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THE CAMDEN MISCELLANY

VOLUME XI





# THE CAMDEN MISCELLANY,

## VOLUME THE ELEVENTH:

CONTAINING

**SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF GILBERT BURNET, THE HISTORIAN.** Edited from an eighteenth-century transcript in the possession of EARL SPENCER by MISS H. C. FOXCROFT.

**EXTRACTS FROM THE PAPERS OF THOMAS WOODCOCK** (*ob.* 1695). Edited for the Royal Historical Society from the contemporary transcript by DR. JOHN HALL, of Kipping, Thornton, near Bradford, Co. Yorks, by G. C. MOORE SMITH, M.A.

**THE MEMOIRS OF SIR GEORGE COURTHOP (1616-1685).** Edited from an eighteenth-century transcript in the possession of G. J. COURTHOPE, Esq., for the Royal Historical Society by MRS. S. C. LOMAS, F.R.Hist.S.

**THE COMMONWEALTH CHARTER OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, [12] SEPTEMBER, 1656.** Edited for the Royal Historical Society from the contemporary copy of the original Charter in the possession of the Mayor and Corporation, and the enrolment in the Court of Exchequer, by HUBERT HALL, F.S.A.

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1907



SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS  
OF  
GILBERT BURNET, THE HISTORIAN



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EDITED FROM AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY TRANSCRIPT  
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## SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF GILBERT BURNET, THE HISTORIAN.<sup>1</sup>

### PREFATORY NOTE.

THE following letters are here given, by kind permission, on the authority of a transcript taken in the year 1893, at the instance of the present writer, from a manuscript copy-letter-book, presumably of eighteenth-century date, preserved among the Spencer Archives.<sup>2</sup> The transcript was not collated by the present writer, who can therefore assume no responsibility as to its entire accuracy. It seems, however, to have been very carefully executed. The originals, which have disappeared, were addressed, between January and September 1680, to George Savile, Earl of Halifax ('The Trimmer'), then in temporary retirement at Rufford Abbey. The answers of Lord Halifax, unfortunately, have not been recovered.

The circumstances in which the correspondence originated may be briefly summarised. An intimacy which Burnet, as chaplain to the Master of the Rolls, and one of the most eloquent of the great London preachers, had contracted with the leaders of the 'Country' party, or Parliamentary Opposition, had been accentuated, in the course of the year 1679, by the opportune appearance of his first volume on the English Reformation; which was published during the very throes of the 'Popish Plot' agitation. Of that affair the immediate results had been, first, the sudden accession of the

<sup>1</sup> These letters have been occasionally quoted in the *Life of Halifax*, vol. i. chap. vii. (Longmans, 1898); and a few brief quotations are included in chapter v. of a *Life of Burnet* now in the press: both by the present editor.

<sup>2</sup> Box 31, bundle 11. (See the brief 'Catalogue of the Spencer MSS.', *Hist. MSS. Comm. Second Report*, Appendix, p. 15.)

'Country' party to power; secondly, the inception in its more extreme ranks of a project for excluding the Duke of York from the order of succession to the Crown. To this scheme Lord Halifax, and it would appear at this period Burnet also, presented an uncompromising opposition. During the summer the political situation had become increasingly strained; matters, on more than one occasion, had approached a dead-lock; and about September Lord Halifax (whose position appeared particularly invidious) had fallen ill, as an effect, it was maintained, of political chagrin. Throughout the great man's indisposition Burnet, to whom Halifax had been exceedingly kind,<sup>1</sup> had been constant in attendance; but on this occasion he confined himself, as he assures us, to the exercise of his professional functions; and was gratified by finding that Halifax, though reputed an Atheist, betrayed a far stronger sense of religion than Burnet had been led to suppose.<sup>2</sup> The *orthodoxy* of his opinions, however, seems to have been by no means equally clear;<sup>3</sup> and Burnet throughout these letters displays an appropriate concern for the spiritual interests of his correspondent.

In January  $\frac{1679}{1680}$ , disgusted by the decline of his own influence and the increasing preponderance of reactionary councils, in the person of the Duke of York, Lord Halifax had left town. His withdrawal naturally excited much attention; and since his action in the great 'Exclusion' struggle which was seen to impend became thus problematical, politicians of every shade soon rivalled one another—and Gilbert Burnet—in their epistolary attentions.<sup>4</sup>

Under these circumstances the letters of Burnet have for us a threefold interest. Ostensibly 'newsletters' they reveal, so to say, his subsequent History 'in the making'; and show us something of the tireless energy with which, throughout life, he collected political gossip. They illustrate, moreover, an interval which is very briefly dismissed in the pages of the published narrative;<sup>5</sup> and they throw direct contemporary light on Burnet's earlier relations with a statesman to whom he eventually devoted some rather acrimonious pages.

H. C. F.

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Reform.* ed. Pocock, ii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *History of My Own Time*, ed. Airy, ii. 246-7.

<sup>3</sup> See *ibid.* i. 484.

<sup>4</sup> *Life of Halifax*, chapter vii. *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> *Hist. of My Own Time*, ii. 247-254.



*Gilbert Burnet to the Earl of Halifax.*

I:

Febry ye 16. 1679 [80].<sup>1</sup>

My Lord,

If I had not been encourag'd by my Lady<sup>2</sup> to hope for your Lordships pardon, I should not have presumed to have given you any trouble in this manner. I cannot but think your Lordship very happy in being so long retir'd from the Lies and follies of this Place, and enjoying the ease of privacy with the innocent Diversions that the Country affords, but your greatest advantage, which is most to be envied, is the entertainment your own thoughts give you now, that they are less entangled, or heated, and these I am confident, finding nothing abroad equal to them will center in somewhat else, which can only make a Man, Master of himself and of all things without him.<sup>3</sup> I know not how your Lord<sup>p</sup> will censure me for telling you any [thing?] that is stirring here, who must needs know certainties from better hands. It is said Bointon of York comes in, a Judge in the room voided by the Supersedeas that was seal'd on Saturday for Pemberton.<sup>4</sup> there is a discourse, yet among few hands, but not altogether groundless, of a consultation among the Judges how the Kings necessities might be supplied in the Intervalls of Parliament. Three, some say, Four deliver'd their opinions, that it could not be so; the rest did not speak, but one that understands things well, assured me this was only an officiousness of my Lord Chief Justice Scroggs who is now in most mighty favour,<sup>5</sup> and as he brought in Weston, so is he said to bring in this Bointon, who has only practis'd in Yorkshire, and so is scarce known here. The Duke of Lauderdale<sup>6</sup> is melancholly upon the Duke's coming up,<sup>7</sup> and did not know of it, till it was publish'd, but what reason he has, I dont know, for I

<sup>1</sup> Lord Halifax left town between January 11 and January 23, 1679-80 (*Life*, i. 203).

<sup>2</sup> Gertrude Pierrepont, second wife of Lord Halifax.

<sup>3</sup> Religion?

<sup>4</sup> Chief Justice of the King's Bench.

<sup>5</sup> He was at this moment in credit at Court, having just cast doubts upon the revelations of Oates, which he had at first endorsed. (Pollock's *Popish Plot*, pp. 347-60.)

<sup>6</sup> Secretary for Scotland.

<sup>7</sup> *I.e.* the Duke of York's return from Scotland, to which he had been relegated by the influence of the 'Country' party, October 27, 1679.

hear nothing from Scotland that may give him cause of fear. The last Letters from Holland speaks of the continuance of their fears of some Impression from France. I hear the new Farm of the Excise is almost agreed on, Sir John Baber<sup>1</sup> I hear is a great man in it, and that it will yield 500,000<sup>l</sup>. notwithstanding the expiring of the additional excise. There is great discourse of setting on the execution of the Laws against Nonconformists, and that the King has said, of late, that their carriage this last year has been such, that they have no reason to expect any favour from him, and that he will take all the advantage against them the Law will give him, but others assure me these are only the heats of discourse, and that there is no such thing intended.

I find by one of the Lords that Petition'd for a Parliament, that they are consulting about renewing the Petition and are indeed resolv'd on it.<sup>2</sup> and now my Lord I must crave your mercy for this Impertinency, but I am so accusom'd to your goodness, that I am not afraid of your severity. I should be mightily pleas'd with myself if there were anything wherein I could be commanded by your Lordship for as you have oblig'd me beyond example, so there are few things of that nature that I do more earnestly desire than to deserve the continuance of your favour to your most  
Humble G. BURNET.

[The secession of Lord Halifax and the other Country leaders, had thrown the weight of affairs on three little-known officials—contemptuously described as the 'Chits'; of whom the supple Lord Sunderland, brother-in-law to Halifax, was the principal. Alarmed at the responsibility it incurred in face of an angry Opposition, this 'Ministry of fears and expedients' (and even, to some extent, the Duke of York himself) evinced an apparent anxiety to conciliate public opinion. In foreign policy, an Alliance against France was regarded as essentially popular, and efforts were made to conclude treaties with Spain and the Protestant powers before the meeting of Parliament.<sup>3</sup> To this the following letter refers.]

<sup>1</sup> One of the heads of the Dissenting interest. See Kennett, *Com. Hist.* iii. 286.

<sup>2</sup> See *Hist. O. T.* ii. 249. The country seemed at the moment divided between 'Petitioners' who presented petitions to the King for the meeting of Parliament, and 'Abhorrrers,' whose counter-addresses expressed 'Abhorrence' of such interference with the King's prerogative. *Hist.* ii. 248-9.

<sup>3</sup> Klopp, *Fall d. Hauses Stuart*, ii. 237-55, 266-9.

## II.

[Feb. 27?]

When I was expecting your Lordships pardon, you are so Indulgent to me as to send me thanks; by this I see you have already brought yourself to bear one of the uneasiest parts of a Country Life, not only to endure the trouble of an impertinent visitant, but to give thanks for it, but as this Civility commonly begets a new trouble, so your Lordship has yourself to blame, if you draw upon you the vexation of many importunate visits from me in this kind. I shall endeavour to make them as short as may be, and the least signification of your being weary of them delivers you from them, but I am put in hope that they shall determine upon a better account, and that a session of Parliament<sup>1</sup> shall bring you up in April, which has been more talk'd of this week. The occasion of it, I suppose is, that on Sunday last, the Dutch and Spanish Ambassadors were with the King. The former told him that his masters desir'd to be speedily inform'd on what services [termes?] an Alliance may be finally contracted, for they could be no longer in such an undetermin'd condition as they are now in. The latter said, that he had orders to tell the King, that if he did not conclude a firm alliance for the Preservation of what remain'd in Flanders, his master would treat with the French for delivering it up. the King would have put it off, till some returns came from Germany, but the Spaniard assur'd him an agent was expected every hour from the Emperour, and that no doubt was to be made, but they would all concur, if matters were once agreed between the King and the States. now since, the Discourse at Whitehall is all of the Alliances now making up. This if a mistake, is of the Spanish Ambassadors making, for my author whom I very well believe, had all from him. I need not trouble your Lordship with the recital of the great Grief at the Duke and Dutchess<sup>2</sup> parting from Scotland, which in good truth was extraordinary, nor with the kind welcome they have found here. The Day after the Duke went aboard the orders that were sent down Two months ago about the new model of the Militia which he had thought fit to

<sup>1</sup> The principal cause of the Earl's retirement had been the decision of the Government, at the instance of the Duke of York, to defer the meeting of Parliament from October 1679 for a whole year. (See *Life of Halifax*, i. 196, 200, 201, 202, 203).

<sup>2</sup> Of York.

keep up, were read in Council to the amazement of all people, who concluded the business was laid aside, and judg'd not sensible [feasible?] The Lord Bergeny<sup>1</sup> that has been long a prisoner, is to be brought to his Tryal on Monday next, since the arrivals a new message was sent to the Duke of Monmouth<sup>2</sup> and said to be, by the Duke's mediation, that if he would ask the Kings pardon and live well with the Duke and the Kings Ministers he shall be restor'd to all again. his answer as himself reported it, was, that he would submit in everything to the King, but would have nothing to do with the Duke, nor with the Dutchess of Portsmouth.<sup>3</sup> he has also forbid his Lady to see the Duke.<sup>4</sup> whether this answer or something else occasion'd it, I know not, but the King has scarce been known in worse humour than he was in yesterday. There is somewhat of the nature of an Apology for the Duke of Monmouth in the Press, or ready for it, clearing him of all designs, particularly of aspiring to the Crown. I hear there is an order sent to the Judges that if any Priests are try'd on the Circuits,<sup>5</sup> they give not orders for the Execution till the King is first acquainted with it. this puts me in mind of what I writt before concerning a Discourse amongst the Judges, which is now much talked of, but Sir Robert Atkins protests it is a forgery all over, and there is no reason to think he would prevaricate on that head.<sup>6</sup> A Frenchman just now come over being with Mr. Boyle<sup>7</sup> two days ago, says, there are in several places 6000 prisoners<sup>8</sup> clapt up and that it is almost incredible how universally that barbarous Cruelty has overrun France.

But now my Lord I am afraid my visit grows too long, yet I

<sup>1</sup> For this incident see *Hist.* ii. 311-2.

<sup>2</sup> Who had returned on November 28, 1679, without leave, from Holland whither he had repaired about September 10, by his Father's command, in consequence of his supposed schemes of political ambition.

<sup>3</sup> Louise de la Querouaille, reigning mistress of the King.

<sup>4</sup> It is said that Monmouth alleged—very unfoundedly—reasons of jealousy for this step. See Roberts' *Life of Monmouth*, i. 125-6.

<sup>5</sup> It was at this time, of course, death for a Roman priest to execute his functions in England. Several priests had been executed on this count during the preceding year—it is said, with the concurrence of Halifax. (See *Life*, i. 160.)

<sup>6</sup> A judge of the Common Pleas from April 15, 1672, to February 6, 1680, when he received his quietus on account of his popular sympathies [Foss' *Lives of the Judges*, p. 25.]

<sup>7</sup> Robert Boyle, the famous chemist.

<sup>8</sup> The proceedings against the Protestants (which culminated with the Revocation of the Edict) had commenced.

cannot break it off, without acknowledging the great Honour you do me, when you allow me a share in your good opinion, your Lordship being perhaps the Person in the world I admire the most, and indeed, when one thing<sup>1</sup> comes to be added to your other excellent Qualities, which must give life and lustre to all the rest, for which I daily long and Pray, you will then Captivate all who know you, and I must freely tell you, all is nothing, without that, there the Mind rests, and enjoys an entire quiet, of which that your Lordship may have a large share, together with all other things that can make you or yours happy is the most earnest wish of your lordships most obedient

G. BURNET.

### III.

March y<sup>e</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> [1672].

My Lord if this comes too soon after my last Impertinence, I must in part blame your Lordship for it, since you encourag'd me to it, by telling me that, the frequenter my Letters were, they were so much the more acceptable, and there being scarce any in the World whose satisfaction I am more naturally inclined to endeavour, your Lordship must not be too severe to me, for being so saucy with you as to hold you thus a minute or two once a week, and that I put you to some small pittance in this time of Lent. I need the greater allowance because I now trouble you, when I have so little to entertain you with, but being resolv'd once a week to enquire after your Lordship, and to tell you at least this peice of news, that there is little or none stirring, which in such times, is, perhaps one of the best things one can hear, I do again cast myself on your Goodness, of which I have made so many, and such trying experiments, that I can never despair of my pardon how faulty soever I may be. It is generally thought that the match of Lady Anne<sup>2</sup> with the young Duke of Hanover,<sup>3</sup> is concluded, but though this does engage the King and Duke more deeply in the concerns of the Empire, I do not find it is so much consider'd here in Town as it ought to be, all the discourse that held for a week about a meeting of Parliament is now fallen, but it is given out, that the next Prorogation will be a short one,

<sup>1</sup> Obviously he means more profound religious convictions.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke of York's daughter, afterwards Queen.

<sup>3</sup> Afterwards George I. of England.

but still with design not to meet the Parliament till November, if some accident does not fall in. There is great notice taken of Sir John Babers<sup>1</sup> being so often in private with the King, the Duke, and the Earl of Sunderland; and the Clergy at Court have some apprehensions of it, as if there were some treating with the Presbyterians, but whether there is anything more than that he is managing the project of the new Farm of the Excise I do not know. The Duke does mightily commend the Duke of Lauderdale's Government in Scotland and has supported him much, which I hear he has needed much, for the Earl of Sunderland, upon his Friend the Earl of Middletons account, has engag'd a Great Lady against him.<sup>2</sup> he does decline apace in his memory and Understanding, but the Duke will preserve him, and all his party, the design of Modelling the Militia in Scotland goes on, but the main part of it seems impracticable, That Those who send out the Horse or Foot, be oblig'd to send always the same men, for if Masters are bound to keep their Servants, it would soon become very uneasy. The Lord Bergensys trial is put off a week longer, they are proceeding according to the Rigour of the law against such as did not come last Summer to the Post, during the Rebellion.<sup>3</sup> I may add to your lordships trouble and make the matter worse by an Apology, but I am sure I cannot make it better, therefore I have nothing to add but that I am

your lordships S[ervan]t  
BURNET.

## IV.

March 13, 1680.

Your Lordship ends your letter with a mention of Remorse and Repentance, but I am afraid your remorse must lie chiefly upon your encouraging me in this weekly Persecution, and then the Repentance will fall to my share, which I do not deny will be very uneasy to me, for I deal with you, as those that traded first

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 4, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> 'Its sayd there has been some disquiet amongst the great ones, . . . and that yr relation [Sunderland] has his part in it; some heates having been between him and Lawthesdale, and such as does refine will not have them principalls but a great man [the Duke of York?] and a woman [the Duchess of Portsmouth?] originally concerned in it.' (Sir William Hickman to the Earl of Halifax, March 21. Spencer MSS., box 31, bundle 36.)

<sup>3</sup> Bothwell Bridge.

to the West Indies, who for Bells and Glass beads brought over Gold, so if I, by sending you the Talk of a busy lying Town can furnish myself with the excellent returns your Lordship sends me of your own Thoughts that comes from a richer mine than any the Indies know, I cannot apprehend the loss of so advantagious a correspondence but with great regret, yet sure you lose nothing by all the wealth you send me, and hope you will not forbid my visiting you in that quiet harbour where you live now so secure, but now the Allegory has carried me too far were it even in a Sermon. I do not wonder that a mind so easy as yours is, should delight in calms, for the restlessness of some mens genius must flow from the want of quiet at home, and so they avoid the clamours within by the crowd and noise about them. The most generous ambition of a great mind is to do good, and when the hopes or probabilities of that vanish, no wonder such do more easily go off a more publick Stage, and having nothing left for their Country but their good wishes, retire to a more contracted sphere, where still their Inclinations to do good follows them, and therefore they do not long to hear mischief, though perhaps nothing would make others feel the want of them more sensibly. But though this is a vanity that has corrupted some of the greatest minds, I know your Lordship is above it, and therefore will not be the less pleas'd with my Letter that I can tell you no criticall nor tragicall Stories in it. On Monday last when Duncomb and his Parteners read the Propositions for collecting the Excise, there were great expectations of the issue of it, for it was believ'd, they would have advanc'd 200,000<sup>l</sup> upon that security, and none doubted but Dashwoods Farm would have been broken; but when all that, vanished, it has been since surmis'd that the disapointment of this money may put them to such straits that a Parliament must meet. Yet all this seems to be a Reckoning without the Host; for by a great many circumstances it is plain there is no thoughts of a Parliament before Winter, if then. there were also great apprehensions of somewhat to follow on the King's going to Sup at my Lord Mayors,<sup>1</sup> and many run thither, fancying I know not what, but there was nothing in it. The business in Scotland goes on in modelling the Militia, there are only to be Lieutenants

<sup>1</sup> An account of this singularly convivial banquet is given by Dorothy Lady Sunderland in a letter of March 12. (*Blencowe's Diary of . . . the Hon. Henry Sidney*, i. 303-6.)

of Horse and Foot, and the inferior officers: but no Superior Officers till there is occasion to use them, and the Officers talk very idly of their coming ere long to a warmer climate. Two days before the Duke left Scotland the Marquisses of Athol, and Huntly, and eight or ten Noblemen, and Gentlemen, Tarbot in particular came to the Duke and did, in their own names and in the names of their Friends make offer of their lives and fortunes to serve the King and the Duke in their own way, without any reserve or asking the ground of the Quarrell, those were their words, as it is written to me, but whether this will be only a Meteor, or break out in a Storm, I am not wise enough to judge. The Earl of Rothes<sup>1</sup> and the Earl of Queensberry are upon their journey, I hear old age seizes fast upon the Duke of Lauderdale, both in Body and Mind, but he seems confident the Duke will hold him up as long as he lives; and get his Nephew Mr. Maitland to succeed him, and upon all occasions makes himself merry on the Earl of Sunderland, for endeavouring to set up the Earl of Middleton. I need say nothing to you of the extravagance of the Earl of Arran who is now in Flanders, he found he was to be order'd to ask Mr. Seymours<sup>2</sup> pardon if he had gone to the Tower, and that, he would not submit to, but I hear he has sent to Mr. Seymour to come and meet him in Flanders, but I believe Mr. Seymour is a wiser man than to go so far on such an errand,<sup>3</sup> since he declin'd to go to meet the Earl of Rochester<sup>4</sup> on the same occasion the other day, by Arlington Gardens, where Lord Rochester staid for him 3 hours. I am sure I deserve a chiding for disturbing your quiet with this scribble, but it is so establish'd that no importunity of mine, can disturb it, yet my fault is not a whit the less, for which I lie at your feet and submit to whatever punishment you will inflict on your most faithfull

G. BURNET.

## V.

March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1679<sup>80</sup>.

I write now with more than ordinary assurance that I shall be easily forgiven, since I will be very short, having nothing to tell

<sup>1</sup> See his character in Burnet *sub anno* 1660, i. 186.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Edward Seymour, afterwards 4th Bart. of Berry Pomeroy.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably, a duel.

<sup>4</sup> John Wilmot, the profligate Earl of Rochester, for whom see *infra*.



you, to interrupt the easy course of your thoughts, for there is now so little news stirring, that there is not so much [as ?] any Lies going about. so that our busy newsmongers can find nothing to hold up discourse, but must either sit silent and gravely say nothing, or must refresh themselves with repeating old stories, and prophesying what will come to pass. The advances the Kings of Sweeden and Poland are making towards the emancipating their Crowns from the Fetters they seem to be under, gives some small comfort to the Coffehouses, and all the Topicks of Arbitrary Government come out on such an occasion. So how gentle soever the Season may be, in the Country, it is more temperate in Town than I have ever known it, only poor Duke Lauderdale I hear is ill, and that his Dutchess who staid behind him in Town, was sent for last night. it will be a great pity if he should not live till the King returns <sup>1</sup> that he may go off with one satisfaction more, for he has very openly said, That ere the King returns, the Earl of Sunderland will be no more Secretary. the Raillerie in Whitehall is, upon the Dutchess of Portsmouths going to pull down her Lodgings<sup>2</sup> and to build them anew. she has sent to the Dutchess of Richmond,<sup>3</sup> to look to her house that it be not spoiled, since she is to build, so it seems she feels none of the wants of the Treasury. I cannot find out matter for a longer Letter, and indeed I can scarce pardon myself for holding you so long with such stuff, but I hope this will find you after dinner, or at some idle hour in which a trifle will be more tollerable, but I must not abuse your patience too much. I am, &c., &c.

## VI.

March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1680.

It seems your Lordship has abundance of leisure in the Country, that you have the patience not only to read, what I write, but to make large returns, though I can scarce free myself from some apprehensions of my being uneasy to you by writing so oft as I do, of which if you do not freely tell me so, it is not like the rest of your Lordships goodness to me. Your prognostic holds but too

<sup>1</sup> The Court appears to have been at Newmarket.

<sup>2</sup> Evelyn, Diary Oct. 4, 1683, says her magnificent apartments were two or three times rebuilt, in obedience to her caprice.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably 'La belle Stuart.'

sure, That the great calm we were in, might be the forerunner of a Storm. for the weather is not more sensibly alter'd since the Thunder on Thursday last, which has cool'd the air mightily, than the Temper of this place has been this last week. I will tell your Lordship nothing that is in print about the Two grand subjects of our discourse here, the business of the Prentices,<sup>1</sup> and of Ireland: for the first, it appears Nevil Payne<sup>2</sup> was in it, and I find several of the Privy Councill look on it as a matter of Importance, and that the Pageantry design'd for the 29<sup>th</sup> of May was but a colour to draw them together. they talk of greater numbers that were listed which I see no good authority for, many thousands are spoken of, it seems very likely some affronts would have been put upon some Persons, which might have occasion'd a tumult, and that advantages would have been made of that. But what truth soever may be in these surmizes, they are generally believ'd, and like to produce considerable effects here, for last night about 40 eminent Men met in the City, and agreed to go and Petition my Lord Mayor for a Common Hall for the security of the City; and it is thought that may produce a new Petition. for it is said, My Lord Mayor is still, what he was in these affairs. The business of Ireland<sup>3</sup> is spoken of by all the Privy Counsellors as a thing of great importance, and to which they seem to give great credit, this I am sure is the language both of my Lord Chancellor, Lord President, E. Bridgewater and Earl Essex,<sup>4</sup> but the particulars are kept secret, as it is very fit they should be. by what is let fall to some, it seems to be a purely Irish design and an absolute revolt from the English to the French Government, nor do I hear of any reflections that are made by this discovery either on the Government or on the Duke, but a few days will bring out more. Some foreign Ministers speak positively of the Parliaments Sitting in April, tho' no body gives credit to it, and the Kings Speech at the last Prorogation, makes them reckon that the Parliament is not to sit, since there is no Proclamation giving notice of it, whereas, others on the other hand argues, that, it is to Sit, since there is no

<sup>1</sup> A riot, which some supposed to have been designed in order to release the Popish Lords imprisoned in the Tower on account of the Popish Plot. *Life of Shaftesbury*, by Christie, ii. 362.

<sup>2</sup> See Pollock, *Popish Plot*, p. 206.

<sup>3</sup> A supposed plot emphasized by Lord Shaftesbury. See his *Life*, ii. 363-4.

<sup>4</sup> Who was supposed to aim at supplanting Ormond, the Lord-Lieutenant, whom he had preceded in that office.

Proclamation to the Contrary. One thing looks like a longer Prorogation, that the Duke of Lauderdale, as I hear, prevailed with the King to give notice to the University of Cambridge that, they should chuse their Chancellor, and instead of the Duke of Monmouth, chuse him. but it is said, this cannot be done, for they cannot make the change but once in two years, and since they confirm'd him last Summer, he cannot be changed till Summer come Twelvemonth. the Duke of Lauderdale is ill of a swelling in his Legs, he seems to be in a very visible declination of health, and of somewhat that is better than health,<sup>1</sup> yet his Physitians do not apprehend any sudden change, every [one?] is now satisfied that the discourse concerning the Earl of Sunderland had not other ground but what the Duke of Lauderdale gave it. I hear the Duke of Buckingham is come over, and intends to present the Earl of Derby and some others for the conspiracy against him next Term. Since I began to write to your Lordship, one has been with me, that has seen most of the Prentices depositions, and he has assur'd me, on his honour the thing is of great importance, and that they who trained in, the Prentices made them believe there were thirty five thousand in and about London. but all that they understood, was only a Procession such as that was, at the Burning of the Pope,<sup>2</sup> but this being secretly manag'd by the Papists, it is concluded that a farther design lay hid under it. Thus I have disturb'd [you?] with the noise of the town, but your happiness in the Country is, that, when the weather is hot you have always some fresh air to cool you, so when you hear such troublesome tidings you can lose the remembrance of them in some pleasant diversion, whereas we, who must drudge on in Town, as we must melt away in the heat, so our diversions is only to talk of those melancholy subjects, and inflame a heat of which we are already but too much feverish. The Coffee houses were in a most languishing condition before, this matter has brought them in heart again, and you never saw a more sensible alteration in the Country after a great rain than this makes in some people's looks. but if I go on, I am afraid your Lordship will think one of its ill effects is that it has set me so violently a writing, that I cannot hold, but to convince you of the contrary I shall only add that I am,

Your Lordships most &c. G. BURNET.

<sup>1</sup> Reason?

<sup>2</sup> The form taken by the rejoicing on Queen Elizabeth's day.

## VII.

April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1680.

I have now, been so long accustom'd to this way of transgressing, that I grow impudent in it, and am like to continue in it, till I receive due reproof from your Lordship. therefore I humbly beg you will not be cruell to yourself by your over indulgence to me. When I wrote last, I knew nothing of the heats of Council about sending blank warrants to Ireland. I hear the Lord President is not yet pacified, the sharpest things pass'd between him and Mr. Hyde,<sup>1</sup> with whom he is not satisfied upon some other score, and I hear there is a making up, betwee[n] him and the Earl of Shaftsbury. The King and Duke talk'd last night at Supper, sharply against Sir William Waller,<sup>2</sup> in the business of the Prentices, as if the Deposition, one of them made of the assistance they expected from the Guards, had been dictated to him by Sir William Waller, the whole matter was slightly spoken of, and I must say, as far as I can see into that matter, there is nothing more in it but that some hot indiscreet Cavaliers design'd a Pageant against the Commonwealth party and that some Papists went into it, and promot'd it. The matter of Ireland seems a most desperat business, but is still a great secret, for the Privy Counsellors profess they know nothing of it further than that it is resolv'd to examine it here, and that every thing will be done for bringing over of witnesses, that the Committee are satisfied, last night, there was a new examination of the Boy in the business of the Duke of Buckingham<sup>3</sup> who now returns to his first evidence against the Duke so to put an end to it, and to put it to a trial, the Attorney General was order'd to indite the Duke of Bucks of Sodomy, and then the whole matter will be understood. My Lord Mayor has put off the motion for a Common Council till the things now under examination be better understood, for this, some treat him with their usual civility to every one who does not in all things submit to them. but he says neither good usage on the one hand, nor ill usage on the other shall make him depart from his principles. the Duke of Lauderdale

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Earl of Rochester; and one of the 'Chits,' *i.e.* the governing Cabal.

<sup>2</sup> Amagistrate, famous for his anti-Popish zeal.

<sup>3</sup> George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham. See Professor Firth's article in *Dict. Nat. Biography*.

continues ill, some think it a flying gout, others a Dropsy, he flies out often into such indecent fits of rage that some think his head is affect'd. The Earl of Rothes will be here to night, a disorder in the North of England has held him almost a week longer on the Road than he intended. it is believed the Duke will bring him in, to have the great Stroke in Scotch Affairs. I could whisper a reason for this, which I had rather you should understand, than have it told you by me. There was a strange Story published yesterday in Coffee houses, of which, though I believe not a little, yet the setting such things abroad, may be done on design to see how the like might take another time, it was said, that Cosens Bishop of Durham had left a paper seal'd in Sir Gilbert Gerrard's hands, with a charge not to open it till the King was dead. but he had been of late wrought on to open it, and finds it a certificate of that Bishop's having married the King to the Duke of Monmouth's Mother,<sup>1</sup> this I had from a Person of Honour, who heard it publish'd in the Coffee house. one thing about the Irish affair I shall add, that I was told, there is nothing now discover'd of a fresh date, but what was transacted about two years ago, when the Irish believ'd we were engaging in a war with the French, upon which they were treating with that crown. It is said, the League the French have design'd with the Crowns of Sweeden and Denmark is ended, and that those Kings are now Pensioners of France, which will much disorder the Princes of Germany. It is still doubtfull what the King of France intends to do next Summer in Holland, they speak with the same apprehension of danger from them, that they do of distrust of our being able to help them. The Commissions for the new Officers in Scotland were sign'd, but I hear there is no advance made in that affair, they say, they will let it sleep till the seed time is over, and that in Summer the matter will be settled, the true reason is, that they will see what measures are to be taken in this Kingdom before they go further in a matter that will certainly [be] ungratefull here, So long have I wearied you with the foolish talk of this Town, I should make an Apology, but I know I am in noble and kind hands, I will therefore stand to your censure and am

Your Lordship's most humble

<sup>1</sup> This is the celebrated legend of the 'Black Box.'

## VIII.

April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1680.

Since your Lordship is so indulgent to me, I shall henceforth without any sort of excuse continue to inform you of such things as pass here, till you arrive at that pitch of mortification from which you tell me you are at present so far remov'd, but some mystical writers say, the highest degree of mortification is, when a man finds pleasure in that, which pains him; yet I should drive the rallery too far if I thought you thus rais'd to such a wonderfull degree, and therefore since the trifles I sent you are not unwelcome, and you put such a malicious construction on the Apologies, I make, you shall be troubled with no more of them. The business of Ireland is now driven as far as it can go, till the witnesses are brought over, but the Discoverer has a scurvy load upon him, being convict upon record of suborning witnesses; so what witnesses he brings over are under the load of this prejudice. The vis<sup>t</sup> Stafford<sup>1</sup> has been talking again somewhat unseasonably that the Prisoners in the Tower are to be Bail'd the second day of the next Term. There was a discovery made yesterday which will make some noise. there are some appointed to peruse the Jesuits papers, that were seiz'd on, at the first discovery of the Plot, who examining Father Ireland's papers, have found a Day-book of his, with the account of his disbursements, in the year 1678. is written with his own hand, by it, it is evident, he was in London the 19th of August, for several days before, there is nothing set down, he being then with Gentlemen in Staffordshire, but there is an Item, of the 19th of August, of things sent from London to Staffordshire, this, one of those who have search'd it, told me, with great asseverations, it is now given in to the Council. When your Lordship reflects on the endeavours to prove, that he was in Staffordshire, you will then find of what consequence this is.<sup>2</sup> There have been several words let fall upon the publishing the next Prorogation that discover Inclinations to Dissolve this Parliament<sup>3</sup> and to call a new one, when the necessity of Affairs shall require it. There is no sort of news from foreign Parts. Next week letters will be expected from Sir Robert Southwell.<sup>4</sup> The turning

<sup>1</sup> One of the Popish Lords in the Tower, executed in December 1680.

<sup>2</sup> See Pollock's *Popish Plot*, pp. 331, 348.

<sup>3</sup> Which had not then sat!

<sup>4</sup> Our Representative at the Court of Brandenburg.

out of Sir William Waller out of the Commission of the peace occasions much discourse, you may conclude that the Town seis [says?] he is turn'd out that the Priests and other Papists may again come to Town, and sleep without disturbance, for it is said, that he only sent for a Prisoner to examine him in the presence of his keeper, and that he did nothing in that particular, but what he, and other Justices, do frequently. The renouncing of the petitions<sup>1</sup> are said to be put into the Gazettes, to recover the prejudices which were brought on the Kings Affairs in Foreign parts, by the Presenting them. As for Scotch Affairs, I can tell you nothing but only that your conjecture is right. The Duke of Lauderdale recovers a little. The Duke of Bucks friends say, they will prove the Boy was not drunk, and that the Affidavits were all made as he deliver'd them, and that he, of his own accord sent to the Duchess of Bucks, to tell her that he had been practis'd with but desir'd to be examin'd that he might tell the truth, but the bottom of this business will appear next Term. There has been a whisper all this week and that among no mean persons, that the Duke of Monmouth was to be summon'd to the Council, and be sent from thence to the Tower. but I have reason to believe it is a fiction. and thus I have given you the talk of the Town without any order, as things came into my thoughts, your Lordships prognosticks are as just as your guessings, for men grow calm again, but retain their disposition still to be inflam'd again with every spark that is blown about. how long the fermentation will continue and advance, especially when so many accidents to [do?] feed it, or how tragically it may end I leave to one of your Lordships great knowledge of mankind to judge, to me it looks very melancholly but to a wise and good man, except he is too great or too Rich, nothing can be much amiss. and for the Herd, they are of so little consequence, that if their folly bring on them the Punishment due for their sins a man cannot lament it much. But though this Philosophy savours too much of a Misanthrope, yet I am not free myself of tender thoughts, when I think what gloomy things seem to threaten us, and that, at no great distance. That a Wise and Gracious Being governs all Human Affairs to excellent ends, and that the Happiness of

<sup>1</sup> These denunciatory addresses were generally known as addresses of Abhorrence, since they expressed the 'abhorrence' of the signatories for the attempts to interfere with Prerogative, involved in the petitions (previously mentioned) for the meeting of Parliament.

another World will more than compensate all the troubles, good men are put to, in this, gives a serenity which no black clouds about us can darken, of which I wish your Lordship a large share, together with every other good thing that can accompany it. I hope your Lordship has so good an opinion of me, that having oblig'd me so highly as you have done, you believe I have so dear and lasting a sense of it as becomes

Your Lordships most humble G. BURNET.

## IX.

April 17, 1680.

The town was become so quiet again, till yesterday morning that the business of Mr. Arnold<sup>1</sup> broke out, that I was thinking what to invent to make a decent Letter of, for as I told one that ask'd me news two days ago, I was very well furnish'd with a great deal, but it was about a 130 years old, being now almost all the day long in the Cotton Library in order to a second great Impertinency<sup>2</sup> which I shall now finish in a short time. but for any fresh news I knew none, the return from Ireland, and an answer from Berlin give a prospect of some a coming, and many feed greedily on the hopes of what this may produce. The Earl of Shaftsbury looks on the business of Ireland as very important, and says, those who address'd that person to him would not have put a trifle or a thing that cannot be made out in his hands, and complains mightily of the Earl of Essex, who was at first very much possess'd with a belief of it, and did of a sudden fall from it.<sup>3</sup> But the business of Arnold is like to produce more considerable effects. I need not tell your Lordship particulars for they are in print, only some things I shall add. which at this distance you may perhaps not have so justly stated to you. It is certain they were not Robbers, though, because of some robberies in our fields<sup>4</sup> lately done, some would put it on that, for besides a very good suit he was in, he had a good deal of Gold about him, but

<sup>1</sup> An active Justice of the peace, who had been severely assaulted by an assailant unknown. The affair was at the moment regarded as a continuation of the Popish Plot, a sequel to Godfrey's murder. See Pollock's *Popish Plot*, p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> He alludes to the second volume (published in 1681) of his *History of the Reformation*.

<sup>3</sup> He was convinced of its worthlessness.

<sup>4</sup> Burnet then lived in Lincoln's Inn Fields.



they look'd for nothing. A very considerable Person whispered me yesterday, might it not be order'd by him to be done, to be more certainly revenged on those, on whom it will be cast,<sup>1</sup> but the severe Bruises on his head and breast, and the cut in his throat being from the one ear to the other. the Jugular vein being also cut through, shews the folly and impudence of this allegation, but the knife went not so deep as the Arterys, and the windpipe. All was done in a very little time, for a boy had been sent from one house to another for a little Beer with a candle in his hand, and he had not staid a minute, when coming out, the candle made the Rogues run away. yesterday many going to see him, and Justice Warcup being to take his deposition, put him into some heat, so that his Surgeon was in some apprehensions of a fever, the [he?] hopes that his wounds are not mortal, but his bruises will trouble him most, how all good men are affected with this, you will find in your own breast, and your experience of mankind will tell you, the use others will make of it. whatever you saw upon Sir Edmund Godfrey's murder your Lordship may imagine now in all mens discourse and carriage. this business is said to be the effect of the Dukes return, and so they say, he will reign, in a word, all that malice can cast on him, is now brought up. Mr. Arnold being to be heard yesterday before the Council, upon a complaint he put in, against one Herbert a Justice of Peace in Monmouthshire for Favouring<sup>2</sup> of Priests, and dealing with a Jaylor to let a Priest after he was condemn'd make his escape, and the Rogues reminding him of Capt. Evans a priest prosecuted and condemn'd chiefly by his means, are such circumstances that it seems more plain in this case than it was in Sir E. Godfreys at first, upon whom the suspicion ought to fall. it was expected there should have been a search this night, to have found out all who were lately wounded in their legs, for one of the Swords slanted through anothers leg, but I hear, they do not look on it as a matter of such importance at Whitehall.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Papists.

<sup>2</sup> Query 'Harbouring.'

<sup>3</sup> Sir William Coventry and William Hickman (correspondents of Lord Halifax) also dilate upon this curious incident. Coventry mentions that a servant of Evans was suspected; and, on his part, thinks the excitement rather less than over Godfrey's murder. (Letters of this date in Spencer MSS.) A man named Giles was convicted of the attempted murder about July 14. See Luttrell, i. 46, 51, 53, 55, 86, and Pollock, *Popish Plot*, pp. 394-9.

Proclamations are coming out upon it, what effect these will have a little time will discover. This is all I can now entertain your Lordship with, and being so chidden for the Apologies, I thought very just, shall end without any further ceremony

G. BURNET.

X.

[April 24 ?]

I scarce have matter for a letter, this week, having produc'd nothing. Inquiries after the attempt on Mr. Arnold fill up all discourse; but though there are presumptions against some that are taken up, yet there is no clear evidence [,] some that I ought not to name, have said, it look'd liker a trick of Oats's or Bedloe's to support the Plot, than anything else. One pretended he trac'd the Rogues to a house in the Strand, but now denys it again, and is sent to be disciplin'd in Bridwell. The story of Fitzgerald in Ireland proves a flamme, for there was no Wall to be found in a place where he said, many writings were built up within a Wall. I saw a Letter from one of Sir Robert Southwell's Company, that says, they are like to have a long Negotiation, for though the French Propositions are little consider'd in that Court, yet our Affairs here, makes them very apprehensive that we cannot be a considerable support to them against such a mighty Enemy. The Dutch are now much out of their fears they were in, of any mischief from France this summer, as one of their Colonels writt this week, yet they have strengthen'd their Garrison at Mاسترخت. All the Town expected a Dissolution this week, which was said to be with design that the Lords in the Tower might be bail'd in the approaching Term. It is probable there will be a Parliament in Scotland, this Summer, the Earl of Rothes will be Commissioner, the Business, will be, to settle the new model of the Militia, to alter the Coronation Oath, to set up the Common Prayer, and to take away all Indulgences that have been given to the Presbyterians party, this is mightily denied by some, and no less confidently said, by others, who are as likely to know it as those who deny it.

The Duke of Lauderdale cannot hinder the Earl of Rothes's advancement, and so there is the appearance of a friendship between them. This is all I have now to offer to your Lordship.

## XI.

May 2<sup>d</sup>, 1680.

A man had need be very intent on his studies that lives near much noise, so in this place of news and talk, it is some happiness to have ones head full of any thing, that either keeps out or soon drives out the impressions which the things he sees, or hears makes upon him, but when this cannot be had without the labour of running up and down, attendance, and dull reading, how much happier is your Lordship that has all this on easier Terms, where every Bird and flower gives you a sweet and easily purchas'd diversion. but those that work in mines, though it is but earth they dig, may bring up some good Metal. I am sure I have cast up much coarse oar, what richer grains may be in it, a little time will discover.<sup>1</sup> In the mean while, I shall be proud of my beads since you esteem [them ?] Pearl. But I cannot sit so close, but the hum of the town finds me out, this week has afforded a good deal of discourse, and now that the Term has brought up company there is talk enough, to one that listens, or but keeps his ears open. The examining Sir Gilbert Gerrard first, and yesterday so many more about the black box,<sup>2</sup> besides a great many other reflections has rais'd one, that is thought may have ill consequences, that this is the Oath Ex Officio condemned by Law, when people are call'd for, without any accusation and requir'd to purge themselves by Oath. and though the importance of the Paper, seems to allow of more strict enquiries, yet others think, this will be made use of if a Parliament meets, which all that are thought to know the Councils, or the Straits they are in, at Court, speak of, as a thing most certain in November, and that there will be no Dissolution. There is now a great want of money for the payment of 15 ships that are returning from the Streights, and have been 30 months there. The King speaks of the Foreign League as a thing that is as good [as] done. and I hear the Elector of Brandenburgh is very willing to join in it. but there is one thing come to the Kings knowledge which will obstruct the meeting of Parliament as much as anything can do. one told me he heard the King say, he knew it was design'd to impeach the Duke,<sup>3</sup> and that he had the Articles in his pocket, this I have

<sup>1</sup> He alludes, of course, to his historical researches.

<sup>2</sup> Supposed to contain the marriage certificate of Monmouth's mother.

<sup>3</sup> Of York.

heard of another way. now it being agreed that the Person impeach'd by the Commons is to be forthwith Committed, it may be expected what effects the knowing this design will have. There is no discovery yet made of the attempt on Mr. Arnold, and as all things cool soon here, so at Court the matter is forgot, or spoken of as a slight thing. The Duke of Bucks does now appear, and a new libel, that looks very like him,<sup>1</sup> and I hear is own'd by him, is as much repeated now, as that on Thomas Earl of Danby was last year, but this is not stuff for me to deal in, and I am confident you want not the entertainment it will give you. There is nothing yet determin'd about our Scotch Affairs. The business of Tangier<sup>2</sup> does much discompose the Merchants who apprehend from those frequent alarms the Moors make, that they are resolv'd to have it, which will be easily done, if they can but purchase some Cannon from the Pyritical Towns that are near them, and if it falls into their hands, it will be the greatest Seat of Piracy that ever was. The business of Ireland is writt of from Dublin as a very solemn great thing. I saw 3 or 4 letters of the 20<sup>th</sup> of April at my Lady Ranelaghs,<sup>3</sup> that mention it as a thing of great consequence and that it will be clearly made out. others speak slightly of it. 4 Jesuits were brought to Dublin and were kept and examin'd very strictly, by this time they are in England. but by this time I have tir'd you, and so will conclude.

## XII.

May ye 8<sup>th</sup>, 1680.

I can never hope to write to your Lordship more to advantage than now, for I have very little to say, and have no ill news to make you melancholly or thoughtfull, so this will be both short, and not uneasy, two qualities that mine have seldom had hitherto. I shall begin with what I heard last night concerning yourself, that Two of your Friends,<sup>4</sup> who I suppose are still with you, went

<sup>1</sup> This is the Libel on the existing Administration usually attributed to Dryden. See *infra*.

<sup>2</sup> At the moment in our possession, as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza. We abandoned it a few years later.

<sup>3</sup> Katherine, sister of Robert Boyle, the chemist.

<sup>4</sup> Sir William Coventry and probably a Sir Thomas Clarges (brother of the first Duchess Albemarle), long a member of the 'Country' party, whom Sir William mentions in several of his letters as intending a visit.

from hence with a kind message from the Duke to your Lordship, and to invite you again to Town and to Business. The business of Ireland is represented from thence to be a matter of consequence, the Priests I believe are by this time come to Town, so we shall know more in a little time. There has been much talk of one Blondell a Priest who in his sickness should have discover'd somewhat of Sir Edmundbury Godfreys murder, but I cannot find any ground for it at all. A Manifesto is expected concerning the business of the Duke of Monmouth's Mother,<sup>1</sup> which I hear will contain severe reflections on the Duke of Monmouth. It is said that our alliances advance as much as can be expected or desir'd. The Moors have not yet left Tangier, but since they have no Artillery there is no great apprehensions from anything they can do. There is nothing of the Affairs of Scotland brought to any conclusion. And now my Lord, I have told you all I know, I shall only add a new stanza added to the Libell of the Chess Story, which because it has so much wit, and so little abuse in it, I thought it was neither unfit for me to write, nor would it be displeasing to you to read.

So have I seen a King at Chess  
His Rooks and Knights withdrawn  
His Queen and Bishops in distress  
Shifting about from less to less  
With here and there a Pawn.<sup>2</sup>

I am your Lordships

most humble,

GILBERT BURNET.

### XIII.

May 15<sup>th</sup> 1680.

The last time I wrote to your Lordship I had very little to say, and there were no ill news then on foot, but now when I have a great deal to tell you, and nothing that is good, I do more unwill-

<sup>1</sup> The Gazettes of April 29 and May 3, Nos. 1507, 1508, had published an account of the 'Black Box' examinations, and the King's denial of the story which affirmed the young Duke's legitimacy.

<sup>2</sup> This is the last stanza of the witty ballad often printed (under the title 'On the young Statesmen') among Dryden's works. It has also been attributed, with more probability, to Lord Dorset. A phrase in Burnet's former letter seems to suggest that he ascribed it to Buckingham, a yet more likely ascription. It was a satire on Sunderland, Hyde, and Godolphin.

ingly give you this trouble. You heard no doubt by the last post of the King's Illness, yesterday all day, we were in good hopes it was at an end, but last night we heard his fit return'd yesterday in the afternoon, the cold fit was short, but the hot was long, it held him in all four hours, but was judged easier than his former. So it is now a form'd quotidian ague, he has taken Charasse his preparation of the Jesuits powder, which is generally thought excellent good. I need not tell you the consternation all people are in, you know mankind too well for that. the Kings going so early to Windsor is blam'd, and it is said my Lady Portsmouth procur'd that, in order to the pulling down her lodgings that they may be rebuilt by Michelmas. he was also many hours a fishing, on Sunday last, and his feet were wet. I hear it has been mov'd in Council to call up all that are of the Privy Council to attend either here, or at Windsor. I shall be sorry this melancholly occasion should bring your Lordship up. The Duke of Monmouth I hear, has got the Earl of Manchester to carry a message to the King full of humble duty expressing his infinite grief for being under his displeasure and chiefly that now he may not attend on him, and desiring that he would reflect on the condition he is in, and on his innocence, I do not know what return is brought. Great notice was taken that on Wednesday last the Examinations concerning the Black Box being like to grow endless, the King cut the matter short, and said he would have no more of that Farce, and upon that, the Duke<sup>1</sup> desir'd there might be some act of State made about it, and that the contrivers and spreaders of it, might be punish'd, but the King said never a word, and all the Board was silent, so the Duke repeated his desire, but still all was silent, then my Lord Chancellor said, he did not see, what more the King could do in that way, but the Attorney General, might be order'd to see, what could be drawn out of the Examinations to found an information on. the Duke upon that, went into his Closet, and those who judge by the looks believe, he was very much troubled at it. The King had at that time a little fit on him, though he dissembl'd it, and it is not known whether his sullenness in that matter was upon deliberation or the effects of a distemper. I believe what I have already wrote does so fill your thoughts, that you will very little consider anything I can add, but since I am writing I shall go on. The business of Ireland grows big, and gains

<sup>1</sup> Of York.

ground in mens belief, besides the four Priests, there is one Fitzgerald, come over, a Gentleman of quality, who though he has been bred a Protestant, yet having lost an estate by the Settlement of Ireland was thought fit to be trusted with the secret, is come over, he is set out by many letters, from several hands with a very worthy character. he gave in his evidence to the Duke of Ormond, and is recommended by him. there came also last night other two persons both of condition, one was a Justice of Peace, the substance of all is, that there was a design of revolting from the Crown of England to France. that Bulls came from Rome absolving them from their allegiance, that they made several applications to the Court of France, that they were to have seiz'd upon Limerick and Gallway, and that a day in November 1678, was set for their gathering together, when Fitzgerald have made his Narrative to the Council, the Earl of Essex said, that he had many circumstantial proofs and advices given him of several passages out of which he could make nothing, not knowing the bottom of the business, but that all these did so exactly agree to the Informations then given in, that he was confident. any that would compare them would be much convinc'd of the truth of the whole affair. The Boyles, and all others that have concerns in Ireland seem fully perswaded of the truth of the business. For Scotland, the commissions for levying the Forces are now all sign'd and sent away, how they will be executed, a little time will tell. The Duke has got an order to be given for settling the business of the Highlanders, which will be a great mortification to the Earl of Argyle.<sup>1</sup> It is generally thought the Duke of Lauderdale's interest declines, but how the Earl of Rothes will maintain that, he now has, I do not know, for he lives so remarkably out of order, that he is every day almost, under some one or other ill effects of his course of life.<sup>2</sup> The hope of a Foreign Alliance lessens much since the Elector of Brandenburg declares he will be neuter, but the Hambourgh Letters say, he has clos'd with France, and that he did expostulate severely with Sir Robert Southwell upon several things for which he charg'd our Court. Letters from Spain say the King and Queen<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Whose committal, conviction, condemnation, and escape from prison took place during the ensuing year.

<sup>2</sup> He died as the result of excessive intemperance, July 1681. *Hist.* ed. Airy, ii. 310.

<sup>3</sup> 'Mademoiselle' d'Orleans, daughter of 'Madame' (Princess Henrietta of England). She had been married just a year to Charles II. of Spain.

there, are on very ill terms, that she cannot submit to the gravity of that Court, that among other instances of the King's displeasure at her, he wrung off a Parrot's neck in which she took much pleasure. and now I am sure you are weary since I have not had the luck to entertain you with one pleasant subject.

## XIV.

May ye 29<sup>th</sup> 1680.

If I durst be so bold as to complain of your Lordship I would adventure to do it, upon your writing twice to me so near one another: as if my enquiring after your not writing had exacted it. I thought once, in revenge, to have wrote to you by the Tuesdays Post, but that would have been too severe a punishment for so kind a fault. hereafter I humbly beg your Lordship will not const[r]ain yourself to write, but when you have a mind to it, and abundance of leisure, only if you do it not yourself once a fortnight, order any of your servants to let me know that mine are come to your hands. The business of Tangier is now the great subject of discourse. The Moors are resolv'd to have it, if it be possible, they lodge in trenches ten foot deep, and so broad, so that they are cover'd from the Cannon; there are great complaints of the Earl of Inchequins<sup>1</sup> carriage, Coll Dunghen says, that being with the Alcaide upon a party, he ask'd him if the King and the Parliament were yet reconcil'd, and seem'd to understand our affairs. The charge of the supplies to be sent thither will come at present to 30,000<sup>1</sup> though they do not raise new men here in the room of those they send, but so much more, if that is to be done, and after all, by the accounts sent over, it is generally believ'd the Town will be lost. Much notice was taken of the Kings sending on Tuesday night to excuse himself to the Earl of Bedford<sup>2</sup> that he would not Dine with him on Wednesday, having invited himself 3 days before, but I hear the Earl of Bedford did not upon that, invite the Duke, and that occasion'd the change of the King's mind. The King seems to be in good health, but his colour is not good, and he was sullen and avoided the speaking with almost everybody: so that the Commissioners of the Admiralty, though they had important busi-

<sup>1</sup> The Governor (a Papist).

<sup>2</sup> A leading member of the Exclusion party, and father of the celebrated William, Lord Russell.



ness, could not speak with him. But that which surpris'd people most, was, his examining the Earl of Macclesfield upon his knowledge of the Duke of Monmouths Mother, being a whore to other people, which that Earl did not remember, though the King gave him a token to call him to mind about it. this is thought an absolute breaking off from all kindness to that Duke, who din'd that day in London with above forty Lords and Gentlemen of Quality, Lord Russell was one. Two healths were drank, the one begun by the Duke of Monmouth, the King and Magna Charta, the other begun by the Lord Howard,<sup>1</sup> The Confusion of all pretending Popish Successors. There is a Letter set out about the Black Box,<sup>2</sup> and the proceedings upon it, I hear it is very severe on the Duke, and insinuates as if the Duke of Monmouth were either Legitimate, or that notwithstanding might be set up, this has determin'd the King in the manner [matter?] of a Manifesto<sup>3</sup> to be set out concerning his Mother, which I hear will be ready for the Council on Wednesday next. There is a discourse of a high expostulatory and threatening letter from France, but I know nothing of it but by report. The Earl of Rothes is made a Duke and is to be Colonel of one of the new Regiments, he is in most mighty favour, though he is once if not twice a day in such a condition, that other persons would scarce think him fit to do any great matters. The Lord Tarbatt is turn'd out of all, as a creature of the Duke of Monmouths; so I hear both the Kings advocates [Advocate?] and the President are to be, and that Sir George Lockhart, is to be Kings Advocate. This is what this place affords for discourse. I shall only add that I am your Lordships &c. &c.

## XV.

June ye 5<sup>th</sup> 1680.

This is one of the quiet seasons in which as my Lord Bacon observes, a man would desire to live, but not chuse to write of it. So there is scarce matter for a Letter, and by consequence we are at present at more than ordinary ease. only fears and apprehensions have their fermentation still. There is a discourse, and that

<sup>1</sup> Of Escrick. A personal friend of the Duke of Monmouth, and notorious for his subsequent treachery, in 1683.

<sup>2</sup> The celebrated pamphlet by Robert Ferguson.

<sup>3</sup> This is dated June 8, and appeared in the Gazette, No. 1519.

among no slight hands, that there is a design of bringing in the Duke to the publick administration of affairs, though with no Patent<sup>1</sup> Character, but as declaring him successor to the Crown, and putting him in some sort of possession of it before the King dies. The matter of Tangier is now settled the men are most aboard, and the Horse will be ship'd next week, I hear the Companies out of which they are drawn are not to be fill'd up, and that the Mole is not to go on till the Moors are driven away, so the expence will not be above 30,000<sup>l</sup>. I do not hear they are in any apprehensions of losing the place at all.<sup>2</sup> They talk much of an expostulatory Letter from France, grounded chiefly on some discourses of Sir Robert Southwells at the Elector of Brandenburg's Court. We are also made believe that the King of France will adhere to his demand of the Spaniards departing from the Title of Duke of Burgundy, if a war follows upon this, we have a Title still, that will be a much more colourable foundation of one, when that is at an end.

Will Fanshaw<sup>3</sup> just now tells me, Letters are come from the Earl of Rochester,<sup>4</sup> by which it seems he must be dead by this time. Dr. Lower is sent for, but they think he cannot live till he comes to him, an ulcer in his bladder is broken and he pisses matter, he is in extreme pain: he has express'd great remorse for his past ill Life, and has perswaded his Lady to receive the Sacrament with him, and hereafter to go to Church, and declare herself a Protestant, and dies a serious Penitent, and professes himself a Christian. Since Mr. Fanshaw told me this, I hear he is dead. I add no reflections on all this, for I know your Lordship will make them much better. The Town says, The Duke of Buckingham has been at Court, it is false, but by what I hear, it is likely he may do it ere long. We have been expecting these two days a narrative<sup>5</sup> of the business of the Black Box, yesterday

<sup>1</sup> As a Papist he could not take the oaths.

<sup>2</sup> Sir W. Hickman, being in the Ordnance, writes very feelingly on the subject. The town and outlying forts corresponded by speaking trumpet, 'and its in ye Irish tongue (for there's no Irish Renegados) which is ye only advantage I have heard of that Language' (Spencer MSS. Box 31, bundle 36. June 2, '80).

<sup>3</sup> A William Fanshaw married a sister of the Duke of Monmouth.

<sup>4</sup> The witty profligate Earl, the history of whose dying repentance Burnet, at Rochester's own wish, published during the following winter.

<sup>5</sup> The royal declaration, asserting the illegitimacy of the Duke, mentioned above.

the Seal was put to it, and it is to be enroll'd in many several Rolls: but I do not hear it is to be printed by authority. yet when it is once enroll'd it will not be long out of the press. so having but little to trouble you, your Lordship will get off easily now with but one page

I am yours.

## XVI.

June 12<sup>th</sup> 1680.

I am afraid this letter will be so long that it will quite fright you from desiring any more, but I must venture for once, though I give you but small comfort when I tell you beforehand that in all this Letter as long soever as it is like to be, there will be very few things that will please you, unless you are of the humour of a Patient who is glad to know the worst of his disease. The business of Tangier fills the Town with discourse, it is a shamefull story, and like to cast as great a blot on us, as that of Chatbam was. The Alcaide sent to Trelawny who commanded the Fort, to render and be prisoners of War. They finding the mines were come under them, gave notice by the Speaking Trumpet to the Town, that they were to quit the Fort at such an hour, that they might make a Sally, and help them to break through; so on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, after they had spik'd the Cannon, and laid a train, which Trelawny, who went out last, fir'd to blow up their Amunition they broke out. the Moors had cast three Ditches about them, the first Two, Six foot deep, the Third nine foot deep, and it was full of mire, they got through the two first, but stuck long in the last, 450 men sallied out, but shamefully run all back to the Town as soon as the Moors fac'd about to them without giving fire, so left them to perish in the ditch. of 180 forty got to the Town. the next day the Alcaide having cut off their heads sent them to Fez, struck a parly for the Garrison to bury their dead, and sent to them to deliver up the Town and be Prisoners of War. Now what is to be expected from a Garrison when four hundred and eighty commanded men did so base an action, I leave your Lordship to judge. This is a new weight on a Government that has already load enough on it in conscience. Our tidings from France are not much better. the King of France has set the 25<sup>th</sup> of this month for his coming to Dunkirk, and the 27<sup>th</sup> for the Spaniards to give their answer about the title of Duke of

Burgundy, and it is generally believ'd upon their denying to lay it down he will fall into Flanders, and it is taken for granted that every place will surrender to him upon Summons. Mr. Sidney<sup>1</sup> has brought over with him an agreed project of an Alliance between Us, Spain and Holland, but it is generally said, the Article is, that a Parliament be call'd, for so Don Pedro di Ronquillas<sup>2</sup> says to every body, it was expected, that last Council day should have brought out somewhat concerning it, but they were disappointed, all that was done was about common matters, only Mr Kingsley[?] was suspended without being heard, and though some of his friends press'd much that he might be first heard, it could not be obtain'd. But yesterday produced such a piece of news that people generally conclude from it, there is no thought of a Parliament at least my Lord Chief Justice Scroggs does not look for any. Mrs Cellier<sup>3</sup> was brought to her trial, where besides great gentleness to her, and roughness to Dangerfeld<sup>4</sup> it was objected to him, that he was not capable to be a witness, for he was under an outlawry for Felony, and that was not specially mention'd in his pardon; it was answer'd, that a full Pardon was intended, and order'd, if there was anything omitted, that, ought not to be stood on. or at least, that it was to be put off till the Kings mind was known. My Lord Chief Justice said, he was not to enquire into intentions, but to take things as they were. So would not admit him a witness, and order'd him to be carried to Jail for the Felony; and it is thought he will be hang'd, or made unsay all he has said. When he saw this, he said openly, that My Lord Chief Justice did now act plainly to discourage all from discovering and repenting the ill they had done, and to be so kind to Delinquents. but Gadbury fairly deny'd all he confess'd to the Council. So Mrs Cellier was acquitted, and kneeling down according to form to say God bless the King and that Honourable Court, she added God bless the Duke of York: as she went out of the Court, she saw Praunce<sup>5</sup> standing near the Court, and said aloud to him, you Rogue you see, how that Rogue is us'd, so shall

<sup>1</sup> 'Handsome' Henry Sydney, our representative at the Hague, uncle to the first Lady Halifax.

<sup>2</sup> Spanish Ambassador.

<sup>3</sup> A Papist concerned in the 'Meal-tub' plot, a forged conspiracy by which (among others) the name of Lord Halifax had been aspersed.

<sup>4</sup> Who had turned King's evidence.

<sup>5</sup> A Popish plot witness.

you and all of you be shortly. I need not tell your Lordship the sense of the Town of this transaction, for I am sure you are not so quite cur'd of the disease of thinking as not to apprehend it. in short all people that are displeas'd with the Court are glad of it. The King is by the observation of all about him extreme uneasy, and has complain'd to one or two of the Duke's being so busy, and giving him no rest. I have this, so, that I dare give credit to it. and it is generally thought that the Duke has lost more than he has gain'd by Procuring the Declaration.<sup>1</sup> There are some employ'd to try what will satisfie the Parliament, and I hear the business of the Earl of Danby<sup>2</sup> is offer'd, but I do not find those who negotiate in that matter have much hope. You know who is my next neighbour,<sup>3</sup> I need say no more. Some of the Physitians have been with the King to perswade him to take Physick, but to no purpose, he takes more of the Jesuits Powder frequently upon some grumblings he has felt, and it is generally fear'd that he may be ill in the autumn: this I hear makes Duncombe and others much backwarder in advancing of money.<sup>4</sup> The Committee of Council for regulating Corporations sits often, which makes some think a new Parliament is designed, but I do not hear much ground is like to be gain'd that way. I hear the Duke of Bucks intends to indite the Earl of Danby<sup>5</sup> this Term, if he can perswade Sir William Waller to come over. Le Mar<sup>6</sup> is dead of the Pox some days after he was found guilty of as foul a blasphemy as ever I heard. but such stuff I do not love to reveal. The Duke of Bucks is said to have broke out the other day into one of his humours against the Duke and the Duke of Monmouth and after he had curs'd them both sufficiently, he in the end curs'd himself, if he was for either, but that he was for a commonwealth. Now after so tedious and unpleasant a Letter, I shall add somewhat to sweeten all. The Earl of Rochester lives still, and is in a probable way of recovering, for it is thought all that ulcerous matter is cast out; all the Town is full of his great penitence,

<sup>1</sup> Concerning Monmouth's illegitimacy.

<sup>2</sup> Still under impeachment in the Tower.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Thomas Littleton, one of the 'Country' leaders.

<sup>4</sup> Because so much of the revenues would determine with a demise of the Crown.

<sup>5</sup> Query Derby: see *ante*, p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> One of the witnesses against the Duke.

which by your Lordships good leave I hope flows from a better principle than the height of his fancy, and indeed that which depends so much on the disposition of the Body cannot be suppos'd very high when a man's spirits are so spent as his were. This, he told me in his last sickness prevail'd with him beyond all other arguments to think the soul was of a different nature from the Body, for when he was so low that he could not stir, and thought not to live an hour, he had the free use of his reason to as high a degree as ever he remembered to have had, in his whole Life but it was plain reason stript of fancy and conceit. I was last night with Sir Francis Winington<sup>1</sup> and telling him that I was to write to day to you, he charg'd me to present his most humble duty to you, and to tell you that he lov'd you with all his heart, I said I should do it in his own words, and now my Lord I am sure you are weary to purpose.

[So great meanwhile was the anxiety of the existing Ministry to secure the suffrage of Lord Halifax, that Lord Sunderland and his two principal colleagues, with Henry Sidney, went down express to Althorpe, in order to meet the recalcitrant statesman. The interview created extreme alarm in the ranks of the 'Country' party, and Burnet's ensuing letter is observably stiff.]

## XVII.

June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1680.

I might well spare your Lordship this trouble, since you will from much better hands have heard how things go, for you will not think it strange if the Town that is apt to talk of every thing makes great inferences from an appointment made between the Earl of Sunderland and Mr. Sidney and you at that Earl's house, which is design'd, as the newsmongers say, to bring your Lordship again into Affairs. So I need say nothing of the Truce at Tangiers for three months, of the Affairs of Flanders, nor of the strange proceedings of the King's Bench, where Dangerfeld one day was cast as no good witness, and within two days when Mrs. Cellier was discharg'd, was found to be a good witness, as [is] within the Newgate Pardon. These things furnish matter of dis-

<sup>1</sup> Formerly Solicitor-General, now a member of the Exclusion party.

course to those who are glad to find any. But of all this you must have receiv'd more certain and particular information than any I can write. Our two Scotch Lords the Duke of Rothes and Earl of Queensberry began their journey on Monday. I apprehend things will be carried with a higher hand than heretofore, for I see they are very full of zeal, and will go through with every thing as long as all can hold together. There has been a discourse about the Town chiefly cherish'd by my Lord Chancellor's friends, as if he, were tottering and like to lose the Seals, but I hear there is no reason for it. Lately three of those that were in Rebellion last year in Scotland, were apprehended by some of the Kings soldiers at Queensferry, seven miles from Edinburgh, but the zealous women of the Town fell upon the soldiers and rescu'd them, so that two escap'd, the third<sup>1</sup> in the fray was knocked on the head, and died in an hour, but the Portmanteau of one of those that got away being seiz'd, they found in it a paper like the draught of a new Covenant for it begins, We undersubscribers, it is a renouncing the King and his Family, declaring him to have fallen from his Regal Power and that they owe him no more obedience, this being in a Ministers Portmanteau gives great reason of suspicion, but whether it was only the essay of an ill natur'd Rebell who would try his pen on such a subject, or if it was a more meditated discourse I cannot understand. The best thing I can add is, that I have nothing else to trouble you but to beg you will accept of the humble duty of yours.

[Lord Halifax hereupon circulated letters of explanation.<sup>2</sup>]

### XVIII.

June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1680.

As I must acknowledge the favour your Lordship did me in ordering your man to call upon me, so I am to beg pardon for a presumption I was guilty of. finding you had forgot to name Sir Francis Winington I presum'd so far as to advise him to call on him in your name, for which if I mistake you not, you will not blame me much. Since you were so lately with men who governs

<sup>1</sup> Cargill. See Burnet, *History of My Own Time*, ii. 306-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Halifax*, i. 225-6.

all the Councils and so can give a man a light to know things for a great while to come it were very impertinent to trouble you with a long letter, the same [tho' some?] things have fallen out this week that were not look'd for, in which your double Uncle <sup>1</sup> has been very active. On Monday the Grand Jury of Middlesex sign'd a Petition for Parliament. On Wednesday the Earl of Castlemaine <sup>2</sup> was acquitted by the Great care and zeal of my Lord Chief Justice, who did so rogue Dangerfield that as he contended long, against hearing his evidence, so when he had done it he gave direction to the jury to have no regard to it, and the Earl of Castlemaine was so sensible of his favour that he complimented him highly upon it. On Thursday the City carried it very highly both in chusing Slingsby Bethel with another of his Stamp <sup>3</sup> Sheriffs, and in calling mightily for a Petition for the sitting of the Parliament, but the Sheriffs would not meddle in it. Yesterday the Duke of Bucks's Cause against Christian and Blood <sup>4</sup> was try'd, it was very clear against the former, though both were found guilty. and this day, that, that has been talk'd of all the week is done, the Earl of Shaftsbury and four other Lords went and gave their Evidence to the Grand Jury against the Duke of York as a Recusant <sup>5</sup> and he is present'd, but the particulars of that affair are not told me right, for by an accident I was oblig'd to keep within doors to-day, but I suppose you will have it written more fully to you by others who know it better. Such a visage of affairs does not look like a Session of Parliament at present, and yet never was anything more confidently given out than that we shall have one in November at farthest, and I can assure you our Scotch favourites are gone this week homewards as much exalted as ever I knew men, and nothing so much talk'd by all about them and hinted at by themselves, That Scotland will be useful to the King, if it Proves so in the Scheme they have laid down, I know nothing of that Nation. I shall not try your Lordships patience, by turning the leaf, but since I have room for no more I add only an adieu.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Shaftesbury, whose first and third wives were related to Halifax and his first wife respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Husband of the notorious Duchess of Cleveland; he had been implicated in the Popish Plot.

<sup>3</sup> Independents and reputed Republicans. See *History of my Own Time*, ii. 239, 247-9.

<sup>4</sup> For conspiracy to defame him.

<sup>5</sup> See *Life of Shaftesbury*.



## XIX.

July 3<sup>d</sup>, 1680.

Your Lordship cannot think it strange, that in a time of so much business, a journey made by all our Great Ministers was believ'd to be more than a bare visit, I am sorry you were then so much out of order, and much gladder that you are now so well. The business of Tangiers is rather suspended than remov'd which appears by this new supply of 1800 men, all the Earl of Dumbartons Regiment is to be sent over with an additional [*sic*] of 600 from Scotland, you had no doubt heard of the second attempt for inditing the Duke,<sup>1</sup> disappointed by the discharge of the Jury as the former was, a third is expected at Hicks's hall next week, when I hear there will be a *Noli Prosequi* to stop further proceedings. The Charge given to the Judges for proceeding severely against the Papists, and gently against Dissenters was a great surprise on every body. On Wednesday last there were between 50 and 60 that Din'd with the Duke of Monmouth near the Exchange where they had the former Healths, and two Rules were made, one that none should drink above a Pint of Wine, the other, that none should Swear. I am told to day that the Petition for the Parliament is again on foot in Middlesex. And to this I shall add the best piece of news I have now to tell you which is, that I have nothing else to trouble your Lordship with, except that I have had one of the best Letters from the Earl of Rochester that ever I had from any person, he has a sedate and sincere Repentance, and a firm Bief of the Christian Religion deeply form'd in his Mind. he has little hopes of Life, and as little desires of it, unless that he may make amends for what is past. I am, my Lord, yrs. G. B.

## XX.

July ye 10<sup>th</sup>, 1680.

I do now write with more than ordinary confidence, for I have scarce matter to fill up ten lines. There was a general disappointment at Hicks's Hall, for the Grand Jury was so laid that they knew how it would go. The two Sheriffs of London are not qualified to hold upon the last Election, for they had not receiv'd the Sacrement a year before, but have now receiv'd so they are qualified if chosen

<sup>1</sup> Of York. See *Life of Shaftesbury* (Christie), ii. 366.

again, which is believ'd will be done next week.<sup>1</sup> The King comes to Town as is said on Monday to oppose their being chose. I know not what to say of the Story in the Gazette about Scotland, for it mentions That, to have been done on the 22<sup>d</sup> of June, and yet the Express bears date the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, and many Letters are come since, which say not one word of it. knowing General Dalieles temper I incline to think it may be a fiction, but D[uke] Ham[ilton] writes me word that the Persons excepted, in the several qualifications of the Pardon last year ride through the Country like Banditti, they are about 1200. A great number to be made desperate in so small a Kingdom. I am yr Lordships most humble servant,

G. B.

## XXI.

July ye 17<sup>th</sup> 1680.

We are now at such quiet in Town that if the business of the Sheriffs had not occasion'd some Discourse this week, we should have been quite run dry. You had no doubt an account of that business formerly, so I need not say anything of it now, but that the Poll turn'd a little yesterday against Bethel and Cornish but the others I hear are not yet within a Thousand of them. The Recorders<sup>2</sup> Carriage is a greater prejudice to all the Motions of the Court than can be imagin'd, sure [since ?] his opposing many things, kindles great opposition to it. It gives as I hear no small trouble to some now at Windsor. There is a report that the Grand Jury of Berkshire have found the Bill against the Duke of York, but I hear it not confirm'd. The Project of the Militia in Scotland is like to be oppos'd, and at best, if it comes to be settled will raise more ill blood than ever it can do good. The wisest and best men [man?] that I ever knew among our nobility there, is dead, the Earl of Kincardine,<sup>3</sup> and now I have done with my news. I am much bound to your Lordship for your good wishes as to St. Martins, but you know how I am stated [*sic*] too well to think they can have effect. My Lord Chancellour has offer'd it to Dr. Patrick upon [which ?] my Lord Russell<sup>4</sup> was so kind to me as to send to his Father of himself, recommending me to Covent Garden, which will be done

<sup>1</sup> See *Hist. passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Sir George Jeffreys.

<sup>3</sup> See his Character in the *Hist.* (sub anno 1660), i. 188.

<sup>4</sup> The celebrated Lord Russell, executed in 1683.

if Dr. Patrick removes,<sup>1</sup> but what he resolves I do not know, for I am now so hot at work about my History<sup>2</sup> that I scarce see anybody [save?] on Thursdays and Sundays. I am to go next week to the Earl of Rochesters who is a little better but not so that there seem great hopes of his recovery. I am desir'd by my Lady Ranelagh to write to you concerning a great many French Ministers lately turn'd out of their Churches, and forc'd to come over. The Bishop of London gathers for them, on one side, and she on the other, so [as] she had found your Lordship so easy and free on the like occasions formerly, that she has laid it on me to beg your charity for them. [,?] I know you will expect that I should name somewhat, I think Ten pounds will be a large charity. I will not trouble you with asking pardon for this, but you will receive next week a Letter Recommendatory from me, for which I ought before hand to ask many pardons, but I will anticipate nothing, if there is no room for it, there is little hurt done save the reading of a short letter, this I will only say before, that what I have writt was not drawn from me by importunity, but was of my own accord, and if your Lordship have occasion for such a servant I can say upon fifteen years experience he is both the honestest and ablest I ever knew. I am Your Lordships most humble and faithfull Servant,  
GILBERT BURNET.

## XXII.

July ye 29<sup>th</sup> 1680.

I could not write to your Lordship on Saturday last, for it was late before I came home from the Earl of Rochesters, and having rid post and very hard to which I have not been accustom'd, was so uneasy that I could not write. Now I understand he died the night after I left him, tho' he did not think he was so near his end. his understanding was perfect, and he had still the greatest flights of fancy that I ever knew in one so low. he was the greatest penitent I ever saw, and died a sincere Christian, but of this I shall say no more because he gave me in charge to publish an account how he died.<sup>3</sup> being one day in a more cheerfull temper than ordinary, I told him with how much concern your

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact Tenison succeeded Lloyd at St. Martin's in October of this year. Luttrell, i. 56; *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, art. 'Lloyd.'

<sup>2</sup> Of the Reformation.

<sup>3</sup> See Burnet's *Some Passages in the Life and Death of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester* etc., published in 1680.

Lordship enquir'd after him, he bid me tell you that he return'd his humble thanks to you, and added, that you were the Man in the World he valu'd most, he believ'd you were melancholly on the account of the Publick and so turn'd to another discourse. to this I shall add another melancholly story, the Earl of Ossory<sup>1</sup> is now in the 10<sup>th</sup> day of a high fever and pass'd all hopes as I hear he lay yesterday as dead, half a quarter of an hour. I can add little to such sad passages, tho' I had more matter than I have, it will not much divert you to tell you there is a mighty struggle in Scotland about the Militia, the counties I hear do generally refuse it. Fife did it tho' the Duke of Rothes went over to make them give good examples, there has been a little bustle between the two Earls of Caithness, the one the Heir of that Honour, the other, He on whom the King conferr'd it.<sup>2</sup> here we have nothing but the business of the Sheriffs, carried for Bethel and Cornish by several hundreds. I have no more to add but to acknowledge your noble present in the Ten pounds you have sent the poor French exiles.

## XXIII.

July 30<sup>th</sup> 1680.

The Earl of Ossory died last night. The business of the Common hall is much talk'd of, but I shall say little of it, for an Account of it and their Petition is in print. Some say the Earl of Inchequin will be again sent to Tangier in order to the making of Peace with the Moors, who are willing to let us keep the place so we hold it as the Portugueses did, the Earl of Lichfield comes in supernumery to the Bedchamber upon the Earl of Rochesters death, and it is said the Earl of Middleton will come in upon the Earl of Ossory's. In Scotland the Council goes on pressing obedience to the Proposition for the Militia, which is different from what it was formerly, for the old Militia is to stand and the Counties are requir'd to vote a pay for 5000 foot and 100 horse besides this is so ill a design, that one comes from there tells me there is nothing now whisper'd so much in Scotland as the extolling the Duke of Monmouth and depressing the Duke for

<sup>1</sup> The beloved son of the Duke of Ormonde.

<sup>2</sup> For this curious incident see *Burke's Peerage*, re Earl of Caithness (George Sinclair, 6th Earl).

this they think an ill requital for their kindness to him. but Rothes undertook to effect it, and besides his being made Duke had a Warrant for 5000<sup>l</sup> which in so poor a Treasury makes a great hole. The Country there is in a great fermentation upon this, and the Meeting houses, (which were after the last years defeat tollerated) which were pull'd down by an order lately sent from Court, Field Conventicles abound again, and tho' one of the proscrib'd Preachers was lately killed at one of them, and this day se'enight his head and quarters were carried through Edenburgh on poles, yet I do not find that allays the heat there, in a word things are carried there as if some enemies to the Government had the direction of the Councils. I am glad to hear that your Lordship is to be here within a month, tho' I doubt whether I should so far entertain an idle story as to repeat it to you, That you are to go to Ireland,<sup>1</sup> which you may be sure I do not believe. I cannot conclude without acknowledging your Lordships great goodness in not only forgiving the presumption of my recommending a Servant, but being so obligingly civil to him in whose favour it was of which he gave me a full account. You still continue to lay more chains on me, whom you have already by many bonds engag'd to be

your Lordships &c. G. B.

#### XXIV.

August 7<sup>th</sup> 1680.

I can be no great trouble to you at this time in which the Town is so silent. The Council day produc'd nothing. Dr. Oates says, the Lord Privy Seal has assur'd him, it is resolv'd to lay the Lord chief Justice Scroggs aside and that Keeling is to succeed him. My Lord Allington is talk'd of for Tangier. My Neighbour<sup>2</sup> tells me they are now wholly employ'd about it, it will prove a great charge, and he thinks to no purpose, but the King and Duke are mightily set on it. Sir William Temple goes ambassador to Spain.<sup>3</sup> In Scotland the Counties generally refuse this new Modell, but the Council seem'd resolv'd to go through with it, many Gentlemen who have most oppos'd it are call'd before the Council, and great severities are expected. Duke Hamilton is gone to the

<sup>1</sup> As Lord Lieutenant. The post had been more than once refused by him.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Thomas Littleton.

<sup>3</sup> This fell through.

Isle of Arran. in a word the fermentation there is extraordinary. A prisoner that was taken refus'd to answer the Council or any, acting by the Kings Commission, whom he call'd Charles Stuart, and tho' both his hands were cut off, and his body ript up, so much that his heart did palpitate long after it was taken out, he died like a Hero unmov'd by all they did, or like a Madman.<sup>1</sup> And now I have told your Lordship all I have to say of what is abroad, I must next thank you for your noble kindness to me, but there is so little inclination to shew me any favour, that tho' many have mov'd that I be put in St. Martins it is so far from being effectual, that I am told, Dr. Patrick shall not, since it is known I should succeed him in Covent Garden, and if I am now in such a character, God knows what I am to expect when I have finished my history. I have been close at it now a month, and am at present pretty far in Q. Marys reign, but I have met with so many passages which have not been known before, that will be thought such [as] if they had [been] laid together on design to cross the Duke's interests so that except I prevaricate, I must resolve to be for ever under his high displeasure, but I shall tell truth, and am not accountable for the use others will draw from it.<sup>2</sup> I hope you are weary of the Country and will be soon in Town, which many long to hear, so there is none alive more happy in your company than I.

GILBERT BURNET.

[*Final Note.*]

Here the Letters end. About the middle of September Lord Halifax returned to London;<sup>3</sup> and Burnet's attempt, some two months later, to effect a reconciliation between Halifax and the Exclusionists<sup>4</sup> was foredoomed to failure. At the request of Sir Thomas Chichele, stepfather to Halifax, the Doctor, it would seem, subsequently appeared before the House of Commons to clear the Earl from an absurd charge of Romanism; 'I wish,' adds Burnet in his account of the affair, 'I could have said as much to have persuaded them that he was a good Christian, as that he was no papist.'<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This was Hackstone, one of Archbishop Sharp's murderers. See *History of my own Times*, ii. 306.

<sup>2</sup> He received during the autumn of this year the thanks of Parliament for the first volume.

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, i. 232.

<sup>4</sup> *Hist.*, Airey's ed., ii. 255; ed. 1833, ii. 250.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* Airey's ed., ii. 260; ed. 1833, ii. 253-4.

Thenceforward their ways parted ; but their intercourse during some years, if rare, remained friendly.<sup>1</sup> The events of the Revolution, however, with Burnet's elevation to the rank of a Spiritual Peer, wrought a change in their mutual relations. The ridicule which Halifax poured on the political pretensions of the Bishop casts a doubt<sup>2</sup> upon the authenticity of a very appreciative 'Character,' usually ascribed to his pen ;<sup>3</sup> while the estimates of Halifax enshrined in the Doctor's History<sup>4</sup> contrast to an amusing extent with the foregoing correspondence.]

<sup>1</sup> *Hist.*, Airey's ed., ii. 300 ; ed. 1833, ii. 294-6 ; iv. 341 ; vi. 278. Brit. Mus. Harl. MS. 6584, fols. 117, 142. (Supplement to Burnet's *History*, pp. 149, 202.)

<sup>2</sup> See *Halifax's Life*, ii. 198, n. 3 ; and Dartmouth's notes upon Burnet's *History*, ed. 1833, i. 491-2 ; vi. 337.

<sup>3</sup> Burnet's *Hist.*, ed. 1833, vi. 335-7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* i. pp. 491-2 ; iv. 268-9. See also Harl. MS. 6584, fol. 88 (*b*). (Supplement to *Hist.* p. 407.)

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