; power conferred on him by his fellow-conspirators, 341; his conferences with Catesby, 342; engages to seize Prince Charles, *ib.*; is summoned by Catesby to London, 360; his arrival at White Webbs, 361; advises perseverance in the Plot, 362; dines with the Earl of Northumberland on November 4th, 362, 400; is informed by Guy Fawkes of the inspection of the vault by Lords Montague and Suffolk, 363; on hearing from Kit Wright of the discovery of the Plot, he flees to Holbeach, 366-372; is mortally wounded, 372; his body exhumed and hung, 373.
- Percy, Sir Ingram and Sir Thomas, join the camp of the Pilgrims, i. 82; their commissions of lieutenants of the borders revoked by their brother Henry, 82, 89; are seized and committed to the Tower, 94; Sir Thomas is hung at Tyburn, Sir Ingram receives a pardon, 95; inscriptions by them on the walls of the Tower, 75.
- Perkins, Mrs. See Ann Vaux.
- Persons, Robert, a Jesuit priest, i. 254; his unpatriotic declaration, 275; is the first English Prefect of the Jesuits, 279; his mission to England and his instructions, 254, 279; his converts, 279; takes up his residence at the court of Rome, 280; his reply in the 'Manifestation' to Father Watson's 'Quodlibetical Questions,' 290; papal breves forwarded by him from Rome to the Jesuits in England, 323, 324; his advice to the Pope on the accession of

- King James, 324, 325; falls into suspicion at the Roman court, *ib.*; procures for Father Robarts an audience with Pope Paul V., 346.
- Peterborough, Henry Earl of, ii, 245.
- Peterborough, Earl of, Lord Mordaunt's grandson, i, 403.
- Peterloo, massacre at, ii, 443, 447.
- Petty, Sir William, founder of the house of Lansdowne, a member of the Rota club, ii, 251.
- Petworth, the residence of the Earl of Northumberland, i, 416.
- Peyton, Sir John, Lieutenant of the Tower, his treatment of Raleigh, i, 223; is dismissed from his post, 228.
- Phelips, Sir Robert, accompanies Digby to Spain, ii, 49; his position in the court of King James, *ib.*; his antagonism to Lord Bacon, *ib.*; his connection with the party in the House of Commons called 'Under-takers,' 63, 157, 161, 172; is committed to the Tower, 64, 70; his release, 111; the king's distrust of him and his party, 158.
- Philip II. of Spain, his marriage with Queen Mary, i, 139.
- Philip III. of Spain, pensioners of, in the court of King James, ii, 15, 70; i, 254; restrictions on English commerce by, ii, 84; procures the execution of Raleigh, i, 250; is the instigator of the Anglo-Spanish conspiracy, 254; encouragement given by him to the Jesuits, 274, 278; is well served by the English Jesuits, 280; his treatment of the Jesuit agents, 325.
- Philip IV., his joy when informed that Prince Charles had arrived in Madrid, ii, 137, 138; his devotion to the Catholic Church, 139.
- Philippa, Queen, captures David Bruce at the battle of Neville's Cross, i, 32.
- Pilgrimage of Grace, a rising in the north of England in behalf of monasteries, i, 76, 80, 84.
- Pilgrimage to St. Winifred's Well, i, 349.
- Pillory, the, ii, 44, 198, 219.
- Pirates, their treatment by the Spaniards, ii, 85; effect on them by the proclamation of outlawry by King James, 97; numbers of them are gibbeted and hung in chains, 97, 98; pardons purchasable by them, 102, 104, 105.
- Pitt, William, his proclamation against meetings where Paine's 'Rights of Man' were read aloud, ii, 411; moves for a committee to report on the papers produced by Baron Melville, 412; reports the existence of seditious bodies having for their object the overthrow of the constitution, *ib.*; asks leave to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, and to introduce a bill giving power to detain suspected persons, *ib.*; seizes Thomas Hardy and Daniel Adams, *ib.*; Rev. Jeremiah Joyce, 413; Rev. John Horne Tooke, and others, *ib.*; fails to prove his charges of high treason against the prisoners, 417.
- Plague and Fire of London, ii, 276.
- Pole, Sir Richard, i, 101; marries Princess Margaret, *ib.*
- Pole, Reginald, i, 101, 136.
- Pole, Henry, Lord Montague, his execution, i, 101.
- Pole, Catherine, a claimant to the throne on the death of Edward VI., i, 101; is married to the Earl of Huntingdon, *ib.*
- Pole, Arthur and Edmund de la, conspire against Elizabeth, i, 156; are committed to the Tower, *ib.*; memorials of them in the Beauchamp tower, 2, 157, 158.
- Pole, Master of the Mint, ii, 447.
- Political clubs, objects of, ii, 420.
- Popham, Chief Justice, judges and condemns those concerned in Priests' Plot, i, 300; his examination of Guy Fawkes in the Tower, 319-321; is one of the commissioners appointed to try Garnet, 397.
- Popish plot, ii, 300.
- Potier takes the Duchess of Richmond as his model for 'Britannia,' ii, 272.
- Poulton, John, instructions given to him by Lady Somerset to bring away the papers from the Beaver Hat, i, 475.
- Powder, its employment on various occasions in conspiracies, i, 326.
- Powder Plot Room, a part of the Lieutenant's house, i, 309; its records and adornments, 309, 310; inscriptions on its walls, 310, 311, 313; examination of Guy Fawkes in, 314-321.
- Powder Plot, not to be ascribed to the Catholics, i, 310; or to Jesuits, *ib.*; its agents Protestant converts, 311; its objects, 311; its origin and history, 322-380; its failure, 364; punishment of the conspirators, 372, 380.
- Powder poisoning, ii, 259, 463-470; ii, 16.
- Powis, a Welshman, betrays the good Lord Cobham, i, 65.
- Prestal, the astrologer, prophesies the death of Elizabeth, i, 156.
- Preston, battle of, ii, 387, 392.
- Preston, Thomas, a leader in the Spencean clubs, ii, 434; heads a procession to the Tower, 436; his speech to the soldiers there, and its reception, *ib.*; is committed to the Tower, 438; his trial and acquittal, 441; his desire to be examined when Thistlewood and others were captured, 465.
- Preston, Father, his confinement in the Marshalsea, ii, 129.
- Priests' Plot, its history and failure, i, 265, 289-296.

- Prisoners in the Tower, cost of their maintenance, i. 148.
- Prisoners' walk, i. 211; ii. 241.
- Protestant Plot, ii. 346.
- Prynne, William, his opposition to Laud, ii. 218; offence given to the king in his 'Scourge for Stage Players,' *ib.*, 242; is arraigned before the Star-Chamber, *ib.*; brutal sentence passed upon him, 219; is confined in the Tower, *ib.*; works written by him there, *ib.*; his citation before the Star-Chamber, 220; his severe sentence, 221; is placed in a prison in the Isle of Jersey, *ib.*; his ghastly apparition to Laud, 238; seizes Laud's papers, and writes the Life of Laud, 238, 239.
- Pulteney, Sir William, a member of the Rota club, ii. 251; arrests Harrington, and conveys him to the Tower, 252, 253.
- Purbeck, Viscount. See John Villiers.
- Puritans, ii. 173.
- Pym, John, the king's fear of him, ii. 158; supports the policy of Sir J. Elliot, 161, 180, 181; his remark to Wentworth on his passing over to the royal side, 188; leads the popular party in its impeachment of Wentworth, 230, 232.
- QUEEN'S garden, i. 8.
- Queen's stair, the, i. 15; ii. 345, 370; all persons coming in honour landed at, i. 16.
- Queen's lodgings in the Tower, Countess of Shrewsbury confined in, i. 254; ii. 165.
- 'Quodlibetical Questions,' i. 289.
- RACK and instruments of torture abolished, ii. 198.
- Radcliffe, Charles, taken with his brother, the Earl of Derwentwater, and condemned to die, ii. 408; escapes to France, *ib.*; returns with Charles Edward, and is again taken, *ib.*; his execution, 409.
- Raleigh, Sir Walter, i. 253, 254, 261, 262, 293, 298, 300, 301, 304, 307, 408, 409, 414, 416, 443, 477; ii. 242, 266, 363; many parts of the Tower named after him, i. 216, 217; his friendship with Shakspeare and Ben Jonson, 218, 219; his extraordinary abilities, 219; interest taken by him in the foundation of free states in America, *ib.*; his hostility to Spain, 219, 220; his seduction of Bessie Throgmorton, 220; is confined to the Brick tower by Elizabeth, 222; is re-committed to the Tower in the reign of James, 222, 223; is falsely accused by Lord Cobham of having been privy to the Arabella Plot, 223; unfounded rumour of his having committed suicide, 226; is cleared from the accusations of Lord Cobham, 230; his trial at Winchester, and re-committal to the Tower, 231; his great popularity, 233; efforts made by Lady Raleigh to procure his release, *ib.*; his estates plundered, 234; expenses of his maintenance in the Tower, 49, 234; his personal appearance, 235; harsh treatment shown to him by Sir William Waad, 237-240; his discovery of a method of expelling salt from sea-water, 237; failure of his health, 239; is transferred to the Garden house, 240; his 'Great Cordial,' 241; his scientific pursuits, 242; is visited by the noble and the learned, 243; writes political tracts, 244; his intercourse with Prince Henry, *ib.*; his 'History of the World,' 2, 244, 245; his voyage to Guiana, return, and fresh arrest, 245; is placed in the Wardrobe tower, 247; his treatment by Sir Thomas Wilson, 248, 249; James orders his execution, 250; his execution in Palace-yard, 251; ii. 1; the results of his death, i. 251; sends a message to Villiers, ii. 6; kindness shown to him by Villiers and Eliot, 8; his confinement in the Garden-house, 165; his kind instructions to Lady Apsley, 165.
- Raleigh's cell, Sir Lewis Stukeley confined in, ii. 12.
- Raleigh's Walk, i. 39, 151, 232, 236, 424, ii. 196, 241, 431.
- Raleigh, William de, pronounces judgment against the mariners who had laid kidels in the Medway, i. 25.
- Ralph, Bishop of Durham, treasurer to the Norman kings, employed by them to raise money for the construction of the Tower, i. 5; his unpopularity, 5, 29; is seized by the Commons on the death of Rufus, *ib.*; is sent to the Tower by Henry Beauclerc, *ib.*; is confined in the Banqueting floor of the White Tower, 28, 29; his treatment in confinement, *ib.*; his bold escape, and flight to France, 30; is called the 'Lion' and the 'Firebrand,' 5, 29.
- Randal, Richard, assistance given by him to Eliot in the capture of the pirate Nutt, ii. 121; is committed to prison, 135.
- Rayner, Mr., marries the widow of Sir George Villiers, ii. 4.
- Record office, Hall tower at one time used as the, i. 9; references to papers found in the, 32.
- Red Cow, the tavern where Judge Jeffrey's was recognised, ii. 380.
- Reeves, Edward, one of the witnesses to the marriage of Seymour and Lady Arabella Stuart, i. 423; is sent to the Marshalsea, *ib.*
- Reeve, apprentice to Lobel, applies the poisonous glistler to Overbury, i. 470; his illness and confessions, 473.

- Reformed religion more popular in large towns than in rural districts, i. 276.
- Reform riots, ii. 418-424.
- Renard, the Spanish agent of Charles V., becomes the chief adviser of Queen Mary, i. 120; his suspicious character, 133; promotes the match of Mary with Philip of Spain, 139; instigates Mary to commit Courtney to the Tower, 140; and put Lady Jane Grey to death, 142; induces Mary to send her sister Elizabeth to the Tower, 153.
- Restoration, the, ii. 290.
- Keynell, Sir George, Marshal of the King's Bench, receives commands to release his prisoners, ii. 150.
- Richard II. (Bordeaux), placed by the Commons under the guardianship of the Earl of Warwick, i. 53; his favourite Simon Burley seized, tried, and executed, 54; having attained the age of twenty-one he exhibits his vindictiveness, *ib.*; commits Warwick to the Tower, 55; imprisons Gloucester in Calais, 56.
- Richard III., Duke of Gloucester, crimes ascribed to him in connection with the Tower, i. 39; stabs King Henry VI. in the chapel adjoining the Hall tower, *ib.*; drowns his brother in the Bowyer tower, *ib.*; beheads Lord Hastings on the terrace below the Keep, 39, 44; orders Brackenbury to kill the young princes, 44; on the refusal of Brackenbury gives similar directions to Sir James Tyrrell, *ib.*; his defeat and death at Bosworth, 45; his cruel conduct to Sir Henry Wyatt, 50.
- Richardson, Thomas, Speaker of the House of Commons, ii. 50.
- Richelieu, Cardinal, ii. 190.
- Richmond, Duke of. *See* Charles Stuart.
- Richmond, Duchess of. *See* Frances Stuart.
- Ritcher, a Reformer, is committed to the Tower, ii. 413; his acquittal, 417.
- Ridley, Nicholas, Bishop of London, his sermon at St. Paul's Cross, i. 113; is committed to the Tower, 123; cost of his maintenance there, 48; his conferences with Cranmer and Latimer, 150; his martyrdom at Oxford, 151.
- Ridolfi, agent of the Pope, draws up a list of English nobles favourable to the Pope, i. 177; forwards treasonable letters to the Bishop of Ross, 178.
- River rights, i. 21-25.
- Rizzio, i. 165, 166.
- Robarts, Father, a Jesuit priest, has an audience with Pope Paul V., i. 346; is despatched to England, *ib.*; is stationed at Vinegar House, 351, 362; is arrested by Sir T. Knyvet, 364; mystery connected with his disappearance and freedom from punishment, 389.
- Robarts, Lord, succeeds the Duke of Ormonde in the lord-lieutenancy of Ireland, ii. 318.
- Robinson, Sir John, Lieutenant of the Tower, ii. 253, 262, 273, 276, 278, 281; his Tower fees, 281, 285; his anxiety as to the illegal detention of William Penn, 307.
- Robinson, Treasurer of the Navy, ii. 447.
- Rochelle, a refuge for Protestants, ii. 67; siege of, 115; its fall, *ib.*; terms of capitulation not observed by the king, 116; Buckingham makes show of a desire to release it, 190, 192, 202.
- Rochester, Viscount. *See* Carr.
- Rochfort, Lord, confined in the Martin tower, i. 411.
- Rodney, Edward, assistance rendered by him in the secret marriage of Lady Arabella Stuart and his cousin, William Seymour, i. 422; assists Seymour in his escape from the Water-gate, 438, 439; is apprehended and committed to the Tower, 440.
- Roebuck Society, ii. 386.
- Rohan, Duc de, takes the command of the Huguenots, ii. 116.
- Rokewood, Ambrose, is induced by Catesby to connect himself with the Powder Plot conspiracy, i. 325; his movements in London before the discovery of the Plot, 362, 363; his rapid flight to Dunchurch, 367; is injured by an explosion of gunpowder, 371; is wounded and taken prisoner in Holbeach, *ib.*; is drawn, hung, and bowelled on Tower Hill, 380.
- Rokewood, ii. 17.
- Roman wall, traces of a, near the Tower, i. 2.
- Roos, Lady. *See* Ann Lake.
- Roos, Lord, accusations of his wife, Ann Lake, against him, ii. 22; is violently assaulted by Arthur Lake, 23; is induced by Gondomar to leave England, *ib.*; his retirement to Rome, his conversion and death, *ib.*
- Rose and Crown, ii. 319.
- Roses, White and Red, i. 74.
- Rota, a political club, founded by James Harrington, ii. 251; its members, *ib.*; its advocacy of free voting, *ib.*; is dissolved by Monk, *ib.*
- Royal Society founded by Bishop Wilkins, ii. 251.
- Royall Book of Verse, i. 7, 37; picture in of Prince Charles of Orleans' life in the White tower, 37.
- Royston, a favourite hunting-seat of King James, i. 356, 473, 475.
- Rudyard, ii. 161.
- Rudston, Robert, i. 27, 125, 127, 129, 134.
- Ruggles, George, his play of 'Ignoramus' played before King James, at Cambridge, ii. 3.

- Rumbold, Richard, is induced to take a part in the Rye-House Plot, ii. 338, 341, 343; suggests to the conspirators his farm at Rye as a favourable spot for seizing the king and the Duke of York, 342; reward offered for his apprehension, 371; joins Argyll in his expedition to Scotland, 372; his death, *ib.*
- Rumsey, part taken by him in the Rye-House Plot, ii. 341; his arrest, 343; betrays his companions, 346.
- Russell, Thomas, warder in the Tower, his evidence respecting the death of the Earl of Essex, ii. 350.
- Russell, Lady, ii. 343, 362.
- Russell, Lord William, a friend of Sydney, i. 480; ii. 340; is summoned by the king before the Council, 343; is committed to the Tower, 244, 344; is removed to Newgate, 346; his death, 363.
- Ruthven, George, a Bow Street officer, set to watch the movements of Thistlewood and others, ii. 450; assists in their capture, 457-459.
- Rutland, Earl of, his opposition to the marriage of his daughter Lady Catharine Manners to Villiers, ii. 27; to thwart the king's will marries a second wife, *ib.*; death of his children, 28; is obliged to succumb to the king, 30; dowry required to be paid by him, *ib.*; his anger at his daughter leaving his house, 31; the marriage of his daughter, 32; takes the command of the fleet, 111, 115.
- Rye-House Plot, ii. 337; its object, 153; the character of the originators of it, *ib.*; the farm of Rye near Hoddesden placed at the disposal of the conspirators by Rumbold, 342; its failure, 343; arrests made by the king, *ib.*
- SACKVILLE, Sir Edward, counsels Lord-Chancellor Bacon to yield York House to Buckingham, ii. 55.
- Salisbury, Earl of, committed to the Tower, ii. 289. *See* Cecil.
- Salisbury, Lady, her intrigues, ii. 14, 40.
- Salkeld, Captain, a pirate, defies King James, ii. 99, 100.
- Salt tower, i. 8; ii. 414.
- Sampson, David, ii. 128.
- Sancroft, Archbishop, confined in the Martin tower, i. 411.
- Sanctuary at Westminster, Elizabeth Woodville takes refuge in the, i. 42.
- Sandwich, Ralph de, Constable of the Tower, book of accounts kept by him, i. 32.
- Sandys, one of the party called 'Under-takers,' ii. 157, 158.
- Sarman, a Bow Street officer, wounded in the capture of Thistlewood and others, ii. 460.
- Savage, Robert, boasts that he is an accomplice of the assassin Felton, ii. 197; is whipped, set in a pillory, and shorn of his ears, 198.
- Saville, Sir John, represents Yorkshire in Parliament, ii. 224; his quarrels with his relation, Wentworth, *ib.*; is elevated to the House of Lords as Baron Saville, *ib.*
- Sawyer, Sir Robert, Attorney-general, examines Sydney in the Tower, ii. 363.
- Scots, estimation in which they were held by the English in the reign of King James, i. 459; invasion of, into England, ii. 228.
- Scott, Attorney-general, conducts the trial of Horne Tooke and others, ii. 413; odium produced thereby, 415.
- Scott, Prebendary, visits Judge Jeffreys in the Tower, ii. 383.
- Scrope, Father (alias Pugh), the priest of Lord Castlemaine, ii. 291; assists Castlemaine in writing the 'English Catholic's Apology,' 295, 296; his escape, 297.
- Secular Priests, or English Catholics, opposed by the Jesuits, i. 265, 272-276. *See* English Catholics.
- Sedburgh, Adam, Abbot of Jervaulx, one of the leaders in the Pilgrimage of Grace, i. 88; captured by Norfolk, 94; his defence, *ib.*; is hung at Tyburn, 95.
- Seez, Osmund de, pronounces a curse on any who should withdraw the lands of Sherbourne House from the Church, ii. 168, 169.
- Selden, John, his work on Tithes, ii. 3; his remarks on the invasion of the Bill of Rights, 203, 205; is committed to the Tower, 207; his release by 'escape,' 210.
- Seven-gun battery, ii. 468.
- Seymour, William, his ancestors, i. 417, 419; is secretly betrothed to the King's cousin, Lady Arabella Stuart, 421; is summoned before the Council, *ib.*; his answer, 421, 422; takes his cousin Rodney into his confidence, and marries Lady Arabella at Greenwich, 422, 423; is committed by the King to the Tower, 254, 423; his life in the Tower, 424, 425; his coldness to his wife, 426; receives a visit from her, *ib.*; his escape from the Water-gate planned by the Countess of Shrewsbury, 308, 434; assistance given to him by Rodney, 439; reaches Ostend, *ib.*; his letters to the King, 444; his want of sympathy with his wife, 447; on her death implores pardon of the King, and obtains permission to return, 447; attaches himself to King Charles during the Civil War, *ib.*; his romantic offer of suffering death instead of his King, *ib.*; marries Lady Frances Devereux, *ib.*; at the Restoration is created Duke of Somerset, *ib.*
- Seymour, Sir Thomas, i. 242.

- Shaftesbury, Earl of, committed to the Tower by Charles, ii. 289.
- Shakespeare, references to, i. 1, 2, 34, 36, 45; inquiry into the reason of his substitution of Sir John Falstaff for Sir John Oldcastle in his 'Henry IV.,' 58, 65, 67; intercourse with Sir Walter Raleigh, 217, 218; 'Measure for Measure,' played before James I. at Wilton Court, 302. *See* W. S.
- Sharp, Dean, visits Jeffreys in the Tower, ii. 383.
- Shelley, William, enters into a conspiracy against Elizabeth with the Earl of Northumberland, i. 193; is committed to the Tower, 194; his objection to the rack, *ib.*; confessions made by him, *ib.*
- Sherborne Castle, the seat of Sir Walter Raleigh, i. 443: ii. 8, 49; tragical history of its successive occupants, 168, 169.
- Shippen, William, ii. 244.
- Shirley, Lawrence, Earl Ferrars, ii. 245.
- Short, Captain E., searches Dugard's house for James Harrington, ii. 246; seizes 'Mr. Edwards,' 246, 247 (*see* James Harrington); accepts Mr. Dugard's bond for the surrender of 'Mr. Edwards,' *ib.*
- Shrewsbury, Earl of, outrage on, by Buckingham, ii. 289.
- Shrewsbury, Gilbert, Earl of, i. 440.
- Shrewsbury, Countess of, espouses the cause of Lady Arabella Stuart, i. 433; her appeals to Carr, *ib.*; her plans for the escape of Arabella Stuart and Seymour to France, 434; on the capture of Lady Arabella, is committed to the Tower, 254, 440: ii. 165; when examined by the Council, refuses to answer their questions, i. 441; her life in the Tower, 442; her examinations by Northampton, 443; and by a select committee of the privy council at York House, *ib.*; remains in the Tower till the death of Northampton, 444; her release, ii. 151; takes up her residence with the Bishop of Bath and Wells, *ib.*
- Sibthorp, Mr., Archbishop Abbott refuses to license the publication of his sermon on the obedience due to princes, ii. 183.
- Sidmouth, Lord, Home Secretary, acquires a knowledge of the Nag's Head plot from the informer Castle, ii. 438, 439; popular outcry against the practice of keeping spies in pay, 440; is present at the cabinet council when information is given of the Cato Street conspiracy, 446; refuses to allow Edwards to be prosecuted with the rest of the Cato Street conspirators, 469.
- Sion House, settled on the Earl of Northumberland, i. 408, 409.
- Skelton, Colonel, Lieutenant of the Tower, ii. 379.
- Skinner, Cyriac, a friend of Milton, a member of the Rota club, ii. 251.
- Skinner, Robert, one of the Jesuits at White Webbs, i. 283.
- Sluys, arrest of Lord Grey at, i. 296.
- Smith, Aaron, his confinement in the Tower, ii. 345; bribes offered to him to give evidence against Sydney, 363.
- Smith, Colonel Matthew, major of the Tower, ii. 414, 429.
- Smithers, a Bow Street officer, killed in the capture of the Cato Street conspirators, ii. 460.
- Somerset, Earl of. *See* Carr.
- Soubise, Admiral Marquis de, comes to England to plead the cause of the Huguenots, ii. 116; his reception in London, *ib.*; King James gives him a guard of honour on his return voyage, *ib.*; his encounter with a Spanish ship, *ib.*; urges Buckingham to relieve Rochelle, 192.
- Southampton, Lord, his quarrel with Lord Grey, i. 269; one of the peers who tried Lord Grey, 301; his opposition to the Howards, 477; his friendship with Shakespeare and Overbury, *ib.*; is arrested on a charge of treasonable correspondence, and committed to the Tower, ii. 73; is released by Buckingham, *ib.*
- Southwell, Robert, ii. 242; a Jesuit priest, succeeded Father Weston as priest in Lady Arundel's household, i. 280; is imprisoned in the Tower, 256, 280; is tried and hung, *ib.*
- Southwick, Father, one of Cecil's spies in France of the movements of the Jesuits, i. 353; is sent for to England to assist in discovering the hiding-places of the Jesuits, 355.
- Spain, its enmity to Sir Walter Raleigh, i. 216, 220; its siege of Ostend, 270; Jesuits in, 275; treasonable negotiations with, 323, 325, 329, 340; its enmity to the United Provinces, ii. 15, 67, 78; its restrictions on British commerce, 84; its vessels captured by the Free Rovers, 93; peace proclaimed between it and the United Provinces, 95; its condition when Prince Charles arrived there, 138, 139; ambassadors of, refused an audience by Charles on his return to England, 148; ineffectual attempt on, by the English fleet, 173.
- Spanish match, views of the Spanish court in the promotion of the, ii. 60.
- Spence, a Yorkshire schoolmaster, his plan of a universal republic, ii. 420; is prosecuted by government, 421; numerous societies formed to carry out his views, *ib.*
- Spencean clubs, questions debated by them, ii. 433; their secret directory, 435; their plan of gaining possession of the Tower, *ib.*

- Spencer, Lord, is insulted by Lord Arundel, ii. 54.
- Spencer, Edmund, the poet, i. 267; sends a sonnet to the Earl of Northumberland, 407.
- Spinola, Marchese, his victories on the Lower Rhine, ii. 81, 82, 139.
- Spurway, Thomas, mayor of Dartmouth, his inability to check Captain Nutt's piratical practices, ii. 107; receives instructions to demand the prizes of Nutt from Sir John Eliot, 127.
- St. Albans, Lord. *See* Francis Bacon.
- St. George, Chevalier de, or James VIII. of Scotland, ii. 385; his character, *ib.*; his aversion to fight, *ib.*; returns to France, *ib.*
- St. John, Sir Oliver, Somerset placed in his custody prior to his committal to the Tower, i. 476.
- St. John, Captain, put out of commission by Calvert, ii. 117; accompanies Admiral de Soubise on his return to Rochelle, 116; his conduct on that occasion found fault with by Secretary Calvert, *ib.*; is confined in the Marshal-sea, 129.
- St. John, the opponent of the ship-money impost, appointed Solicitor-General, ii. 235.
- St. Peter's Church, bells presented by Henry III., is rebuilt by Edward I., i. 6, 8; ii. 165, 215, 237.
- St. Thomas' tower, William Seymour confined in, i. 424, 427.
- Stafford, Edward, Duke of Buckingham, trial and execution, i. 20; father of Margaret Cheyve, 85.
- Stanfield Hall, the dowry of Lady Jane Grey, i. 103.
- Stanhope, Lord, protests against Pitt's bill for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, ii. 412.
- Stanhouse, Father, takes an active part in inciting the people to a second Pilgrimage of Grace, i. 88.
- Stanley, Sir William, his treachery at Deventer, i. 280; sends Guy Fawkes on a secret mission to the court of Spain, 325; his opinion of Guy Fawkes' 'sufficiency in the wars,' 330; goes to Spain to induce Lerma to assist with an armed force, 340; on his return is induced by Father Owen to raise a brigade to co-operate with the Powder Plot conspirators, 347.
- Starch, a royalty on, granted to Lord Northampton, i. 452.
- Star-chamber, the, i. 208, 402, 403, 410; 444, ii. 38, 41, 43, 220, 227.
- Stews, the, of Southwark, i. 207.
- Sullingfleet, Edward, chaplain to Charles II., ii. 315; is sent by the king to visit Penn in the Tower, *ib.*; his report, 316.
- Story, Dr., ingenious impersonation of him, i. 183, 184.
- Stourton, Charles, seventh Baron Stourton, hung with a silken cord for the murder of the two Hargils, i. 403.
- Stourton, Edward, ninth Baron Stourton, is apprehended on the discovery of the Powder Plot, i. 403, 404; is married to a sister of Frank Tresham, *ib.*; his examination before the Star-chamber, *ib.*; his condemnation, imprisonment in the Tower, and release, *ib.*
- Strange, Father, endeavours to procure a divorce for Lord Castlemaine, ii. 299.
- Strode, his commitment to the Tower, ii. 207; is taken to the King's Bench, to the Gate-house, and again to the Tower, 209, 210; gains his liberty by the legal process of 'escape,' *ib.*
- Strong room in the Belfry, ii. 241; tenanted by Cardinal Fisher, i. 69; Edward Courtney, 137; Princess Elizabeth, 20, 152; Princess Margaret, 166.
- Stuart, Lady Arabella, i. 223; a plot concocted in her name, 298; is present at the trial of Garnet, 397; her engaging and attractive manners, 418; her numerous suitors, *ib.*; an object of interest to foreign courts, *ib.*; falls in love with William Seymour, 419, 420, 421; is committed to the custody of Lord Knyvet, by Northampton, 421; James sends presents to her, 421; secretly pledges her troth to Seymour, *ib.*; part taken by her in the masques given on the creation of Henry Prince of Wales, 422; is married to Seymour at Greenwich without the King's consent, 423; the anger of James thereat, *ib.*; is given into the custody of Sir Thomas Parry, and lodged by him at Vauxhall, *ib.*; her life in confinement, 425; her solicitude on account of her young husband, 426; pays a visit to him in the Tower, *ib.*; is by the orders of the King placed in the custody of the Bishop of Durham, 427; her kindness to her domestics, 430; her appeal to the Chief Justices, 431; is forcibly removed from Vauxhall, *ib.*; her illness and detention at Highgate, 432; is lodged at East Barnet, *ib.*; the Countess of Shrewsbury espouses her cause, 433; escapes from East Barnet, 435; her flight to Blackwall, *ib.*; reaches the barque engaged to take her to France, 437; is pursued and overtaken, 438; is lodged by the orders of the King in the Tower, 440; her examination by the Council, 441, 442; Waad's incivilities to her, 443, 445; her letters to the King, 444; her sickness, and her letter to Northampton praying for relief, 445 becomes insane, 446; failure of her

- friend's plan for her escape, *ib.*; her death, 447; is buried in Westminster Abbey, *ib.*
- Stuart, Charles, Duke of Richmond, falls violently in love with Frances Stuart, ii. 268; the king surprises them together, arrests him, and commits him to the Tower, 271; is released by the king, *ib.*; his runaway match with Frances, *ib.*; his low character, 272.
- Stuart, Frances, Duchess of Richmond, her rare beauty, ii. 267; is the model of the 'Britannia' of our coins, *ib.*; her royal lovers, 268; her apartments in White Hall, *ib.*; takes part in an indecent comedy, *ib.*; is one of the mistresses of King Charles, *ib.*; the Duke of Richmond falls in love with her, *ib.*; and offers her his hand, *ib.*; the king surprises her and the Duke in her chamber, 271; secretly leaves White Hall, and is married to the Duke, *ib.*; her reconciliation with the king, 272; leaves annuities to cats, *ib.*
- Stuart, Matthew, Earl of Lennox, marries Princess Margaret, i. 161; is committed to the Tower by Elizabeth, 163; is released, 164; deceives Burghley, and is sent to Scotland as English agent, 164, 165; when ordered to return to England, refuses compliance, 165; marriage of his son Darnley with Mary Queen of Scots, *ib.*; is appointed Regent of Scotland, 168; is assassinated, *ib.*
- Stukeley, Sir Lewis, Vice-Admiral of Devon, his vile character, ii. 10; his betrayal of Raleigh, *ib.*; acquires the name of 'Sir Judas,' *ib.*; is universally detested, 11; his interviews with the Earl of Nottingham and King James, *ib.*; is charged with clipping coin, and is committed to the Tower, 12; is released by the king, and goes to the Isle of Lundy, *ib.*; his death, 13.
- Suckling, Comptroller of the Household, sent by the king to receive the Seals from Williams, ii. 171.
- Suffolk, Earl of. *See* Thomas Howard.
- Suffolk, Duke of, impeachment of, ii. 45.
- Suffolk, Countess of, her impure character, i. 259, 299, 453, 461; receives bribes from Don Juan de Taxis, 299; her jealousy of Lady Arabella Stuart, 430; her daughter married to the Earl of Essex, 449; encourages her daughter to violate her nuptial vows, 451; supplies King James with handsome favourites, 455, 456; is repelled by Overbury, 459; her intriguing character, ii. 14; her intercourse with magicians, 17; her schemes to supplant Villiers in the favour of the king by means of Monson frustrated, 17-19; murders the accuser of her husband, 24; charges against her, 25; is confined, and committed to the Tower, *ib.*; her release, *ib.*
- Surrey, Earl of, ii. 242. *See* Howard.
- Sun Tavern, ii. 281.
- Swinton, Sara, punished for her false accusations of the Countess of Exeter, ii. 23, 24.
- Sydney, Algernon, his wisdom and his patriotism, ii. 353; his noble ancestry, *ib.*; his travels and his studies, 354; is wounded at the battle of Marston Moor, *ib.*; fights under Fairfax and Cromwell, 355; labours to find ships and guns for Blake to defeat the Dutch, *ib.*; opposes Cromwell when aiming at a power beyond law, *ib.*; at the fall of Richard Cromwell, enters Parliament, and is in favour of a commonwealth, 356; declines the overtures of General Monk, *ib.*; lives abroad for seventeen years, *ib.*; returns home, and devotes his time to literary pursuits, *ib.*; his intercourse with Essex, Russell, and Penn, 338, 340, 357; Howard of Escrick seeks to entangle him in plots in favour of the Duke of Monmouth, *ib.*; is arrested and his house searched, *ib.*; is examined by the Council, and sent to the Tower, 345, 357; his 'close' confinement, *ib.*; is examined by Secretary Jenkins and Judge Jeffreys, 358; writes the 'Discourses concerning Government' in answer to Sir R. Filmer's 'Patriarcha,' 360; doctrines propounded in the book, 360, 361; his reply to Hampden's desire to visit him, 363; his accusers again examine him, and are toiled in their endeavour to gain evidence, *ib.*; illegal means taken to ensure a verdict against him, 364, 365; manifest falsity of the indictment against him, 365; is taken to Westminster Hall, 366; his trial before Judge Jeffreys, 367; evidence of Howard of Escrick, *ib.*; verdict for the crown returned, *ib.*; his prayer in court, *ib.*; his last days, 368; his death, *ib.*
- Sydney, Sir Philip, ii. 354.
- Sydney, Sir Henry, lord-lieutenant of Ireland, ii. 353.
- Sydney, Robert, Earl of Leicester, lord-lieutenant of Ireland, ii. 354.
- TALBOT, Sir Gilbert, master of the regalia, ii. 324.
- Taylor, Bishop Jeremy, ii. 242.
- Taylor, William, ii. 243.
- Temple Bar, heads exposed on, ii. 406.
- Tenison, Rev. Thomas, his visit to the Duke of Monmouth in the Tower, ii. 375.
- Tesmond, Oswald. *See* Greenway.
- Thames, kidels placed in the, by the Wardens of the Tower, i. 21; disturbances therefrom, 22.

- Thelwall, a Reformer, committed to the Tower, ii. 413; his trial and acquittal, 417.
- Thriske, William, abbot of Fountains, incites the people to a new Pilgrimage of Grace, i. 88; is seized by Norfolk, and hung at Tyburn, 94, 95.
- Thompson, Robert, ii. 128.
- Thistlewood, Arthur, a member of the Spencean clubs, ii. 434; position occupied by him among his associates, *ib.*; has a sketch of the Tower, with a detailed drawing of the more important parts, 435; reward offered for his apprehension, 439; is taken and placed in the Tower, 245, 440; charge of high treason preferred against him, *ib.*; his trial and acquittal, 441; his appearance and previous life, 441, 442; challenges Lord Sidmouth, *ib.*; is arrested and sentenced to a year's imprisonment in Horsham jail, 443; his desire for vengeance against the government, *ib.*; makes the acquaintance of Edwards and others, *ib.*; plot formed for murdering the ministry, seizing the monies in the Bank, and taking possession of the Tower, 451; is informed by Edwards of the Cabinet Council at Lord Harrowby's, 452; is attacked by military and police in Cato Street, 454; his escape, 459; one thousand pounds offered for his apprehension, 461; is pursued and captured, 463; is examined at the Home Office, 464; is committed to the Tower, 466; is lodged in the Bloody tower, 468; is taken from the Tower to Newgate, tried, and executed, 470.
- Throgmorton, Mr., suggests to Buckingham the propriety of wearing a secret suit of mail, ii. 191.
- Thurlow, Lord, his intimacy with Horne Tooke, ii. 418.
- Tichborne, Governor of Winchester Castle, receives instructions to execute the condemned prisoners, i. 302; his instructions countermanded by the King, 304.
- Tidd, one of the Cato Street conspirators, ii. 451, 456, 459, 464; is committed to the Tower, 466; is tried and executed, 470.
- Tilletson, Francis, denounces the Jesuits to Cecil, i. 265.
- Tilly, his victories in Germany, ii. 141, 142; gains the battle of Stadtloo, 145.
- Tooke, Rev. John Horne, ii. 410; brought before the Privy Council on a charge of treason, 413; is sent to the Tower, 244, 413; his high intellectual powers, 416; his trial at the Old Bailey, *ib.*; his acquittal, 417; his friendship with Burdett, 418; his dinners and his guests, *ib.*; his writings in advance of his age, 419.
- Torture, resorted to,—Fawkes, i. 321; Nick Owen, 393, 394; Garnet threatened with, 397; Crompton and Markham in the Torture-chamber, 441.
- Tower, the, its locality, i. 1; its historical associations, 2, 3; its prisoners, 2; books written within its vaults, 2; its antiquity and origin, *ib.*; its present building commenced by William the Conqueror, 3; used by the Norman kings as a royal residence, 3, 6; its antiquity compared with that of the palaces and prisons of Europe, 3, 4; the memories in connection with it, 4, 5, 7; its architects and builders, 5; division into the Inner and Outer Wards, 8–10; its towers and turrets, 11, 12; its wharf, 13–20; its water gates and stairs, 15, 16; pictures of its daily life, 16–20; rules for the maintenance of prisoners in the, 47–52; prisoners confined in—Thomas Bates, 297; Edmund Campion, 279; Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, 475; George Chambers, 386; Father Clarke, 253, 297; Lord Cobham, 305; Hugh Crompton, 440; Sir Everald Digby, 376; Guy Fawkes, 364; Father Fisher, 253, 389; James Franklin, 473; Father Garnet, 286, 388; Lord Grey, 298, 305; John Grant, 372; Robert Kay, 373; Sir Griffin Markham, 297; William Markham, 440; Mayerne, 473; Lord Montagu, 401; Sir Thomas Monson, 473; Lord Mordaunt, 403; Father Oldcorne, 387; Sir Thomas Overbury, 466, 467; Nicholas Owen, 386; Earl of Northumberland, 410; Sir Walter Raleigh, 254; Edward Rodney, 440; Ambrose Rokewood, 373; Archbishop Sancroft, 411; William Seymour, 254, 423; Countess of Shrewsbury, 254, 440; Countess of Somerset, 476; Father Southwell, 256, 280; Lord Stourton, 404; Lady Arabella Stuart, 437; Frank Tresham, 373; Ann Turner, 473; Ann Vaux, 389, 395; Richard Weston, 473; Robert Winter, 373; Thomas Winter, 373; allusions to prisoners confined in, ii. 12, 14, 15, 16, 24, 241–245, 254, 271, 276, 281, 284, *et passim*. Constables of—Lord Suffolk, 14; Earl of Newport, 234; Lord Moria, 429; Lord Hastings, 436. Lieutenants—Sir Allan Apsley, 150; Sir W. Balfour, 213; Sir Isaac Pennington, 237; Sir John Robinson, 253; Captain Cheek, 353; Colonel Skelton, 379; Lord Lucas, *ib.*; General Compton, 386; Colonel Williamson, 406, 407; General Vernon, 413; General Loftus, 436. Majors—Colonel Smith, 414; Captain Elington, 467; Deputy-Governor, Colonel D'Oyly, 386; attempted seizure of the regalia by Colonel Blood, 324 350; after the flight of James II.

- lieutenants were not required to reside in Government house, 386; duties of lieutenant devolve on a deputy-governor or a major, *ib.*; instruments of torture abolished, 406; rooms occupied by Horne Tooke and others, 414; is summoned to surrender by Preston, 433; treatment of the Cato Street conspirators, and rooms occupied by them, 468; no prisoner confined in it for a political offence since the execution of Thistlewood and others, 470; its former character past, 471; its present state, 472. *See also* Introduction, i., v.—xxiv.
- Tower Ghost, i. 411.
- Tower Hill, Sir Gervase Helwys, hung in chains on, i. 475; execution of Sydney on, ii. 368.
- Tower warden, his powers, i. 21; places kidels in the river, *ib.*; his contests with the people, 22–24. *See* Kidels.
- Townley, his hymn in honour of the assassin Felton, ii. 197; escapes to the Hague, *ib.*
- Traitors' gate built by Henry III., i. 6, 9, 16; ii. 19, 374, 378; persons in dishonour landed at, i. 16.
- Treason—Spanish, Surprising, and the Priests', Coke's three plots, i. 298.
- Trenchard, John, ii. 337; his committal to the Tower, 345; his release, 363.
- Trevor, Mark, a friend of Harry Hastings, ii. 273–275.
- 'Trial, the,' English merchant vessel, infamous behaviour of Spaniards to, ii. 85, 86.
- Tromp, Admiral, *ff.* 355.
- Trooper, anecdote of a, ii. 355.
- Tresham, Frank, is taken into confidence by Catesby, i. 323; is inclined to support King James on his accession to the throne, 325; Catesby is troubled with doubts respecting his fidelity to the Plot, 349, 351, 352; death of his father Sir Thomas, and his succession to Rushton Hall, 352; his conference with Catesby at Barnet, 359, 360; urges Catesby to flee to France, 360; is taken prisoner, 373; his examinations and confessions, 376, 377; a student of equivocation, 378; his statements and counter-statements respecting Garnet, *ib.*; his sudden death, *ib.*; his punishment for his share in the Essex Rising, how compounded for, 404, 405.
- Tresham, Mrs., induces her husband to sign a paper containing a denial of the confessions he had made affecting Father Garnet, i. 377, 378.
- Tresham, Sir Thomas, one of the converts of Father Persons, i. 279; bribes paid by him to avert punishment from his son Frank, 405.
- Trumball, English resident in Flanders, reports to Winwood the revelations of the apprentice Reeve, i. 473.
- Turner, Ann, the White Witch, i. 460; gives love-philtres to Lady Essex, *ib.*; takes Lady Essex to Simon Forman, the astrologer, 461; encourages Lady Essex's illicit meetings with Carr, 462; her servant Weston appointed keeper of Sir Thomas Overbury, 468; instructs Weston how to mingle poison with Overbury's drink, 469; her apprehension and trial, 473, 474; her statement that Prince Henry was poisoned with a bunch of grapes, 473; is hung at Tyburn, 475.
- Turner, Samuel, his six questions in the House of Commons respecting Buckingham, ii. 177.
- Turvey, the seat of Lord Mordaunt, a resort of the Jesuits, i. 402.
- Tutchin, John, a victim to the cruelty of Judge Jeffreys, visits him in the Tower, ii. 383.
- Tyburn, Ann Turner hung at, i. 475; alluded to, ii. 321, 406.
- Tynley, Elizabeth, one of the gentlewomen of Lady Jane Grey, i. 145, 147.
- Tyrell, Sir John, murders the princes Edward V. and the Duke of York in the Tower, i. 44, 45; his confession, *ib.*
- 'UNDERTAKERS,' a party in the House of Commons, why so called, ii. 48, 63.
- Ulster mission, ii. 158.
- VALENTINE, Benjamin, assists Holles in holding the Speaker in his chair till the Remonstrance is passed, ii. 205; is committed to the Tower, 207; his sentence by the King's Bench, 209; is released, 210.
- Vane, Sir Harry, committed to the Tower, ii. 239, 243, 356.
- Vansittart, Chancellor of the Exchequer, ii. 447.
- Vaux, Ann, known as 'Mrs. Perkins' at White Webbs, i. 285; her intimacy with Father Garnet, 285, 286; accompanies Garnet to Hendlip Hall, 384; after the discovery of Garnet, remains at Hendlip Hall with Mrs. Abington, 386; follows Garnet to London, and her communications with him, 387, 388, 389, 391, 394, 395; her house at White Webbs searched, and examination of her servant James, 394; is arrested and committed to the Tower, 389, 395; her boldness when under examination, *ib.*; is set free and again arrested and examined, 395, 396; forwards a letter to Garnet in the Tower, 396; her fruitless examinations, *ib.*; Garnet's declaration respecting her, 397.

- Vaux, Elizabeth, of Harrowden, a letter with her signature found on Guy Fawkes on his apprehension, i. 315; assistance given by her to the conspirators, 345.
- Vaux, Helen. *See* Mrs. Brooksby.
- Vaux, Henry, son of Lord Vaux, enters a monastery, i. 285.
- Vaux, William, Lord of Harrowden, his sufferings for conscience' sake, i. 286; history of his family, 285, 286.
- Vaux, Lord, confined in the Fleet for life, i. 453.
- Vauxhall, Lady Arabella Stuart's residence at, i. 423-425.
- Vavasour, W., writes the paper said to have been Frank Fresham's, containing a denial of the charges against Father Garnet, i. 378.
- Vega, Lopez de, ii. 141.
- Velasco, Juan Fernando de, his answer to Winter on the assistance to be rendered by Spain to the Jesuit conspirators, i. 329.
- Venetian form of government, Harrington's high estimate of, ii. 265.
- Vere, Sir Francis, commander of the troops at the siege of Ostend, i. 262, 263, 270; is recalled from the Low Countries by James I., 307; Northumberland quarrels with him, 406.
- Vere, Sir Horace, satirised by Gondomar, ii. 70; fights on behalf of the Protestant cause, 71.
- Verney, Sir Francis, a Free Rover, his adventures, and death, ii., 100, 104.
- Vernon, General, Lieutenant of the Tower, ii. 413.
- Vice-admiral, duties of a, ii. 10.
- Victoria, Queen, State trials in her reign: Frost, Jones, and Williams, in Wales, ii. 471; O'Brien, Meagher, and Mitchell, in Ireland, *ib.*; is fired at by Oxford, *ib.*; by Francis, *ib.*; by others, *ib.*; during her reign no man suffered death for a political offence, *ib.*; serenity and prosperity of her reign, 472.
- Villiers, Sir Edward, his interest in monopolies and patents, ii. 50; his early death, 186.
- Villiers, Sir George, his marriage to his wife's lady's maid, Mary Beaumont, ii. 3; his family and death, 4.
- Villiers, Sir John, measures taken by his mother to secure his marriage to Frances Coke, ii. 35; he is created Viscount Purbeck and Baron Stoke, 38; scandalous conduct of his wife, 174-176.
- Villiers, George, Duke of Buckingham, his fair form and his gorgeous dress, ii. 1, 2; his comic powers, 3, 4; his first appearance before King James at Cambridge, *ib.*; his parentage, *ib.*; his education in Paris, 6; why called 'Steenie' by the king, *ib.*; his rapid preferment,
- 6, 7; his dealings with the sorcerer, Doctor Lamb, *ib.*; his kindness to Sir Walter Raleigh, 8; is made Master of the Horse, and Lord High Admiral, 13; his friendship with Sir John Eliot, *ib.*; his opposition to the Howard family, i. 477; ii. 15; removes the Monsons from their posts, 16; overthrows the Lakes, 24; drives Lord and Lady Suffolk from court, *ib.*; breaks off his match with Ann Ashton, 26; marries Lady Catharine Manners, 27, 32; is created Marquis of Buckingham, *ib.*; his conduct in the marriage between Sir John Villiers and Frances Coke, 38; gains possession of Wallingford House, 40; covets York House, and compasses the fall of Lord Chancellor Bacon, 41; is induced by the Howard family to promote the marriage of Prince Charles with the Infanta of Spain, 58, 59; instals Dr. Lamb at York House, 65; resolves to accompany Prince Charles to Spain, 69; releases Oxford and Southampton from the Tower, 73; is entangled by Gondomar in the plot called the 'Matter of Holland,' 79, 81; adventures during his journey to Spain with Prince Charles, 111, 114; his arrival at Madrid, *ib.*, 136; proposal made to him by Olivarez, 140; is created a duke by the king, 142; his conduct towards the Spanish Dons, 143; his impatience to leave Spain, 145; his popularity on his return from Spain; 148; his account to the king of the rupture of the Spanish match, 149; overrules the king's disinclination to call a parliament, 152; his pretended zeal for war with Spain, 152; his anger when the Council declare for peace, 154; seeks assistance from Lord-Keeper Williams in deceiving the House of Commons to grant war supplies, 156, 157; gives to the House of Lords a fictitious narrative of his journey to Spain, 159; the Spanish ambassador demands his head, 160; effect of this demand on the house and the country, 160; his quarrel with Digby, 167; releases Digby from his imprisonment in the Tower, 169; his lofty position on the accession of Charles to the throne, 170; overthrows Lord-Keeper Williams, 171; his conduct to Archbishop Abbott, *ib.*; desires Laud to draw up a list of the clergy for King Charles's use, 172; troubles in his family, 174; popular fury rises against him, 177; accusations preferred against him by Turner in the House of Commons, 177, 178; Eliot supports the accusations of Turner against him, *ib.*; charges brought against him by Lord Digby, 180; is denounced by Eliot, 180; his answers to the charges brought against him unsatisfactory, 182;

- his endeavours to procure a loan for the king abortive, 183; commits Williams to the Tower, *ib.*; suspends Archbishop Abbott from his office, *ib.*; raises an army and equips a fleet, *ib.*; failure of his expedition to Oleron, *ib.*; his reception on his return to England, 184; articles of impeachment framed against him by the House of Commons, 184; change in his character, 185; numerous offices held by him and his family, 186; is denounced by Eliot as the 'great delinquent,' 188; warnings given to him in the city of London, 189, 190; endeavours to win back popular favour by making a show of war, 190; the people's jealousy of him, 191; the king's remark to him, *ib.*; Throgmorton exhorts him to wear a secret coat of mail, *ib.*; his arrival at Portsmouth, 192; his arbitrary conduct there, *ib.*; is stabbed by Felton, 193; the news of his assassination received with joy by the people, 196.
- Villiers, George, Duke of Buckingham, (son of the preceding); his life of jest and comedy, ii. 282; character of his 'Rehearsal,' *ib.*; his frequent confinements in the Tower, 243, 282; (1) for his marriage to the daughter of Lord Fairfax, by Cromwell, 282-284; at Cromwell's death is removed to Windsor, *ib.*; his release on the death of Cromwell, *ib.*; his shameless conduct on the restoration of Charles, 284; (2) for his conduct towards Lord Ossory, 285; (3) for insulting the Marquis of Dorchester, *ib.*; (4) for plotting against the king's crown and life, 281, 287; his trial before the Council, 288; his release through the solicitations of Lady Castlemaine, *ib.*; (5) for his outrage on Lord Shrewsbury, 289; close of his career, *ib.*; countenances Colonel Blood, 320; accuses Ossory and Clarendon of a desire to poison him, 323; is threatened with revenge by Ossory, the son of the Duke of Ormonde, in the king's presence, if any harm befalls his father, *ib.*
- Villiers, Barbara, Countess of Castlemaine, one of the mistresses of King Charles, ii. 268; procures the release of Buckingham from the Tower, 283; her frailties in early life, 291; her passion for ugly men, *ib.*; her marriage to Roger Palmer, 290; her amours with the king, 292; her wonderful beauty, *ib.*; her first-born baptized according to the rites both of the Catholic and Protestant Church, 293, 294; separates from her husband, 294, 295; her family by the king, 295, 296; her variety of lovers, 297; her ascendancy over the king, 298; is pensioned and dismissed the court, *ib.*; her scandalous life in Paris, *ib.*; returns to England, 302; her marriage to Beau Fielding, *ib.*
- Villiers, Susan, her marriage with Sir William Fielding, ii. 34; honours conferred upon them, *ib.*
- Villiers, Sir Kit, Earl of Anglesea, interested in the upholding of monopolies and patents, ii. 50; his search after a wife, 74; is refused by Lady Howard, *ib.*; seeks in vain the daughter of Sir Sebastian Harvey, *ib.*; Lady Bessie Norreys taken from him, 75.
- Vincent, Mr., his answer to Penn's 'Sandy Foundation Shaken,' ii. 314.
- Vinegar House, a portion of the old House of Lords, i. 331; supposed by Catesby to be suitable for his design of blowing up the King, *ib.*; is hired by Percy, and Guy Fawkes installed there, 333-335; powder planks, and tools stored there by the conspirators, 335; conferences between Bacon and Hamilton held there, *ib.*; is vacated by the conspirators, and the stores removed, 337.
- WAAD, Sir William, appointed Lieutenant of the Tower i. 235; his harsh treatment of Raleigh, 236; inscriptions by him on the panels of the Powder Plot Room, 312, 313, 314; puts Guy Fawkes to the rack, and wrings confessions from him, 320; his treatment of the Jesuit prisoners, 375; is present at the death of Little John, 394; receives as prisoner the Earl of Northumberland, 410; William Seymour entrusted to his custody, 423; his wranglings with Seymour respecting the furniture of his rooms, 424, 444; escape of Seymour from his custody, 439; his cruel treatment of Lady Arabella Stuart, 443, 445, 446; is superseded through the machinations of Northampton by Sir Gervase Helwys, 467.
- Walcott, his connection with the Rye-House Plot, ii. 338, 342; his trial and condemnation, 346.
- Walden, Lord, Captain of the Gentleman Pensioners, ii. 14; is required by Buckingham to give up his post, 25.
- Wales, Catesby counsels an appeal to the Catholic population of, i. 369.
- Walker, Sir Edward, one of the commissioners sent to examine Harrington in the Tower, ii. 254.
- Wallingford, Viscount. *See* William Knollys.
- Wallingford House reluctantly yielded by Lord Wallingford to Buckingham, ii. 40.
- Walpole, Sir Robert, Secretary-at-War, in the Tower, ii. 245; determines that no clemency shall be shown to the Jacobite lords, 390.

- Walsh, Sir Richard, assaults Holbeach House, the resort of the Powder Plot conspirators, i. 371.
- Walsingham, Captain, his defiance of Admiral Fajardo, ii. 101; his success as a pirate captain, 102; his commitment to the Tower, 104.
- Walsingham, Secretary, counteracts the design of Philip the Confessor, i. 204.
- Walsingham, Sir Edmund, Lieutenant of the Tower, and Cardinal Fisher, i. 72.
- Wapping Stairs, nineteen pirates gibbeted at, ii. 97.
- Ward, Captain, cause of his commencing the career of a Free Rover stated, ii. 91, 92; attacks Spanish vessels, 92, 94; his friendship with the Bey of Tunis, *ib.*; is outlawed by King James, 92; his success against the Venetians, 92, 93; his life at Tunis, 95; scornfully refuses to be considered a pirate, 98; his encounter with the 'Rainbow,' 98; English vessels scrupulously spared by him, 98, 101.
- Ward, Thomas, an unsworn member of the Powder Plot, is with Lord Monteaule when he receives the warning letter, i. 355; is desired by Monteaule to apprise Catesby of the discovery of the Plot, 357.
- Warden's house, ii. 426.
- Wardrobe tower, the, i. 8.
- Warner, Walter, one of the frequent visitors to the Earl of Northumberland in the Tower, i. 414.
- Warwick, Earl of, his connection with the pirate war, ii. 104.
- Warwick, Edward, Earl of, ii. 245.
- Warwick, Earl of. *See* Beauchamp.
- Warwickshire, provision made by Cecil to prevent an insurrection of the Catholics in, i. 354.
- Water gate, popularly called St. Thomas' tower, i. 6, 9, 13, 15, 254, 266, 308, 439; ii. 468.
- Watson, William, a Catholic priest, his opposition to the Jesuits, i. 289; his Ten Quodlibetical Questions, *ib.*: ii. 242; is seized by Bishop Bancroft, i. 290; concocts with Father Clarke what is known as the Priests' Plot, 291; induces Sir Griffin Markham and George Brooke to join the Plot, 292-294; his overtures to Sir Edward Parham, 295; is arrested and committed to the Tower, 297; is condemned, hung, and quartered, 301.
- Watson, James, sen., a surgeon, a companion of Thistlewood, ii. 434; frequents Spencean clubs, *ib.*; stabs Rhodes with a sword-stick, 437; his arrest and commitment to the Tower, 438; is tried and acquitted, *ib.*; a true bill found against him, *ib.*; is arraigned at the King's Bench on a charge of high treason, 440; is acquitted, *ib.*
- Watson, James, jun., his speech at the Merlin's Cave, Spa Fields, ii. 435; heads a procession to the Bank, 436; breaks into a gunsmith's shop, and demands arms, *ib.*; fires his pistol at a gentleman named Richard Pratt, *ib.*; plunders shops in the Minorities, 437; his escape, *ib.*; reward offered for his apprehension, *ib.*
- Wellington, Duke of, commander of the forces, at the Cabinet Council at Lord Harrowby's, ii. 447; his advice respecting the capture of the Cato Street conspirators, 452, 453.
- Well tower, the, i. 9.
- Wentworth, Sir Thomas, Earl of Strafford, his ideas of government opposed to those of Buckingham, ii. 49; is promoted by the king, 64; his claims for power, 156, 158; his antagonism to Sir John Eliot, 159; his friendship to Spain, 159, 162, 217; supports the popular party, 178, 187; the King's proposals to him, 188; his apostasy to the royal side, *ib.*; his remark to Pym, and Pym's reply, *ib.*; his life and character, 223, 224; circumstances which caused his changing from the liberal to the royalist side, *ib.*; conditions of his adhesion to the King, 225, 226; is created Lord-Deputy of Ireland, *ib.*; his despotic acts, *ib.*; is impeached by the House of Commons, 230; is tried, and condemned to death, 231; his commitment to the Tower, *ib.*; his assurance that the King will not sign his death-warrant fails, 233; his last interview with Laud, 234; his behaviour at his execution, *ib.*
- Wentworth, Lady, her passion for the Duke of Monmouth, and the influence exercised by her over him, ii. 371, 372; her death, 376.
- West is concerned in the Rye-House plot, ii. 341; his arrest, 343.
- Westcott, a Bow Street officer, engaged in the capture of the Cato Street conspirators, ii. 459.
- Westminster Abbey, Lady Arabella Stuart buried in, i. 417.
- Westminster Hall, trial of Father Garnet in, i. 397; of Lord and Lady Somerset in, 477, 478; of Lord Morley in, ii. 277.
- Westmoreland, Lord, Privy Seal, ii. 446.
- Weston, a Jesuit priest in the household of Lady Arundel, i. 280; is confined in the Clink Prison, 256, 280.
- Weston, Richard, a servant of Ann Turner, appointed keeper of Sir Thos. Overbury when committed to the Tower, i. 467; is instructed by Mrs. Turner how to mix poison with Overbury's drink, 469;

- his arrest, confessions, and death, 474, 475.
- Whaddon Hall, the family seat of the Greys of Wilton, i. 266.
- Wharf, the, i. 13; the difficulties encountered in its construction, *ib.*; legend respecting it, 14; alluded to, ii. 329, 345, 376, 382, 395.
- Wharton, Lord, committed to the Tower, ii. 289.
- White Hall, ii. 59, 60, 66, 73, 94, 96, 110, 124, 133, 167, 184, 196, 209, 240, 249, 253, 263, 268, 282, 318, 346, 382.
- White Hart Tavern, Brooks' Market, ii. 445.
- White Horse Tavern, the place of meeting of those concerned in the Popish Plot, ii. 299.
- Whitelocke, Captain, his visit to Raleigh in the Tower, and its result, i. 238.
- White Roses, i. 152, 156.
- White, Sir Thomas, lord-mayor of London, i. 104, 116.
- White tower, popularly called Cæsar's tower, i. 4; its divisions, 26; its vaults, *ib.*; its main, banqueting, and state floors, 27, 29; inscriptions on its walls, 27; its noble prisoners, 28; one of its turrets used as an observatory, *ib.*; Father Fisher a prisoner in, 253, 390.
- White Webbs, its occupation by the Jesuits, i. 282-288, 321, 324, 329, 347, 348; is searched for evidence against Garnet and Ann Vaux, 394.
- Widdrington, Lord, his confinement in the Tower, ii. 245, 387; pleads guilty, 389; is pardoned, 391, 404.
- Wildman, Major, an Anabaptist, a member of the Rota club, ii. 251, 255, 262; committed to the Tower, 338, 345.
- Wilkes, John, his commitment to the Tower, ii. 244, 413.
- Wilkins, Bishop, Royal Society founded by, ii. 251.
- William the Conqueror, the building of the Tower commenced by him, i. 3.
- William IV., State trials in his reign, ii. 471.
- 'William and Thomas,' captured by Tuscan pirates, ii. 87.
- Williams, John (Archbishop of York), rector of Walgrave, ii. 29; is called the 'Eunuch,' *ib.*; his ambitious character, *ib.*; ingratiates himself into the favour of Earl of Rutland, 30; persuades Lady Catharine to abjure the Catholic faith, 30-32; celebrates the marriage between Lady Catharine and Buckingham, 32; heads the conspiracy against Lord Bacon, 42; his scapegoat doctrine, 43; betrays the Archdeacon of Cambrai, 43; his advice respecting the abuses of patents, 50; is created Bishop of Lincoln, and succeeds Lord Bacon in the Seals, 55; his connection with Lady Compton, 57; represents to Buckingham the consequences of the illegal imprisonment of Oxford and Southampton, 73; his declaration for peace with Spain rouses the anger of Buckingham, 154; his reconciliation with Buckingham, 157; his policy for bringing all parties together in the House of Commons, *ib.*; the Seals taken from him by Buckingham, 171; is committed to the Tower, 183; his release, 184; his assistance sought by the king to neutralise the Bill of Rights, 187; his saving clause rejected, 188; accusations brought against him by Laud, 221, 222; his sentence and commitment to the Tower, *ib.*; his release, 230; his advice to Charles respecting signing Wentworth's death-warrant, 233; is promoted to the see of York, 235; procures a sequestration of Laud's powers, 236; his opposition to the motion excluding the bishops from parliament, *ib.*; is again committed to the Tower, *ib.*; his reconciliation with Laud, 237; his conduct to King and Parliament, 240; his death, *ib.*
- Williamson, Colonel, Lieutenant of the Tower, searches the person of Bishop Atterbury, ii. 406.
- Wilmot, John, Earl of Rochester, confined in the Tower, ii. 243; persuades the king that Buckingham is plotting against his crown, 286; his anxiety to get Buckingham's place as gentleman of the bed-chamber, *ib.*
- Wilson, Sir T., his infamous mission, i. 247-249; his cruelty to Raleigh, 249, 250.
- Wilson, one of Cecil's spies in Spain, i. 353.
- Wilson, a tailor, one of the Cato Street conspirators, his capture and examination, ii. 465, 466; is committed to the Tower, 466.
- Wilton Castle, the seat of Lord Grey, i. 253, 297-304; King James takes up his residence there during the trial of the prisoners at Winchester, 300.
- Wimbledon, Horne Tooke's residence at, ii. 418; Sir Francis Burdett's villa at, 418, 425; duel between Mr. Paull and Sir Francis Burdett near, 423.
- Winchester Castle, the conspirators concerned in the Priests' Plot tried at, i. 300, 302.
- Windebank, Sir Francis, Secretary of State, joins the Jesuits, ii. 217; is impeached, and flees to Calais, 229, 231.
- Windsor, Lord, and Dr. Lamb, i. 293; ii. 152, 155.
- Winifred's Well, pilgrimage to, i. 348.
- Winter, Thomas, one of the Powder Plot conspirators, his early history, i. 322; his connection with Lord Montague, 323; is sent on a mission to the court of

- Spain by father Garnet, *ib.*; Catesby announces to him his project of blowing up the King, 327; mentions Guy Fawkes to Catesby as one able to carry out his plans, 328; is sent on a secret mission to Velasco, the Constable of Castille, 329; his interview with Father Owen in Brussels, 330; he engages the services of Guy Fawkes in the Powder Plot, *ib.*; assists Kay in conveying the powder and mining tools to Vinegar House, 335; Ward urges him to warn Catesby of his danger, 357; requests Tresham to repair to Burnet and confer with Catesby, 358; receives the promised money from Tresham, 360; is informed by Kit Wright of the discovery of the Plot, 365; he leaves London, 367; is wounded and taken prisoner at Holbeach House, 371; confessions wrung from him in the Tower, 375, 377; is drawn, hung, and bowelled on Tower Hill, 380.
- Winter, Robert, of Huddington, is drawn into the Powder Plot by Catesby, i. 340, 341; is taken prisoner after the assault of Holbeach House, 373; is hung near Paul's Cross, 380.
- Wintoun, Earl of, a Jacobite lord, his imprisonment in the Tower, ii. 245, 387; petitions for time to prepare his defence, 388; refuses to plead guilty to the charges brought against him, 389; desires to be attended by Rev. George Heriot, *ib.*; his frequent delays, 390, 405; his escape, 405.
- Winwood, Ralph, Secretary of State, i. 459; gives instructions to Trumball respecting the apprentice Reeve, 473; lays before the King the confessions of Reeve and Helwyss, which lead to the apprehension of Lord and Lady Somerset, 473-475; his opposition to the Howards, 473, 477.
- 'Wizard Earl,' the Earl of Northumberland, why so called, i. 409.
- Wood, Mary, a Norfolk hag, Lady Somerset gives her a diamond ring for a philtre to rid her of her husband, i. 464; is arrested and makes confessions which implicate Lady Somerset, 464, 465.
- Wood, Sir David, refuses to comply with the desire of Lady Somerset that he should assassinate Sir Thomas Overbury, i. 465, 466.
- Wood, Matthew, shares Burdett's opinion respecting the legality of the warrant of the Speaker, ii. 427; and advocates his cause in the House of Commons, 431; his reception of the mob proposing to take the Mansion-House, 437; endeavours to compel the Government to prosecute the spy Edwards, 469.
- Woodstock, Thomas de, called the Good Duke of Gloucester, i. 55; joins the Earl of Warwick in resisting Sir Simon Burley, 54; vindictiveness of Richard towards him, *ib.*; is captured by an ingenious stratagem, 55; is carried to Calais, 56; his death, *ib.*
- Woodville, Elizabeth, widow of Edward IV., seeks refuge in the Sanctuary in Westminster, i. 42.
- Woodstock, court of King James held at, i. 420, 421; Lady Arabella Stuart and William Seymour secretly betrothed at, *ib.*
- Worcester, Lord, one of King James's Council, present at the reading of Montague's letter, i. 356; one of the commissioners appointed to try Garnet, 397; resigns his office of Master of the Horse in favour of Buckingham, ii. 13.
- Worcester gaol, Humphrey Littleton confined in, i. 384; Mr. Abington, 385.
- Wotton, Sir Henry, writes from Venice respecting Captain Ward, ii. 92, 98; his name mentioned as one able to perform the duties of Secretary of State, i. 459.
- Wray, Edward, his marriage to Lady Bessie Norreys, ii. 75-77.
- Wraynham, John, finds fault with the judgment of Lord-Chancellor Bacon, ii. 43; his punishment, 44, 51.
- Wren, Matthew, writes an answer to Harrington's 'Oceana,' ii. 251.
- Wright, Jack, introduces Percy to Catesby, i. 332; takes the secret oath, 333; on the discovery of the plot leaves London with Catesby, 365; is mortally wounded at Holbeach, 371.
- Wright, Kit, is sent by Garnet and Catesby to the court of Spain, i. 325; meets on his way Guy Fawkes, *ib.*; a memorial sword ordered for him by Rokewood, 351; is sent by Percy to Isleworth, 361; hears under the windows of Montagu Close that the Plot has been discovered, 365; he informs Winter and Percy, 366; his flight with Percy, *ib.*; his arrival at Holbeach in Staffordshire, 370; receives there a mortal shot, 371; his body exhumed and hung, 373.
- W. S., lines by, on Overbury, ascribed to Shakespeare, i. 477.
- Wyat, Lady, places the Abbot of Bexley in the Stocks, i. 50.
- Wyat, Sir Henry, cruelties practised upon, while a prisoner in the Tower, i. 40; story of a cat bringing him provisions, *ib.*; his liberation and prosperity, 50.
- Wyat, Sir Thomas, the Poet, i. 126; ii. 242.
- Wyat, Sir Thomas, the Younger, i. 126; his opposition to Queen Mary's Spanish match, 127; is chosen Captain of the Kentish rising *ib.*; his revolt unsuccessful, 127-134; is committed to the Tower, *ib.*; implicates Courtney and Prince-

- Elizabeth, 153; withdraws his accusations, 154; his execution, 155.
- Wykes, Aquila, keeper of the Gate-house, is commanded to release his prisoners, ii, 150.
- YORK, Duke of. *See* Prince Charles, also James II.
- York House, examination of the Countess of Shrewsbury at, i, 443; commission of inquiry into Overbury's death at, 474; Lord Bacon's reluctance to yield it to Buckingham, ii, 41; Dr. Lamb installed there, 65; Buckingham's arrival there on his return from Spain, 179, 184; granted to Lord Fairfax by Cromwell, 283.
- Yorkshire, feeling of the people in, in favour of monasteries, i, 80.



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