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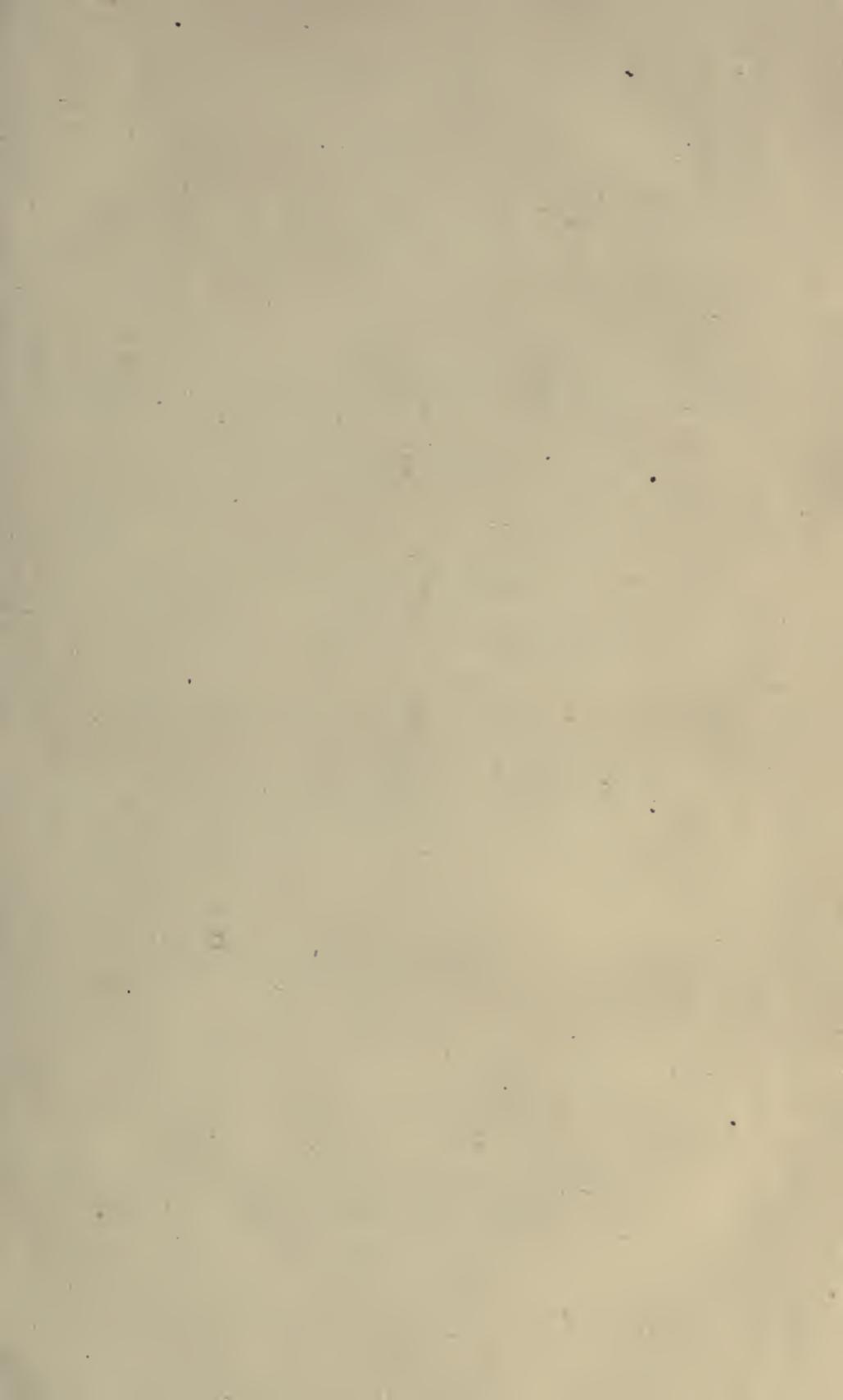
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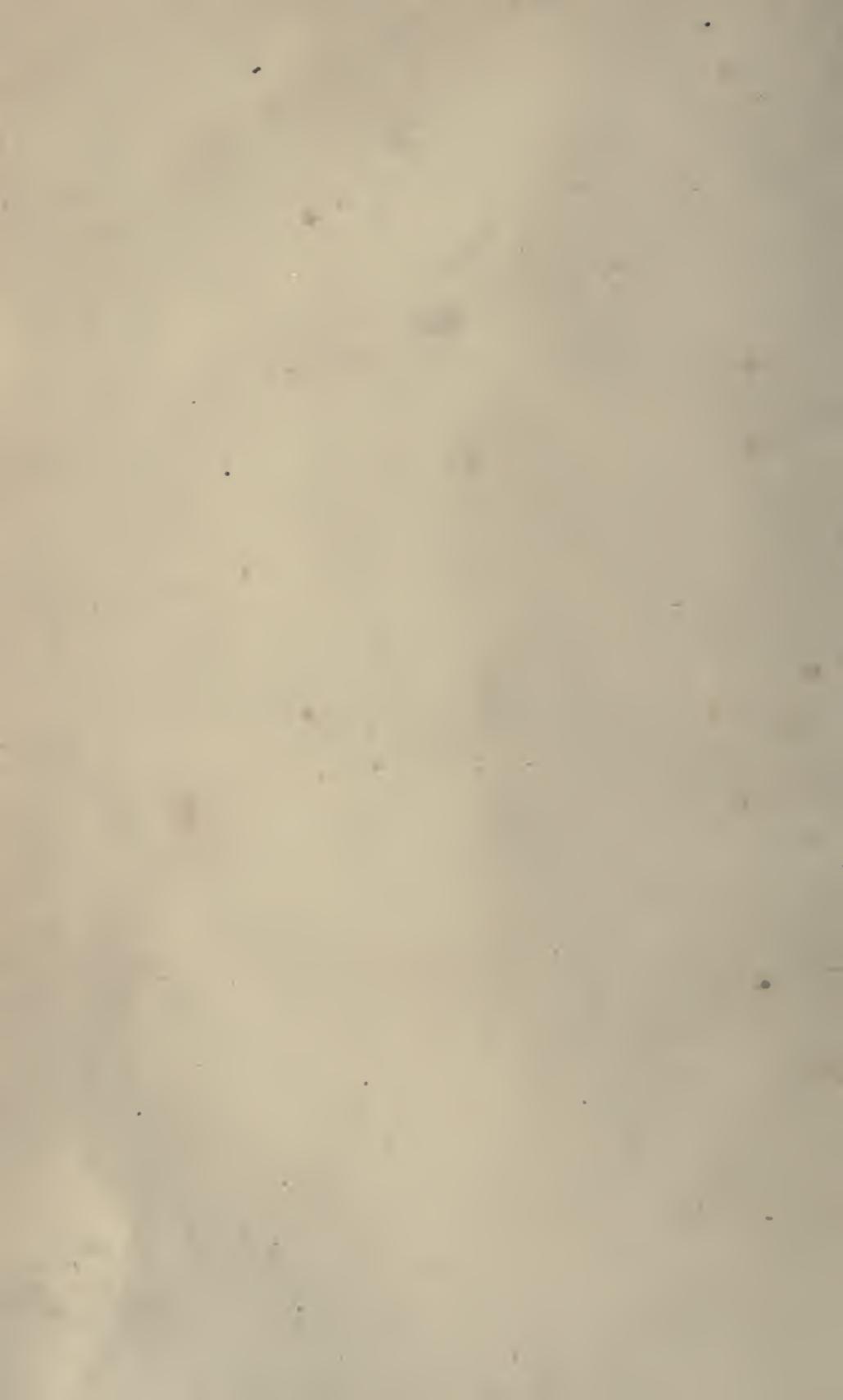
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COMMENTARIES

ON THE

LIFE AND REIGN

OF

CHARLES THE FIRST,

KING OF ENGLAND.

BY ISAAC DISRAELI,

A NEW EDITION, REVISED BY THE AUTHOR,

AND EDITED

BY HIS SON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,

GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1851.

LONDON :
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

ADVERTISEMENT BY THE EDITOR.

ALTHOUGH this work, which was completely revised by my father, has been a long time in the press, and would, under any circumstances, have been published at this period, it so happens, that it appears at a moment when the subjects of which it treats, not only attract, but absorb, the mind of the nation. Its chapters on "the Genius of the Papacy," on the "Critical position of our earlier Protestant Sovereigns, with regard to their Roman Catholic subjects," from the consequences of the oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy; on "the Study of Polemical Divinity prevalent at the commencement of the Seventeenth Century," and kindred themes, are in fact the history of the events, the thoughts, the passions and the perplexities of the present agitated epoch. Nor does the domestic portion of these volumes disprove the principle, that history but repeats itself; and when we read of the conversions to the Roman faith then rife, especially among

the elevated orders of the community, we seem to be listening to the startling narrative of the hour ; and instead of the names of the Countess of Buckinghamshire, the Lord Keeper Weston, or the Lady Falkland, are almost tempted to substitute those of personages, who live in our sight and personal knowledge.

These volumes form the second part of that complete edition of my father's works, of which the edition of the "Curiosities of Literature," in three volumes, recently published, supplies the first. His Miscellaneous works, containing his "Fragment of the History of English Literature," will conclude this edition, and form three additional volumes.

D.

HUGHENDEN MANOR,
December, 1850.

PREFACE TO THIS NEW EDITION.

BY THE AUTHOR.

I HAVE long considered the age of Charles the First as the most favourable epoch for the purposes of historical and philosophical investigation. It was an age when unsettled opinions and contested principles produced such a variety of human conduct, that all that has happened, or is happening, since, seems only a repetition of attempts at what was then first discovered to be impossible ; a consummation of what was then left unfinished ; or a furtherance of what then remained imperfect.

This history has been frequently written, and even now occupies the studies of foreigners. It has excited such vehement but opposite feelings among the most eminent men in our nation, that we almost despair of an impartial narrative. An intelligent foreigner has observed, that since the days of our first Charles, English histories are the polemics of politics. The Monarchist and the Commonwealth-man have bequeathed their mutual recriminations and their reciprocal calumnies. At a later period, when Whigs and Tories infused their controversies into their degraded history, trying events and persons by their own

conventional tests, they judged of their ancestors as of their contemporaries ; narrowing their views by their own notions, their own interests, and their own passions. Such partial estimates of human actions and modes of thinking, may become anachronisms in morals and in politics.

This work which was published, at intervals, many years ago, in a domestic revolution (1830-2), has not been unsuccessful in obtaining the sympathy of the public, probably, in a chief degree, from the novelty of its plan ; and, it is to be hoped, to some extent, from the impartiality of its researches and the justness of its views. I have assuredly not written these pages as a partisan. I was attracted to the subject early in life, because it seemed to me rich in all that interests the moral speculator. I believe that I have composed these volumes solely as the history of human nature.

These " Commentaries " aim at forming a necessary supplement to our knowledge of an eventful age, by investigating still controverted topics of paramount and enduring interest, and by throwing light upon personages and occurrences through the combination of secret with public history.

With regard to my authorities, I have not chosen to cover the margin with perpetual references for facts with which few readers are unacquainted, and to books too well known to require a transcription of their titles. Whenever my narrative, or my opinions, are founded on manuscript information, I have scrupulously registered the

authorities. During the many years in which this period has attracted my study, I have, at various times, examined a variety of unpublished diaries, and a vast mass of unpublished correspondence, connected with it. We are furnished with materials for the history of human nature, to which the ancients could have no access. One particular department seems peculiar to our own times—the history of negotiations in the despatches of ambassadors. By them we may best learn the genius which prevailed when the transactions occurred. The narrative opens a living scene, and the motives of the personages are sometimes as apparent as their actions. It is not fanciful to say, that we often know more of our ancestors than they themselves knew. Many a secret for them is none for us. The letter which was prayed to be thrown into the flames when read, we hold in our hands: the cabinet conversation, unheard but by two great statesmen, we can listen to. They viewed the man in his occasional actions; we scrutinise into his entire life. They marked the beginnings, but we the ends.

The reader will not fail to observe, that the “*Mercure François*” is frequently quoted in these volumes as authority.

Many years have elapsed since, struck by the curious and important information which was constantly afforded by this journal, I observed that “the ancient ‘*Mercure François*’ is a sort of official annual register of the times, and contains a good deal of our own secret history, which I have found to my surprise, so accurate, that I am

convinced that it must have come from a well-informed correspondent in England. It is, perhaps, singular enough that I have found in two or three instances, circumstances and conversations in this 'Mercure' which I have myself drawn from contemporary manuscripts, and which had never been printed in any English Work."

Since these observations were made, I have discovered a fact apparently unknown even to the French Bibliographers: viz., that Cardinal Richelieu was a frequent correspondent of this journal, and that even the king himself, Louis the Thirteenth, often contributed to its columns. Many articles in the royal hand-writing and corrected by the royal hand, are still in existence. With regard to the Cardinal, the style and the hand of the great minister are easily to be recognised. Besides exercising a constant supervision over the "Mercure," and himself waging the war of words whenever the contest was important, Richelieu furnished treaties of alliances, capitulations, narratives of battles and sieges, written by the commanders, and the despatches of ambassadors whenever they contained any facts which he desired should be known to Europe. Many of these articles are found in the Manuscripts of De Bethune.

I will not omit in this, the last preface that I shall ever write, the acknowledgment of the obliging confidence of the present Earl of St. Germans, in entrusting me with the manuscripts of Sir John Eliot. His lordship called my attention to the notice, which I had taken of his memorable ancestor, in a communication alike distinguished for its

elegance, its courteousness, and its information. By the aid of these papers, I was enabled to throw some fresh light upon the character of a very eminent personage, whose career had hitherto baffled the researches of our historians.

To my ever kind and valued friend, the Rt. Hon. JOHN WILSON CROKER, whose luminous and acute intelligence is as remarkable in his love of literature and art, as it has been in the course of a long, an honourable, and distinguished public life, I stand deeply indebted for access to the Conway Papers, which, by permission of the late Marquess of Hertford, to whom these volumes had descended, he afforded me.

I have received aid from other friends, and other manuscripts, which I have acknowledged in my notes. I have particularly drawn much information from the MS. negotiations of Melchior de Sabran, who was the French resident in England during the years 1644 and 1645. Of these there are two folio volumes in our National Library, but there are eight volumes of these inedited negotiations in the extraordinary collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bart., of Worcestershire; a collection of many thousand manuscripts, which must rank its zealous owner among the Sloanes and the Harleys of former days.

May, 1847.

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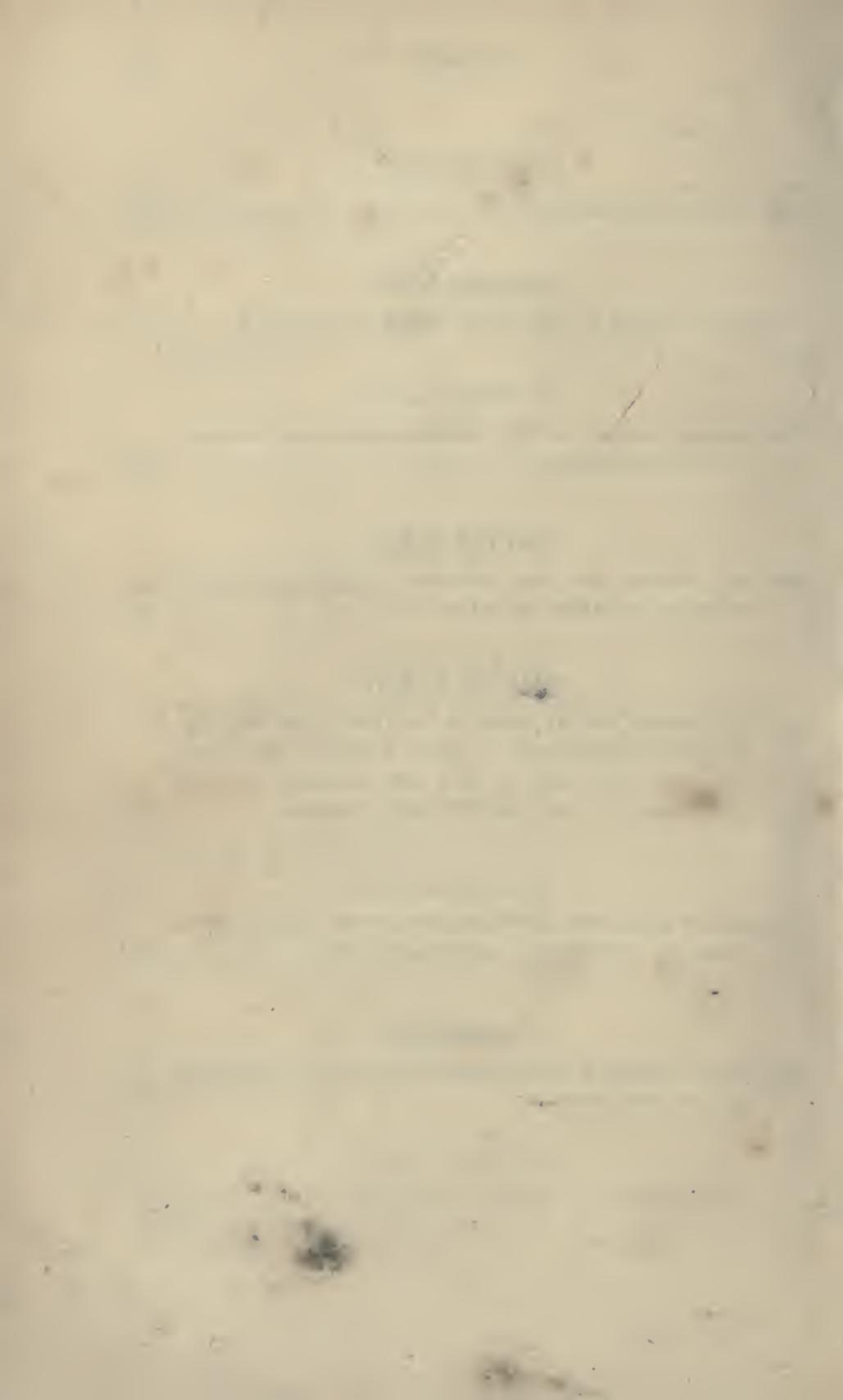
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LIFE AND REIGN
OF
CHARLES THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

CHARLES THE FIRST.

Two centuries have elapsed—a short period in the history of national revolutions, since Charles the First ascended the throne of England, and the name of this monarch still awakens the most conflicting opinions. Yet a right understanding of the character and conduct of one who involuntarily became a most eminent actor in a mighty revolution, can never be a matter of indifference to the philosopher and the politician; nor should such an exhibition of human nature, where the ennobling and the degrading passions are at the same time called forth, fail to interest our common sympathies.

Charles the First ascended the throne under circumstances in which no monarch had hitherto been placed.

The course of events had rendered necessary a great change in the condition of mankind throughout Europe; for the social system was constructed on a scale which bore no relation to the increased and complicated interests of society. The impending Revolution was not to be a partial change, as had sometimes happened, when the rule and power had been merely transferred to the aristocracy, or to the hierarchy, or assumed by the absolute sovereign; nor was it to be a temporary concession to the excited apathy of a suffering people, a change which merely

reduced the privileges of the few and the miseries of the many. But it was to be a total change ; to abolish certain fundamental doctrines, to mark out new classes in society, to raise up new interests, to define new rights, and to substitute new modes of thinking. And, finally and chiefly, it was to develop the true principles of government, and to explain and confirm the source and object of all delegated authority.

It was long doubtful in which country the great Revolution was to commence. During the minority of Louis the Thirteenth, the ambition of the turbulent princes of France, the republican character of the Duke of Rohan and the Hugonots, and the bold remonstrances of the Parliaments or Law-Courts, exhibit some faint outlines of the Revolution under our Charles the First, which all these had preceded. In an ingenious parallel we might detect some very apt resemblances. The genius of one man directed for a time the tempest from France, and consequently from the Continent ; for there are reasons to believe that the social condition of the Continent of Europe will never be materially affected, except through the agency of our great neighbour. The Frondeurs, under the later administration of Mazarin, often appealed to the English revolt under Charles the First ; and finally the vast concussion of France in our days opened in imitation of our own, and terminated with a similar catastrophe.

There were peculiar reasons which might have justified the supposition, that England would be the spot in which the important struggle would commence. The establishment of the reformed faith had habituated the English to a greater freedom of inquiry than their neighbours, a freedom of inquiry unknown in preceding times, when authority was the sole test of opinion ; and a long and luxuriant peace had raised up among the Commons of England a new class of men ;—new, by possessing a weight and influence in society which they had never before held. There were other causes, which, though not so evident, were scarcely less influential, but which must be developed as we proceed. It was fated that England should be the theatre of the first of a series of Revolutions which is not yet finished.

Authorised in believing, by the doctrines of the age, by his

consequent education, and by the natural gravity and elevation of his own mind, that he ascended the throne as the anointed of his Creator, it was the doom of Charles the First to witness the divine authority of his crown trampled upon, the might of his magnificent hierarchy overwhelmed, the civil institutions of his realm swept away, all that he deemed sacred profaned, all that he held received denied, all that he considered established subverted; and in their stead new doctrines and new practices introduced, many of which were monstrous, and all extraordinary.

In this unparalleled state of affairs, for we must never forget that in our Revolution history afforded no parallel to instruct and to warn, instead of disappearing from the stage, like an insignificant actor overwhelmed by the unexpected importance of his part, we find, on the contrary, the English monarch the most eminent, the most energetic, and the most interesting personage, during the long, the fearful, and the dubious struggle. When the struggle was over the King came forward, and closed his career by a most memorable death—dying with the same decision with which he had lived; and while he was covered with execration and obloquy as the TYRANT by one party, who feared that if he were not a tyrant they would necessarily be considered traitors, he was hailed by the greater portion of the nation with prayers and tears as the MARTYR.

It is difficult to believe that a man who thus lived and thus died could have been that individual whom it has always been the supposed interest of a successful party to represent. Tyrant and Martyr are rarer characters than mankind is accustomed to consider them; and they often vanish before the impartial student, who, searching neither for the tyrant nor the martyr, dares to seek into history for the man.

We have hitherto obtained but a slight acquaintance with the personal character of Charles the First; for it has been assumed by those who have been unable to make the King despicable, that the private character of a monarch stands unconnected with his public one. But it is as impossible to form a just conception of the character of a king without becoming acquainted with his private history, his motives as well as his conduct, as it is to form a just conception of the individual, without becoming acquainted with the times in

which he lived. We are not, therefore, surprised that those who maintain that the private character of Charles the First is unconnected with his public one, have judged of that public character as if he were their contemporary.

The characteristic of the mind of Charles the First was that inflexible firmness to which we attach the idea of strength of character. Constancy of purpose, perseverance to obtain the object, and fortitude to suffer for it, this is the beautiful unity of a strong character. We should, however, observe, that this strength of character is not necessarily associated with the most comprehensive understanding, any more than the most comprehensive understanding is necessarily supported by this moral force. Hence the stronger the character of the man the stronger may be its errors, and thus its very strength may become its greatest infirmity. In speculating upon the life of Charles the First, through all the stages of his varied existence, from the throne to the scaffold, we may discover the same intellectual and moral being. Humiliated by fortune, beneath the humblest of his people, the King himself remained unchanged; and whether we come to reproach, or to sympathise, something of pity and terror must blend with the story of a noble mind wrestling with unconquerable Fate.

CHAPTER II.

OF CHARLES THE FIRST DURING HIS BOYHOOD.

WE may be excused for unfolding the minuter characteristics of a young prince, those obscure intimations of the future personal dispositions, which Alfieri has called *Sviluppo dell' indole indicato da vari fattarelli*, "development of the natural disposition indicated by various little matters," for in this respect princes differ from other men; their early characteristics are not likely to change. The youth of princes is seldom passed in submission. Surrounded by those who seek by compliance, or officiousness, to cultivate a friendship with their future sovereign, princes are unfortunate enough to be flattered even in their boyhood. This, and the impossibility of being influenced by

those circumstances which make other men the creatures of events, and dependent on the caprice of fortune, effectually prevent their early character from changing, and render the conduct of their life subordinate to their constitutional dispositions.

In the history of one who was remarkable for a hardy frame tried by unwearied activity, who during his long imprisonment had never need of a physician, and who, at his death, exhibited those physical appearances which are indicative of longevity, it may deserve notice that he was born, and lived some years, in a state of extreme debility, and that he struggled with, and overcame, several personal defects.

Circumstances, apparently trivial, in the history of Charles the First, had often the fatality of connecting themselves with the unsettled disputes of the Church and the State. The accidental circumstance of the birth of this royal babe in a state of weakness, threatening a speedy dissolution, occasioned a hasty baptism; the place of ceremony unrecorded, the officiating person unnamed; whose was the episcopal hand which had sprinkled the Martyr of the Church? or had a Presbyterian teacher, as it was rumoured, administered the baptismal rite?

Such were the tormenting inquiries which agitated Churchmen and Dissenters, in the protracted controversy of *Lay-baptism*. The ecclesiastics insisted that all non-conformists were mere laymen, a principle which was designed to invalidate their baptisms. Burnet, not hostile to the Presbyterian cause, at a later period alluded, in one of his charges, to the circumstance recorded of Charles's unepiscopal baptism; this renewed the old heats with those who persevered in their axiom, that "Bishops and Presbyters were the same." The Dissenters had long exulted, and the Churchmen had long been mortified, that Charles had not received any of the benefits of episcopal baptism, when, a hundred and fifty years after the event, Carte startled the contending parties, and settled the dispute on the side he wished to favour, by referring to the document of "John Blin-sale, Ilay Herald, who assisted at the baptism." In that hitherto unnoticed narrative was specified the name of the bishop, the royal chapel where the ceremony had passed, the minutest occurrences of the magnificent solemnity, the pall of

gold, silver, and silk, "wrought as it was spoken, by his Majesty's umquhile mother," on which the bairn was laid, the names of the lords who bore the ducal crown, the laver, the towel, the bason, and, finally, the "Marchioness of Huntley, who bare the bairn instead of the nourrice." This discovery of Carte's instantly changed the former appearance of the question, and the Dissenters could no longer triumph in the obscure baptism of a prince, administered by a Presbyter.

But if the ceremony of Charles's baptism had been thus solemnly performed, with all the pomp and regality of the Court, could it possibly have escaped the knowledge or the notice of Spotswood, who tells us, that "the christening was hastened because of the weakness of the child," or of Perinchief, the eulogist and advocate of Charles, who positively informs us, that "he was deprived of the usual ceremonies wherewith such royal infants are admitted into the Church." Who then is this Ilay Herald who has marshalled knights, lords, and ladies, and heralds, precluding with a flourish of trumpets. Harris asserts, from internal evidence, the whole narrative to be a clumsy forgery!

Thus at the very threshold of our history we stumble on error, or imposture, a circumstance not rare in more important matters than the present,* relating to Charles the First.

It must, however, be observed, that some circumstances which Harris brings forward as the mere inventions of an ignorant person, are not of the nature which he supposes them. The Ilay Herald, he observes, represents "the Chancellor Cassils as present at the solemnity, though there was no such Chancellor then in being; and he tells us that Monsieur de Rohan, and his brother called Monsieur de Soubise, were his Majesty's gossips, though the Scotch historians never mention their being in that kingdom." The Chancellor Cassils I must leave to the

* An idle antiquary might employ an hour in examining into the authenticity of this suspected record, it being in MS. in the Heralds' Office at Edinburgh (the Lyons' Office), written by John Blinsale, Ilay Herald, who assisted at the baptism. It is entitled "An Account of the Birth and Baptism of King Charles the First." The subject ceases to interest us, but the detection of an historical forgery is always gratifying. This document was first printed by the Rev. Henry Cantrell, in "The Royal Martyr, a true Christian," &c., &c., 1716, long before Carte wrote. The Presbyter Harris fiercely disputed its authenticity, merely from party-feeling.

researches of the Scottish antiquary; but as for Monsieur Soubise standing at the christening in Scotland as Charles's godfather, I find this very circumstance incidentally noticed in the Diary of Sir John Finett, the Master of the Ceremonies. Soubise's brother, the Duke of Rohan, the eminent chief of the French Hugonots, was also in Scotland, and, by the desire of James, stood as godfather to Charles; the circumstance is mentioned in his life, and is incidentally alluded to by John Cookes, the Solicitor-General of the Commonwealth, in his statement of the King's case. This strongly corroborates the suspected narrative of the Ilay Herald. By the expression of Spotswood, we can by no means infer that the episcopal and regal ceremonies were not performed; and as for the vague style of Perinchief, as that book was written by one man, and published under the name of another, a circumstance none of our writers notice, its authority is not unquestionable.*

It is certain that the infant Duke long continued in a weakly state, for many ladies who had been proud suitors for the keeping of the royal child were now deterred from soliciting this anxious charge. When in his fourth year, he was delivered to Lady Cary; that perfect courtier, her husband (afterwards the Earl of Monmouth), declares, that "those who wished him no good were glad of it, thinking that if the Duke should die in our charge, then it would not be thought fit that we should remain in Court after."

The Earl's candour is as admirable as his loyalty, for he was at least as fearful of losing his place, as of losing his Prince. The Earl of Monmouth has also alluded to "many a battle my wife had with the King, about slitting the string under the child's tongue, and putting his legs into iron boots." The parental care of James was accompanied by all the force of argument, but, as was usual with him, he yielded up the point of debate.

* Perinchief's Life of Charles the First is of little value, but that little may be authentic, and it is frequently referred to. Perinchief must not, however, be considered as writing from his own knowledge, for the materials were chiefly collected by the learned William Fulman, who at his death left them unfinished. Colonel Titus, the author of the famous political pamphlet "Killing no Murder," also supplied him with some notices for the two latter years of the King's life. Such assistance only proves that Perinchief himself was a poor workman.

This physical weakness cast a sullen air over the manners of the young Prince, and Lilly sends down a tradition of the evil nature of his infancy "from the old Scottish lady his nurse." His debility withdrew him from those sports and exercises in which his brother excelled, and contracting retired habits, Charles loved the hours of study. It is probable that these untoward circumstances led to the early formation of the reserved and thoughtful character of the future monarch, as well as conduced to the variety of his acquired knowledge. Charles had a vigilant tutor in Thomas Murray, a learned Scotchman, whom afterwards he chose for his secretary, and whose zeal he finally remunerated by the provostship of Eton. The unalterable affection of the pupil for the tutor is a strong indication of the man.

James the First, who has been so freely taxed with pusillanimity and folly, cannot, however, be reproached with having engendered them; his children, Henry, Charles, and Elizabeth, alike sustained their princely character in the heroic elevation of their minds. There was no royal family in Europe which put forth such a promise of future excellence as these accomplished Princes. Jonson was struck by the paternal zeal of James the First, whom, without court flattery, he addressed in a masque:

"You are an honest, good man, and have care of your bairns!"*

King James, to provoke Henry to apply himself more ardently to his closet studies, had intimated that his brother, who already loved his books, would prove more able in the management of affairs, and the science of his favourite "king-craft," than he, who chiefly consumed his days in the tilt-yard, and passionately pursued his military exercises. The fatherly admonition was received in silence, but when his tutor, Sir Adam Newton, reiterated the King's reprimand, the Prince asked whether he really thought that his brother would prove so good

* I find a curious anecdote of that zealous paternal attention of our "Pedant King," which I have not met elsewhere. James took such minute care of their education, that "the children of James were well instructed in music and dancing: his Majesty desired them to keep up their dancing privately, though they whistle and sing to one another for music." Harl. MSS. 6987 (24).

a scholar? Sir Adam was of that opinion. "Then," rejoined Henry, "will I make him Archbishop of Canterbury."

A spark of rivalry had been kindled between the royal brothers. When Charles was about ten years of age, the young Prince had already attracted observation by the progress of his studies, and by the warmth of his temper. The Princes, with Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other noblemen, were waiting in the privy-chamber for an audience. Henry, in allusion to his brother's proficiency in his studies, jocularly placed the Archbishop's cap on his head, observing, "that if he continued a good boy, and followed his books, he would make him one day Archbishop of Canterbury." The little Prince indignantly flung down the square cap and trampled on it. Duke Charles, it would seem, had heard too frequently of the future Archbishopric, and the taunts from his heroic brother stung the little Prince into an ebullition of momentary feeling. This feeling was constitutional. Warm and hasty passion was long an infirmity with Charles, and one of which he was very sensible. At various periods of his life, the King used preventive means against being overcome by his natural impatience. In more than one interview, which was likely to lead to subjects where his feelings might seize on him unawares, it was preconcerted that these topics should not be debated by him, but left to his council. This defect in his temperament was one which, like his stammering, could only be mastered by a stronger impulse of the mind, as when he stood calm and unsubdued in the greatest day of his adversity.

From this anecdote of the royal boys, the contemporaries of Charles, in the taste of the times, deduce opposite inferences. One detects a mystical presage of the future fall of episcopacy under his administration; to another it seemed peculiarly ominous of the fall of the Archbishop himself, who afterwards was suspended from his offices by the displeasure of his sovereign; a third, with the malignity of a Commonwealth's man, accepts it as an evidence of the latent sullenness and stubbornness of the future monarch; while an ultra-royalist, in the depth of his wisdom, discovers in it "a sign of bigness of spirit, and a humour that did not love jesting or levity." It is evident, that every one of these philosophers would have composed the

history of Charles, on the principle which they had already so happily discriminated. So many historians, so many Charleses!

The fraternal intercourse between the sons of James was, however, rarely interrupted; for we have still left several familiar notes written in English, French, and Latin, by the Duke to the Prince. They are despatches of the hour, perhaps also the playful exercises of his studies. "Sweet sweet brother, I thank you for your letter. I will give anything that I have to you, but my toys and my books." Sometimes the little Duke visits Prince Henry's stables, and mounts his great horses, "that on his return he may wait on him in that noble exercise." Then there are thanks for two bidets which Henry sends him—or it is an invitation to walk together—or a detail of the studies of the week.

Welwood says of Charles, that he wrote "a tolerable hand for a KING." The republican whig grudgingly allows a Stuart, and a monarch, even the humble distinction of caligraphy. The truth is, that the hand-writing of Charles, like all his other acquirements, was elegant, and opposite to the slovenly scribble of his father, who, careless in all exterior things, too lightly esteemed the habit of distinct writing; a habit, it may be worth observing to some, which gives pleasure in the intercourse of friendship, and promotes accuracy in that of business. The skilful in autographs may like to learn, that Charles the First's hand-writing, and, perhaps, no man ever wrote more, always free and flowing, as he advanced in life and in reflection became more and more regularly formed, and finally contracted into slender elegance. In a French letter to Prince Rupert unsigned, he observes, *J'espère que vous connoîtrez ma petite main*. I have seen some notes to his children, written during his close confinement in his latter days, which are remarkable for the delicacy of their Italic character. In the long leisure and still meditations of imprisoned solitude, the fond remembrance of his children seems to have moved the pen in tracing every word so carefully written.

Charles overcame his corporeal infirmities in his youth, but his defective speech seems to have lasted some years. It was probably the real cause of his brevity in conversation: he used few words; and we smile at Sir Henry Herbert, the Master of

the Revels, entering the royal words in his diary, on some occasion when the King gave him a favourable answer to his request, "because his master's custom affords not so many words." The singular gravity, the deficient freedom in conversation, and the reserved manners of Charles the First, struck the Count de Brienne as uncommon circumstances, which made it difficult to decide on the Prince's character. When Cardinal de Richelieu curiously pressed the Count to be informed of the genius of the monarch, De Brienne replied, "To me he appeared extremely reserved, and this induces me to judge that he is either an extraordinary man, or one of a very middling capacity. If he affected this *retenue* to prevent any jealousy on the late King his father's side, this would be a mark of his consummate prudence; but if it be quite natural to him, and without any *finesse*, I should draw very opposite conclusions." From this oracular style the Cardinal could not have gathered much. The truth is, that it was too nice a point for the critical and youthful diplomatist, recently returned from the English Court, to venture a decision upon; nor could he know that the habitual reserve of the Prince originated, in great part, in the pain which conversation occasions him whose speech is not fluent.

The King's difficult utterance rendered his addresses from the throne painful to himself and the Parliament. This early compelled him to have the Lord-Keeper recite his speeches, a circumstance which his friends considered, however trivial it may appear, as having had an unfavourable influence on his affairs. It is our own voice alone, whose modulations can give sanction to our feelings. Charles closed his first speech to Parliament, the only ungracious passage in it, by this declaration:—"Now, because I am unfit for much speaking, I mean to bring up the fashion of my predecessors, to have my Lord-Keeper speak for me in most things, therefore have commanded him to speak something unto you at this time, which is more for formality, than any great matter he hath to say unto you."

After the death of his brother Henry, Charles appears to have felt the propriety of turning his attention to those hardier pursuits which he had hitherto avoided; and it was not long ere he excelled in the fashionable accomplishments of the gentleman of that day; the manly exercises of vaulting, archery, running

at the ring, and the *manège* of the great horse; shooting in the cross-bow, musket, and "the great ordnance." In the tennis-court he toiled with the racquet; and to his last days, those of his imprisonment, loved the tranquil recreation of the bowling-green. By active sports he invigorated his frame. One who knew Charles, describes him as "a laborious fieldsman;" and another tells us, that he was thought to be the most adroit manager of the great horse of any man in the three nations, and a sharp marksman; he chased a winter-deer as skilfully, which is one of the hardest tasks of "a woodsman," as he excelled in shooting one. At the age of nineteen he distinguished himself among the young nobility in a feat of arms at a justing at Whitehall, and in such a manner, that it was imagined that Prince Charles would become as eminently military as his late brother; and at the later period of his marriage, the Count de Brienne noticed the adroitness of our royal cavalier, "in breaking some lances, in this chivalric exercise." Whatever art and practice could acquire, he gained; the lighter graces were denied him.

Thus early Charles surmounted the obstacles which nature had cast in his way. The languid indolence of the closet, deeply attached as he was to study, and to the more pleasing arts, failed to seduce him entirely, and the intrepidity of his after-life, through all its vicissitudes, was never disturbed by his personal deprivations. Not even the many who watched him with no friendly eyes have presumed to accuse him of that impatient querulousness, which betrays its moments of weakness.

At the age of sixteen, Charles was created Prince of Wales, and held a Court; but he lived in no political opposition to his father, a habit which has been assumed by some heirs of the English crown. His late brother had opened with a different career, and had roused the jealousy of his father, and the fears of Cecil. Whatever may be the policy of the heir to the crown in conducting himself in direct opposition to the interests and views of the Cabinet, some dangerous results must occur, both at home and abroad. At home his cause will combine together the dispersed and insulated members of perhaps very heterogeneous factions into one formidable body. A common

interest is thus created for those who else would never have acted together. It is certain that the family politics of the English Court have not been indifferent to foreign Cabinets. The Gaul, the Spaniard, and the Austrian, have often been solicitous to raise a party in this kingdom subservient to their own peculiar interests; and whenever the heir of the English throne suffers his inclinations to be controlled by intriguers around him, he runs the risk of becoming, unconsciously, the ally of the enemies of his country.

The Ambassador La Boderie advises the French Cabinet not to neglect granting certain pensions to four or five of Prince Henry's Court, by whom it seems these favours were expected, since that young Prince was entirely under their influence, and had resolved to maintain a political independence at the Court of his father.

There were not wanting in that day some busy spirits, who, now finding their "occupation gone," ascribed to the sedate temper of the youthful Charles a narrowness of genius, and natural incapability of entering into their higher political speculations. But Charles most certainly looked up to his father with reverence and affection; and if the name of James the First fail in some degree to excite the same feelings in the minds of this later age, we must attribute this result to the unjust oblivion of some virtues, and of no inconsiderable talents.

In his youth, Charles must have been laying the foundations of that various knowledge, and that habitual and curious observation in all the arts, both the fine and the mechanical, which once induced this ingenious Prince to declare that "he thought he could get his living, if driven by necessity, by any of the arts and trades which he knew how to practise." Once, in familiar conversation, the Prince made a remarkable observation, that if he were necessitated to take any particular profession for a living, he could not be a lawyer, for, said Charles, "I cannot defend a bad cause, nor yield in a good cause;" a principle from which he never swerved, if we are to decide by the actions of his after-life.

Charles had studied the art of war, and indeed the King afterwards proved himself to be one of the most able generals

in the Civil Wars. He was not unskilled in fortification; and that science which has been called naval architecture, a study not unworthy the pursuits of an island-monarch, had particularly engaged his attention; for one of his most magnificent measures was "building that miracle of ships called the Royal Sovereign;" and when he was reminded of the vast charge it required, he observed, "that while some nobles prodigally spent their patrimony in luxurious courses, nothing either to their credits or reputation, or beneficial to the kingdom, as King he might be allowed to build that ship for his pleasure, which might be useful for the service of the kingdom."*

The more delightful arts he pursued with intense pleasure, for this monarch was not only a lover of art, but could himself have aspired to the honours of an artist. These, however, had not absorbed his studies. The library of St. James's, before the Civil Wars, contained a manuscript volume, which Charles in his youth had presented to his father, consisting of his literary collections and other epitomes, the fruits of juvenile studies.

But these philosophical and ingenious pursuits have been barbarously censured as mean and trivial in a monarch. The arts and sciences were considered by the rigid Puritanic politicians merely as sources of emolument for the mechanics who professed them. The intellectual part of these studies—the meditation, and the elegance, and the knowledge, which discipline the mind in the progress of invention, had never rectified their crude principles, softened their harsh tempers, or illumined their dark minds. These studies, not unworthy of a sovereign, would have reflected his tastes among a people, whose fanaticism had so long persecuted the finer arts; and our nation would not have suffered the reproach of foreign critics, who, ignorant of our history, ventured to assign the natural causes which, as they imagined, incapacitated us from excelling in the practice of the arts of imagination and sensibility. Charles the First, had it been his happiness to have reigned in peace, would have anticipated by a century the glory of English art.

* Lilly.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE STUDY OF POLEMICAL DIVINITY, PREVALENT AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

THERE was one particular course of studies in which James the First himself had instructed his son—that of the dogmas and the controversies of the theology of the times. In these pursuits Charles was a docile pupil, and in his first speech to Parliament, to repel the malicious rumour of his inclination towards the Roman See, he proudly declared, “I may, with St. Paul, say, that I have been trained up at Gamaliel’s feet.”

His father advised the Prince’s chaplains, who went to Spain, not to engage in unnecessary disputations on religion; but if challenged, the Prince would be moderator, and observing them smile, he earnestly added—it is said he swore, that “Charles could manage a point in controversy with the best studied divine of ye all.” Nor was the commendation partial. In the celebrated conference with the Presbyter Henderson, the King, without books for reference, or a secretary by his side, during a tedious fortnight,* fought that memorable theological logomachy, till the hoary adversary of episcopacy, covered with the dust of his library, retired with a broken spirit. It is probable that neither convinced the other; but this did not the less exhaust the old man’s vexation, and may have accelerated his death.

To these studies Whitelocke ascribes that aptitude of Charles the First, which enabled him to excel as a summer-up of arguments, and endowed him with such a clear perception in delivering his decisions. The King’s readiness in contracting a lengthened, and methodising an involved discussion, was remarked by another great lawyer, Sir Robert Holborne: he observed that “the King could drive a matter into a head with more sharpness than any of his privy council.” This readiness

* By the *Gesta Britannorum* of Sir George Wharton, it appears that “this dispute between the King and Mr. Henderson began at Newcastle, May 29th, and it did not end till June 16th.”

was his prominent characteristic, and the King himself was well aware of it. Sensible that he could correct with acute judgment, rather than compose with freedom and fertility, the King carefully revised the papers which he commanded others to write, observing that "he was a better cobbler than a shoemaker."

Lord Bolingbroke has severely ridiculed James the First for his polemical divinity, and a hundred echoes are still multiplying Pope's "Pedant King." But this it is, to be a philosopher without being an antiquary; the generalisations of history are too often substituted for the real knowledge of particulars, merely because the philosopher is ignorant of them. An invective against royal pedantry would always be plausible; but the inquiry, whether there were any pedantry at all displayed on this occasion, could not occur to those who find it convenient to try events and opinions by the standard of their own age; and who seem to narrow human nature to their own horizon. But to transform our forefathers into ourselves, is to lose all likeness of the originals, and to throw into the back ages the notions of our own times is a moral anachronism, a source as fertile of errors as the passions of parties have been of more unjust misrepresentations. The true historian is a contemporary of the past.

Polemical studies were not the peculiar tastes of James and Charles, as is commonly imagined. Ere the reign of the "Pedant King," and long after, they occupied the most eminent scholars in our nation. They had not been considered unworthy of royalty itself, and it is from a slender volume of polemical divinity, that our sovereigns still derive one of their regal distinctions. Even Elizabeth acknowledged that she had read as much controversial divinity as any divine, and maintained her supremacy in the Church, as well as in the State, by the arguments of which she was a mistress.

Laud put forth his elaborate reply to Fisher, the Jesuit, to repair the open breaches of the beleaguering Romanist; a volume which Charles recommended to his son, to guard him from the artifices of Rome, and which even extorted from the great Puritanic republican, Sir Edward Deering, the applause, that Laud had struck the Papist on the fifth rib. The

“Apology for the English Church,” by Jewel, was chained in churches, to be opened at all times by the way-faring reader. Were not the days of the learned Usher harassed by the challenges of Jesuits? And after all, however skilfully these might be refuted, that great controversialist felt not always sure that the antidote completely operated against the poison; for, in addressing the Oxford librarian, Usher advised him to be careful that “the English papist-books be kept in a place by themselves, and not placed in the library, for they may prove dangerous.” So that a Protestant Archbishop could even resort to the arts of a Spanish Inquisitor, who casts all the volumes of heresy into the darkest corners, or incarcerates them under the strongest locks. Did not Lord Falkland enter the lists with the Roman Catholic, Thomas White, with “A Discourse of Infallibility?” Are that accomplished Lord’s learned speech in the House, and his friend the great Chillingworth’s treatise on “Episcopacy,” to be condemned for that pedantry of polemical divinity which Lord Bolingbroke, with so many others unlearned in British history, ridicule with such a reckless philosophy in James and Charles?

But the age of the first Stuarts was pre-eminently an age of POLEMICAL DIVINITY; an age of doctrines and controversies, and what may be justly termed artificial theology. It was then not only a warfare of the Roman tenets with the Protestant creed, but of new races split into Arians and Arminians, and Calvinists, who ambitiously had combined with political parties. The affairs even of Protestant nations were then connected with synods. Politicians concealed themselves under the short mantle and band of doctors of divinity. The awful themes of predestination,—free-will,—election,—reprobation,—and the resistibility or irresistibility of grace,—the questions whether the essence of God was *quale* and *tantum*, whether his eternity was only an eviternity, and how the Divinity could multiply himself in himself—were the melancholy studies which agitated the irascible spirits of the age. Men seemed to rest their future salvation in enormous folios, which it was easier to devour than to digest. These controversies now only attract the eye by their formidable array as we view their champions marshalled on the shelves of a public library; there only can we judge of

that vast consumption of human life which they cost their victims—their writers and their readers! After the labours and the persecutions, the hatreds and the agonies of long centuries, these doctrines and these dogmas, defended or confuted, were found to be interminable as that memorable dispute between the Dominicans and the Franciscans, which the Pope wisely set at rest by decreeing that it should never be decided! The great policy of Rome, to avoid schisms, has always been to elude the discussion of inconvenient topics.

Futile and nugatory as were the subjects of these disputations between Roman Catholics and Protestants, and ludicrously mean those between the Presbyter and the Episcopalian, yet in that learned age these themes involved the dignity of erudition and the powers of logic; all the resources of a ready, an acute, and a luminous mind. He was the most successful polemic, whose disciplined memory could most promptly flourish the keenest weapons on his own side, while he pressed in triumph on the blunted and broken arms of his antagonist. The assailant was slowly to circumvent, or rapidly to storm, the weakest points of his opponent; but the art to retreat was as great as the skill to attack. In the vacillation of the disputants, victory hung on the subtilty of an argument; and the omission of an authoritative text, or the surprise of an ambiguous one, might shake the whole arrangement of a system of doctrine.

Had these vain and offuscating disputations only tormented the heated heads of a few dreaming recluses, or a few acrid partizans, they would have merited but an obscure notice in the history of England; but they had penetrated into the recesses of domestic life, and theological disputations were constantly carrying on in private houses, in the presence of the head of the family who was gained or lost by the fortune of the Thesis; and there have been families where the disputation, like a law-suit, has devolved from the grandfather to the grandson. The gentry were reading and writing tomes of religious controversy; in the country, whole parishes were disturbed by the public disputations held by the Papist or the Puritan, and many were the lapses of the backsliders into Romanism. Some Protestants, to humble the Puritans, were earnestly looking about for a reunion with the Roman Catholics, for they had

observed, not without dread, the Puritanic party, like one in our own times, starting up among all ranks of society.

Let us now draw the curtain, and exhibit the domestic pictures of the Romanist and the Puritan in the days of Charles the First.

The most complete picture of the English Catholics is one by their own hand, touched by the warmth and fulness of secret confidence.

Panzani, the concealed agent of Rome, in a secret report, reckons the English Catholics at one hundred and fifty thousand, forming no inconsiderable portion of the higher class of English subjects. In the first rank of nobility were Catholics, who, though making no open profession, were living in great fear, anxious to preserve the royal favour. When these entertained a disguised priest in their house, it was unknown to their servants, and not even confided to their children. Some, as Protestants, frequented churches, took the oaths, and occasionally spoke against Catholics; yet in their hearts they were papistical, and concealed one or more priests under their roof. Panzani assures his master that almost all the principal Protestant nobility, secular and ecclesiastical, who had died when he was in London, although generally reputed Protestants, had died in the Roman faith.

However partial Panzani's account may be deemed, it is unquestionable that in these times sudden conversions and the flight of many eminent persons to the Continent were frequent. Certain it is also, that persons high in office were secret Romanists. In the curious manuscript memoir of the Capuchins who came over to Henrietta, I found an account of an interview between Charles the First and the Lord Treasurer Weston, who died Earl of Portland. In his last illness, having called for his priest, and embraced all the infallibility of the Roman Catholic Church, his lordship requested to see the King once more, to return into the royal hands his staff, as Lord High Treasurer. The following dialogue ensued:—"Sire, I replace, with respect and gratitude, this staff into the hands of your Majesty, while I deeply regret that I have been less faithful to the service of God than to your Majesty's." "No, no!" replied Charles: "this staff has been well placed in your hands, and there I

will have it remain." "Sire," once more replied the relapsed Lord Treasurer, "I am no longer capable of bearing it: first, because I can never recover from my present malady; and secondly, though it may seem odious, I should no longer conceal from your Majesty, that, by the grace of God, I am now a Catholic." "Get but well," said the King, "and the Catholic religion need not hinder you to keep this staff as an able minister." This case of the Earl of Portland, at the head of the King's cabinet, affords a curious instance of the duties of office not unfaithfully performed by an Englishman, who at the same time anxiously concealed the real state of his conscience. Clarendon tells us, the Romanists only were those who did not believe this Earl to be a Catholic; but the English only suspected his inclination to Papistry, or as the Capuchin writes the term, which he says is used by our nation, *au Papism*, from the tranquillity the Romanists under his administration were allowed to enjoy. Nothing in his open conduct or his language betrayed the concealed Catholic. It now appears, by this authentic manuscript, that the Earl held a private correspondence with the famous Père Joseph of Paris, a Capuchin, who transacted all the secret affairs of Cardinal de Richelieu.

It is evident also that some divinity students were lost in the mists of the artificial theology of Rome; and the secret domination of the missionary priests was so great as to excite the jealousy of the Papal agent, who has described in terms which a Protestant might repeat, that "the missionaries enjoy many conveniences in the houses of their patrons, and, being the *directors of the masters and servants, and admitted to all the secrets of the mind*, any one may judge what ascendancy they acquire." Such, then, was the state of the English Catholics at home; and the sanctity of the domestic abode was frequently troubled by two religions abhorring each other, under the same paternal roof.

The Romanists more particularly practised on the infirm sympathies of females: their nervous and seraphic temperament was more easily entranced by an imaginative religion, by the divinities they embraced, by the miracles which flashed before their eyes, by the gorgeous scene of the Roman ceremonial, the altar, the censer, and the chaunt. The illusion of the magical

service of the Catholic worship is acknowledged by Panzani. But the female, by her personal influence, was still more actively propagating the espoused doctrines.

The Roman hierarchy has ever experienced the tenderness of the sex; among the first temporal dominions of the Popes appears the donation of a Countess, and one of the pontiffs obtained the *sobriquet* of *Matronarum Auriscalpius*, "the ear-picker of the ladies," from his adroitness in the art of wheedling.

It is only by entering into the recesses of domestic life, that we can be enabled to form a clear notion of the extraordinary scenes which now occupied the passions of the people. We discover perpetual conferences in private, or, rather, severe wrestling matches between a Jesuit and a divine. Lord Mor-daunt and his lady invite the learned Usher to confer with a priest whom his lordship kept in his house, on the points in dispute between the two Churches. The conference was held several days, when Usher maintaining that the Church of England was *no new religion*, the lady, whose great fear had been its ambiguous novelty, was confirmed in her Protestantism, and the argument against its novelty proved so strikingly novel to his lordship, that he became a convert from Papistry. But Usher was not always at hand; his absence, and twenty-four hours to unravel his twisted logic, might have enabled the perverting priest to produce a new point, and occasion a fresh lapse.

Lady Falkland suddenly declared herself to be a Papist. All her friends, sensible of the disgrace, fly to her with an argument, or a menace; Mr. Montague would terrify her ladyship, that she, dying an English Papist, would die in a state of damnation;—but this was only his assertion! Cozens (afterwards the Bishop) told her that she had sinned damnably, in departing from that Church wherein she was baptized, before she had consulted with its heads; however, he gave her ladyship a few notes, which she sent to her drunken Irish priest, for such he was, and who returned such silly answers, that Cozens would not reply. "If I turn again," said Lady Falkland, "I will turn Puritan, not moderate Protestant; for moderate Protestants, such as Mr. Cozens, are farther from Catholics than Puritans."

But it was the Countess of Buckingham, the mother of the favourite, who formed the highest hope of the Romanists. She had great power over her son. Gondomar, that exquisite wit, wrote to Spain, with an allusion to their own impious custom, "that now, indeed, they might have great hopes of the English reverting to Catholicism, because, like all good Catholics, more intercession was made to the *Mother* than to the *Son!*" When this old lady was passing away to the Church of Rome, James the First, in his zeal, insisted on a conference between the Dean of Carlisle and Fisher the Jesuit. It was at first imagined that the Dean had given the Jesuit "foil after foil;" but the feminine weakness of the old Countess wavered, and a second conference was required. James then himself would be the arbitrator; and observing that the cunning Jesuit all along had eluded the arguments brought against him, while, in the confirmation of his own tenets, he was extremely weak, his Majesty insisted on setting down in writing the nine points, or questions. To these the Jesuit duly returned "a close and well-wrought answer." A third conference therefore became necessary. The chief point at which the aged Dowager stuck was, what the Jesuit had urged about "an infallible visible Church." Bishop Williams, to cut the matter short,—in giving but not in conceding some points to the Jesuit, yielding in appearance that he might carry his point the more directly, retreating only to advance, seemed, to use the jockey metaphor of the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield,—“to have put the Jesuit out of his ordinary trot; yet he fell into a shuffling pace, and carried the lady behind him.”

But in these religious conferences, the women were not the sole actresses. The times were "pendulous," says Heylin. Amidst these fluctuations of faith, the disturbed mind found no resting-place, while it seemed only to weary itself by its incessant activity. It was a world of waters, where the perishing dove could only live on its wing. It is a curious fact, that Archbishop Laud, on his trial, in order to convince his judges of his faithful attachment to the Established Church, read a list of persons whom he had recovered from their lapses into Papistry; and among them is the Lord Duke of Buckingham, who, he adds, "was almost quite gone between the lady, his mother,

and his sister." Indeed the Protestantism of the royal favourite must have been in a very ticklish state, for, on his departure to Spain, James told the chaplains, "that he had trained up George so far as to hold the conclusion, though he had not yet made him able to prove the premises." Laud congratulates himself, that of the number he had recovered, only two had relapsed—the Countess of Buckingham and Sir William Spencer; "it being only in God's power," he observed, "not mine, to preserve them from relapse."

But the member of the Church of England was not only assailed by the English Papists; the peace of the country was equally violated by the English Puritan.

In the manuscript diary of Sir Symond D'Ewes a puritanic scene opens to us. His father and himself and a clergyman held a "passionate dispute" about the "assurances" of salvation. The clergyman maintained that there could be no real assurance in this world; for men, subject to many sins, were apt to deceive themselves. D'Ewes affirmed, that this was the tenet of the Romanists; but that the Church of England held that God's children, or "the elect," in this life might attain to a certain knowledge of their own future salvation by faith. His father sided with the clergyman—"a man," adds D'Ewes, "who, holding two livings in two several shires, did not much trouble himself in making sure his inheritance in a better world." Some time after, this clergyman, having conned over a certain book by one Perkins, it upset his whole system, and drew an acknowledgment from him to the father, of the soundness of his son's principles. This appears to have been an unexpected triumph for young D'Ewes. He now felt uneasy, having converted a clergyman, lest his arguments could possibly admit of any refutation. He set down more earnestly to watch his syllogisms, and to see there was no leak between his premises and his corollaries; ringing them at all corners to try their soundness. Having got his servant to transcribe them fairly, his father read and approved. This family document of faith is perhaps still coffered among the antiquities of our antiquaries' collections. Such incidents were daily occurring in families, without always terminating so peaceably.

At this day, what should we think of the Premier and the

highest officers of Government summoning a cabinet council to meet at York House, where Buckingham presided, to attend a conference between four divines on metaphysical points of religious doctrines—on predestination, grace, and free-will?—Or the House of Commons debating on the heresy of Dr. Richard Montague; on which occasion, Pym delivered a report which electrified the House, who, no longer conceiving that only divines were capable to decide on divinity, decreed that the Doctor's doctrines were Pelagian and Arminian, tending to the disturbance of Church and State. The Arminian doctrine, which the Synod of Dort condemned, and of which we hear so much during this period of our history, has been reduced to five articles, against predestination, in favour of free-will, of the nature of grace, and on similar points. It would be very difficult for the reader unacquainted with these subjects, to associate any *political principles* of Popery, or arbitrary power, with such mystical notions. Yet Rapin, a French Protestant, and all the writers of the Puritanic party, attached this odium to them; and because some of the early patrons of Arminius (such as Laud) advocated arbitrary government, Arminianism became the sin of the Court. Was not Arminianism a palliative for the terrible Calvinism of the Articles and Homilies? These five Arminian articles were so far from being connected with Popery and arbitrary power, that Tindal observes that they are generally received by the Church of England, and are the creed of thousands. John Wesley founded his system of faith on Arminian principles.

A reader of our popular histories has possibly entertained no notion of the state of affairs which we have described, yet effects will always be imperfectly comprehended without a knowledge of their causes. We are apt to consider the reigns of James and Charles only as the epoch of the struggle of popular freedom; but that glorious struggle was deeply obscured by exertions not less energetic, though less pure, less patriotic, less ennobling, by the mean designs of contracted minds, and by the intrigues of rival factions, who alike condemned the sovereign, who would yield to neither, and sank beneath both.

If James and Charles, then, were versed in the disputations of the Romanists and the Puritans, it was not only the feelings

of the age which might have occasioned such scholastic skill, but the interests of their Crown, since in these disputations they were defending the principles of their government in Church and State. In England, the Romanists were a faction suppressed, but not extinguished; and a suppressed faction, though it run into all corners to hide itself, yet loses nothing of its dangerous activity. In fact, the subtle Papists were now playing fast and loose: while their priests were masking themselves under fictitious names, and dressing themselves in lay characters. At this day we may smile at James the First in his retirement, having at his leisure hours the Bishop of Winchester to read over to him the four tomes of Cardinal Bellarmine's Controversies, and dispatching a special messenger to the libraries at Cambridge for volumes to collate the quotations, and to refute the arguments. We may smile, too, at his lively conference at Hampton Court; but he knew well the "men of parity," who were for modelling the Government, each man according to his particular notion; the rabid Presbyters, who, howling at the surplice as "a rag of prelacy," and dashing into pieces the idolatry of painted glass, aimed at nothing short of abolishing the sovereignty and the hierarchy together. Thus these polemical studies were, in fact, political ones. The Reformation had made the study of Polemical Divinity in England a general pursuit—a study for which, it may be said, mankind have a natural disposition. Doubtless there were some disputants who, gifted with a more enlarged comprehension, felt that in these controversies were implicated other interests than those of the soul, and other attributes than those of Omnipotence. Doubtless, in combating the infallibility of the Pope, the illustrious Falkland felt that he was vindicating the political independence of his country; and are we to believe that, in supporting that infallibility, the Jesuit White was unmindful of the lustre which, from the success of his syllogism, must necessarily be reflected on his order? But the motives of the great mass of the nation were more spiritual and less enlightened. The study, however, was universal, and its effects consequently not less general. Doubt and dogmatism pervaded all ranks, and, as usually happens where new systems are broached, and ancient ones canvassed, in most cases the scepticism was as to the

propriety of the existing order, and the certainty as to the fitness of the theoretical. Was the monarch then, of all men, alone to be ignorant, uninterested, and inactive, when he surely, of all men, was most interested in the result? which, to say the least, was a decision whether he and his people should bend to the foreign despotism of the Romish tiara, or degenerate into the mongrel rabble of the Presbytery of Geneva!

CHAPTER IV.

SECRET HISTORY OF THE SPANISH MATCH.

MODERN history affords no parallel to the narrative of the projected, proffered, accepted, and at length broken-off match of Prince Charles of England with the Infanta of Spain. In the suspended march of that mysterious story, the thread, so finely spun and so often dropped, is still taken up with "the eagerness and trembling of the fancy." We have to trace the open shows of things, and their under-workings—the contrasted characters of the illustrious actors in the combination of uncommon incidents—the chivalry of the English Prince embraced by Castilian magnanimity—the honour of two great nations awaiting the issue of a love-story, and the winding up of its action in the grand unexpected catastrophe of a naval war. Tilts and tournaments had become obsolete; and no single knight-errant was suspected to be abroad on a pilgrimage of love, when Charles, by one audacious flight, startled the slumbering genius of the folio romance.

The gallantry of Charles was, like the other parts of his character, somewhat serious and intense. The state of the youthful Prince at this moment is ingeniously described in a letter *ab Ignoto*, probably the suggestion of Buckingham, to the Conde de Gondomar, in which the writer points at the danger of a cold delay with a spirit so youthfully eager, and so fanciful!

"The Prince is extremely sharp set upon this match; and you know that a hawk, when she is first dressed and made ready to fly, having a great will upon her, if the falconer do not follow

it at the time, she is in danger to be dulled for ever after. The Prince, you know, was thought slow enough to begin to be eager after the feminine prey; take heed, therefore, lest in the fault of your delays, he grows dull, and in short time he will not stoop to the lure, though it were thrown out to him."

The Spanish Match is one of those passages in our history, which, inexplicable to its contemporaries, has been found equally perplexing to our latest historical inquirers. Hume has remarked "that James having, by *means inexplicable from all rules of politics*, conducted so near an honourable end the marriage of his son, and the restoration of his son-in-law, failed at last of his purpose by *means equally unaccountable*." Of the parties concerned, who were the deceivers, and who the deceived? Or, if there were any sincerity in the treaty, what causes broke off the projected alliance? Sir David Dalrymple observed, "how imperfect all the printed accounts were of the Spanish match; yet the learned in British history," said he, "*well know* that these secret and interesting transactions may be explained from papers hitherto unpublished." Dalrymple must have alluded to that ample correspondence which, twelve years after this announcement, Lord Hardwicke drew from the Harleian Collection, for his "Miscellaneous State Papers." Since then, I have discovered a memoir of Sir Balthazar Gerbier,* the secret agent of James and Charles, which has thrown a clearer light on this involved piece of secret history, and with the aid of some fresh materials, holding this "goodly clue" of many threads in our hand, we shall perhaps now feel our way through the labyrinth.

James endured the reproaches of his own day, and his character must still bear the traditional obloquy, for not precipitating a Continental war, to maintain the weak Palsgrave in the ambitious career by which he lost his patrimony, when that prince assumed a crown which he could not hold. To the English nation, the vital interests of the reformed religion seemed in peril. James was censured for indifference to the Protestant cause, an inclination to Popery, and deficient zeal as to the condition of his rash son-in-law. Yet, though James, from his notions, could never sanction the Palsgrave's assump-

* Sloane MSS. 4181.

tion of the Bohemian crown, he seems nevertheless to have been unjustly blamed, for the restitution of the Palatinate was the unceasing object of his thoughts, as a father and a sovereign; or, as Lord Bristol elegantly expressed it, "in nature and honour." The restoration of the Palatinate had been attempted in all the multiform shapes, and through all the open and indirect roads of patient and delusive negotiations. James the First had dispatched Gerbier to sound the German princes. This secret agent discovered that "the union," or Protestant League, as "unions" in politics are often found to be, was widely disunited; and the Calvinist and the Lutheran were hateful rivals. Neither the French nor the Hollanders, nor even Sweden and Denmark, would stir for the Palatinate. A few poor German princes were not unwilling to be subsidised monthly; but James had no periodical bullion casks to keep up their parade days. The little Protestant princes were either averse to risk their own equivocal condition, or were divided by opposite interests, while many of these very Protestant princes were actually the allies of the Romish Emperor. The English agent, Gerbier, was treated so coolly on this occasion, that the Prince Elector of Treves and another prince, hinted at "such public incendiaries who would engage princes in unnecessary wars with their neighbours; besides," they added, "in these days, God did not send prophets more to the Protestants than to others." And yet the clamour for war continued, year after year, in our country. It may be sometimes a question, whether a war, originating in the passions of the English people, or even tending to their beneficial interest, is necessarily to be adopted by the British Cabinet. Even in the general cause of freedom, we are too apt to imagine the sympathies of foreigners; we forget that they have their own national prejudices, their ancient customs, and the rooted interests of predominant parties,—affections stronger than even the love of freedom!

The pacific King certainly long hesitated, as he himself expresses it, "to undertake a public war of religion through all the world at once;" while our popular writers of history are still echoing the politics of the wise "walkers in Paul's," who were for levying armies without raising subsidies.

The negotiations for the Palatinate were grafted on those for

a family alliance with Spain. James the First had often regretted that the dignity of an English monarch was impaired by his religion, for none of the great continental sovereigns being Protestants, the Prince of Wales could not be matched in his own rank. The project of a Spanish alliance had in it all the magnificence he desired; but both the negotiations languished through all the tediousness of diplomacy. It is known how that delightful literary ambassador, Gondomar, kept James in play some seven years, with merry tales and quaint quips, and most compliant promises, which it was the business of Olivarez to mystify by the return of the courier. A grand *coup-d'état* was projected at once to strike at the secret, whether the Court of Madrid were in earnest, and could be induced to terminate both these important discussions, by accepting the proffered alliance with the family of Stuart, breathed from the lips of the princely Celadon himself to the fair Infanta. With whom this eccentric project originated, has been often and vainly asked. Was it a flower of the Spanish fancy of Gondomar? The Earl of Bristol charges Buckingham with having concerted measures with the Spaniard, to carry away the Prince to Madrid. Charles, indeed, declared in Parliament, as Bishop Hacket expresses it, that "the heroic thought started out of his own brain to visit the Court of Madrid;" but that declaration might have been designed to screen Buckingham from Parliamentary responsibility; or the Prince, yet green in manhood, might have mistaken the whispered suggestion for his own pre-conceived design. The Duke confidentially imparted to Gerbier, that it was himself who struck out this bold invention. Clarendon has recorded of the high-spirited Charles, that "the Prince loved adventures." One of unexampled splendour was now open to him! The universal fears of the nation for the personal safety of the Prince in the hands of Spain, Buckingham told Gerbier, he considered as groundless; Spain could acquire nothing even by the loss of the Prince of Wales; for the Protestant succession was secured in the progeny of Elizabeth of Bohemia, and the honour of Spain was immaculate.

We are told in the declaration to Parliament, in the account given of the motives of this extraordinary journey, that James the First had commanded the Duke to accompany the Prince;

but the truth is, that when this knight-errantry was discussed, James, as usual, wisely remonstrated. Charles, like a young Prince, only shed tears in silence, but Buckingham's violence to extort his consent threw the aged and infirm monarch into an agony ; for, on this secret journey, no council was to be held, the pilgrims were to wander in secrecy and silence. James was reminded that he had himself set the gallant example ; for when the Scottish fleet had caught the first fresh breezes, to waft over Anne of Denmark, the monarch, unobserved of any, conveyed himself on board : " a resolution," the Scottish monarch nobly said, " which he would not confide to any of his council, that no one might incur responsibility for having consented to the absence of the Sovereign."

The Prince and the minister journeyed together *incog.*, accompanied only by Sir Richard Graham, a creature of the Marquis ; unpractised travellers ! they strangely blundered, or found their faces too eminent to be hidden. Though their persons were disguised by long beards, and Tom and Jack Smith familiarised their names, they were often at a fault. They flung a piece of gold to a ferryman at Gravesend, which cast the fellow into such a melting tenderness, that, to prevent the deadly quarrel he imagined these unhappy but liberal gentlemen were hastening beyond sea to terminate, he raised a hue and cry, which, as they journeyed on sorry hacks, arrested them at Canterbury. The heir apparent, and the Lord Admiral, stood before the Mayor, when Buckingham, taking his worship aside, was compelled to unbecome, and assure him that they were going secretly to inspect the fleet. The trembling magistrate was let into a state secret ! At Dover, Sir Francis Cottington and Endymion Porter had a vessel ready, which landed them at Boulogne. They had left their beards on the shores of Britain, and on the road to Paris chanced to fall into company with two German gentlemen returning from England, perfectly acquainted with Stecnic's fair countenance, and with the stately personage of his prince, both of whom they had not long ago seen at Newmarket. The Germans expressed their opinion ; but Dick Graham had the ingenuity to unpersuade them ; though they could not avoid hinting that " the hardest thing in the world is to unbelieve our senses." At Paris, having bought periwigs, " to over-

shadow their foreheads," they were admitted among the crowd at the French Court, where Charles, for the first time, saw the Princess Henrietta, rehearsing a masquing dance. There is no algebra to discover the unknown qualities of moral probabilities: what vaticinator would have ventured to predict,—least of all men would Charles himself have believed—that his Queen was then before him? The Count de Brienne, in his contemporary memoirs, relates that the Prince and the Duke were "surprised by the beauty of the ladies at Court; but that no one struck the Prince more than Madame Henriette." I give this as an instance of those self-suggestions which a writer of memoirs is apt to indulge, by connecting in his mind preceding with subsequent events. By an autograph letter I have seen of the Prince, to his father, among the royal letters in the British Museum, he appears not to have been struck by any mysterious sympathies; his letter shows, that he was most moved by the beauty of the more important personage, at that moment, the Queen of France, the radiant whiteness of whose complexion, and whose arts of coquetry, afterwards produced such a madness in Buckingham. When the Earl of Holland was afterwards at Paris to negotiate the French match, the Queen of Louis XIII. regretted that when Prince Charles saw them practise their masques, Madame, her sister, (Henriette,) "was seen at so much disadvantage by him, afar off, and in a dark room, whose person and face has most loveliness when considered nearly."

The companions escaped through France, not without peril. Floating rumours preceded, and couriers were behind them. The Government had already some intimation of the two extraordinary travellers. At Bordeaux, the Duke d'Epéron balanced in his mind, whether he should allow them to proceed; and at Bayonne, where they wore "five riding coats, all of one colour and fashion, in a kind of noble simplicity," the governor considered them as five ambiguous personages. A slight occurrence might have brought some trouble. It was Lent-time, and no meat was procurable at the inns. Near Bayonne they met a herd of goats, on which Dick Graham, now master of the horse to the Marquis, but erst, "an underling of low degree in his stable," and moreover a Scotchman, told the Marquis that "he could snap up one of those kids, and make

a shift to carry it to their lodgings." The Prince, overhearing the proposal, cried out, "Richard, do you think that you may practise here your old border tricks?" After having ordered the goatherd to be paid for his kid, the Prince himself rode after the animal, and shot the prey in the head.

Alone and disguised at night, on the 7th of March, the Marquis and the Prince alighted at the house of Lord Bristol, at Madrid, "never merrier in their lives." Tom Smith (the Marquis) entered with his portmanteau under his arm, but Jack kept in the dark on the opposite side of the street, with the postilion. Tom opened with a story about some messenger of the Earl's, who, he said, had been robbed. While he was speaking, Buckingham was recognised; and they flew to conduct the Prince to his chamber. On this occasion we have a letter from Lord Bristol, which he calls "a distracted dispatch," so full "of admiration, of joy," and had he written his thoughts, he might have added, "of despair." This secret journey was a thunderstroke. It reversed the whole system of politics: a treaty which had been maturing for years, and which, as it appeared to Bristol, was on the very point of conclusion, was now to be thrown into the hands of his ungovernable rival, amidst all the inconveniences which his political brain could conjure up.

Bristol now dreaded "those accidents which ordinarily fall out at the interview of princes, wherein difference of custom or religion may raise disasters, and the emulation which groweth between their chief servants and ministers, whereby often the affairs of their masters are disordered and hazarded, so that friendship and amity is seldom bettered or increased."

On Saturday morning, after Secretary Cottington and Endymion Porter had come, a message was sent to Gondomar, who, learning Buckingham's arrival, apprehended that the Prince was not far off. An interview of Buckingham with Olivarez followed. The Lord Admiral was introduced by a secret passage to the King's private room, and in this audience the feelings of the youthful monarch of Spain are described by Bristol:—"I never saw the Spanish gravity laid aside before, nor any man more overtaken with joy than the King was, for he secretly understood of the Prince's being here." The Conde

Olivarez hastens to cast himself on his knees. In his rapture he exclaims, that "the Infanta ought to be thrown into his arms; she should be his mistress, if she could not be his wife!" and turning to Buckingham, he said, "Now our masters may divide the world!" The Prince intimating his desire to see the Infanta, a royal party was made to meet in their coaches in the Prado. Thrice they passed; the Infanta wore a blue ribbon about her arm to distinguish her; and all the world witnessed, if we may trust Howel, the deep blush mantling her face as Charles gazed on her. The young Spanish monarch, impatient to embrace his chivalric guest, offered to wait on the Prince, who, in return, proposed going to the palace; but in the struggle of courtesy, it was fixed that they should meet at night on the Prado. Charles found the King waiting, with his cloak muffling his face. He hastened to the Prince, who met him half-way, and embracing, the Spanish Monarch and the English Prince entered the royal coach together, with Bristol for their interpreter.

The pleasant, subtle Gondomar, having on the following day been sworn into the council of state, told the Prince, with his accustomed political mystification, that he had strange news to communicate, which was that an Englishman had been sworn in as a privy counsellor of Spain. Gondomar was perpetually declaring that he was an Englishman in his heart, notwithstanding the affronts he had so often received from the English mob, or apprentices, of whom the mob then chiefly consisted, and whom he called "the London boys."

All honours were decreed, all rejoicings were commanded. It was ordered in council that Prince Charles should enter the palace accompanied by those ceremonials of state which were observed at the coronation of the Spanish monarchs; and that the Prince should take precedence of the King, attended by a numerous guard of honour. The King sent the Prince a golden key, which opened the royal privy apartments; that he might have free access at all hours; and the Queen sent her presents to the English Prince, with feminine taste, elegant as well as rich. They consisted of a great basin of massy gold, which was borne by two men; a curiously embroidered night-gown was folded in it. Two trunks bound with bands of pure gold,

and studded with nails of gold, with locks and keys of gold; the coverings and linings of amber leather, and filled with fine linen and perfumes. These were accompanied by a rich writing-desk, every drawer of which was full of rarities and curiosities. And that every public appearance might respond to the joyous occasion, the sumptuary laws against excess in apparel were suspended, and the people were invited to ruin their families in emulative costliness. The rapture was universal. At Charles's public entrance into Madrid, hangings of arras, and pictures, adorned the houses; scaffolds were raised in the streets; knots of people were all day shouting; orations and poems were recited in every corner—processions were passing—trains of magnificent equipages were moving, and gorgeous liveries flamed in the sun. The royalty of Spain was abroad, and the glory of the Court and kingdom adorned a day, such as Madrid had never seen.

The public voice had already married the Infanta; and the burthen of a song, by Lope de Vega, was echoed by the populace:—

*“ Carlos Estuardo soy,
Que, siendo amor mi guia,
Al cielo d'España voy
Per ver mi estrella Maria.”*

*“ Charles Stuart I am,
Whom Love has guided afar;
To the heaven of Spain I came,
To see Maria my star.”*

But what was the rumour? What were the politics of the people? “The Prince of England had come for a wife, and to be a Christian?” The purport of this extraordinary visit was imagined to be Charles's determination to make his conversion secretly or openly, and this appears at first to have been the notion even of Olivarez. Indeed it was difficult for a Spaniard to conceive any other.

Among a superstitious people, whatever they desire must be sanctioned by augury or omen, and whenever a great public event happens, they require nothing less than the attestation of a particular interposition of Providence. Heaven and nature must move to consecrate their temporary passions. This irrational

devotion regulates the feelings of a papistical people, and according to the inclinations of the governors, blind ignorance is supplied with favourable or unfavourable demonstrations. In the rapture with which Charles was received by the Spanish nation, and perhaps with some vague prepossession of his conversion to Papistry, these were not wanting, and the priest had prepared the miracle! Seven months previous to the arrival of Charles, the country had suffered greatly from drought. On the Prince's arrival, the weather changed; genial showers fell; and abundant harvests succeeded the dread of famine. The most fruitful season known in the memory of man was, they said, brought by the English Prince. This was a great and particular Providence for all Spain; but it was necessary to have a minor omen for Madrid; something which the Court and the mob might witness with their own eyes; and behold! since Charles had lodged in the palace, a single pigeon—a pigeon, where pigeon had never been seen before—roosted continually above the window of his apartment, fed by no human hand, yet never quitting its chosen seat to travel for food. "These little trifles, among those superstitious people, are very much observed," says one of Charles's suite.

All now was the holiday of life, and the romance of the princely lover was at length opened. He ran at the ring, in presence of his mistress, and had the good fortune to carry it at the first course; and this chivalric achievement was one more auspicious omen. Although Castilian etiquette did not allow the Prince to be in private with the Infanta, this circumstance only the more inflamed his ideal passion. At the court theatre the Prince stood with his eyes immovably fixed upon the Infanta for half an hour together, and as Howel expresses the enamouring reverie, "in a thoughtful speculative posture." Charles watched her progress from church to church, and tracked her carriage through the streets. The Infanta having gone one morning to the *Casa di Campo*, to gather maydew, the Prince rose with the sun, and, accompanied by Endymion Porter, explored the house and garden. Not finding *La Dame de ses pensées*, the rover pursued his way into the orchard, where a wall and a double-bolted door opposed his passage. Love hath wings; the Prince scaled the wall, and resolutely leaping down from

the height, hastened towards her: the Infanta shrieked and fled! The old Marquis, her guardian, falling on his knees, implored the Prince to consider for a moment that the hoary head of his suppliant was at stake.

A sedate majesty in Prince Charles, a manly beauty, temperate habits, and a thoughtful mind, were congenial with this grave people. The romantic visit by which the Prince had thrown himself into their arms had electrified the nation, and drawn all Spanish hearts towards the hope of England. The Prince of Wales was covered with the prodigal honours of the Court of Madrid; the name of Carlos Estuardo moved on the lips of the people.

But Charles stood alone among his countrymen; and above all, Buckingham offered a provoking contrast to his master. The airy freedom of his manners, often degenerating into the grossest licentiousness of conduct, was never to be forgiven by the offended Majesty of Philip, and the contemptuous pride of Olivarez. Buckingham's indecorous habits, like all his actions, lie open to the world; and his inconsiderate familiarity had often provoked many serious altercations with the Prince during their residence at Madrid.* But there was a charm in the frankness of his nature, a joyousness in his temper, which partly redeemed the follies of the hour, though these left a wound which could never be healed in the moral gravity and the stateliness of the Spaniard.

The English in the suite of Charles acted as freely as they talked: they were mostly ill-chosen. Some of them were the hare-brained parvenus of Buckingham. A groom had been promoted to be the Duke's "Master of the Horse;" another

* We possess a voluminous catalogue of his minutest improprieties, and his more flagrant outrages, printed in "The Cabala," by James Wadsworth, the author of the English Spanish Pilgrim, whose father taught the English language to the Infanta. This man, an English Jesuit, on his return home renounced his Catholicism, dubbing himself Captain, and by Laud's history, 394, was one of "the common messengers, whose business was to take up Popish priests." This renegade appears to have been a loose liver in every respect. The charges were doubtless exaggerated, for the minutest is not lost in the enumeration. Buckingham called the Prince ridiculous names, in mere playfulness, and admitted the lowest women into the King's palace. He fell ill at Madrid, from political vexation, or some other cause, and the Court of Spain declared that "they would rather put the Infanta into a well than into his hands."

menial attendant was now "Gentleman of the Bed-chamber." The national antipathies in religion and in manners were perpetually clashing. The superstitions of this "kingdom of priests" were more particularly brought under the English eye: when the Irish priests would tamper with the English, the sturdy Protestant often closed a tough point of theology on the broken head of the weaker Papist; and all this in a land where the haughtiest Don trembled to touch irreverently the meanest friar. The interposition of Gondomar, or the policy of the Government at that moment, saved more than one Briton from the remorseless tribunal of the priesthood. A rumour, that the heretics had no religious service (prayers being only read in Charles's apartment), occasioned the printing of our Liturgy in Spanish, which was dispatched from England to repel the aspersion, and must now be among the rarest books in Spain. The ridiculous contrast, as it seemed to the London "gallant," of Spanish pride and Spanish poverty, the sombre Madrid, and the ceremonious Hidalgo, wearied those who had ever on their tongues "Sweet England!"—"Most of our company," says one of them, "did nothing else but play at cards; for to say truth, there was nothing to be done else." The only precious commodity they wished to take from Spain, when they had travelled through its sterile land, was "their good air to join our earth, that England might be the happiest spot on earth."

From this close intercourse among the persons of such different customs, and such opposite nations, our sagacious ambassador had foreseen, from the moment of the Prince's arrival, the consequence of all those incidents which were now following fast one on the other. Buckingham's political conduct was not less offensive than his moral. His native rashness was urged on by a double spur; he was receiving accounts from England of formidable intrigues against him; even Bishop Williams, the Lord Keeper, was confidentially warning his patron of some "ungrateful devils;" a *corps diplomatique*, by the way, of which he himself was the great demon, for he was the double of himself, the *Fouché* of the day. Buckingham would have broken by violence the dilatoriness, from time immemorial, of the Spanish Cabinet; he kicked at the tortoise to quicken its motion, but,

secure in its sacred shell, he only rendered it motionless. The King refused any longer to treat with *him*; and Olivarez having insinuated that the Duke had given some hope of the Prince's conversion,—to his diplomatic consternation, received *the lie!*

The Prince had already lost his wager of “a horse of forty pieces” with Sir Richard Wynne, that he would land in England in June,—it was now September. England with one voice was calling for her Charles; the father was in tears for his son. In Madrid, the sight of the Prince of England had become cheap and common. At an earlier period, on a report of the rout of Tilly's army, the great minister, in consternation and haste, had knelt to Charles, and talked of offering a blank for him to fill up with his own conditions, for the restitution of the Palatinate: but now, when the authentic news arrived that Brunswick was utterly defeated, Olivarez became silent, and his visits rare; his *palabras de complimiento*, as he sometimes called all his fine promises, condescended to become very coarse and familiar. He said now, that “the Prince was watching the Infanta like a cat does a mouse;” and when pressed to hasten the departure of the English, Charles himself has given the ambiguous kindness of his answer; that “he would throw us all out of Spain as soon as he could!” The same old difficulties were ever and anon starting up. The Conde would patch this “mingled yarn,” and audaciously propose, that the son of the Palatine should marry the Emperor's daughter, and be brought up in the Court of Vienna, which implied a conversion. And when Charles demanded whether, in case the Emperor proved refractory, the King of Spain would assist with arms to bring him to reasonable terms, the Conde replied, that it was a state maxim, that the King of Spain must not employ his army against the House of Austria. On this, Charles protested to Olivarez. “Look to it, Sir! for if you hold yourself to that, there is an end of all! for without this, you may not rely upon either marriage or friendship!” I have read in a letter of the times, that when the English minister pressed Olivarez to oblige his master in the affair of the Palatinate, which would preserve for Spain a friend for life, that profound statesman observed, “Ah, Sir! Kings have no gratitude!”

Olivarez, however, sometimes indulged in a vein of good

Spanish humour. When they seemed to be waiting only for the ratification by the new Pope, the Condé told the Duke, "Now certainly it must be a match, and the devil could not break it!" The Duke thought so, and added, "The match had need be very firm and strong, for it had been *seven years* in soldering!" The Conde, as a mark of his unreserved confidence, then showed the Duke a letter from the King with his answer. This was designed as a proof that the match had not been really intended *seven months!* a State secret which mystified the whole business;—they were now walking in a mist. This royal letter has come down to us, merely from the recollections of Sir Walter Aston, who, though allowed to translate it before the Prince, was not suffered to take a copy. We may suspect it to have been a political *ruse* of the subtle Spaniard. Of their sincerity, however, at this time, I have discovered an irrefragable evidence in a very extraordinary incident. The confessor to the Infanta gave out his opinions unreservedly in opposition to the marriage—he was checked for these opinions, and solemnly warned of their consequences, but the friar persisted at the risk of martyrdom. The Infanta became excessively melancholy, she was observed to avoid her suitor, and to retire into privacy. The friar was seldom absent from her presence; in the secrecy of the confessional he alarmed her delicacy, and worked on her mind by religious horrors. "Do you know," said he, "what evil and what curse you are incurring?—you will have to sleep every night by the side of a naked man, and that man condemned to hell fires." The health of the Princess declined; the friar might have baffled all the intrigues of both Cabinets, but they presented him one morning with a fatal cup of chocolate.* Sometimes the Conde proposed that the marriage treaty should conclude without the difficult appendix of the restitution of the Palatinate, "for then," said the Cervantic Olivarez, "it could not fail; for the Infanta might beg it on her knees!" That zealous explosion

* I read this circumstance in a secret letter from Lord Bristol to James I., in the Conway Papers, those valuable documents to which Horace Walpole alludes, now descended to the possession of the Marquis of Hertford. Long a prey of damp and neglect, the fragments, now carefully arranged, lamentably show that we have lost one of the most interesting collections of secret history.

of feeling which flung the lie into the face of the grave diplomatist, to beat back the treasonable insinuation of the Prince's conversion, concluded the interviews of these ministers. This discourtesy had become absolutely necessary; even the Earl of Bristol had been alarmed by the Madrid reports, and Olivarez had unquestionably forfeited his pledge, that he would never touch on the Prince's religion. The proud minister told Charles, that, if he would profess himself a son of the Romish Church, Spain would yield all his desires, and it lay with himself to be the wealthiest and the most powerful monarch in Europe. The reply of the young Prince has come down to us—"My Lord, you have broken your word with me; but I will not break my faith with God!"

There was an idle report that Prince Charles designed to decamp secretly from Spain, as if he had considered himself in personal danger; a suspicion in which Castilian honour was involved. It was nobly answered on Charles's side, that "if love had brought him there, it was not fear that should drive him away."

While the ministers were thus playing at cross-purposes, the chief personages themselves were more tenderly intimate. The King urged the Prince to delay his return till spring, that he might accompany the Infanta home. She, not tearless, complained with all a woman's feelings, that "if the Prince loved her he would stay for her:"—and when Charles assured her, that "his heart would never be out of anxiety till her feet had pressed on British land," she answered with a modest blush, so accurate is the record of love! "that should she be in danger on the ocean, or indisposed by the rolling waves, she would be cheered by remembering all the way to whom she was going." These formal speeches seem to have been taken out of "the Academy of Compliments;" and Charles, who had flown to Madrid a romantic lover, was now, we may suspect, leaving it more warmed by politics than passion.

Buckingham set off alone to the ships, without taking a ceremonious leave at Court. He was now utterly anti-Spanish, and sullenly brooding over a French alliance. The Spanish monarch himself, with all the magnificence of his Court, would accompany Prince Charles. On their way to the sea-side, a

festival awaited them at the Escorial, that Spanish eighth wonder of the world! On leaving this palace and its enchanting gardens, a stag lodged in their way—the horn was blown and the chase was roused. The stag, which was breathed well, dropped beside a wood, where, the ceremonies of the death performed, the hunters were reminded of their exercise by their keen appetite. Turning into the wood, a scene, as if prepared by magic, opened; a magnificent repast was spread before them, on a table canopied with green boughs. Cool shades and exquisite viands in a moment dissipated heat and hunger. After this refection, Philip once more repeated, that the confidence of the Prince in having entrusted his royal person to his care had for ever endeared him in his brotherly affection: Charles again reiterated his vows for Philip's fair sister. A marble column had already been erected as a monument of alliance and amity. These royal personages, laying their hands on the pillar, in a mutual embrace ratified the marriage-treaty that was on the point of rupture, and the grand alliance which was about to terminate in a war. Politics is an art, admitting neither love nor friendship.

From the moment of Prince Charles's landing at Portsmouth, the whole nation was struck with that popular madness which has often seized on us. All eyes sought the idol of their hearts, the aged blessed the day they had lived to witness, public societies and private families were offering up their religious thanks. On his entrance into London, the universal joy made an universal festival: tables were spread in the streets, the wine and sack were flowing from the conduits. London, and far beyond its environs, appeared day after day in a conflagration of bonfires, and the bells pealing through the night proclaimed the return of the solitary hope of the nation.* Charles more than once received the same ardent testimonies from the

* The most preposterous terrors were formed by the people of the effects of the Spanish match. In the MS. Journal of Sir Symonds D'Ewes, it appears that some dreaded an intention of the Jesuits to get rid of the King and Prince, by poison or other means, whenever "the Spanish Lady," who would then survive them, could train up her children in the Romish religion, and re-establish popery in England! The same national terror was by no means dissipated afterwards by the French match.

populace. Is it strange that a Prince, once so loved, should afterwards have been at a loss to account for the estrangement of the affections of "the headstrong multitude?" They who are the victims of such passions can rarely discover the causes of what Sir Henry Wotton so happily describes as "the lubricity of popular favour." The memory of early gratitude or early flattery is scarcely to be effaced even by injuries; and he, who in his perplexity is forced to sit in judgment upon himself, will appeal to the people against the people.

The Prince and Buckingham hastened to Royston. The King met them on the stairs, and the Prince and the Duke kneeling, the old King fell on their necks, and wept. Then shutting all out, they held a conference for four hours, late in the night. The secrets of palaces are hard to get at, but the news-letter writers have speculated on this conference. The eaves-droppers, on these critical interviews, are not without authority for us minute chroniclers! The attendants at the door sometimes heard a still voice, and then a loud one; sometimes it was laughter, and sometimes chafing; but such was the variety of tones, that they could not conjecture the tendency or the close of this conference. In a word, these very reports present the true and fantastic image of this whole history. The grand secret was supposed to have broken out at supper, when James openly expressed his content, that, *since the restitution of the Palatinate was no farther advanced by the Spaniards, matters should rest as they were.* The old King, with that pointed sententiousness he frequently used, said, that "he liked not to marry his son with a portion of his daughter's tears."*

We might infer, from the language which James publicly used on this occasion, that on the English side now the project of a Spanish union was entirely given up. James, however, still temporised, still dreading a war. In Spain, after the

* I have seen a letter from James to the Earl of Bristol, 13th Nov. 1623, in the Conway Papers, where this domestic monarch uses the same paternal language. Alluding to some movements in the Palatinate by Spain, unfavourable to a restitution, James observes, that "he must now receive satisfaction from the King of Spain in the affairs of the Palatinate, for he cannot abandon his interests, and it would not be proper, when *receiving one daughter in joy and content* (the Infanta), *to leave another in tears and sighs* (Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia).

departure of the Prince, the King continued to be, to all appearance, seriously occupied in favour of the match. He had a gallery erected in the streets, covered with the richest tapestry, to conduct "the Princess of Wales" in the magnificent solemnity of the *deposorios*. When the dispensation arrived from Rome, the ordnance resounded the joyful news, and the illuminated city reflected the zeal of the populace. The household of the Infanta was arranged, the presents and the large portion prepared, even the love-letter to the Prince, and the dutiful epistle to the father, to be dispatched on the day, were already composed.* These open preparations were afterwards the derision of the Gazettes over Europe; but it must be confessed that they most clearly prove the earnestness of the Spaniards. We cannot therefore believe, as it is usually maintained, that the Spanish match was merely a bait designed to be gorged by James's credulity. Neither had Philip been duped by James; for in England, as we may find by manuscript letters of the time, the same preparations had occurred. We hear that "the new chapel for the Infanta goes on in building;" † and there was a chapel erected for her at St. James's, of which Don Carlos Colonna laid the first stone. We find also that a deputation of the nobility had set out for Southampton to receive the Spanish Princess, to repair the high roads, and to get ready shows and pageants, for which latter purpose Inigo Jones, and Allen the player, accompanied them. The sincerity of both the principal parties, therefore, is unquestionable; what then was the consternation in Madrid, when the proxy which Charles had deposited with Bristol, was ordered to be kept back till its power was suffered to expire! Mutual recriminations followed, and then it was that Philip ordered the Infanta to drop her title of Princess of Wales.

* In the collection of Royal Letters at the British Museum will be found a Spanish Letter from the Infanta to her future father, as she undoubtedly considered James I.

† The Romanists, who have made history a lie by their legendary taste, are at all times imagining miracles, and describe the most human events in the celestial style of the Golden Legend. In a letter of Sir Henry Bourchier, he notices the workmen of the Romish chapel:—"The new chapel for the Infanta goes on in building, and our London Papists report that the angels descend every night and build part of it."

In the Spanish match James had a complex object. If the marriage restored the Palatinate, the Palatinate would make the match popular; the formidable and active Catholic party in England would be conciliated by an English Catholic Queen. Strange as this consideration now sounds in our ear, it, however, greatly entered into the politics of the times. But the restoration of the Palatinate was in truth an English and Protestant, and not a Spanish and Roman Catholic, interest. Philip, indeed, had promised it; yet when James positively required that the Spanish monarch should unite his forces with the English in protecting its independence, it was then that insurmountable difficulties hemmed in both parties. In restoring the Palatinate to the Protestant son-in-law of James, the King of Spain, as Olivarez declared, would, in giving his sister to Charles on those terms, be preparing for his new brother a desperate war with the Catholic party, within three months of his marriage; and would ensure for himself a war with his uncle the Duke of Bavaria, the Emperor Ferdinand, and the whole Catholic league. It was one of James's difficulties, in contracting this wished-for alliance with Philip, that the English interest, which was to league and confederate with all the enemies of the House of Austria, would perpetually disturb the peace of this new alliance.

Spain, in the proposed alliance with the Royal Family of England, had only adopted a favourite system, which had even become proverbial with the nation—

“ Guerra con todo el mundo
Y Paz con la Inglaterra! ”

To keep England from any close alliance with France, and to estrange her from the Netherlands, was the policy of the Cabinet of Madrid. The family union had been the dream of Spanish politics—since the day, perhaps, that saw a Philip on the English throne. Once they had dared to propose Prince Henry's conversion; and though the proposition was repulsed with scorn and indignation, yet the arrival of Charles in person, in their own city, seemed of itself half a conversion. The Spanish Catholics cherished a sanguine fancy about the mutability of the English in religion. If the will of one English monarch had altered, that of another had reinstated, the ancient faith. They

were informed by the English Catholics that their holy mother, the Church, had many children here; and Sir Toby Matthews, one of their most active heads, in a letter to the King of Spain, pressing on the marriage, declares that "should it be broken off, no Catholic but must expect the extremity of rigour from the common people, and the importunate malice of the Puritans." To relieve the Irish and the English Catholics, would be securing Spanish adherents; and in war, half the nation might subdue the other! England was a land which hitherto the heavens had guarded from their dark dominion; but a Spanish princess, like another Virgin Mary, might alight among the martyrs of Rome, and mitigate, perhaps annul, "the penal laws and statutes." With Spain, the emancipation of the English and Irish Catholics was one of the great points of the negotiation, and the temporising politics of James and Charles flattered the Spaniards that the English princes had a leaning towards Rome. In one of the Papal state-papers, where his Holiness applied the term "Catholic Church" to his own, James inserted "Roman," asserting that he held himself to be as good a Catholic as the Bishop of Rome himself: Charles, on the other hand, wrote a complimentary letter of submission to the Pope, which astounded the zealous Protestants, as amounting, in their mind, to a declaration of Papistry. The truth is, that our sovereigns, at that period, were earnestly intent on relieving a very considerable body of their subjects from almost intolerable restrictions. During the present negotiation, the Spanish ambassador had become the organ of the fearful and distrustful Roman Catholics of our country; and he had obtained from James, under his Majesty's seal, the grant of a pardon for the past, and a dispensation and immunity from their legal restrictions for the future. The Catholics considered that this pardon and dispensation were revocable at the King's pleasure, and not binding on his successor. They therefore urged for the more public concession of a proclamation. But James, though willing to grant the grace under the great seal, addressed to the judges, justices, and other public officers, shrunk in terror from the public avowal of this secret article in the treaty. "A proclamation," said he, in his pointed manner, "is only for the vulgar people, who had no interest in the business, nor were capable of

anything but fear and rumour." The Spaniards reproached him with evasion; but James was not such an apprentice in his famous "king-craft," as to set to hazard, with all its "divine and indefeasible rights," the crown itself; and this monarch repeatedly declared, that the Romanists in this country must expect nothing more than a connivance, and not a toleration.

The political workings of the two Crowns began to develop themselves soon after the enthusiastic reception of Charles at Madrid. The negotiation doubled through all the bland windings of concession and conciliation; but the parties, when they came to a close explanation, detected that a Catholic and Protestant interest run counter to each other; and parallel lines can no more join together in politics than geometry. But nothing seems impossible to great diplomatists; the immediate object of the Spanish interest was to conclude the marriage, to separate the Court of St. James's from that of the Louvre, and Olivarez proceeded, relying on his diplomatic address to ward off everything obnoxious, while Buckingham imagined by his audacious spirit to strike off in a heat what had long lain intractable in the coldness of negotiation. On the side of England, whenever the spirit was high, the restitution of the Palatinate was urged; whenever the Spaniard was to be soothed, this matter, it was agreed, might be conveniently postponed till the marriage was solemnised. But the subterranean current which undermined the specious but false fabric was the personal dispositions of the actors so deeply engaged; the mighty hatreds of Olivarez and Buckingham, and the fears and jealousies of Bristol. The young Princes, their masters, were but the state puppets which the hands of these intriguing ministers secretly moved with an artificial life. Such was the little confidence between the parties, that each sought by the most subdulous contrivances to get at the secret motions of the other. The secret correspondence of both parties was mutually betrayed; Charles tells James, "By the French ambassador's means the Spanish ambassador has seen all the letters that we have written to you: you are betrayed in your bed-chamber." This, however, was trivial, compared with the magnitude of our own ambassador's doings at Madrid; for Lord Bristol put forth some claims for the value of his services when he declared that

there was not a letter sent by the King of Spain to any other State, of which James had not a copy before it came to the place of its destination; not a port in Spain which had not been sounded; not an expedition but its intention had been revealed. One extraordinary fact, perhaps unrivalled in the annals of diplomacy, the Earl thus relates:—

“I used such industry as to get all the papers of the King’s private cabinet into my hands; took copies and notes of such of them as I thought useful; and upon every of them set my private mark before they were conveyed back again, to the end that if I should have an occasion to have charged him with any thing mentioned in the same papers, I might let him see I knew it, by telling him in what paper it was, and marked with such a mark.”

It is however curious to add, that even this subtle and profound statesman entertained, in his own house, a spy placed by Buckingham, who had in his pocket a power ready, at a critical moment, to paralyse, as it finally did, all the machinations and stratagems of Bristol himself. Such was the political march of “the Spanish Match;” but these mutual deceptions had so multiplied, these crooked paths had so perversely crossed each other, that the actors could no longer extricate themselves from the labyrinth in which their folly had involved them. The only real difficulty that now remained was, to determine which should bear the infamy of the rupture.

James, in his speech to Parliament on the project of the French match, acknowledges, that by the Spanish negotiation “he had been taught this piece of wisdom,—that generality brings nothing to good issue, but that before any matter can be fully finished, it must be brought to particulars.” This was a political axiom not inappropriate when delivered from the throne, but it concealed the mystery of the sudden rupture of a royal marriage long planned, and by both parties equally desired.

CHAPTER V.

SECRET HISTORY OF THE FRENCH MATCH.—ROYAL AND
POLITICAL MARRIAGES.

WE now change the scene and the actors, but it is only a second part of the same comedy.

After the return of the Prince from Madrid, the ancient connexion between the two Governments—for in political history an uninterrupted alliance of more than twenty years may be deemed ancient—was virtually, though not openly, dissolved. In a change of councils, new measures were meditated; but before a Parliament was called, and a tale was framed to captivate the listeners, and humour the nation already prepared for a Spanish war, Buckingham was busied by domestic and foreign arrangements.

Our Duke had strangely wrested, from the fears of the good people of England for the safety of their Prince, a popularity for which it seems he had a taste, which had never hitherto been gratified. Whenever a people labour under a political panic, however unfounded, he who accidentally removes the illusory fear, may chance to receive a nation's unmerited gratitude. The person of the Prince, which had been placed in possible danger by the hardy imprudence of the adventurous minister, had been more secured by the inviolability of Spanish honour, than by any wisdom of his conductor—yet, in the heat of English fears, Spain appeared an enemy, and Buckingham a patriot. Coke saluted the Duke as “the saviour of his country.” In this blaze of popularity, when the name of Buckingham echoed from the mouths of the people, the Duke found no difficulty in intriguing with the Opposition through the agency of Dr. Preston, a courtly Puritan, and chaplain of the Prince, and in laying the foundation of a coalition with his former adversaries in Parliament.

After these precautionary measures at home, he had to look abroad and to substitute a new influence in Europe for that

which had ceased to be. He was to search into the long-neglected cabinet of France.

A quarrel with Spain was a certain means of uniting the Gaul with the Briton; for in politics there exists no impediment to the formation of a strict alliance, whenever a common prey is pointed out.

In the new system, France was to fill up the vacancy of Spain; and the political marriage, which had failed at Madrid, was to be consummated at Paris. The movements of statesmen are not always complicate; the mechanism of cabinets is sometimes a very simple operation.

A treaty, however, is always uncertain in its termination; and, however simple its objects, the treaty itself may chance to be extremely complicate; and, even after signature, utterly incapable of being executed.

As Hymen had now to lead the diplomatic corps, two ambassadors-extraordinary, the perfect representations of Love himself, were selected by the volatile and impetuous Minister of England. These graceful emissaries were two congenial friends,—the Earl of Holland and the Earl of Carlisle; two courtiers “as accomplished as were to be found in the palaces of all the Princes of Europe;”—heroes of a drawing-room, personages to figure in a masque or a ballet, whose glittering and lovely forms were idolised by the women.

The Earl of Carlisle was the modeller of fashions, from whose inventions the vainest did “but transcribe copies.” His boundless passion for magnificence was cultivated with all the earnestness of business, though Clarendon observes that “his universal understanding would have taken as much delight in any other way.” His great abilities, and his firm and elevated views in negotiation, are displayed in his correspondence; and it is difficult to comprehend how so capacious a mind could contract itself into so diminutive a passion, so petty seems its object, so vehement its pursuit! He consumed the vast revenues which royal favour and two splendid marriages had provided; and having thus expended nearly half a million of money in this personal lustre, “he left not a house nor an acre of land to be remembered by.” He was a Scotchman, who, bred in France, and living in England, had wisely cast off his

nationality when it could only occasion pain, and he was perhaps the only Scotch follower of James whom Englishmen loved.

A life of pleasure—to delight himself and to be the delight of others—he considered more innocent than a life in which, though inspired by severer virtues, the hearts of men rankle with rivalry, or are criminal through ambition. The Earl died as he had lived: the Epicurean calmly withdrew from this festival of existence, careless even of death!

Henry Rich, Lord Kensington, and, in the progress of the French treaty, Earl of Holland, from the moment he was received at Court, had attached himself to the Duke of Buckingham, whose vehement friendship was sure to accelerate the prosperity of the creatures of his favour. He had fixed Lord Kensington about the person of Prince Charles, as gentleman of his bed-chamber, and had thus secured at all times one who would protect his interest with the heir of the Crown. The Earl's conversation was attractive;—Clarendon notices his "lovely presence," and a contemporary poet describes it—

"Thy beauty too exceeds the sex of men."

The correspondence of these lords is characteristic, and to the political investigator their letters are highly instructive. These two accomplished courtiers, though intimates, were of opposite characters. We see the soft, corrupt creature of place and power in the Earl of Holland, pliant in his principles, inexhaustible in his adulation; but we are struck by the force of dignity, and the elevation of intellect, in the profound councils of the Earl of Carlisle, who, with the talent of developing truth, had too much greatness of mind to disguise or to conceal it.

Lord Kensington was, about three months after the return of the Prince from Spain, sent on a secret mission to the Court of France. He bore no official character, for it was a voyage of discovery, preliminary to a more settled intercourse. Mary of Medicis, the Queen-Mother of France, however, had long desired this political marriage. As far back as in 1620, five years before the present time, it appears by some letters recently published of Lord Herbert, that he wrote from Paris to James the First, that "a proposition of marriage had been carried by

the Lord Buisson to England; but that James had answered that he was now too far engaged with Spain." The match was popular with the French nation; and when the diversity of religion was alleged, it was said with characteristic levity, that "a wife ought to have no will but that of her husband."

The English envoy on his arrival found that the Queen-Mother governed the state; and his first visit was to the Louvre. So little was Louis the Thirteenth interested by this arrival, that the young monarch did not suspend his perpetual movements, and on the following day went to the country; but the presence of the English Earl produced not quite so slight an impression on the Spanish Ambassador, who, disturbed and agitated, appears to have had a full conception of the purport of the visit. The Spaniard instantly sent forth a rumour that the alliance between the two Courts of Spain and England was completed, and that the marriage was on the point of taking place; so that, as this Spanish comment ran, Lord Kensington might have spared himself a journey, which was only designed, as it was maliciously insinuated, to hasten his master to do that which he considered the same as done. To paralyse the efforts of the English visitor, and to conciliate the confidence of the French, was the first business of the politic Spaniard.

The Queen-Mother, however, was only the more curious in her inquiries about the terms on which the Spanish alliance stood.

Lord Kensington was guarded in his first answers. He did not deem it prudent to open at once, and he only complained of the Spanish tediousness, which, according to their old custom, had out-wearied the King and the Prince, and he thought that the Spanish alliance would soon have an end.

As the term "Spanish Alliance," included both the treaty and the marriage, it was still ambiguous. The Queen-Mother on this point, more a woman than a politician, then directly touched on the marriage. His Lordship, by repeating more strongly that he considered the treaty was at an end, delicately insinuated that the marriage would never take place. Day-light was breaking on this dark business, to the comfort of both parties.

Lord Kensington, though unfurnished with official powers to address himself direct to the Ministers, had however taken up his station. They knew where to communicate with him, and

politicians lose not a day. They contrived to acquaint him with their dispositions of amity and alliance. Not only the Ministers secretly communicated their wishes, but the Queen-Mother added her part, assuring his lordship that she had often indulged the hope that her daughter should be given to the Prince of Wales, "but," she significantly observed, "the female must be sought; she may be no suitor!"

Thus Lord Kensington was treading a path of roses. The Ministers were as eagerly compliant for the political union, as the Queen-Mother gloried in the more tender one, in spite, it seems, of the manœuvres of the Spanish ambassador, who having at first indulged his Cervantic vein by putting the question to every one—"Whether the Prince of Wales could have two wives, since he is married to the Infanta?"—afterwards, more angrily, in his rhodomontades, talked of the armies his master could shortly bring into the field. Olivarez, in process of time, sent bigger words from Madrid; for there he told our ambassador, that if the Pope granted a dispensation for the match with France, the King of Spain would march to Rome and sack it! On which Mary of Medicis, that long experienced politician, promptly answered—*Vraiment nous l'empecherons bien, car nous lui taglierons assés de besogne ailleurs.*—A year afterwards she was herself a solitary exile!

The Spaniard was moving heaven and earth against the alliance of France and England—the Pope, the press, and cabinet intrigues. The Court of Madrid long influenced his Holiness to refuse the Dispensation, without which the marriage would be invalid. They got up a mysterious conspiracy against Buckingham and Charles, in secret midnight interviews with James, and unquestionably had succeeded in terrifying the aged monarch, who was on the point of dismissing the favourite from his councils. They opened the presses of Italy, Germany, and Flanders, with a volley of pamphlets. They procured a German Jesuit to publish two, on the unnatural alliance between a Catholic monarch and Lutheran heretics, which made the more noise when the Sorbonne condemned them as libels.*

* These were *Admonitio ad Ludovicum XIII.*—and *Mysteria Politica*. The author was Keller, or, as the name is translated into Latin, Cellarius. There is a curious account of this famous *Mysteria Politica* in the *Mercure François* XI. 34.

But Lord Kensington, however he might feel the roses springing under his feet, seemed unambitious of handling the thorny politics. He therefore suggested to his Court, the propriety of separating the propositions of the treaty from the arrangement of the marriage; for in the delicacy of his fears he considered that, by insisting on both together, it would look as if the one were designed to force the French king to the other. He dreaded the mutual jealousies of both parties in framing a treaty, incited, as they might be, by the crafty wisdom of the Spaniard, who, in despair, would do everything to win over one side. In France they imagined that Spain might still seduce England by the restitution of the Palatinate; but in England they might dread that France would be divided from us by the restoration of the Valtoline.

Such is a picture of the mutual suspicions which harass our Cabinet politicians—and of the unhappiness of their far-sighted views of that mutual susceptibility of inconstancy, so prevalent whenever new state interests are to be substituted for former ones.

A fresh impulse came from London. The favourable dispositions of the French Cabinet, which Lord Kensington transmitted to the Duke, induced the minister to touch a secret spring of communication, in an overture to the Count de Tillicres, the French Ambassador. A gentleman is hastened with a secret dispatch for the French king, containing the joyful intelligence; the royal answer arrives immediately, that no one more than the French monarch valued the alliance of so great a monarch as his Britannic Majesty. The Earl of Carlisle, provided with ample powers, sets off to open the negotiation, which was to combine the strength of two great nations, and change the face of Europe.

There was no difficulty in conveying to the French the

It is a collection of pretended letters from eminent persons in different parts of Europe. The writer ingeniously enters into the views of the different cabinets with unsparing freedom. The art of this political writer consists in infusing jealousies among the Combined Powers. He appears to have been well furnished with information: he would alarm France that her new ally is again “entering the garden of the *fleurs de lis* ;” and while he treats James with irony for his warlike preparations, he attempts more solemnly to kindle suspicions between the father and the son; the Parliament; the Anglican Church; and the Puritans.

arguments of the English Ministry, for breaking with Spain : at Paris, they were most valid, since both parties found their political interest to be the same. It is curious to observe the arguments of the Count de Brienne, the French first secretary of state, and afterwards minister, in favour of this new alliance with England. The justice of the complaints of the Cabinet of St. James's against that of Madrid, are allowed to the full ; and the policy demonstrated by the most subtle reasoning, of the restitution of the Palatinate, that favourite object of the Protestant cause, and of the English nation. The English interests in an instant are identified with the French.

The minister, the Duke de la Vieuville, had earnestly opened this amicable intercourse with England. The French Cabinet was strongly disposed for a Spanish war ; but sometimes it is difficult even to raise a pretext for an open declaration, and the minister, therefore, now gladly took up the Protestant and forlorn cause of the Palatinate, while his most Christian Majesty in the style of diplomacy, or of the French *Mercure*, with "all justice and piety," acted with the disinterested resolution of succouring the allies of France, the United Provinces, the Swiss, the Northern Powers, and even the Turks—to check the growing ambition of Spain pressing on its neighbours. In a treaty of alliance, and a royal marriage with England, each was a pledge of that unity of power and coalition of interests, which were to strike at the preponderancy of Imperial Austria in the wide career of her ambition ; and divide Europe into two vast confederacies, where the Protestant interest was not only to oppose the Roman Catholic, but the flame once kindled, political interests were even to unite the Lutheran with the Catholics. The Venetian who feared Spain, and did not love France, was to combine with the Swiss, the Hollander, and the Dane : while the far-distant Bohemian was invited to plunder certain cities of Germany, and quaff the wines of the Moselle, which, it seems, the Emperor had accorded to be their "honourable stipend."

Lord Kensington had imagined, by the ardour with which he himself and the Earl of Carlisle were entertained, that no possible obstructions could arise in the smooth progress of the treaty, and still less in that of the marriage, and he counted on

the accomplishment of these important objects as on an affair of ten days.

The Duke de la Vieuville was a zealous, but a weak prime minister, directing a cabinet divided into small parties. He sought for an accession of influence by conciliating the Queen-Mother's favour in procuring her favourite, the Bishop of Luçon, who soon became the redoubted Cardinal de Richelieu, to be admitted into the Cabinet Council. It was the Minister's intention, as the young King made no scruple to inform the secretaries, not to admit the Bishop to the more interior secrets of state, but to advise with him only in occasional consultations; a custom which it seems the Premier had been wont to adopt with others to whom he had never yielded his entire confidence: least of all men, did he desire to yield this confidence to the Bishop of Luçon, whose character he was so judicious as to dislike, but whose aid he was so weak as to require.

The King, who was governed by his mother, wished, on the contrary, to grant the most unreserved confidence to this political aspirant, whose talents were already felt by those about him. Mediocrity, seeking for an ally in Genius, is inviting the most dangerous of its enemies; and such half-measures as the present are sure to end in the very evil they dread. All this is verified in the fate of the Duke de la Vieuville—his weak precautions ensured his ruin. Even while the treaty with England was in progress, the obscure favourite of Mary de Medicis was to be the man who was adroitly to expel from the royal councils those who had called him there; to cast into exile his unhappy patroness; to hold his sovereign in bondage; to guide the destinies of Europe; and unquestionably to contribute to the destruction of Charles the First, the very prince whose double union, personal and political, with France, at present so deeply engaged his labours. What a career may a mighty genius run, unconscious to itself!

The treaty of marriage was the more favourite negotiation with Lord Kensington, and this hymeneal ambassador, faithful to his charge, was studying how to make the Prince of Wales and the Princess of France enamoured of each other. A confidential letter was sometimes addressed to Charles, as well as to the Minister. His Lordship repeats how all in France repute

his Royal Highness to be "the most complete young Prince and person in the world."

"The sweet Princess Madame" long felt a passionate desire to view "the shadow of the person so honoured," the Prince's picture, which his Lordship wore about his neck, yet this poor young lady durst not, like the Queen and other princesses, open it, and consider it, and admire it; she only saw it afar off, "she whose heart was nearer it than any of the others that did most gaze upon it." Impatient for a leisurely inspection of a physiognomy doomed by politics, if not by love, to be the arbiter of her happiness or her glory, a confidential lady was the messenger to his Lordship to entreat for a short loan of the portrait of Prince Charles. Our flowery courtier may tell the romantic incident in his own words, a curious specimen of an amatorial embassy. We seem to read a passage from the *Arcadia* of Sidney.

"As soon as she saw the party that brought it, she retired into her cabinet, calling only her in, when she opened the picture in such haste as showed a true picture of her passion, blushing in the instant at her own guiltiness. She kept it an hour in her hands, and when she returned it, she gave it many praises of your person. Sir, this is a business so fit for your secrecy, as I know it shall never go farther than unto the King your father, my Lord Duke of Buckingham, and my Lord of Carlile's knowledge. A tenderness in this is honourable, for I would rather die a thousand times than it should be published, since I am by this lady trusted, that is for beauty and goodness an angel."

There was, however, something more serious in this diplomatic correspondence, between Kensington and the Prince, for his Lordship records his Royal Highness's opinion, as he had received it from Buckingham, that the treaty of alliance should precede that of the marriage, so that business, as well as love, engaged the attention of the intended bridegroom. But to return from love to politics!

Lord Kensington arrived at Paris in February, where, though he found all parties disposed to his purpose, yet France required a public demonstration from the English Court, that her ancient amity with Spain had terminated. This was now no longer any

obstacle in this negotiation with France; Buckingham told his own tale in his own way; Charles had sanctioned it; war with Spain was decreed by the voice of Parliament, and the pacific James reluctantly armed for the Palatinate in the succeeding month.

As in the Spanish, so in the French negotiation, an intractable article concerned the English Catholics. At first the French had appeared less catholicised than the Spaniard: the pulse of the Minister beat temperately, and he seemed satisfied by certain explanations of Lord Kensington, which threw a new light over the ambiguous conduct of James, whose frequent revival of the penal laws against his Catholic subjects had been in compliance with the cries of his Parliaments and his people. The French Minister only requested that the English Monarch would not tie his hands up so strictly as to be disabled from bestowing some moderate favours on his Catholics; and that he would allow of the mediation of France, in case the alliance should take place, "Else," observed the French statesman, "we shall not save our honour, and shall hardly be reputed Catholics."

But a sudden change interrupts the negotiation. They rise in their demands. The English ambassadors declare that what they asked in favour of the Catholics, to be allowed an Established Church, was contrary to the laws of England, and they would never consent to it. The French then appeal to the Spanish treaty, and they declare that their Princess is not to be treated for, on inferior terms than the Infanta.

The English now were forced to propose, that in their high consideration of the King and Madame, the Catholics should be as favourably treated as the articles concerted with Spain had allowed, provided this article was not inserted in the contract. The King and the Prince should sign a letter, which was to contain the offensive obligation which they dared not disclose to the nation at large.

But a letter, it was observed, might be easily disavowed, while a marriage contract was a solemn act perpetuating its object.

The distressed negotiators looked on each other in dismay. Both sides seemed to dread a renewal of the seven years' treaty

of Madrid. The Queen-Mother had openly said “ *Qu’il méritoit d’être lapidé qui s’y opposeroit.*” Conferences multiplied, difficulties were debated, and the Minister de Vieuville, in equal impatience and embarrassment, agreed with the English ambassadors, that, provided the letter were written in very strong and positive terms, he would satisfy his own Sovereign ; and to gain over the other French Commissioners, he proposed that Lord Kensington should hasten to England, bearing a letter of credit from Louis the Thirteenth to James the First, finally to adjust the more difficult points. After this suggestion, the Minister followed the French King to the country, and on his return commanded the Count de Brienne to expedite this letter of credit to Lord Kensington, constituting his Lordship the secret agent of the French Monarch, and which letter he and the ambassadors of England had concerted together.

The Count de Brienne, or Lomenie, first Secretary of State, and one of the Commissioners for the Treaties, was evidently engaged in the interests of an opposite party. Struck at the consequence of writing a letter conferring such secret powers on Lord Kensington, and suspecting that the Minister had gone far beyond the intentions of the Cabinet, and further considering that where doubt was so decided, disobedience might be a prudent duty, the Secretary of State played off a trick on the Minister and the Ambassador. Aware that Lord Kensington understood the French language but very imperfectly, as he tells us, instead of drawing up a letter of this confidential nature, he composed one in which was no mention of business ; it only described the amusements which then occupied His Most Christian Majesty.*

The English Ambassador proceeded to England with this amusing letter ; but as soon as Richelieu arrived in Paris, an extraordinary *éclaircissement* occurred. The Count de Brienne in raillery reproached the Cardinal’s reserve towards him, in

* Whether Count De Brienne has told a pleasant story to enliven the memoirs which he composed for the instruction of his family, or flattered himself on his dexterity more than was his due, I cannot decide ; but it seems not probable that the Earl of Holland, afterwards a great favourite with Henrietta Maria, was so inexpert in the French language. During the present negotiation he has given in his letters some conversations in their native idiom.

having concealed his consent in so important an affair as the King's letter of credit. The news startled the Cardinal, and he ruminated; lauding, however, the sage precaution taken in a matter of infinite delicacy, by his most judicious friend the Count de Brienne.

The result of this communication appeared not long after. The Cardinal is now *Chef du Conseil*. De Brienne, or Lomenie's, signature is affixed to the royal *ordonnances*, and the late minister is thrust into an old castle. He stands charged with abusing the King's confidence while treating with foreign ambassadors, and with other accusations, such as a fallen minister is liable to. He is accused of a chimerical enterprise to convey water to Paris, which was much in want of it; of squeezing purses in the disposal of places, by some who could not get promotion; of a design to take possession of a house which did not belong to him—in a word, De Vieuville furnished the *colporteurs* of the Pont-neuf for a month, with pamphlets *sous le manteau*, in which, among other charges, it was asserted that he was so penurious that no one could get anything by him; but the choice scandal was entitled, "The public voice to the King," though it might be considered as a private one, coming as it did from a person who had been struck off the Pension List when the Minister attempted an economical reform.

Thus that very impracticable treaty about English Catholics, which had cost fruitless years in Spain, in a few months turned out the French Premier.*

The disavowal of the acts of a minister threw everything back. It shook the councils of James the First, who concluded that "the French King was taking up the fashion of Spain

* *Mercure François*, X. 671.—*Mémoires du Comte De Brienne*.—*Biog. Universelle*, Art. de Vieuville. This minister, after having been expatriated, outlived his great enemy, and returned to France, resuming all his honours under Louis the Fourteenth, with the character of a disinterested and zealous minister. The fact is, that Vieuville was far too accommodating to satisfy the Catholic party. We gather this from the *Mercure*. The writer having observed the advantages of the treaty, in having *gained thirteen years for the education of the children as Catholics*, instead of ten, as had been granted to the Spaniards, he adds, "Had not the Marquis de la Vieuville passed over too many other points in this treaty, the interests of religion had been better served; had he continued in office, we should not even have succeeded thus far:—it was the happy change of administration which procured for us what has happened."—*Mercure François*, XII. 901.

to entangle this business." The Count De Tillieres is recalled, and a new French Ambassador, the Marquis d'Effiat, is to repair the mischances of the past. Of an insinuating character, he winds into the good graces of the King, the Prince, and Buckingham.

In proportion to the Cardinal's ascendancy in the cabinet, the treaties moved the more sluggishly. Richelieu was inflexibly bent on supporting the Romanists in England. The most extraordinary argument the Marquis d'Effiat urged for their emancipation was, that if that were granted, the Protestants would have the greater chance of their conversion, since then each party would fairly debate, and openly enlighten one another. Truth at least would prove infallible. It was imagined that the Protestant could not deny the force of free discussion; but "what is truth?" jestingly said Pilate, or rather Lord Bacon, particularly when both parties proclaim that they alone possess her, and also that they will both combat for her.

It was on this occasion that the French Ambassador, according to the *Mercur*e François, held out as an illustration of his argument, that the late monarch of France, Henry the Fourth, by allowing freedom of religion, had by this means gained over many of the "Religion pretendue," whom the monarchs his predecessors had thrown into rebellion, and made more obstinate in their opinions, by multiplying their persecutions. It is curious to listen to a Romanist advocating the cause of toleration, but it is always in a Protestant land! Of the present remarkable argument of the Marquis d'Effiat, which we shall have occasion again to refer to, we may discover the fallacy by noticing the close of Roman Catholic toleration in the cruel revocation of this very edict of Nantes, on which he grounds his argument for Catholic emancipation in England.

The negotiation thus advanced and retrograded, the agents on both sides were shocked at the vacillations of their own cabinets; at their ambiguous instructions, or their fresh demands. What had been agreed on was retracted; what mentioned, explained in a sense quite contrary to what the other party understood. Lord Carlisle at length was compelled to take down in writing their resolutions, and on one occasion silenced the debate by delivering them their former words.

The Marquis d'Effiat was so wearied of the part he had to play, that he requested to be recalled.

At one period, both parties being at a loss to proceed, the French agreed to be satisfied with a solemn promise, that the Roman Catholics in England should at least be not less favourably treated than they were to have been if the Spanish match had been concluded. De Brienne observes, "We would not explain particulars, or enter into conditions; and the ambassadors then consented that this hitherto insurmountable article should, in such general terms, appear in the contract."

But when they came to particulars, they did not find their work the clearer by such clumsy botching. On another occasion, when a fair copy was made of the *Ecrit Secret*, which James and Charles were to sign, concerning the English Catholics, to use Lord Carlisle's words, "the infamous word *Liberty* was, by the false suggestions and artifices of Ville aux Clercs, foistered in." By this "infamous word *Liberty*," we must infer that it was a covert attempt on the French side to disguise Catholic emancipation. But if at one moment they relaxed into general terms, defining nothing, at another they rigidly assumed the most specific and absolute conditions.

The real cause of the phases of this negotiation was the anxiety of James, who, knowing that Spain was practising with France upon any terms to break off this treaty, and who alarmed lest this rupture should a second time expose him to the laughter of the world, was evidently more compliant to the Marquis d'Effiat at London, than the Earl of Carlisle was to Richelieu at Paris. James even consented to "the infamous word," if it could not be razed out without disturbing the amity of France; observing that "it carries with it a great deal more show than substance;" and unquestionably it would hereafter, by the force of royal logic, signify nothing. But this facility at home traversed the efforts of our ambassador, who was often singing to the deaf; and he requested that they would speak to the French ambassador in a higher tone. Lord Carlisle writes home, with great force and discrimination: "Quarrel with the Marquis d'Effiat; not with his person, for that is worthy of all favour and esteem; but quarrel with his charge, with his commission, and with his minister's arts; who,

when they find 'tis inflexible, set him awork. If any thing be granted to him, then they stop our mouths withal; if he promise any thing, that they disavow, as having no commission to treat."

When Lord Carlisle alluded to the French agreement of furnishing their quota of troops in the common league, the Cardinal replied by alluding to the freedom of the Catholic priests. "*Donnez-nous des Prêtres, et nous vous donnerons des Colonels!*" exclaimed Richelieu in the combined spirit of a cardinal and a commander-in-chief.

The dispensation from the Pope was used as a great machine, to be worked or to be stopped as suited the French party.

At Rome it was ever delayed. We had there a Roman Catholic lord acting for us against the close intrigues of Spain. The French Archbishop of Ambrun came over here, and has left us a mystifying memoir, in which he either persuaded himself, or would others, that James was a Roman Catholic. The situation of James was pitiable. Every endeavour on his part to relieve his Roman Catholic subjects, then far more numerous than in our times; every expression of a conciliatory nature; every vain dream of the re-union of the opposite churches, was sure to be construed far beyond its meaning by those who still lingered in hope.

The French Cabinet could not confide to his Holiness their own secrets of State; and the Pope lightly appreciated the bare word of an heretical sovereign. Could "the Father of the Faithful" sanction a league of the "pretended reformed" against his own ancient children? The true child of the Pope was his beloved Spain, and she was on her knees before him.

But as the Papal Cabinet was still the arena of the political wrestlers, Father Berulle, not long after Cardinal, was dispatched on the French interest, to demonstrate to his Holiness that from this royal marriage great advantages would accrue to the Catholics of England.

The secret history of this dispensation would form no incurious tale. It was slowly wrung from St. Peter, and was long in coming. A menace from Cardinal Richelieu hastened its last steps. When the Minister grew impatient for the state-espousal, he declared that the marriage should take place without the dispensation, which might arrive after.

At length De Brienne himself was dispatched to England ostensibly to ratify the articles, but really to procure what he calls "an act sealed by the Lord Keeper," which should secure the favourable conditions demanded for the Roman Catholics. These were probably those secret articles which were of so extraordinary a nature that they startled the world when they were revealed to the public eye.

The feelings of the Romanists were sadly put to the test by a circumstance which now occurred. The King, among other civilities, had desired the Lord Keeper Williams to invite the French ambassadors-extraordinary to a supper. His lordship resolved, as Dean of Westminster, to give the banquet in the Jerusalem Chamber, Westminster Abbey, but to precede it by an episcopal collation of his own contrivance, taking advantage of the locality to introduce these bigoted Romanists into the heretical church. He got the resident ambassador to consent to be present at a prayer for the King; it being Christmas-day, he had the whole Christmas service performed, to show the Romanists that there was "no corruption of doctrine, much less of heresy," so that they might report favourably to the Princess Henrietta, and be witnesses how nearly the English service approximated to the Roman. At the north gate of the Abbey, his lordship, at the head of his clergy, received them in pontifical state; the exterior and interior of the Abbey were every where illuminated with torches, that the strangers might lose nothing of the pomp and solemnity of the ceremonies. Entreating the ambassadors, with their nobles and gentlemen, to enter, he promised, on the word of a bishop, that nothing should happen which could offend their feelings. The organ was played by the great musician of the times, Orlando Gibbons; the choristers, in their rich copes and with exquisite voices, chanted three anthems; and the Lord Keeper presented to each of the foreigners the Liturgy printed in their own language. The story is told in triumph by the biographer of the archbishop.*

The French company behaved decorously, and departed with a due impression of "that form of holiness in which the English

* Hacket's Life of Archbishop Williams, p. 210.

monarch worshipped." However, the ambassadors themselves, for whom the treat was designed, had not only no reverence to bestow on this occasion, but were strongly affected, both by their religious and diplomatic character. Ville aux Cleres kept on his hat, and when all others carried away their French book of prayers, he left his, in the stall of the choir in which he sat, as if it had been forgotten, and no one thought proper to bring it to him. The truth is, that there were two causes why this ecclesiastical entertainment proved so trying to the feelings of the French ambassadors. To assist at the service of Protestants was accounted no light sin, and the English Romanists were watchful of the conduct of the French party, that they might report it to the Spanish. One of the French ambassadors, the Count de Brienne, whose name does not appear in the biography of the Lord Keeper, has recorded the horrors of that evening. "I reproached," he says, "Monsieur d'Effiat ever to have consented to this invitation of hearing a prayer for the King of England. I pointed out to him the consequences of French ambassadors joining in prayer with Protestants. It was a trap which I resolved to elude, and, leaving my lodging late, meant to go straight to the deanery, and not to the church. But I found the Lord Keeper dressed in his pontifical habits, advancing with his clergy to receive us at the porch: he obliged us to follow him, and conducted us, in spite of ourselves, to seats which had been prepared for us. I therefore resolved, while they chanted anthems, to kneel; and to show that I did not participate in their prayers, I said my *chapelet*, counting my beads. This greatly edified the English Catholics."*

De Brienne, however, was more particularly gratified by the political civility of the English Cabinet, in qualifying his Most Christian Majesty, "King of France and Navarre," and not according to the ancient custom of England, as "the French King." "For the English," he tells us, "argue, that if the people of France acknowledge this Prince and obey him, that nevertheless his Britannic Majesty possesses a legitimate claim to the country and the territory of France."†

* Mémoires du Comte de Brienne, i. 193.

† This obsolete absurdity of a pretension to the Crown of France, by a nation who could not maintain an army there, was carried on through a long series of

But at the very moment that De Brienne was here engaged in a solemn ratification of the treaties, he was himself suddenly shocked at their infraction by his own Court. The English army, already collected at Dover, under Mansfeldt, was preparing for their passage through France, where they were to be joined by their new allies. This was a point long agreed on.

De Brienne was on the eve of departure: he had to partake of a magnificent supper given by Buckingham. A courier arrived from Paris, which, as he says, in his mind threatened to put an end to all such fêtes, and indeed violently agitated his honourable feelings. His dispatches contained an order from the French monarch, notwithstanding our convention, adds De Brienne, that the English would not be allowed to land at Calais, on the frivolous excuse, that the Treaty of Alliance would not take place till after the marriage. At midnight he hastened to consult the French ambassador on this fatal intelligence, this first open violation of the treaties; and however subtly the Marquis d'Effiat afterwards practised on Buckingham, it only added one more deception to the chain of duplicity, by which all parties were involved. This insincerity of the French monarch is perfectly explained by an observation which De Brienne has elsewhere thrown out, and it offers an interesting picture of that conflict of adverse interests which will often torment the breast of a sovereign. After all these negotiations, Louis the Thirteenth was irresolute in his own mind to break with Spain, whose sinister power, though it was suspected, was not more so than that of the English monarch; for it was known to Louis that his Huguenots, who were then acquiring daily strength, looked toward England as the true champion of their cause; and little was the French monarch solicitous to contribute in calling forth the force of England. Although the policy of his Cabinet had resolved to

reigns, and has been only recently corrected. The Dutch edition of De Brienne's Memoirs observes, that the addresses of our Parliament, when levelled against Louis the Fourteenth, always contemptuously treated this monarch as "the French King;" but that his most Christian Majesty was sure to recover his titles in times of peace; and he adds, that children in their quarrels treat one another in the same way. It is thus great nations have sometimes perpetuated follies consecrated by ancient prejudices.

aid the Prince Palatine to recover his States, two contrary phantoms were continually haunting the mind of Louis. On one side he beheld with dread the elevation of the House of Austria, and on the other he feared that of England.*

At length, on the 10th of November, 1624, the treaties had been signed by both parties, and it was imagined that, after almost a year's anxious labours, the moment of repose had arrived. In politics, it seems, that affairs may be finished, but not concluded. Three months afterwards we have an energetic and an admirable letter from Lord Carlisle, from which I shall make some extracts, as not only continuing our narrative, but as also being an evidence, that the epistolary style in the days of James the First, when not the work of pedantry and affectation, loses nothing in force and beauty when compared with our own.

“ They are grown so indiscreetly and unreasonably presumptuous, as to impose a new treaty upon us, after a perfect treaty concluded, signed and sworn by his Majesty: under the Pope's borrowed name they would exact not only all the dishonourable and prejudicial circumstances which, with much labour and contestation, we had avoided or rejected, but would inforce no less than a direct and public toleration, not by connivance, promise, or *écrit secret*, but by a public notification to all the Roman Catholics of all his Majesty's kingdoms whatsoever, confirmed by his Majesty's and the Prince's oath, and attested by a public act. This holdeth proportion, I must confess, with the whole course of their former proceedings.”

Lord Carlisle had British feelings. Indignant at Richelieu's manœuvres, in an elevated strain, by which few ministers are so fortunate as to be addressed by their political agents, he solemnly charges Buckingham to maintain the dignity of the crown, and secure the hearts of the people.

* It may be worth noticing, and it proves that this failure of the French King of his promise was not forgotten, that afterwards, in the address of Buckingham's secretary to the Rochellers, it is particularly ascribed to the influence of the Jesuits and Spanish interest over the French monarch. “ By means of this faction, the refusal of a passage to the army in England provided for Count de Mansfeldt, at the moment of their departure, which had been solemnly agreed on, the liberty of Germany was betrayed, and twelve thousand Englishmen had nearly all perished.”

—*Le Mercure François*, xiii. 805.

“ Now, last of all, by pretence of the Pope’s authority, they would impose upon us real alterations and new additions, extravagant in themselves, and incompatible with his Majesty’s honour and the peace of his kingdom. Do but remember, my most noble Lord, how much your noble and generous proceedings in Spain did endear you to the loves and hearts of his Majesty’s people, all which you will lose (I beseech your lordship to pardon my liberty, proceeding from a fast and sincere friendship), if you give way in this. The world will now conclude it was nothing but a particular passion and animosity, and not care of the public, which excited you thereunto. Nothing can more justify and advantage Digby, than the admission of the last of these new conditions, which carry with them more prejudice and dishonour than the conditions of the Spanish treaty, which might seem out of necessity to be extorted, the Prince’s precious person being in their hands; but now, there being no such necessity, the envy will be wholly cast upon the negotiators. I beseech your lordship to give your humble, faithful servant, who hath made a league offensive and defensive with your friendship, leave to assure you, that you will find little faith or fast friendship in any but the true British hearts; much less, in these inconstant and perfidious monsters, who will make little scruple to ruin their best friends, so as they may not fail to compass their ends.”

In the treaty, it is specified that “ the children of the future marriage shall be brought up by their mother till the age of thirteen years.”* This would have made an English Protest-

* The Dutch, and doubtless, Protestant Editor of De Brienne’s Memoirs, not without reason, seems astonished at this article, as he finds it given by De Brienne. “ James the First,” he says, “ here betrayed the cause of his religion, and thus drew on his posterity all their calamities.” It must be confessed that Hume was somewhat perplexed on this discovery; but his philosophical genius, in my opinion, as I shall shortly show, has struck into the right vein. He says, “ It can scarce be questioned, but this article, which has *so odd an appearance*, was inserted only to *amuse the Pope*, and was never intended by either party to be executed.”

Dr. Lingard has vaguely stated that “ the children should remain under the Queen’s care until they were thirteen years old.” But should not our historian have noticed the sense in which the Catholics accepted this article? The words in Rymer are more precise. *Les enfans seront nourris et élevés après de ma dite dame Reyne*. With the Catholics it was a stipulation for the religion of the children. It is always so asserted by one of the negotiators, De Brienne, in his Memoirs, vol. i.,

ant's cheek tingle with indignation ; yet, after having extorted this impracticable concession from the British Cabinet, when the dispensation was finally sent, it came clogged with a clause, so insurmountable, that even James or Charles, with all their facility, dared not perform it. It was nothing less than a Catholic emancipation, in the form of a treaty with the Roman Pontiff, to be sanctioned by an oath of the English sovereigns, which violated the fundamental laws of our Constitution.

Although the Gallican Church, in some respect, has freed herself from the Papal omnipotence, yet in the affairs of religion, and on points of doctrine, her enslaved intellect is still fettered by its holy chains. Even De Brienne confesses as a plea for these repeated tergiversations, that they usually arose from Rome. "There," he says, "the least matters are not easily obtained, and on this occasion they had raised many difficulties to follow up the intentions of the King, because we did not disclose the acts which we had passed with England, and that we were satisfied with the concession of his Britannic Majesty." This was a dilemma which seemed inextricable ; but when affairs are inextricable, statesmen discover expedients. The hand of the English monarch was paralysed, he dared not put his signature, and to proffer his oath to Antichrist might have raised a general revolt in his three kingdoms. To satisfy the conscience or the dignity of the Pontiff, observes the acute commentator on "Bassompierre's Memoirs," a *mezzo termine* was contrived ; and the French monarch engaged on the part of the King of England for those points in which the latter could not, or dared not, treat directly and openly with the Pope. To such miserable shifts were the greatest monarchs of the world driven by a power which they disavowed in terms, resisted in substance, and submitted to in form.*

p. 188, and it is confirmed by Père Griffet in his excellent History of Louis the Thirteenth, vol. xiii., p. 422. "*Ce qu'il y a d'étonnant, c'est qu'ils ne faisoient pas tant de difficulté sur l'article qui regardoit l'éducation des enfans dans la religion Catholique jusques à l'age de douze ans, qui devoit ce semble leur paroître d'une si grande importance.*" The reader has found here, at page 114, the self-congratulations of the Mercure, on the Cardinal's success in obtaining thirteen years instead of ten, for the education of the children as Catholics.

* Memoirs of the Embassy of the Marshal de Bassompierre to the Court of England in 1626. Translated with Notes. 8vo. 1819. I recollect no volume of the

In politics too much has been conceded to forms, which only adds to the insincerity of the parties. By this hollow etiquette, this veil that never hid what it covered, have the weak been flattered by the potent! Statesmen sometimes have to act very ridiculous parts, and it is not strange that their views should be so often misconstrued by the people, and adroitly pointed against themselves, by the artifices of an opposing party.

At length the Duke de Chevreuse, as proxy, espoused, in the name of the King of England, for the Prince had now become the Sovereign, Madame Henrietta Maria. In the *Mercure François*, the splendid ceremony, and the public rejoicings from Paris to Amiens, occupy a moveable page of festivals, processions, and triumphal arches. All the magnificence of France was radiant, and the details, from the mantles of violet velvet, spotted ermine, and cloth of beaten gold, to the allegorical entrances into towns, the comfits from the mouths of Dragons, or the verses from Sibyls or Muses, with an exhibition of all the daughters of France who had been Queens of England, represented as so many different virtues, were all unquestionably to the taste of Louis the Thirteenth, who perhaps edited, with particular care, the splendid chronicle in this Book of Kings. A circumstance in the marriage-ceremony was remarkable. Although the French had obstinately persisted, during their negotiation, in requiring a secret article respecting the education of the children of the marriage, under their Roman Catholic mother, yet when mass was performed at Nôtre Dame, with great delicacy they permitted the Duke de Chevreuse, as representative of the English monarch, to withdraw from the mass, and accompany the two English ambassadors, who were not present during its celebration; but who returned to the French monarch to take their rank in the procession, the instant it was concluded.

Scarcely had the marriage ceremony closed, when to the

size in our historical literature more desirable for the general reader. The varied information contained in the notes is perpetually enlivened by a searching spirit, which strikes at the results of historical evidence, deducing inferences, and detecting nice discriminations, such as a mind practised in the business of life, and drawing from its own experience, could alone discover, and which prove that the writer has been conversant with Courts more modern than those of the historical antiquary. The Editor is the Right Hon. John Wilson Croker.

astonishment of the whole Court, the unexpected arrival was announced of the Duke of Buckingham, accompanied by a train of English gentlemen. The hostile Count De Brienne observes, "This Englishman appeared to the Court to have his head filled with chimeras that broke out in his conversation; he pressed for the departure of the Queen of England, and every one earnestly wished for that of the presumptuous stranger." The departure of her Britannic Majesty was delayed by the indisposition of the King, who was desirous of accompanying his sister to Compiegne.

Our comet of fortune blazed with intolerable light. Even the severity of the sullen Secretary of State softens, as his reminiscences sparkle, in describing the singular beauty of his person, the grace of his movements, the strange magnificence of his dress. We hear from our own quarters, of Buckingham's twenty-seven suits, the richest that embroidery, lace, silk, velvet, silver, gold and pearls could ornament; and more particularly of the white uncut velvet, set all over, both suit and cloak, with diamonds, valued at four-score thousand pounds, set off with great diamond buttons, and diamonded feathers. To the women Buckingham seemed a degree above a mortal; for among the seductions of his gallantries, he practised one peculiar to his own fantasy—he had his diamonds tacked so loosely on, that when he willed, some graceful motion would shake off a few—and he obtained all the celebrity he desired from the pickers-up—the *Dames de la Cour*; whatever any fair hand condescended to take from the ground, the Duke conferred on her as an unalienable possession.

But alas! his presence at the Court of France was fatal to her who seemed placed beyond the reach of Fate—to Anne of Austria, the Queen of Louis the Thirteenth; and Buckingham was perhaps the only man who dared to become enamoured of a Queen. The royal lady, too, was one whose pride was to subdue the hearts of distinguished persons; and who, in Europe, was as distinguished as the magnificent and fascinating English Duke.

Buckingham shed tears on the Queen's hand at his departure. Were those drops the melting effusions of his mind, or the burning heat of his senses? The annals of gallantry, usually

so circumstantial with the French, have preserved a sullen and royal silence. Was the passion of Buckingham refined, as Hume in the calmness of his philosophy would conjecture, who tells us, "that attachment at least of the mind which appears so delicious, and is so dangerous, seems to have been encouraged by the Princess." But the discontent of her royal husband, the rage of the Cardinal, here a double rival to Buckingham, and the covert style of the Secretary of State, indicate the treason. "Had this Princess followed my advice," says De Brienne, (which was to remain at Paris with her sick husband) "she would have received great advantages; but she preferred the counsels of Madame de Bervay," who probably was not unacquainted with her Majesty's confidential inclinations, nor the promised festivals of every day, which were to make gay the progress to the coast. We fear that Hume is here but an apologist for the French Queen, when we find in the graver historian, Père Griffet, that "several of the Queen's household were suddenly dismissed, the Marchioness de Vernet, her *dame d'atours*, and Ribera her physician, as persons who had proved to have been too favourable to the design of the Duke." And farther, when we recollect the reply of Voiture, when her Majesty met him musing in the garden of Ruel. "What are you thinking on?" inquired the Queen. "I am thinking," replied the wit, in impromptu verses, "that if at this instant the Duke of Buckingham should appear before your Majesty, who would lose the day, the Duke, or Père Vincent?" the Queen's confessor. The mystery of the loves of Anne of Austria and Buckingham is not diminished by a letter of the Earl of Holland to our Duke, in which, among other state affairs, we discover certain hieroglyphics of love—a *crown* to designate the King of France, a *heart* the female lover, and an *anchor* our Lord High Admiral. It appears that the anchor was most urgent to revisit Paris, but the crown continued in its strongest suspicions, and the heart "hath infinite affections." A threat of the young bravadoes of the Court, set on by the crafty Cardinal, that he is not a good Frenchman who would suffer the *anchor* ever to return from France, might have its effect. "You are the most happy unhappy man alive, for the *heart* is beyond imagination right, and would do things to

destroy her fortune, rather than want satisfaction in her mind. I dare not speak as I would. I tremble to think whether this will find a safe conveyance to you. Do what you will, I dare not advise you—to come is dangerous, not to come is unfortunate.”—A specimen of love-letters inclosed in the dispatches of ministers of state!

The calamity of *Roman Catholic* and *Protestant Marriages* in the royal family, for calamitous they have always proved to be, by exciting the fears and jealousies of the nation, in an age of controversial faiths, was so far from having yet been ascertained, that on the contrary both parties then calculated on mutual advantages from this forced union of opposite interests. The first difficulty lay in the preliminaries; for while one party required so many concessions which could never be conceded, the other, in its perplexity, accommodated matters by promises which could never be performed. It seemed the art of one party to evade what the other at length would abandon; and it appears that, notwithstanding the secret articles of the treaty ostensibly signed, there were others still more secret, which annulled them, as the English Cabinet, in their subsequent discussions and rupture with France, always asserted.

Rapin wonders what could induce the English to have acceded to this treaty; and Mr. Croker, whose enlarged views are those of a statesman, has, in this particular instance, as I think, too easily adopted Rapin's suggestion—that it was owing to three causes; James the First's avarice, vanity, and indifference to the Protestant religion. Such assumptions too easily pass into history; and it is as necessary to exercise a critical spirit upon historians themselves, as on the materials with which their histories are composed. Our honest Huguenot emigrant, influenced by the horrors of intolerant Papistry, which once massacred the brothers of his faith, and at the moment of his writing had hunted him and his from their hearths—Rapin, a suffering Protestant, adopted the Puritanic prejudice, that the father and the son were really indifferent to the religious establishment of their country. Were James and Charles then indifferent to retain their crowns, and did they prefer the private interests of a minority to the universal feeling of the nation?

We have shown that the restitution of the Palatinate was the

ceaseless and tormenting burthen of the Spanish negotiation; and among the last letters still extant, which Charles the First wrote to the Prince, afterwards Charles the Second, may be found a reiterated and solemn charge to obey his mother in all things, saving in religion; on this head he was to guide himself by the English Bishop (Cousens), and the excellent council which Charles had provided for his son. The governors of Charles the Second, from his infancy, were Protestants. Charles the Second was indeed so flexibly filial, that he appears to have equally obeyed his father and mother, for on the throne he lived a Protestant, and died a Catholic. He probably acquired his Roman faith abroad, where every day he experienced the benefits of perpetual absolution.

Rapin's observation then is merely popular and superficial; nor perhaps had that diligent historian a mind sufficiently comprehensive of the nature and character of these *political marriages*; and much less of the *state-reason* or policy of the present one.

The French marriage with Henrietta Maria was the natural consequence of an entire change in the foreign relations of the English Cabinet. An alliance with France had been resolved on to balance the loss of the other great power; a marriage would doubly cement the union of interests. Whoever would ascribe it, with Rapin, to "the avarice and vanity" of James, at least must allow a great deal to the political wisdom of his "king-craft," in preferring the potent alliance with France to one with a secondary power, and of secondary powers only consisted the Reformed. What had James acquired by his marriage and alliance with Protestant Denmark? In war she was but a weak ally, but in her own troubles she hung upon the strength of England.

The nature and character of these POLITICAL MARRIAGES in our own history is a subject of some curiosity and importance. Royal marriages with us were long the results of political combinations, and the contract of marriage was nothing more than a clause in a treaty; the treaty itself being an act of political co-partnership, framed by all the fears and jealousies of the high-contracting parties. In the wooing of the crowned and conjugal pair, the ambassadors, who were the adroit match-

makers, and the grave Ministers of State, who did not forbid the banns, had no other motive than what Italian politicians term the *Ragion di Stato*. A daughter or a sister were the victims, if they are to be considered as such, whenever by their means a great political purpose could be obtained. Henry the Eighth enjoined his executors to effectuate a marriage between Edward the Sixth and Mary of Scotland. The Scots, however, being under the influence of French councils, rejected the overture. The Protestants then resolved to bring about an alliance and union by arms; and it was on this occasion that a Scottish nobleman said, "I like the marriage, but fancy not the wooing."

In that darling project of Catherine of Medicis, of uniting our Elizabeth with a prince of the royal line of France, when, after the first repulse, it was proposed by the French Court, that the Duke of Alençon should succeed his brother the Duke of Anjou, and the English ministers seemed as desirous of the arrangement as the French monarch, the King impatiently observed, "You have now only to change the name of my brother, the Duke of Anjou, and insert in its place that of my brother, the Duke of Alençon, in the articles which were agreed on; as was extremely well observed to you by my Lord the great Treasurer (Burleigh)." So simple is the style of these plotters of political marriages!

James has suffered an animadversion, because when Prince Henry died on the 6th of November, his brother Charles was offered to the Spanish Princess on the 9th. But in political marriages, it appears that not a single post is to be lost. Love neither precedes, nor accompanies, the Hymen of the *corps diplomatique*, who often waves a smoky torch over the diplomatic treaty of a political marriage.

Royal marriages are a tribute paid to the interests of the State. A Duke of Orleans is selected for a Princess of the House of Mantua, which means that France resolves to maintain her footing in Italy; or, they are the price of new projects of ambition, and as such they were considered by Napoleon, when he long vacillated between an Austrian or a Russian Arch-duchess, a political marriage on which the fate of Europe revolved! The potent monarch of Spain condescended to cross the seas to unite himself with an English Queen, and

could afterwards bend the knee to her renowned sister; and because the suppliant but haughty Castilian could not obtain a political marriage, his unsuccessful wooing was concluded, as usual, by a political war.

The double marriage of Louis the Thirteenth with Anne of Austria, the Infanta of Spain, and Madame Elizabeth of France with Philip, Prince of Spain, spread a general alarm among the Protestant states. England and Holland, by means of their respective ambassadors, strained every effort to break off this family alliance. Even some of the French Catholics had approved of the resolution of Henry the Fourth, to avoid a family connexion with the Spanish Court, already too formidable for the peace of Europe; but the policy of Mary de Medicis changed the political system after the death of the King. The double political marriage was designed by Spain to maintain the predominance of the House of Austria in Germany, and to deprive France of the confidence of her numerous Protestants.

It may, however, be a question how far these domestic unions operate upon the public interests of princes, and whether a royal marriage necessarily includes the adoption of the same system of politics. It has been sometimes insisted on that a royal marriage has no connexion with the higher interests of the state; and that the new brother or the new father are as likely to declare war against each other as against any other sovereign. In the present case, when the Protestants were alarmed at the double marriages of France and Spain, the Constable Lesdiguières assured the French Protestants, that a prince in espousing his daughter to his neighbour did not espouse his councils, and that the French monarch would never put his kingdom in flames for the pleasure of the Spanish sovereign. This principle of royal conduct seems, however, more plausible than true; for, however it be disguised, the real design of the two Cabinets at first manifested itself in these royal marriages, though circumstances afterwards occurred, as they did in the case before us, to alter the political position of the royal relatives.

A royal marriage must, in general, be considered as the confirmation, and not the cause, of a particular line of policy. It

is a public announcement of an alliance, which the supposed interests of the contracting parties have already cemented, and not an union, which is to create interests between the nations, which do not exist.

The monstrous union of our Elizabeth with the Dukes of Anjou and Alençon, made the Puritan, who wrote a book against the French marriages, and lost for it the hand which wrote it, exclaim, that "a daughter of God was united with a son of Antichrist;" while foreign Catholics said of Charles the First, when that Prince was proposed to the Infanta of Spain, and afterwards to a Princess of France, that it was the abomination of "a Heretic with a Christian;" and some in England ascribed the calamities of the present reign according to the expression of Hamon l'Estrange, as "an ireful stroke of divine justice, from his Majesty marrying a lady of misbelief."

The nature of these royal marriages, indeed, was never comprehended by the people, either at home, or abroad. The people are occasionally mystified by statesmen, but they are too impatient to inquire how the tricks of political jugglers are performed.

Even Charles the Second cheerfully submitted to a grave and tawny Princess of Portugal, repulsive in her person; and we now hold Bombay from this marriage. The overtures and proposals of the conjugal union of William the Third with the daughter of James the Second at the time were unwillingly consented to by the royal parent, and as coldly received by the Prince of Orange, yet how vast the results of this memorable union!

Of such adverse elements has been often compounded the royal alliance of persons whom nature and affection had never brought together; nor is this natural communication necessary for the designs and the ends of government; and it may be curious to observe, that such marriages are so strictly political, that whenever it has happened that they have been unexpectedly broken off, inasmuch as such rupture is the consequence of a most contrary change in the policy of both parties, they have usually terminated by a declaration of war.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE CRITICAL AND VARIABLE SITUATION OF THE ENGLISH SOVEREIGNS, WITH REGARD TO THEIR ROMAN CATHOLIC SUBJECTS.

THE difficulties which were insurmountable in the Spanish match, and which were only eluded in the French, lead to the consideration of an important subject.

I know of no historian who has yet developed the critical, and often the variable, situation of the sovereigns of England, in regard to their Roman Catholic subjects. Elizabeth was denounced by Romanist and Protestant; James and Charles, perpetually accused of sacrificing the national cause, were reproached by the Roman Catholics for deception and evasion.

To form a just conception of the state of the English Roman Catholics, we must not only view their condition at home, a picture which I have already exhibited, but we must also become acquainted with their external relations with the Continental powers.

The secret history of England may be often looked for among the great family of European Governments, and the solution of many a political enigma in our own country may be detected in the policy of foreign cabinets. It is there we find how many paradoxes are only truths unexplained; how conflicting interests have been forced to unite; and how consistency of conduct may be developed among the most contradictory schemes. Statesmen have been fascinated by a fond error, in imagining that their closet-intrigues can make permanent incompatible things, which from their very nature cannot stand together; and that the expedients, so ingeniously formed by their mutual deceptions, will avail against the eternal force of principles.

In this history, we must not at once leap from the Papistry of Mary to the Protestantism of Elizabeth; an awful interval lies between, which is lost in the perspective view of the historian.

It is asserted that the great change in religion, under Elizabeth, was carried by six votes, and passed in a single session; that "a superstitious" practice (the striking the breast with an exclamation) observed at the elevation of the Host, was abrogated only by a single vote, and that no greater majority decided on the abolishment of parts of the ceremonial. At first it was announced that no change should take place in religion till Parliament met! Affairs were best arranged when not put to a lottery of public opinion, which seemed to depend on uncertain chance. The term of transubstantiation was saved by a vague description of the elements, by which the Romanist was enabled to partake of the Sacrament with the Protestant. Of "the Supremacy in Church and State," assumed by Henry the Eighth, that eternal stumbling-block of Papistry, the bill having long been tossed to and fro in Parliament, Elizabeth softened the oath, as we are told, by her great statesman Walsingham, "Her Majesty not liking to make windows into men's hearts and secret thoughts, except the abundance did overflow into overt acts, impeaching her Majesty's supreme power by maintaining a foreign jurisdiction."* That is, her Majesty wisely resolved to maintain her supremacy, though in the oath "she removed the hardness of the name and appellation of supreme head." In politics the name is often yielded while the thing is preserved.

The Queen dreaded what she foresaw would occur, controversies and contentions; and to prevent these, she inhibited all preaching, both by Papist and Protestant. She even expressed her displeasure when the late exiles of Protestantism attempted to exercise their ministry—and, as honest Strype truly observes, "thus even and impartially did the State carry it to both parties." During forty years' continuance, every project was tried to reconcile the Papist to what was called "the new Religion," and in that dawn of religious controversy great results were expected from "the force of truth." But a Protestant writer has told us, that, by this means, many true Protestants were lost.†

On the accession of Elizabeth, the Romanists were so numerous, that one of their English historians asserts that they

* Cabala, p. 407.

† Hamon l'Estrange, "The Observator Observed," p. 28.

formed two-thirds of the nation. Possibly at a particular period they might have reached to this number, for the great body of the people were always to be reconverted to the religion of their new sovereign, and the multitude, stupified by the changeful times, seem to have passed as easily from the accommodating Protestantism of "the child-king," to the heated papistry of the bigot Mary, as to the mingled settlement of the virgin reign. Elizabeth herself, half Protestant and half Catholic, was the true representative of her own people. She deemed it advisable, that a Roman Catholic bishop should place the crown on her head, and in her royal councils, Catholics were mixed with anti-Catholics. The Queen, from the first, looked forward to that conformity in the national religion, which to enforce afterwards, caused the despair of our statesmen, and the unhappiness of the people.

The Romanist still entered the same church with the new religionist. Elizabeth, herself a lover of stately magnificence, still lingered amidst the grandeurs of the pontifical rites and ceremonies. Her feminine eye had been allured by the snowy alb, the flowing amice, and the gorgeous stole, and her imagination had yielded to the sculpture and the painting—to her, yet hallowed accessories to devotion! A crucifix, pale in the light of tapers, consecrated her chapel, as long as it was—legal, and it was some time before the Queen would consent to degrade the Image or the Picture into "superstition"—by Act of Parliament! So obscure, so cautious, and so undetermined were the first steps to withdraw from the ancient Papistical customs, that Elizabeth would not forgive a bishop for marrying; and auricular confession, however condemned as a point of Popery, was still adhered to by many. Bishop Andrews would loiter in the aisles of Paul's to afford his spiritual comfort to the unburtheners of their conscience.*

But Elizabeth had to rule over those terrible men with all their dark hatreds—political theologians; many of whom were Papists, or Puritans, as Walsingham expresses it, "not so much in conscience as in faction."

* This last remains of Popery may still be traced among us; for since the days of our Eighth Henry, the place of Confessor to the royal household has never been abolished.

The English exiles, who had flown to the Reformed of Switzerland during the Marian persecution, many of whom had imbibed the republican notions of the petty Presbytery of Geneva, were now urging the Queen to what they called "a thorough reformation," a favourite term with all rising parties, but always ambiguous; and, in the present instance, most perilous to the balancing and cautious wisdom of the royal councils. At that crisis, between Romanism and Protestantism, England might have bled through all her veins; a spirit more exterminating than that of her civil wars, was on the watch to be let loose among the people; for a war of religion breathes a more terrible inspiration than the decaying interests of political parties, whose contests are but temporary, and whose passions at least are mortal.

What was passing among the people at these critical times, we gather from the letters of Bishop Jewell, the famous author of "The Apology for the Church of England." This venerable Protestant was so disgusted at the lenient measures pursued by the Queen, and so dubious of the awful issue, that in despair he threatened to return to his former exile at Zurich. He did not find our "insular" people at first so Protestant as he had imagined; the clergy, for the most part, were Papistical, and the brutish and indifferent multitude had not yet had sufficient time to recover from a reign of terror; but the people remain always the people, and their torpid natures are ever to be acted on by some happy artifice. A petty incident in the great history of the Reformation seems to have accelerated its impulse among the humbler classes of society. Psalm-singing, which had already spread with such popular success in Switzerland, was introduced into our churches; and when three or four hundred persons joined in chorus, the new religion excited more sympathy; at length, when "the boys in the street spat upon the priests," Jewell puts off his return to Zurich, and exults in the improved state of the Reformation.

But when the "monuments of antiquity," were defaced, and the parish crucifix was dragged by those who had worshipped before it, to kindle a new fire in Smithfield, in vengeful memory for other fires which had there been lit; though Elizabeth punished the rioters, yet then many Romanists took a sad

farewell of their father-land—the horror of heresy was gathering round. Divided power was scorned equally by the implacable haughtiness of the Roman Pontiff, and the vindictive spirit of his former victims. The Romanist and the Reformed could only meet for mutual annihilation.

Now rolled the thunders of the Vatican. Pius the Fifth, blessed with the spirit of St. Dominic, the great Extirpator of Heresy, anathematised the English Queen, and delivered her dominions to Mary of Scotland. The joyful martyr, who in open day affixed the Bull of Excommunication at the gate of the Bishop of London, was executed as an English traitor. "A pious conspiracy," as the Catholic historian terms an attempted insurrection in the North, was to have been aided by the Spaniards of Alva in the Netherlands. Whenever a party rushes to an extremity, the opposite interest either sinks in its weakness, or establishes itself in its strength. This very rebellion partly purged the ill-humours of the realm, observed the statesman, Walsingham. The Bishop of Rome now discovered his inept infallibility, and perhaps regretted his impolitic impatience. In order to repair the irreparable breach, both himself and his successors granted a dispensation to their English Romanists, to allow them to show outward obedience to the Queen—till a happier opportunity! But the Catholic politics and the Catholic faith of Rome had betrayed their immutable nature.

Thus, a single blow for ever separated Englishmen from Englishmen: Papist and Protestant now became distinctive names. In the fashion of that day, the rising religion called themselves, in glory, "Gospellers," and their adversaries, in contempt, "Papelins." In the ascending scale of the *odium theologicum*, the more odious designation of *Recusant* at length branded the Romanist; though it had anciently been confined to those disturbers of the public repose, who refused to acknowledge all legitimate authority. The papal supremacy was treason against the native sovereign.

The anathema of Rome deprived the English Queen of the loyalty of a considerable part of her subjects, while it inflamed the passions of a new party, who themselves had become protesters against "the good Protestants of Elizabeth," as the first

moderate Reformers attached to the hierarchy were afterwards distinguished in the succeeding reign. At this crisis, the tempered wisdom of the Queen saved the nation. She maintained her shaken throne, as a Queen of Protestants.

Thus early sprung the critical difficulties of our sovereigns. Now religion was running into factions, conscience inspiring acts of treason; and the missionary of Rome, or the Presbyter of Geneva, the Jesuit, or the Mar-Prelate, were fired by the same ambition of predominance. Roman Catholic and Protestant writers are still discussing whether the victims of the State under Elizabeth and James perished as martyrs for their faith, or as traitors to the Government; and the same difficult distinction occurs in the history of Catholic France. Louis the Thirteenth insisted that he did not war with and persecute the French Reformed for their religion as they imagined, but for their rebellion. It is the philosopher alone, who has discovered that monster in politics, whose hermaphrodite condition he has called "political religionism."*

In the darkness of the Court of Rome, one prolonged dream hovered about the Tiara—it was the conquest of England by invasion; or a scheme more consonant to the subtle genius of Italian policy—the rule over England by intrigue. Clement the Eighth, unlike the profound Sixtus the Fifth, imagined that there was no insurmountable difficulty to the vicegerent of Heaven gathering once more his Annates in the lost island. The busy spirits of Cardinal Allen, of Father Parsons, and other expatriated Romanists, were most active after the failure of the Spanish Armada, and still later, when the Father, one of the most political heads in Europe, ineffectually laboured to secure James on the Roman side. After the failure of the invasion, it was the great object of Father Parsons and his party to exclude James from the English crown in favour of the Infanta of Spain or the Duke of Parma. This great political Jesuit repeatedly declared, that the possession of the throne was a matter of perfect indifference, provided that the possessor were a Catholic—leaving to the princes who were interested in

* See an article on that subject in the second series of *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. ii.

the settlement of this crown, to appoint among themselves the English sovereign.*

This settlement, however, could not have been accomplished with all the facility which in their Papal fascination was imagined by these able English agents of the Court of Rome. The verse of Virgil had separated the isle of Britain from the world, when Rome, as it seemed to the Roman, was the whole universe; but in the vast revolutions of time the solitary island had become the arbitrator of dominion. The two potent monarchies of Spain and France, amid their rival jealousies, courted the insular sovereign as their mistress; and the alliance of England was a casting weight in the government of the world. By its locality, as much as by the power of its ruler, England had protected Europe from the universal monarchy of Spain, as long afterwards Anne did from the universal monarchy of France; a glorious office, the inheritance of the English nation, whose title, as the protector of the freedom of Europe, has been confirmed by the great captain of our days.

Yet, with all our physical force, and all the wisdom of our councils, which extorted the admiration of that great statesman, Cardinal d'Ossat;† which were confessed by the Spanish secretary of state, Antonio Perez;‡ and admitted by the official writer in the *Mercure François*;§ in our own country the

* The Rev. Charles Plowden, p. 151, on Berington's Panzani. See for a further account of Father Parsons, AMENITIES OF LITERATURE, on "the First Jesuits in England."

† Cardinal d'Ossat, when he saw James the First quietly ascend the English throne, without the interposition of foreign powers, which they flattered themselves the English would have called in on this occasion, writes, "The people of this island have shown that they know how to settle their own affairs, and that in the surest way; and those out of doors (*ceux de dehors*) are very much mistaken in their designs and their hopes; particularly the Spaniards," adds our French ambassador, "who, though most vexed at this event, will be among the first to get over the King of Scotland on their side, if you do not prevent it."—*Lettres*, vol. v. 254.

‡ Antonio Perez, in sending a book to the Earl of Essex, in a Latin letter, alluding to a passage in that volume, observed, "What is here said of the equilibrium of France and Spain, and of England being the balancer of Europe, while those two kingdoms are the scales, is not to be lightly treated by any prudent observer." The original may be found in *Obras de Antonio Perez*, p. 693.

§ *Mercure François*, 1626, p. 891. "The most powerful Crown in Christendom, after those of France and Spain, is that of Great Britain; and it is indeed of such

Catholic interest was still active, and the English Romanists were still looking to their allies on the Continent.

A knowledge of the secret policy of the Court of Rome we acquire from a conversation of the French ambassador, Cardinal d'Ossat, with the Pope, Clement the Eighth. The Frenchman, dreading the subjugation of England by Spain, brought forwards all the difficulties of a projected invasion, reminding his Holiness of the former discomfiture of the Spaniards. To quiet the alarm of the French ambassador, his Holiness opened a different project; and to allay the rival jealousies of the two powerful monarchies, Clement the Eighth proposed that a third monarch should be placed on the English throne, who should be their mutual friend. Should this arrangement fail, a partition of England between France and Spain would equally serve the purpose, as his Holiness exemplified by that partition of Naples which the combined nations had effectuated in the time of Louis the Twelfth.* We have witnessed, in our own times, this political artifice of partitioning a great kingdom, and sacrificing the independence of one nation to the coalition of injustice and rapacity.

The machinations of the Papal Cabinet were more numerous than appear on public records. Mary of Scotland was long the sustaining hope of France, of Spain, and of Rome; and her political immolation was a martyrdom of Catholicism. In the Roman scheme of subjugation, they had seated on the throne of England the phantom of an Italian cardinal, who by a dispensation was to marry the hapless Arabella Stuart. They continued to dispute even the claims of the son of Mary to the English crown. A pope had also fixed on one of his courtiers to be the King of Ireland. Such were the dreams of the Roman Pontiff!

The day that the royal anathema was nailed on the Episcopal gate at London, may serve as the date for a new æra in modern history—the establishment of the civil liberties of Europe; and the martyred slave of passive obedience, who perished as an English traitor, sealed with his blood the emancipation of his

consequence, that it can give a predominance to either of those two Crowns to which it may choose to unite itself, to the great prejudice of the other."

* Cardinal d'Ossat's *Lettres*, ii. 363.

fellow-countrymen from the supremacy and the despotism of Rome.

From that day, England was politically separated from her potent neighbours; and this novel state of affairs was productive of some phenomena in history which have not always admitted of explanation.

The great monarchies of Europe were Papistical, and the proscribed sovereign of England had to open new principles of conduct—to raise up new interests—and while on the Continent the balance of power long preponderated against the advocates of civil and religious freedom, the policy of England was to ally herself with the secondary governments of the Christian world, and to sustain the weakness of the Reformed, who flew for aid to the only formidable power in Europe who could be their protector.

Although the distinctive titles were not yet assumed, which in the progress of time were adopted; the secret springs which now were moving the Cabinets of Europe, and which were to raise such continued intrigues—act by such mysterious motives—and show themselves by such contradictory measures, at home as well as abroad, were the ROMAN CATHOLIC and the PROTESTANT CAUSE.

We long stood alone in Europe, and often the object of the systematic intrigues of the Papal Court. In a confidential letter, which was lately read at the Society of Antiquaries, Lord Leicester, in the reign of Elizabeth, describing the state of public affairs, impresses the urgent necessity of a close and common union among themselves; for at this moment they stood unconnected with any one of the great Continental powers, who are all Catholics. The whole letter offers a striking evidence of the unsettled state of home affairs; and the solitary existence of England, left to herself among the great governments of Europe.

In England the Catholic interest was as an under-current, working its dark and silent passage against the mightier stream; and abroad the Protestant cause was at times in the most imminent peril. What could be the consequence of this cruel condition, which placed our friends among their enemies, and held our enemies within ourselves? The state policy of the

English Cabinet, and of the Cabinets of the Romanists, became uniform, for it consisted in secretly aiding their own parties in foreign lands. The Papal Court, and its allies of France and of Spain, fostered the vain hopes of, or silently acquiesced in, the conspiracies against heretical princes by their own Catholic subjects. On our side, we had to sustain the minority of mankind in Europe against their masters. This perpetual reaction throughout Europe between Catholics and Protestants may be often traced in our own history; yet the true springs of action were rarely revealed to contemporaries, although by some they seem to have been obscurely surmised. Old Camden observed, that the Papists were ever most busied in fermenting divisions at home whenever the nation was attacked from abroad.

In this unhappy condition, long were the Papists under the government of the Reformed, and the Protestants in the dominion of the Catholic, dangerous subjects. History abounds with their intrigues, their conspiracies, and their mutual persecutions. From the days of Elizabeth we had to aid, openly or covertly, the oppressed or the rebellious Protestants of France; and that infant republic in the Spanish Netherlands, whose glorious emancipation forms one of the most interesting revolutions in modern history. In a large correspondence which I have turned over of Charles the Ninth of France with his ambassador at London, I discovered reiterated complaints of the insidious conduct of our Elizabeth, who, at the moment she was professing the most sisterly love, was in fact secretly aiding the French Huguenots; but it must also be confessed, that Charles, on his side, was not more innocent; for his close and secret correspondence with the Scotch, by his active agents, might have furnished an ample recrimination to the English Queen. The same conduct may be observed in the political relations of England and Spain. In 1585, while we were yet at peace with that potent monarchy, Philip was actively fomenting the insurrection in Ireland, and Elizabeth not less earnestly assisting in the formation of a republic in the Spanish Netherlands. The political system of aiding Protestants who were the subjects of a foreign prince, became a case of conscience with the pacific and casuistical James the First, with whose high notions of divine right ill accorded an alliance with insur-

gents or rebels. It was a question with him, "How far a Christian and Protestant king may concur to assist his neighbours to shake off their obedience to their own sovereign?" In what manner this delicate point was resolved by the casuistry of Archbishop Abbot is not material; the ministers of James, or the gunpowder of the Catholics, might have speedily settled this case of conscience. Charles the First, who entered into a bolder system of politics than his father, eagerly adopted the cause of the Duke of Rohan at the head of the Huguenots of France. This indeed was an English and a Protestant interest; but it provoked a potent enemy. This interference of the English sovereign in the civil wars of France was afterwards avenged by the great and implacable Cardinal, who, patient and watchful through a series of fifteen years, was silently active in his dark intrigues with the Scots, till he worked them into open revolt;—and the vengeance of this great statesman was at least a secondary cause of the destruction of Charles the First. The open scene in which the *Catholic and Protestant interests* assumed a palpable form, was the memorable war which so long disturbed Europe with the groans of Germany. It was in one continued battle of thirty years,—such these awful and protracted conflicts may be deemed,—that the *Evangelical Union* finally liberated itself from the *Catholic League*;—for by these undisguised names they are recognised in history.

It was, however, by a fortunate accident, the state policy of France, and its jealousies and fears of the House of Austria, that the foreign Reformed saved their independence; as formerly in their outset, it is considered that Charles the Fifth, from a similar political jealousy of the power of his own German princes, to balance contending interests, silently acquiesced in the growth of his heretics. The Emperor spared the monk Luther from the seduction of a cardinal's purple. France, who had ever been the persecutor of the Reformed, now, to keep down Austria and to wrestle with Spain, raised up an intermediate power, by confederating with the Protestant princes. The councils of her statesmen were allowed to prevail over those of her ecclesiastics. Kings are more tender of their sovereignty than of their religion. For France, the predominance of Austria or Spain was an immediate danger; but points of faith may

be safely adjourned. The security of empire would necessarily include the security of religion.

Had France confederated with the other great Catholic powers, the Reformation, and with it the cause of political independence and civil freedom, had possibly sunk into an obscure schism. Spain and Italy have shown the astonished world how human opinion can be walled out by the frontiers of a spurious faith. The foreign Reformed might have been left without a single independent State, and without a sanctuary for refuge, save the solitary island to which they would in vain have turned their eyes. Thus, the Protestants owe their political existence possibly to the aid of that France, which afterwards expelled her children of heresy from their hearths.

Those only who have read the letters of the times can form any adequate notion of the agonising and universal interest which pervaded the English people at every advance or retreat of the Austrian Tilly, the Danish Christern, and the Swedish Gustavus—the fate of Protestantism, in the battle of Lutzen, hung on the thread of victory; but the victory itself brought no consolation for the loss of “the Liberator and Deliverer of Germany,” for the fears of the Reformed survived their victory many succeeding years.

At this period, the critical difficulties of our sovereign arose from two causes. First, from the refusal of the English Romanists to take the oath of allegiance to their native sovereign—and, secondly, from the vacillating conduct of the English monarchs in their occasional suspension, or occasional enforcement of the utmost severity of the penal laws against the Catholics.

The Pope who succeeded the excommunicator of Elizabeth, guided by the same invariable principle, admonished his English flock to refuse the oath of allegiance to her successor—“for the salvation of their souls.” Here many affected to treat this brief lightly, as not emanating from his own will,—but a second ratified the irrevocable fiat; and those who had taken the oath of allegiance were held infamous by their own party. This conduct of Paul the Fifth opened a source of misery to the English Romanists, and to their sovereigns. Charles the First conceded to his Catholics that he would not press their

acknowledgment of him as supreme head of the Ecclesiastical state, but this monarch could never be convinced that his English Catholics should refuse that oath of allegiance, which merely bound the subject to his sovereign; it was a pledge for civil, and not for religious purposes. But in the spiritual government, the monarchy of the earth was not the least of its prerogatives. The oath of allegiance, which had originated in the gunpowder plot, necessarily included an unequivocal disavowal of the *deposing power* of the Pope; an inviolable doctrine bound up with the Papacy, by which "the Servant of the Servants of God" remained the real, though not the ostensible, sovereign of his English slaves.

Hence all the sufferings of the Romanists of England! Whenever it became necessary to tender the oath of allegiance, and whenever it was conscientiously refused, the consequence, as a Catholic feelingly observed, was "worse than excommunication." Of such undefinable horror is composed a premunire which they incurred. Pursuivants, or King's Messengers, might at all times enter the abodes of Catholics; children might seize on the property of their parents; all the charities of life were denied the proscribed Papist.

The Romanists in the days of Charles the First were divided in opinion respecting the oath of allegiance; some offering vague arguments and subtile corollaries, which tended to separate the temporal from the spiritual dominion of the Roman Pontiff; but what seemed perfect logic at London, was rank heresy at Rome. The great body of the Romanists in England disdained the subterfuge. Panzani sympathising with the English monarch, whose forbearance he acknowledged, and compassionating his brothers, whose interminable sufferings he foresaw, suggested a conciliatory modification of the oath of allegiance.

This enlightened, at least this humane, agent of the Romish see, was sentenced to eternal silence, and was soon recalled by his Court. Such is the immutable despotism of the Papacy! and fervent as we are at this day to alleviate these sufferings of our fellow-countrymen, have we found that these cruel exigencies form but a vanished tale? The insurmountable difficulties seem still to be lying before us. Like the hero of antiquity we

are combating in darkness, and against an Immortal.* We have witnessed, but yesterday, the principles and the conduct of the two parties among the English Romanists;—the one, wholly papal from ancient days, have surrendered to the chair of St. Peter the heavens and the earth; the other would throw into speculative doubt the secular jurisdiction of their spiritual sovereign. We have seen how, in their attempts to win over their brothers, they have cast themselves into inextricable confusion; a protestation drawn up by their own hand, with some names subscribed and deposited in our national library, has only encountered other protests; has been refused signatures, and the faithless instrument has even been called for by some to retract their own subscriptions.†

It is remarkable that these two parties of Romanists are nowhere to be discovered, but among Protestants. It is in a land of Protestants, that the Romanist elevates his tone, advocates the freedom of mankind, and eloquently cries for toleration. James the Second, who suffered the martyrdom of a kingdom for his Romish creed, eagerly sought to remove all tests from the Dissenters; ‡ but in a land of Romanists, the soil has been kept sacred from polluters.§ Toleration is a term which the

* A Jesuit inclining to the liberal feelings of Panzani, and therefore in odium with the Society, Father Blackloe (or Mr. White) has expressed himself with the utmost force of words, on the *Pope's infallibility*. "It were a less crime to violate a maid upon an altar, than to settle amongst us the belief of the Pope's infallibility." Our Jesuit has branded the doctrine of *opus operatum* with the censure of *pagan superstition, hypocritical witchcraft*. Further he writes, "Mr. Montague and others are sending to Rome for his Holiness's Bulls, to beat English calves." He tells Sir Kenelm Digby what doubtless he would still have repeated: "*Our clergy are fools, not worth the pains you take for them; they will never dare to act without a Breve from Rome.*"

† This chapter was written in 1828, before the Act for the Emancipation of the Roman Catholics had passed the British Legislature.

‡ When James the Second put out a declaration for liberty of conscience, in which he was sure that all Nonconformists would join with him, Baron Wallop, famous for his repartees, said, "All this is but scaffolding; he intends to build another House (Popery), and when that House is built, he will take down his scaffold."—*Dr. H. Sampson's Diary*, MS.

§ It is rather a curious fact, that the Roman Catholics themselves have been alarmed at the tyranny which the Protestants would exercise over them, as much as the Protestants have been frightened at their persecutors. Guy Patin has conjured up this phantom of dreaded retribution. "All the Huguenots of Europe will

very Roman Catholic lexicographers never admitted into their dictionaries, and which they dare not explain.*

As Charles the First only required from the Romanists a political or civil oath of allegiance as their sovereign, in refusing this, they incapacitated themselves from becoming his subjects. The monarch and his cabinet were, therefore, anxiously concerting measures with his party, and protecting these Roman Catholics. Both sides were straining to reconcile the most repulsive difficulties.

We are now to open some extraordinary incidents which seemed equally inexplicable and alarming to contemporaries, and which many still consider as no doubtful evidence of the concealed disposition to Popery of Charles the First.

The celebrity of the Jesuits, and the favouritism they enjoyed with the Roman Pontiff, had awakened the complaints and jealousies of the secular priests: and between the Jesuits and their foreign principles, and these priests of English birth, who, though they were rigid Roman Catholics, cherished the feelings of Englishmen, existed irreconcilable hatreds.

The hopeless reunion of the two churches, the real source of all James's compliances and arts, was still the fatal seduction of the ministers of Charles. Like James, Laud would probably have acknowledged the Church of Rome to be the mother-church, provided she would have owned her daughter. The loyalty and allegiance of his own Catholics only was required by the sovereign. What else could he want from the Court of Rome?

This reunion was often discussed, and great indulgences were granted to the pacifying priests. The Queen's confessor, Father Philip, was for softening and smoothing, and even altering some

one day agree together, and occasion a general revolt under the name of Religion; particularly whenever they shall have for their chief an enterprising genius like that of the King of Sweden—Charles the Twelfth. If these people get the upper hand of us, they will treat us savagely, very different from what we do them. They will not suffer us to hold our mass. The Huguenots are dangerous politicians, as has been lately shown in England and in France." Such at least was the opinion of that day.

* See the last edition of the *Dictionnaire de Trevoux*, 1771—"Tolerance is a word getting into use. It is the weak who raise such outeries for Toleration."—*Curiosities of Literature*, second series, ii. 397.

insurmountable points; Panzani was desirous of assisting in this work of amity; and on this system of reconciliation several books were published by the priests. Charles had long been prepared to trust to this chimerical project; for James was disposed to treat some of the Roman doctrines—their transubstantiation, invocation of saints, and tenets of similar concoction, merely as “scholastic questions,” as he termed them in one of his speeches. But the whole fabric of Roman superstitions stands, as it were, like witchcraft; and would the Thaumaturgus throw open his mystical bulwarks, that the creeping spirit of Protestantism might, with a Judas-kiss, plant its revolutionary standard there?

Charles the First was particularly pleased with a work of Franciscus à Sancta Clara, a Franciscan friar, alias Father Davenport: it was designed to bend the Roman Catholic system as nearly as it could to the Protestant. But, however it gratified the English monarch, at Rome it was immediately condemned, and the writer summoned to appear before a tribunal, where to appear is to be guilty. Father Philip incessantly interceded with the Papal Cabinet to forbear rigorous proceedings against Davenport, who, while he was a favourite with the English Court and the learned, at the same time professed perfect obedience to the Papal decisions. The book was condemned, but the censure was not published, and the writer’s excuse of personal infirmity was accepted for the journey to Rome.

But what the intolerant genius of Rome deemed of the tendency of this work, so grateful to Charles and Laud, appears in one of those numerous passages in the manuscript copy of Panzani’s Memoirs, which the editor has suppressed in the printed volume. “This work in Rome was thought very dangerous, because it laboured to accord together the same English schismatical Church with the Roman Catholic; that is to say, Hell with Heaven; or rather, as the English Catholics used to say, the author would join together Christ with Luther.”

Another edition came forth. The Jesuits, enraged at this new offence, instantly published the censure it lay under at Rome. Davenport apologised, declaring that the new edition had appeared without his consent, and submitted himself entirely to the decision of his Holiness. However, the Franciscan would

not trust himself with his Italian sovereign, while he reposed under the protection of his English monarch.

The fact, however, of the condemnation of the book could no longer be concealed from the King, while another work by Father Courtenay, which Rome had highly approved, asserted the Pope's deposing power. Charles was so deeply irritated, that Panzani found that it was scarcely in the Queen's power to pacify the English monarch respecting these artful proceedings of the Roman Pontiff.

To me it is evident, although I do not find the fact noticed by former historians, that Government secretly patronised these English priests, who in this country were assiduously employed in emancipating the Roman Catholics from their temporal slavery to the Court of Rome. These priests looked up to the English Court for protection from their implacable enemies the Jesuits.*

An extraordinary incident occurred, which at the time alarmed the English public, and apparently sanctioned the prevalent notion of Charles's devotion to Rome.

In the prison of the Clink, several priests had long found an asylum. Some who had been condemned to imprisonment for the space of sixteen years (since the gunpowder treason), and had been discharged more than seven years, still voluntarily remained in prison. By some officious informer, the Marshal of Middlesex was urged to obtain a warrant from the Attorney-General to search the Clink, "to seize all Popish and superstitious matters." A very extraordinary scene was now exhibited.

The Marshal discovered a number of priests who were attended by men and women servants. One Father Preston occupied a range of three or four apartments, part of the Bishop of Winchester's house, forming a large library, "supposed to be worth two thousand pounds at least," and described "with shelves like a bookseller's shop." There he found also altars ready furnished for mass, rich crucifixes, chalices of silver and of gold, bags of money unopened, and abundance of manuscripts. In the

* See two letters of Father Leander to the Secretary of Windebank, descriptive of their situation.—Clarendon State Papers, i. 106—128.

apartments of one Father Cannon, among similar things, particularly "his holy water, which he instantly cast out into the chimney," there was a small collection of pictures, a crucifixion, a Magdalen, all of high price. What seemed remarkable, there were pictures of Queen Elizabeth, King James, and King Charles—"the taking of the pictures did exceedingly move the priests to impatience." There was a portrait of an old priest, named Collington, of whom Cannon affirmed, in his scoffing manner, "that that man's beard had done King James more hurt than an army of ten thousand men could have done." Other chambers were stored with similar objects, abundance of books, great wealth, boxes of oil for extreme unction, "much trash with plenty of church stuff."

On the first assault of the Marshal, the priests were melancholy and thoughtful; and while the Marshal was so busily occupied in locking up the apartments, or in breaking into them, the priests seemed only anxious to convey a notice of their situation to the Archbishop; and when they heard that their message had reached his Grace, they suddenly expressed their joy, that now nothing would be suffered to be removed away. "And it came to pass accordingly," says the Marshal in his report. "For having locked up stores of wealth in various apartments, and while we were in full search in the third chamber, a countermand was brought from the Archbishop and the Attorney-General, and the Marshal and his men forbidden to take away as much as a paper."*

This scene is somewhat strange, and exhibits several mysterious circumstances.

It is evident, whoever these English priests might be, and there were others in the same predicament in other prisons, that they considered themselves tenants for life. They accepted even a voluntary imprisonment; they turned their prison into a monastery, and their labours were their studies—their large libraries, their catalogues of books priced, their great wealth, their rich church-ornaments, and every object about them, indicated that they were neither obscure nor forgotten. They could not be disloyal subjects, for Father Cannon had dis-

* Rushworth, i. 240.

covered in his pictures, not only curiosity of taste, but curiosity of loyalty; for he would not have collected a series of the portraits of our English monarchs, had he looked on them with the eyes of a Jesuit.

We are let into the secret history of these priests by the letter which the Archbishop (Abbot) wrote to the Attorney-General on the Marshal's seizure and disturbance of this nest of priests.

“GOOD MR. ATTORNEY,

“I thank you for acquainting me what was done yesterday at the Clink; but I am of opinion, that if you had curiously inquired upon the gentleman who gave the information, you should have found him to be a disciple of the Jesuits; for they do nothing but put tricks on these poor men, who do live more miserable lives than if they were in the Inquisition in many parts beyond the sea.

“By taking the oath of allegiance, and writing in defence of it, and opening some points of high consequence, they have so displeased the Pope, that if by any cunning they could catch them, they are sure to be burnt or strangled for it. And once there was a plot to have taken Preston as he passed the Thames, and to have shipped him into a bigger vessel, and so to have transported him into Flanders, there to have made a martyr of him.* In respect of these things, King James always gave his protection to Preston and Warrington, as may be easily shown. Cannon is an old man well-affected to the cause, but meddleth not with any factions or seditions.

“They complain their books were taken from them, and a

* Father Preston was the great champion for the oath of allegiance, and wrote several books in its defence, in answer to Bellarmine, Suarez, &c., under the name of Roger Widdrington. He was a learned Benedictine, and missionary in the reign of James and Charles. He stood out long against the intreaties of his friends, and the menaces of Rome; but after this firm and even successful resistance having prevailed with many, both clergy and regular, to join with him, I find that this able champion in so noble a cause, Englishman as he was, surrendered all his rights and his understanding to despotic Rome! How, therefore, could a Protestant, for a moment, depend on the conviction of a Romanist, since the firmest advocates for tendering allegiance to their English sovereign, in the face of their own arguments, and against the very oaths they have offered, were backsliders into the supernatural darkness of the Roman cavern.—*Dodd's Church History*, ii. 420.

crucifix of gold, with some other things, which, I hope, are not carried out of the house, but may be restored again unto them; for it is in vain to think that priests will be without their beads or pictures, models of their saints; and it is not improbable that before a crucifix they do often say their prayers.

“ I leave the things to your best consideration, and hope that this deed of yours, together with my word, will restrain them for giving offence hereafter, if so be that lately they did give any. I heartily recommend me unto you, and so rest

“ Your loving friend,

G. CANT.”

We have now an idea of the real occupation of these priests, and the necessity of their voluntary confinement, for their own personal safety. Their object was to emancipate their fellow Romanists from their foreign despotism; they were in heart, or at least in outward appearance, true-born Englishmen; but they were not the less Roman Catholics; and while the series of the collected portraits of the English monarchs marks their patriotic feeling, the flout of old Father Cannon, “that Collington’s beard had done James the First more damage than an army of ten thousand men,” shows that though ready to acknowledge the English monarch as his sovereign, the priest held but lightly his skill in divinity.

The ignoble means practised by the Papal Court to silence their refractory subjects, is not exaggerated by the Archbishop. The historian of the Roman Catholics himself notices the fate of an unfortunate Benedictine, who, having written against the temporal power of the Pope and the loose casuistry of the Jesuits, was decoyed abroad, and confined for twenty years a prisoner at Rome.* That implacable tribunal could not even forgive the miserable apostate who returned to its bosom; for while it pardoned, it pronounced his death, as appeared by the mysterious fate of the Archbishop of Spalatro, who was lured to quit England, and to expiate his apostasy at Rome. The more modern fate of the great historian of Naples, whose learned genius dared to investigate the sources of the ecclesiastical power, attests that power’s unrelenting intolerance. Giannone, enticed from his

* Dodd’s Church History, iii. 101.

retreat in a neutral dominion, betrayed, and cast into a tower, in the tenderness of Papal mercy was suffered to pine away in solitude.

We have now ascertained the design of Charles the First and his minister in their intercourse and protection of that small party of the English Roman Catholics who would not refuse their oath of allegiance to their native sovereign, and who occupied themselves in writing books to enlighten their fellow Romanists. Their little success attests the desperate cause they advocated. The result of this temporising spirit of the English Government, which we have with some pains developed, was at the time to renew the jealousies of their own people, and finally to leave their own character in history doubtful and ambiguous.

It is said that Charles the First, in the course of his reign, discharged more than eleven thousand priests. They were sent to prison by shoals, and regularly every year great numbers were liberated by privy seal. This appeared very strange to the public. A statute of Elizabeth, confirmed by James, had declared that all natural subjects in priest's orders, by the authority of the Roman See, were traitors, and were condemned for execution. It was considered by Parliament, in 1640, that Charles the First was censurably remiss in not hanging all these priests; and the King's conduct on that occasion discovers his perplexity.

One John Goodman, convicted of being a Romish priest, was condemned, but reprieved by the King; on this reprieve the Commons hold a conference with the Lords, and petition for his execution. The King, in his answer, observed that when the Recorder had attended on him, as usual, with the names and crimes of convicts, he had found that Goodman had been condemned for being in priest's orders; but that he had been acquitted of perverting the people in their belief. Tender of blood in cases of conscience, the King considered that such a man was fitter to be banished or imprisoned. This produced a remonstrance, urging the justice of the law.* A deputation of the Houses waited on the King; when one of the King's arguments was, that "Elizabeth and James did never avow that any

* Rushworth, iv. 158.

priest in their time was executed merely for religion." The King however (it was in 1640) declares that since he is pressed for execution, he would not discontent the people, and he wholly remits the prisoner to the mercy of both Houses; but he adds, "I desire ye to take into consideration the inconveniences which may on this occasion fall on my subjects and other Protestants abroad, since it may seem to other States to be a severity. I have told you this, and now think myself discharged from all ill consequences that may ensue from the execution of this priest."

The royal answer was received with humming, as Baillie informs us; and this mark of their approbation attests that the majority of the members were not yet perfectly trained up for mere party purposes.

In this dilemma, the noble conduct of the unhappy convict himself appears to have relieved both parties. Goodman petitioned to be executed, that "he might not live the subject of so great discontent in your people against your Majesty. If this storm be raised for my sake, let me be cast into the sea, that others may avoid the tempest: my blood will be well shed to cement the breach between your Majesty and your subjects on this occasion." This magnanimous offer of his life seemed to have disarmed the Commons, for nothing more occurred about this priest.

On this case, I must observe on two historians. Even Mr. Brodie alludes to "the intolerance of the Commons," and would apologise for it, by insinuating that the secret motive of persecuting this priest after the reprieve was the fear of the rising party in the Commons, "lest the suspension of the law in the case of Goodman should pave the way for the pardon of Strafford." It must be confessed, that he here makes our patriots astute pupils in the school of Machiavel; for with this motive we must suppose them to have preconcerted their plans, and taken long views of their future operations. The Presbyter Neale, in composing his own history of the sufferings of Non-conformity, one might have imagined, would have felt a more tolerant spirit; yet he not only asserts that it was strange in Charles to allege that Elizabeth and James did not hang men for being Papists, since many were executed for denying the

Supremacy, &c., but, without any reserve, he condemns the King for not hanging the priests; and he has favoured us with the secret motive of the unhappy monarch. "Such was his Majesty's attachment to *this people*, to the apparent hazard of the Protestant religion, and the peace of the kingdom." Such are the passionate historians of party! They take up the vulgar impressions of the great objects of their inquiries when these are convenient, and rarely view them as statesmen, and much less as philosophers. Charles's hint of the probable retaliation abroad had, no doubt, raised the "humming" of the wiser members.

A year afterwards, however, the same principle was acted on, and terminated in the same result. The scene, however, was on a wider scale, for in one week they petitioned to have seven priests hanged.

At this moment, in December, 1641, Charles was still more subdued, while the patriotic party was still more popular. The King did not, however, alter his conduct, which finally produced the same result. The recent Irish massacre had embittered the spirit of the Commons, and offers some excuse for their unworthy persecution of seven miserable men.

Seven priests were convicted in one week, and, as usual, reprieved by the King, who, in a message to the House, informed them that the French ambassador had interceded to have their sentence changed into banishment. The Commons desire the concurrence of the Lords to hang five of the seven priests; and the Lords confer with them to learn the curious reason why five should be executed and two saved? I do not find the reason recorded. If it were on any principle of mercy, it lost that virtue in its progress; for I find the House petitioning to hang without exception. The King replied, that if the Houses would consent, he would banish these seven priests; and as they returned no answer, the King suspended this sanguinary execution.

It appears that, two months afterwards, when the Venetian ambassador reported that the Pope threatened to land an army in Ireland if these priests were executed, the Commons indignantly renewed their petition. The King now hinted at the dread of retaliation by the Irish Rebels, and again left the

priests to the mercy of the Parliament. As they could neither agree to pardon or to hang, they were silent.*

But these difficulties of the King greatly prejudiced him in the public opinion, and the clemency shown to Goodman and the seven priests was easily ascribed alike by Royalist and by Puritan, equally alarmed, to the influence of the Queen. Charles was always protesting that he would put the laws in execution, yet he never failed in contriving some means to elude them. Our honest Rapin is sadly perplexed to account for such contrary proceedings; for while he candidly confesses that Charles was not "popishly affected," yet during the first fifteen years of his reign he not only screened the Roman Catholics from the rigours of the law, but even countenanced them by confiding to their care some of the most important offices,—as those of Privy-Councillors, Secretaries of State, and Lords Lieutenants of counties. The opinions and motives of conduct of this monarch may be more obvious to us than to his contemporaries. Charles unquestionably had often conciliated his numerous Roman Catholic subjects, and most of them afterwards displayed their inviolable loyalty, for in the civil wars that loyalty did not interfere with that creed which bound them to their foreign sovereign at Rome. The King and his minister fell victims to the vain hope of amalgamating them with the great body of the Protestants. As for the affair of these priests, Charles well knew that they were not of that class which had terrified his father as well as Elizabeth: they were not gunpowder traitors, poisoners of saddles, or rapier men who were to fall on the beefeaters; some were bookmen, who had engaged their inkstands in the cause which the monarch was so desirous to maintain. He

* I find a memorandum, that on this occasion, in the Lords, the Bishops withdrew themselves before the voting of the question, it being in *agitatione causâ sanguinis*. On this principle, the Inquisition burn men, that they may not shed blood. Had the Bishops betrayed this humanity in the Star Chamber, they would have shown to the world that they did not resemble the Spanish Inquisition. The story of the seven priests I drew from Nalson, ii. 732—740. I wished to confront his statement with Rushworth; but, to my surprise, I find no notice of the conferences of the Houses about hanging these seven priests. Did Rushworth judge that this piece of history would be little honourable to the wisdom or the humanity of the popular party? The omission must have been voluntary, and impeaches his integrity.

knew them to be zealots, who at least suffered for conscience sake; many were condemned merely for having taken priest's orders, though living obscurely as the disguised dependents of some ancient Roman Catholic family. Could he, divesting himself of the true dignity of a sovereign, and of that intelligence which the office of sovereignty should include, run with the clamours of a party and the illusions of the people? Charles could not have imagined that the commonweal was to be preserved by a hecatomb of miserable priests. Much we grant to the panic of those unhappy times, and more to the passions; but can we entertain a doubt that the merciless persecutions of these priests was one of the stalking-horses of party?

I cannot quit this subject without pausing on one of the most pathetic incidents in this history of human nature—the situation and the feelings of these most miserable men, the Roman Catholic priests. How many inevitable crimes, and how many untold sufferings, never appear in the history of a people!

One of the Capuchins who attended on Henrietta has left a memoir, which affords us the secret history of that devoted party. Père Gamache writes with the simplicity of a child, and he convinces me of his sincerity, even when he describes some miracles which he himself witnessed. He perpetually reiterates that there can be no other religion than the Catholic Apostolical and Roman; it is the true religion, founded by Jesus Christ, and was the only one in which a mortal soul could be saved.

It appears, that by "the solid reasons" which his great genius could enforce, Père Gamache was very adroit in converting young ladies and old gentlemen. He exults in the martyrdoms which he certainly witnessed in England, under "the detestable Parliament."

The pursuivants, who were employed to hunt out Romanists, he describes generally as persons of an infamous character; the greater number consisting of apostates, whose intimacy with the haunts and customs of their former associates assisted their pursuits. They had free entrance into the houses of Romanists at all hours, and priest-catching became actually a wicked trade, in which they laid traps and directed decoys to inveigle their victims. These pursuivants resembled the worst class of Bow-street runners, if it be true that some of them verify an old

proverb. These Englishmen were dragged to prison, and on the mere conviction of being priests, either by their own confession, or the deposition of witnesses, these helpless beings, whose profession the Government had made a state-crime, passed from the prison to the gallows.

The Capuchins, who still remained in England, after the departure of Henrietta, awaiting her return, now disguised in their persons, for their beards would have been in their way, by bribing the jailors, were admitted to visit the condemned priests, and offer their spiritual aid; and as the matter was understood, the jailor's Protestantism melting away in his hand, he would lock them all night in the cells, and thus secure the imprisoned the rites of their religion.

The priests said the mass, received the confessions, distributed the adorable sacrament of the Eucharist, and received from the hands of those who in a few hours were to be saints, images bearing some signature from their blessed hands, and relics which the Romanists would collect with avidity. Such were the Vigils of Martyrdom!

"These faithful and generous warriors of God," exclaims Père Gamache, "issued from the prison-gate to their glory." At the tree, some disguised priest would insinuate himself among the crowd to grant absolution to the condemned man; it was done by a secret sign agreed on, either by holding down the head or lifting the arms, but if the disguised Capuchin, in the fervour of his act, should have betrayed himself, the barbarous cry from the mob, of "Priest! Priest!" was a fatal signal that immediate disappearance could alone save his life.

Some of these priests rejoiced when they listened to their barbarous sentence—it secured them the martyrdom they aspired to. There were others who loved life, without yielding up their religious faith. Gamache one night waited on five condemned priests. One was more sullen than the others; he had flattered himself, by his great interest, that he should be saved, but the King at that moment could not exert his clemency, and yielded to the Parliament these five priests. The news was brought to the sullen priest that he must die in the morning. At that moment, when all hope failed, a sudden change took place; he was now as desirous to die, as he had

before been reluctant. "It is better for me," he cried, "that I perish to-morrow in the cause of Jesus! Fathers! let us rejoice for this divine favour!" The supper was before them, "Hold!" he cried, "we will rejoice!" and giving money to the attendants, he bid them go and fetch some Spanish wine. He passed the supper-hour in innocent gaiety, and then they prayed till the break of morning, and he died with the same courage as the others.

One of these priests, by an ingenious trick, resolved to give a singular testimony of his religious faith before an innumerable multitude. "This generous soldier of Jesus" on the scaffold, the cord already about his neck, addressing the sheriff, said, "Sir, you see me condemned to death, not for any crime against the King or the State, but simply for having said mass, and being a priest. Death is terrible of itself even for the most resolute,—what will be done for me if I renounce the Catholic religion, and become Protestant?" "You shall be saved from this shameful and bloody death, you shall have life, and the means of living." This offer he expected, and it gave him an opportunity of turning to the people, to show that life had been offered to him, and that he now rejected it for his religion. The sheriff provoked, ordered immediate execution, but the Romanists rejoiced, and some Protestants were touched by pity—it is well that Père Gamache did not add that they were all converted.*

To the Catholic, the deaths of these priests were so many martyrdoms, and deeming them such, they used every means and spared no cost to procure some of their remains, as the most

* Although I give more credit to Père Gamache's Memoirs than some of my readers will incline to, I must at the same time observe, that his feelings are so perfectly papistical that they at times deeply imbue, and give a false colour to his style. I will not think that the Capuchin was capable of inventing stories, but that he told them to great advantage for his own cause. In the present anecdote he says, that the sheriff offered the priest, in case of his abjuring his popery, that he should be recompensed *de quelque opulent bénéfice*. Now it is not probable that a Roman Catholic, with a rope about his neck, abjuring his creed for his life, could ever be trusted with any church preferment, and therefore Père Gamache must here, and elsewhere, be charged with a little pious fraud, and with twisting facts, which are true in themselves, to his own particular purpose, which makes them false.

precious and authentic relics. To dip some memorial in their blood,—to snatch a heart still beating with life from the flame,—to preserve the dismembered limb of a victim,—were objects which the Romanists had at heart, and which it appears were often supplied by the avarice of the executioner. The pious ambassador of Portugal was desirous of procuring the head of one of these priests—this was a most difficult acquisition, for the heads were always placed on spikes over London Bridge, all counted and out of reach. The ambassador, however, sent for the executioner, and offered a large sum for a particular head, and paid him half the money down. Ketch, if he took one head, found it absolutely necessary to place another, to prevent any inquiry. He hit on an expedient worthy of himself. At night he opened a fresh grave, cut off the head of his neighbour, and climbing to the top over the bridge, succeeded in spiking the Protestant's head and carrying off the martyr's, but in his trepidation he fractured a limb, and, just escaping from the Thames, carried the remembrance of converting a Protestant's head into a Papist's to the day of his death.

Such were these fated priests, and such the adoration of the Romanists!

In the cause of civil and religious freedom, we have persecuted—but our persecutions at least have been in detail. A principle more terrific is the eternal reproach of the Romanist, the massacre—the auto-da-fé—the expulsion of a whole people of fellow-citizens—these are written in blood, in the histories of Italy, of France, and of Spain. Centuries of persecution have passed over, yet of all men, the religious are least reconciled to one another! We must not look in the Gospel for the cause—it is among themselves.

To return to our original subject. The other critical difficulty of our sovereign arose out of the state-reasons, which often interfered with a rash compliance with the reiterated petitions of Parliament against the Romanists. At every proclamation which our Government issued against this unhappy race, at the instigation of their alarmed and jealous Protestants, remonstrances were renewed by the great European powers; retaliation was provoked, and one frequent cause of relaxing the severity of our penal code was the desire to abate that spirit of

persecution, which Rome busily revived against the Continental Reformed. The emancipation of the British Romanists was one of the great state-interests of France and Spain. It always formed one of the chief articles in their treaties, and was the subject of the incessant representations of their resident ambassadors. Whenever James the First had to propitiate the foreign powers, a habit which his pacific system too often indulged, a conciliatory style towards the Catholics was held out to his Parliament, which was sure to revive the dread response of "the alarming growth of the Austrian power, and the state of our poor oppressed brethren abroad." To further the projected alliances with Spain, and afterwards with France, the execution of the penal laws against the Romanists was suspended; but Fuller describes the popular uneasiness in his own manner. "The people suspected that if the treaties took effect, more water of the Tiber, than of the Thames, would run down London Bridge." It is to these cabinet measures which James alluded in one of his later speeches. "It is true, that at times, for reasons *best known to myself*, I did not so fully put the laws in execution, but did wink and connive at some things that might have hindered more weighty affairs." Charles also assigned the reason of his lenient conduct to the Roman Catholics, when his third Parliament seemed in dread of the designs of Popery. "It had been with the hope that foreign Princes would have used the like moderation towards the Protestants, but not finding the fruits of it, he was now resolved to add some farther severity to what the petition desired." A statesman-like answer! The King could not contend with the voice of the people, but in yielding to it, he gave this public warning to foreign powers, of the necessity of a reciprocal forbearance.

Foreign Cabinets imagined that it only depended on the will of the English monarch to grant an open toleration to his Catholics; and therefore the repugnance which James and Charles showed to put forth an open declaration in their favour, at the very time they consented to a suspension of the penal laws, argued to them an uncertain grant, and seemed a gross duplicity. And whenever it happened, as it frequently occurred, that the temporary quiet which the Catholics enjoyed, roused

the fears of the people, and Parliament, too often operating on these panics, called out for the severe execution of the penal laws against the Catholics, the English sovereign was denounced by France, and Spain, and Italy, for disingenuousness and perfidy. James always assured the foreign ambassadors that he could only grant a connivance, but not an open toleration, to his Catholic subjects.

These critical difficulties were perpetually recurring. The secret though slight intercourse which Charles held with Rome, diffused a terror through the nation; yet we may now learn that on his side the sole objects of that intercourse were the restitution of the Palatinate—and perpetual projects to alleviate the state of his own Roman Catholic subjects, and secure his royal supremacy, by passing over in silence his ecclesiastical. The administration of his minister, Laud, was, on the same principle, to melt two opposite faiths into one, by a reunion of the churches; and thus to reconcile contraries, which attempt ended so fatally.

Yet the popular error run, that the Protestant cause had been utterly abandoned; and those popular panics a party knew well how to direct for their own purposes. The prejudices against Charles for his connivance of Popery proved fatal to him in many of the most critical periods of his reign. The Queen's "idolatry" was always a lively *reveil*, for the Royalists were as jealous of the King in this respect as the Parliamentarians and the Puritans.

Alone, in the midst of violence and war, after the loss of the battle of Naseby, Charles resolved, in despair, to engage the Irish Romanists. Their forces cast into the scales of fortune might have turned them. But in this attempt Charles placed himself in a dilemma. To have done this openly would have struck with jealousies and terrors his Protestant people, and his having done it secretly has countenanced an opinion with some that Charles would have sacrificed the religion and constitution of his country. His success would have been pronounced a *coup d'état*; his ill-fortune has cast on him the odium of a duplicity of conduct into which his hard fate too often hurried him. This frequent contradiction in the conduct of the English sovereigns has seemed inexplicable both to their apologists and

their censurers. Mr. Brodie, observing on Charles the First's "insincere dealing in regard to recusants," which he tells us, "even his apologists admit," cannot account for "the line of policy which the ministers of the crown pursued, when they endeavoured to alarm Parliament by the audacious proceedings of Jesuits."* In the one case the King protected these unhappy Romanists, the recusants, from the fury of the popular prejudices as long as he could; and in the other he was compelled to sacrifice them to the popular feeling, to obtain supplies from the Commons.

This is the true picture of the complicated state in which James and Charles were involved between the jarring interests of their Romanists and their Protestants.

The subject before us may be illustrated by the position of other monarchs and ministers abroad, since the Reformation; and we shall invariably find that the people so little comprehended their designs, that these eminent personages have incurred the same public censure, though, in fact, they were devoting themselves to the public cause.

Henry the Fourth of France, a genius born for empire, himself a Protestant monarch, doomed to rule over a Roman Catholic nation, could see no stability in his government, if he persisted in protesting against the authority of Papal Rome; his state-policy cut the gordian knot of theological politics, and with equal fortitude and prudence he bent to human circumstances. The one was sacrificed to the many. But the hand which subscribed a public profession of Popery, at the same time signed the benevolent Edict of Nantes, which conferred toleration on his oppressed Protestants. But Henry has incurred the usual odium of apostasy from the Protestants he loved! Cardinal Richelieu found himself much in the same predicament, and, by acting in the same manner, drew on himself the odium of his own Romanists. The Cardinal, having granted a peace to the Huguenots, was instantly assailed by his enemies as a man of no religion. Libels were showered on him from every part of Roman Catholic Europe. He was called "the Cardinal de la Rochelle; the Patriarch of Atheists; the Pope of the Calvinists."

* Brodie, ii. 174.

He felt these aspersions sensibly, and the burning of these libels did not suppress them. Yet certainly it was not any lukewarmness in the cause of Papistry which had induced this subtle Cardinal to treat heretics with forbearance; his secret intention was far opposite to what appeared, and it was not necessary to inform the Huguenots that he had only deceived them. After 1628, no one accused Richelieu of tolerating heretics. "He never discovered more ability as a statesman," observed Le Clerc, "than at the moment his conduct suffered such popular censure," and which censure came from those for whose cause he acted.

In the great intercourse of European nations, politicians seem doomed to act by indirect means. An open avowal of the real purpose of the negotiator would close at once all negotiation; for such complicate and clashing interests can only be accorded by the tediousness of mutual accommodation. In the most successful negotiation, the most active genius has only gained the most he could, and yielded the least he was forced to. Hence those dark and intricate practices of state-policy, state-secrecy, and state-craft; subterfuges, expedients, connivances, and the juggle of deceptive treaties. We may smile at the mystifying style of James the First, but it veils a dark truth—"You must not dip too deep in what kings reserve among themselves, among the *arcana imperii*." He alluded to those dilemmas whose horns transfix both the sovereign and the people.

And this unhappy result must happen, that often, while the statesman is earnestly engaged in obtaining the objects of popular interest, by means which appear quite contrary to their purpose,—like James and Charles, and Henry and Richelieu,—he is suspected and condemned. Yet who but the statesman in office can know the secrets of Cabinets? the humours of the influential persons—the projects of the moment—the divided interests, the strength and the weakness of the parties? These can never reach the people at large, and may not always be comprehended, even by their representatives.

Such are the cabals of statesmen! In according incongruous interests, and with all the infirmities of human nature about them, a more open conduct on their part seems hopeless. The

perfectibility of politics must be deferred to the day of the perfectibility of man; a millenarian politician would be a very romantic historian.

The critical and variable situation of our sovereigns, in regard to their Roman Catholic subjects, long formed a political phenomenon which perplexed contemporaries, and has puzzled historians. It occasioned the English monarch, as we have shown, sometimes to excite the clamours of his own people, and sometimes the murmurs of foreign Cabinets, and has caused an apparent contradiction in the professions and the acts of the sovereign. The mysterious motives and the involved principles which led to this paradoxical result could not have escaped the scrutiny of our historians, had they written with less partiality, and with far more philosophical investigation; in a word, had they dared to look upwards to the fair countenance of Truth, which all parties have so often veiled.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GENIUS OF THE PAPACY.

It was a single blow, I repeat, which for ever separated our fellow-countrymen among themselves, but the stroke was not human! The supernatural royalty of the Papacy was an invisible dominion placed beyond the reach of a human hand.

It is absolutely necessary that the student of modern history should form some notion of the genius of the Papacy, if he would comprehend the astonishing effects of that anomalous power which startle us in the sobriety of history.

No philosophical genius has yet composed the vast history of the Papacy. The elaborate researches of Giannone in his *Istoria del regno di Napoli* will provide the curious inquirer with an intimate knowledge of the Ecclesiastical Constitution, should his curiosity not weary in accompanying the erudite Jurisconsult through his five discursive quartos.* We would not draw our

* Giannone was betrayed and condemned to perpetual solitude. The occasion of his flight from the realms whose history he had composed, is characteristic of the Papal Government. On the first publication, the ecclesiastics practised every art

waters from the troubled streams of the early Protestants; the amiable Huguenot Plessis de Mornay,* and the vindictive Calvinist Jurieu;† nor from that heap of works which were thrown out in heat and passion. The tribunal of posterity admits not suffering witnesses to sit among the jury, or decree with the judge. One glorious fragment indeed, long suppressed from the world, is consecrated by genius—and it comes, too, from Rome itself! The indignant and Protestant spirit of the grave historian of Italy broke forth, till, startled by the force and multitude of his own truths, he apologises for his noble

of calumny to kindle the hatred of the populace against Giannone, who soon discovered that he could not venture to walk in safety the streets of Naples. I translate his words. "They invented a diabolical rumour that I had denied the evident periodical miracle of the prodigious liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius." The rumour was followed by a menace that should the blood of the Saint, on the approaching day, be obdurate, and the miracle cease, the people would now know to whom they were to ascribe the loss of their celestial patron. Giannone was advised by his friends not to stand the trial.

By the style of his narrative, it would seem as if the historian by no means denied the miracle. Indeed, when at Geneva, he professed the Roman Catholic faith; and it was to perform the Papistical rites more publicly that he was inveigled by a Piedmontese officer, an agent of Rome, to the Paschal communion in an Italian village; this Mouton finally conducted the credulous historian to his dungeon. Giannone, hostile to the Popes, was not so to Papistry. He bitterly censures our Henry the Eighth for usurping the supremacy in the Anglican Church; but the deformity of this error was much greater, he says, when Elizabeth ascended the throne; and contemptuously adds, "Then, for the first time, a woman bore the title of the head of the Church,—an event which offered to the universe the ridiculous scene of a spiritual sovereignty degraded to the distaff." I fear we must despair of finding a philosopher in a Roman Catholic.

* In his *Mysterium Iniquitatis, seu Historia Papatus, &c.* This pure and noble spirit Voltaire paints as the most delightful of men:—

Censeur des Courtisans mais à la cour aimé;
Fier ennemi de Rome, et de Rome estimé.

Were this so, it would do great honour to Rome; for Mornay labours to demonstrate, that his Holiness is the Antichrist; however, as one *sobriquet* is as valid as another, the Romanists call Mornay "The Pope of the Huguenots."

† *Histoire du Calvinisme et celle du Papisme mises en parallèle*, 2 vols. 4to, abounds with curious matters, but their correctness sometimes has been impeached. It is a voluminous answer to Father Maimbourg's *History of Calvinism*. Bayle took up the subject, and proved to be the greater favourite with the public. Jurieu, who was no half hater, and the friend of Bayle, never forgave his friend his eminent success; and the mortified controversialist, irascible and visionary as he was, finished by hating the philosopher as well as the Pope.

ardour—*il dolore giustissimo del danno publico, m'aveva più ardentamente, che non conviene alla lege dell' Istoria traportalo**—as if history had laws to suppress the emotions which it would inspire! The error was not in Guicciardini, but in human weakness; in that Roman Catholicism, which stands confused between what it deems sacred and knows to be criminal. The Papistical nephew who suppressed the passage may claim our pardon and our gratitude for the conscientious impulse which prevented its annihilation.

Concealed among polemical disquisitions, or traced by the curious idleness of mere antiquaries, we have still to explore into the secret principles, by which a power more than human has arisen among mankind. The philosophical inquirer will not limit his researches by simple dates, for dates, which commemorate events, furnish no discovery of their causes. The principle of actions often lies remote from the acts themselves; nor must we, in the novelty of a name, lose the recollection of the antiquity of the thing. The genius of the Papacy existed before there were Popes. On this critical principle of historical investigation, the future historian of the Papacy may yet detect, how the religion of modern Rome has disguised Polytheism, and mimicked Judaism.

We can hardly recognise the mystical Being whose growth shadowed the earth by an universal dominion, when we would trace him through the obscurity and neglect of the first centuries of his existence. The pastor of Rome with his flock, often suppliants, even to Pagans, for a precarious aid, claimed but a portion of the common alms devoted to the poor, or piously collected for the building of a church. As yet was there no pride of supremacy in that meek bosom, no avarice for Jewish tithes, no longing for Levitical first-fruits. *Pasce oves meas*, was the apostolical command, and the humble Presbyter or Bishop knew only to obey. The sole vestige of

* Guicciardini, lib. iv.—towards the close. The reader must not look for it in the contents appended to each book, which were probably taken from the original edition, in which it was cautiously omitted. The authentic passage, recovered from the autograph of the author, after having been published by Protestant collectors, was not finally inserted till the Florence edition of 1775 appeared under the imprint of Friburg. The MS. is preserved in the Magliabecchian Library.

his poverty is retained in the title prefixed to his Bulla and his Breves, of "The Servant of the Servants of God;" but in the *Ceremoniale Pontificale*, we find his truer style, for there the tiarred Pope rules "the Lord of Lords, and the King of Kings."

At length, when the Episcopal jurisdiction grew stronger in the mental darkness of Europe, in those ages when even the chieftains of nations might be classed among the meanest of their own hordes, it was assumed that the Bishop of Rome had been divinely instituted by Jesus, in the person of the first Bishop, whom they asserted to have been the apostle Peter. When men were familiarised with miracles, and a Pope was elected among his rival candidates, from the circumstance of a dove resting on his head, it was hardly accounted miraculous, that a mortal Bishop should be the Vicegerent of Heaven. Certain it is, that the West received what the East rejected. In the possession of the invisible world, the usurper became irresistible on earth—and a mortal omnipotence was founded on a pun, a proverb, and a metaphor, and authenticated by a legend and a forgery.*

* Blount—but he was a Roman Catholic—might have placed the Papal titles to their fabulous domains among his "Jocular tenures."

The celestial empire, and the divine institution of the Papacy, are founded on Matthew xvi. 18, 19. Our translation runs—"Thou art Peter, and upon this *rock* I will build my church;" but in the original Greek, the name Peter has the equivocal signification of *stone*. In the versions of the New Testament in French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, they have been enabled to preserve this play on words; the French by their *Pierre*, the Italians by their *Pietro*, the Spanish and Portuguese by their *Pedro*. By converting the *stone* into a *rock*, our version gains in dignity and Protestantism, but the Pope's title, dependant on the *Autonomia*, has been left to our Catholic neighbours.

The *keys* of the Papacy, and their terrific consequences, were furnished by a metaphor. "I will give unto thee the *keys* of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven." This power the Romanists apply solely to the Apostle Peter, and hence derive the Papal dispensing powers. Some Protestants have inferred that this power was equally conferred on all the Apostles, but it is impossible to deny that it was solely addressed to Peter. Bishop Horsley at once concedes the point, but triumphantly asks the Romanist to prove that Peter had ever any successors.

Their purgatory, that new-found land in the regions of Theology, originates in a proverbial expression in the 1st of Corinthians iii. 13. 15. To save their own "stubble" from the "fires," the Pope clemently levied his "indulgences" and his "masses" *pro redemptione animarum*.

The *Papa* became the vicar of Christ, and was saluted as God! It is scarcely credible, but it rests on multiplied authorities, that the papal divine institution could have occasioned this extreme idolatry, even among the barbarians of the age when it rose. The Pope has been held as "*Un dio in terra,*" Giannone affirms in his "Profession of Faith," p. 12. The Canonists have impiously called his Holiness, *Dominus noster Deus Papa*—"Our Lord God the Pope."* The same style was adopted by the Council of Lateran, sess. 4th. The title of *Pont. Opt. Max.* is common on papal medals, and in dedications; the epithets are the same which are given to the Divinity. There is a curious treatise on schism, by Cardinal Zaberella, Archbishop of Florence; where he declares, alluding to the Popes, whose ambition he wished to control by holding frequent councils—*Quod omnia possint quicquid liberet, etiam illicita, et sit plus quam Deus*, p. 703.—"That all things are permitted them, even what is unlawful, and so they can do more than

To make Peter confer the succession of the Roman See in his own right, it was necessary to conduct the Missionary there. The Scriptural authority not furnishing any evidence, a Romanist desperately asserts that Peter's epistle, dated from *Babylon*, was written at *Rome*, in his reply to our learned Pearson. The adventures of Peter at Rome may prove their own authenticity, where Simon Magus challenged Peter to fly, and broke his own legs to show he could not himself.

Even a Romanist acknowledges—

An Petrus fuerit Romæ sub judice lis est.

The Ecclesiastical *forgeries* of Rome are too numerous to specify, beginning with the fabulous donation of Constantine. The pretended original is preserved in the Vatican. Du Plessis Mornay tells us, that the scribe has ventured to add at the end this strange paragraph:—*Quam fabulam longi temporis mendacia finxit.* Mornay's *Mysterium Iniquitatis*, p. 35. As I have not seen the Instrument, I almost doubt this honest confession.

However, Peter the fisherman of Galilee, at all events, was quite a different person from the Bishop of Rome: even Pope Sylvester, several hundred years after, preferred holding his title from the Emperor, rather than from St. Peter; and refused wearing a golden crown as not fit for a religious head, as Platina tells us. It was long afterwards that a Pope placed his foot on the neck of an Emperor. These are the materials of Papal history.

* The famous Jesuit, Father Parsons, had the ingenious impudence to affirm, that he could not find any such expressions, though he had troubled himself in looking after them. Foulis, who has written an extraordinary folio against the Romanists, supplied him with a catalogue of ten editions of Paris and Leyden, where he might read them. The learned Giannone, however, is the best of authorities.

God himself." This treatise on schism was put into the index, and has been frequently reprinted by Protestants. It must, however, be acknowledged, that some of the Canonists, pretending to be more moderate on the divine person, have been more confused. These assert *Papa, nec Deus est, nec homo; sed neuter est inter utrumque*. "The Pope is neither God nor man, but neuter, partaking of both natures." In books printed at the Vatican, its master has been imperiously styled "the vice-God." Constantine, it seems, actually saluted the Pope as God! Such a revolting piece of idolatry has been solemnly alleged as an authority for the divine honours conferred on the pretended successor of Peter. But was Constantine a Christian? On this perverse association of ideas, which some of the advocates for Popery have joined together, of *a God in Heaven, and a vice-God on Earth*, Warburton has observed, that they accuse those who deny the infallibility of the Tiara, of a direct tendency to Atheism.

In this divine institution of the Roman Bishop, in this immediate connection with the Supreme Being,—we behold the re-institution of the Jewish Theocracy, and earth is again hallowed by the presence of a "kingdom of priests." The consequence of this impious, but successful mockery, appears in what is at once the object and the foundation of the papistical Empire. Gifted with the attributes of the Deity, was it unreasonable in the Pope to demand, or in the people to yield, a passive obedience to one, who was all-knowing, and all-mighty? A despotism was thus established, in comparison with which the rule of an Eastern monarch was the lightest of governments, for the despotism of modern Rome was not an empire only over the body, but also over the mind. Passive obedience was demanded not merely from the animal man, but from the sensible being. The power of an earthly tyrant is transient, and the theatre of his rule is limited—but in the successor of St. Peter, mankind beheld a terrestrial deity, and in an empire half divine and half human, Heaven might be lost by an Excommunication, and Earth become a desert by an Interdict.

The philosopher will pause to inquire by what miraculous contrivance the neck of his fellow-creatures was so nicely fitted to this unparalleled yoke—he will ask by what means such a

degree of mental terror could have been infused into the minds of men without the aid of material force. It is here that we shall detect the secret principle of the Papal government. The very power which ventured to invoke from the silence of its Jewish tomb, the severe and sacred spirit of the abrogated theocracy, with the same wave of the wand, summoned from its gay funereal urn, the wanton genius of departed Paganism, and dared to combine in the novel system, the characteristics of both. The Pope, seated on his eternal throne, smiled even amidst his sublimity, and the same power that founded its rule on eternal terror, established its empire by endless indulgence. Roman Catholicism is a combination of the supernatural agency of the Judaic Theocracy, and the seductive ceremonies of ancient Polytheism. Is it wonderful, then, that none resisted the enchantment? Is it wonderful that all hurried to propitiate and prostrate themselves before that power, which secured their spiritual existence, while it indulged their earthly carnality?

Such was the Papacy! The sacerdotal throne, like some miraculous vision, hung amidst the triple regions of Heaven, of Earth, and of Purgatory. A bewildering and mystical fabric of curious superstitions was thrown open to mankind. What they touched were shadows, what they heard were fictions, magical illusions of a scenical religion from the Jubilee to the Tenebres. There all things were made holy,—their bread, their water, their beads, and their bones; these were “the love tokens” which enchanted the people’s affections—and for the children of society they had their shows, and their festivals, and rabbinical romances of St. Dominic and St. Francis; for the imaginative, a glory of beatitude; for the impassioned, celestial loves! There sat the judge who could never be judged, changing unrighteousness into righteousness, absolving, dispensing, indulging, squaring the circle and rounding the square. To him alone upon this earth is permitted to prohibit virtues, which then become vices; or to consecrate vices, which then become virtues; for to obey his commands is the greatest of virtues, and to do what he forbids is the greatest of crimes.*

Such is the Pope! This mystical being, kings made more

* See the language of Bellarmin. Giannone, *Professione di Fede*, p. 11.

than regal, emperors more than imperial; while the multitude, like the slaves of Ava, cast themselves on the earth, nor dared to lift their eyes on the human being before them. The awful prostration of the understanding in the being who was distinguished as *ter catholicus*, even among minds of intellect and spirits of enterprise, is one of the most mortifying examples of self-degradation. The victories of French monarchs were gained for the Vicar of Christ, and their successors still pride themselves on the cheap reward of the peerless title of "The Most Christian King." None more willingly surrendered themselves to their holy Father than the wealthy and the wicked. These covered the land with abbeys and priories, chauntries and shrines, gorgeously erected and munificently endowed, for the salvation of their own souls, and the redemption of their ancestors. The charter of donation, by the largeness of its grant "to God and the Church," often attested the criminal votary. Thus the empire of Papal Christianity found an unfailling growth in the crimes and the remorse of men, and even in the refuse of human nature it could inspire heroes and victims.

Whether the triple crown denote, as the Pope's great antiquary, Angelo Rocca, tells us, three powers—the imperial, the regal, and the sacerdotal, investing the sacred personage with universal authority over the globe; or whether, as some explain, it be the awful emblem of his three mysterious dominions, certain it is, that his Holiness was a human being, whose likeness never had been seen on this earth, and it is not strange that he should have been so frequently demonstrated to be the Antichrist.

His terrestrial pride was viewed on the day of his election. Mounted on a white palfrey, he rode under a canopy supported by Italian nobles or foreign ambassadors; and when emperors and kings were at Rome, an emperor was to hold the golden stirrup, a king was to guide the silken reins. If too aged to ride, the royal personages were to bear him on their shoulders. At the Pope's banquet, beneath the state, covered with cloth of gold, were placed his plain chair and table: an emperor was permitted to sit on his left hand, but a king was to take his station at the lower table of Cardinals. Who shall have the

blessedness of carrying the laver to wash the hands of the Pontiff?—An emperor shall have the blessedness of carrying the laver to wash the hands of the Pontiff. Who shall set his plate before him?—Both emperors and kings might contend for that honour. The people only believed what they saw. The masters of the world they knew to be subjects, like themselves, of that mystical being whose human divinity was a mystery too great to be comprehended, too certain to be denied. They knew that the sovereigns of the earth were chained together at the chair of St. Peter; while the sealed edict of a soldierless chief dispersed armies, or dethroned monarchs, and partitioned out empires which were not yet discovered. God himself, in the Roman creed, was in the hands of the Pontiff. Whenever he went forth, he was accompanied by the divinity. The Eucharist preceded him, inclosed in a small case, cautiously steadied on the back of a snow-white steed, beautiful in form and proud with ornaments, around whose neck the small bell tinkled which ushers in the presence of the body of Christ! If, as the crowd cast themselves on their knees before that small case, one truly pious and philosophic mind, undazzled by the processional pomp, had dared to turn aside and think, he might have been reminded of the ark of the God of Israel, of the time when the Lord of Hosts was carried before the people, while the eyes of twelve armies were bent towards the ark, as they guided their march by the presence of the Deity.

This Papacy was a monstrous sovereignty, which the profane legislators of antiquity had never contemplated. It was a polity without a public. In fact, there was no public mind throughout Europe, for Europe was Romanised. The ancients, indeed, had invested the sovereign with the sacerdotal character; for with them religion was a subordinate and accessory part of their political system; but modern Rome had invested its prelate with sovereignty. The difference is immense. When the monarch was also the priest, he bowed to the gods, as to the protecting power of the state. When the priest was also the monarch, he trampled upon man, as upon the creature of his omnipotence. When the monarch officiated at the altar, he trusted that the sacredness of his office might render his temporal authority more respected. When the priest was seated

on the throne, he knew his temporal power could enforce his spiritual tyranny. The monarch consulted the interests of his people, for whom he exercised the priesthood. The priest only consulted the interests of his order, by whom he had risen to the monarchy. With the monarch, the people was the great object: with the priest, the people was the great subject.

In these latter ages, it would have been a moral impossibility to have reared the divine and human government of the Papacy, which, we must repeat, was a portentous compilation of Oriental despotism, Polytheistical idolatry, and the Judaic theocracy. The most potent of all governments could only have originated in the rudest ages; for in the history of mankind it will be found, that every excess of delegated power has ever been proportioned to the wants and infirmities of men. In the political infancy of Europe, the evils of universal barbarism were alleviated by an universal government, where, in the person of one common father, the paternal sustained the feeble, for he required slaves; and stayed the indomitable, for he would suffer no rival. The great political secret of supporting the inferior against the superior, was known to Rome. Meanwhile, a supernatural power seemed to guard the holy patrimony. There the conqueror arrested his invasion, there the marauder dropped his rapacious grasp more terrified by excommunication than by the commandment of Heaven. Had Christianity purified its barbarous nations, Europe would have formed the Platonic dream of the politician—an apostolical commonwealth; but the barbarous nations corrupted Christianity, and he who was called the father was more corrupt than the sons.

In more refined ages, the mundane father of Christianity was not ignorant how to maintain his terrestrial influence, by the intrigues of the cabinet—by infusing mutual jealousies among his own children, and by exciting a war in Europe, or preaching a crusade in Asia, often averting the danger of the times, which might have reached the holy see itself. The Machiavelism of the Roman Pontiff has inflicted sufferings on Christianity far deeper than it ever received from the vagrant Hebrew and the expelled Morisco. The Court of Rome, in affecting spiritual and temporal influence, necessarily made its religion its politics, and its politics its religion.

But all human institutions partake of the mortal nature of man; and at length we view the vicegerent of Heaven figuring only as the uninfluential sovereign of a tract of Italy.

In considering, however, the Pope as an aged prince, whose territories might be swept away in one morning by any of the petty sovereigns who have partitioned out among themselves the Eden of Europe, we must beware lest we form a very erroneous conception of the pontifical domination. No inglorious conquest of the Pope can remove the principles of an unextinguishable Papacy.

Were I writing a volume instead of a chapter, it might not perhaps be difficult to show, in examining the consequences of the civilisation of Europe, that while the individual Pope has become less influential, the Papal system may not have fallen into any decline; and that the very causes which have reduced the vicar of Christ to a state of comparative insignificance, have also, and necessarily, rendered the Papacy independent of the Pope. In these days the Pope may be a prisoner in the castle of St. Angelo, while the Papal system may be all dominant at Madrid; and while the nominal head of the Papacy may be owing his safety to the exertions of a Protestant prince, the genius of the Papacy, at the same time, will be attacking the interests of that very Protestant prince, in Portugal, in Ireland, or in Mexico.

In an age when we flatter ourselves that even the castes of the Hindoos are losing their fatal distinctions, it will be considered too bold to avow that the empire of modern Rome is as eternal in its principles as the empire of ancient Rome was in its pretensions. Yet we cannot forget that the most ancient of religions, and the most ancient of nations, in spite of millenniums of war and captivity and persecution, count at this day members and votaries not less numerous than when they confounded the chariots of Assyria, or sacrificed on the banks of Siloah. Like the old theocracy, has the imitative Papacy also separated its followers from all other beings. In ceasing to be Catholics, they cease to be a peculiar and a favoured people—a people before whom are placed, and for whom alone are reserved, both earth and heaven—a people who may possess the one without losing their confidence in the other. Who would reason if he be happy? Who would relinquish his own certainty for

the doubts of others? The God which his lip presses is a God; the saint which he invokes is a saint; the religion he adores is the only true religion. Passive obedience, the grand political secret of unity and conformity which some statesmen have perished to obtain, is secured in this government by the immutable imagination of its slaves. Sovereigns indeed have wrestled for their freedom—a nation indeed has rejected this creed; but were I a Catholic, I should perhaps consider that in lapsing from Rome we fell like Lucifer, and that our daring rebellion only conduced to render Omnipotence more omnipotent.

Long previous to Luther, heresy in the Celestial Empire had enraged, without alarming, its divine chieftain. With Moses and Mahomet he had already waged a successful war; and in his unrelenting dominion, where man often ceases to be a brother, the flame was consecrated as an act of faith, assassination inculcated as a doctrine, massacre honoured with a panegyric, and the expulsion of a whole people of fellow-citizens twice formed a Papal triumph.* But before the sin of clamorous Reformation, the abomination of silent heresy was as dust in the balance; and the might of Rome was never more evidenced than when a whole nation had emancipated itself from its influence. To counteract the new rebels, even the Inquisition was not deemed sufficient—that merciless tribunal where they search for the thoughts of man by the torture which annihilates them. Even this Inquisition was a power which seemed not omnipotent: the Pope dared to create another power even greater than himself. Modern Rome sent forth her flower of chivalry in “the order of Jesus.” The soldier, its founder, had stamped his military character on these novel adventurers. Ambition to conquer the world for Rome, was the genius of the order. They flew at the signal of their monarchical general to take possession of all countries. They had chiefs of legions in both hemispheres—sentinels at all posts. Life was not valued by its first enthusiasts, but their successors were

* By their expulsion, Spain lost by her Moriscoes her agriculture, which she has never recovered, and by her Hebrews her trades and manufactures—truer sources of wealth than her galleons of Mexico. France, in violating her public faith by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and by rejecting from her bosom the most ingenious of her children, enriched by their arts the looms and workshops of her Protestant rival.

masters of all the wisdom which preserves it. But the atom of glory still worked through the system, and they sacrificed all private interests to their public cause, which terminated at Rome. Politicians in the cabinets of Europe, they were sapping the governments which they themselves were conducting. Casuists in domestic life, their relaxed morality moulded the conscience to the inclinations of the austere or the licentious. Slaves of Rome, every where else rebels: arrogant and meek, obdurate and indulgent, they were the ornaments of society whose happiness was incompatible with their secret government. The character of this versatile body is a solecism in human nature: their history is an enigma unsolved, and their dissolution is even a subject of sceptical inquiry.

These were the men who, during the reigns of our early Protestant sovereigns, were attempting by all means, and in all countries, the subjugation to the Roman yoke of this solitary and rebellious Island of England.

When Charles ascended the throne, the Jesuits, from their conduct under Elizabeth and James, were a proscribed race by the law of the land; nevertheless, they swarmed throughout his kingdom. Disguised, but active, they were concealed in lay dresses, in the recesses of private houses, and, finally, they were busied even in the royal palace. Under these circumstances, amid the exultation of the Romanists, and the alarm of the Protestants, Charles the First led to the altar a Roman Catholic princess, and upon this alliance were most probably founded the hopes of all Romanists, that the great result, which they hitherto had failed in bringing out by force, might finally be consummated by intrigue. The monarch could not have been unconscious of their expectations; but his tenderness for a portion of his subjects, then numerous and valued, as a sovereign would influence his conduct in the cabinet, and at times his feelings as a man. Alternately to keep down and to protect the Romanist, as we have seen, was a labour of danger and difficulty. The King's conscientious profession of Protestantism, and the strength of his character, were the best guarantees against the kingdom of England sinking once more beneath the GENIUS OF THE PAPACY.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHARLES ASCENDS THE THRONE.—THE FIRST PARLIAMENT.—ARRIVAL OF THE QUEEN.—SECRET HISTORY OF THE KING'S FIRST MINISTERS.—BUCKINGHAM.—WILLIAMS.—LAUD.

THE youthful Charles ascended the English throne with all the prodigal hopes of sovereignty. At this moment, in the warmth of his age, and with his own sanguine temper, the King was not, perhaps, the least happy man in his dominions. A daughter of France, in the bloom of sixteen, was his bride: his Favourite's quarrel with Spain had fallen in with the passions of the people, and the rupture of the threatened Spanish treaties had obtained, even for Buckingham, a few months' popularity.

The nation had long wanted in the luxuriance of peace. England stood the envy of the Continental powers. When we turn to the French *Mercure*, which may be often considered as an official state paper, and always as an useful commentary on the times, we discover that our country was the only kingdom in Europe untroubled by foreign or intestine war; an asylum to which many had flown, to pursue their industrious trades, and where shortly after they sought a royal patronage for the more delightful arts. The political watchword "Grievances" from the lips of party leaders had not yet been multiplied by the echoes of the populace; the undefined terms of the royal prerogative, and the privileges of the Commons, had yet been only touched on by the scholastic fancies of James, and not expressly insisted on by the Parliament itself; politics had not yet been artfully grafted on religion; and the supernatural doctrines which implied a critical knowledge of the will of Heaven, and treated theology as a system of the schools, had not yet been mixed with privy loans and subsidies. All these were seeds of evil which were lying in the soil. It must be confessed, that the affairs of a people may look better in perspective, than the interior view may justify.

A new era, however, was about to be opened by an enterprise of a hardier nature than the nation had long been accustomed to; and the eyes of Europe were watchful over the first great act of the spirited young Prince.

Charles the First, on his accession, was desirous of changing his style to that of *the King of Great Britain*, in all legal or civil acts, as well as in acts of state. This comprehensive style was probably suggested by a design of amalgamating the diversified portions of his dominions, of giving coherence and unity where the jealousies of three distinct races had often carried their rival feuds. This design anticipated the "Unions" of happier days; but it was so little comprehended at the time, that when the King intimated his design to his judges, the sages of the law agreed after consultation, that this change of the regal title could not be effected, and the two Houses, with equal wisdom, delivered the same judgment.*

The King's earliest act was to assemble the great national Council. Awaiting the arrival of the Queen, Charles, not without expressions of impatience, delayed for a very limited time the meeting of the Houses.

Charles, attended by his Court, sojourned at Canterbury. He went for some days to Dover, to direct the accommodations for the Queen,—and then returned to Canterbury, that the Queen on landing might have time to recover from the voyage before their first meeting. The ordnance from the French coast proclaimed the Queen's departure, and after a stormy passage, at seven in the evening, she stepped "out of her boat on shore by an artificial bridge, framed for that use only. Master Tirwhit brought the news of her arrival within half an hour and six minutes" to the King at Canterbury. The messenger of royal love had wings swifter in flight than our jockeys can calculate.

The King and his Court arrived at Dover Castle at ten in the

* James took the title of King of Great Britain in the second year of his reign; but Mr. Hallam observes, that "it was not long afterwards abandoned." The very change of name to Great Britain was objected to;—one of those hard and minute acts of jealousy in the Commons, which delighted to thwart the first Stuart, and made James threaten to live alternately in the two kingdoms, and keep his Court at York.

morning; and though at that moment unprepared to meet the impatient bridegroom, Henrietta flew from her apartment to receive him. Kneeling at his feet, with all her spontaneous grace and native vivacity, she kissed his hand; the King bending over her, wrapt her in his arms, and kissed her with many kisses. This royal and youthful pair, unlike others of their rank, met with the eagerness of lovers, and the first words of Henrietta were those of devotion. "*Sire ! je suis venue en ce pais de votre Majesté pour être usée et commandée de vous.*" Her dark eyes sparkled, and her motions were quick and volatile. It had been rumoured that she was short in stature, but she reached to the King's shoulders. Charles cast his eyes down to her feet, anticipating his thoughts, Henrietta playfully showing them, declared that "she stood upon her own feet, for thus high I am, neither higher nor lower." After an hour's conversation in privacy, they proceeded to Canterbury, and on Barham Downs the Queen found a number of the ladies of the Court waiting her arrival. Descending from her carriage, they were presented to Henrietta in this rural levee by the King. Henrietta took her dinner surrounded by the Court. The King performed the office of her carver, in cutting up a pheasant and some venison.

By the side of the Queen stood her ghostly confessor, solemnly reminding her that this was the eve of John the Baptist, and was to be fasted, exhorting her Majesty to set no scandalous example on her first arrival. But Charles and his Court were now to be gained over as much as John the Baptist. Henrietta affected to eat very heartily of the forbidden meat, which gave great comfort, it seems, to several of her heretical subjects. She carried her dissimulation so far, that being asked, whether she could abide a Huguenot, she replied, "Why not? Was not my father one?" In all this conduct Henrietta was acting a part the most distressing to her feelings. Her ready smiles, the graceful wave of her hand, the many "good signs of hope," as are mentioned in a manuscript letter, induced some of the English to conclude that their Queen would become one of themselves. Even the grave Sir Symonds D'Ewes, the puritanic antiquary, struck by her deportment to her women, and her looks to her servants, "which were so sweet and humble, could not abstain from deep-fetched sighs, to consider that she wanted

the knowledge of true religion ;” a circumstance, however, that Henrietta would have as zealously regretted in Sir Symonds himself. It is evident that this vivacious French lady, at her first moments, resolved that all England should fall in love with her ; but a few days after, at Whitehall, she dispensed “a frown,” as an alarmed courtier writes, which indicated that her “pleasing countenance” was capable of expressing “a spirit and vigour” which, in the mind of the observer, seems to have connected itself with a terror of Papistry ! The Queen at dinner feeling inconvenienced by the heat and the company, “drove us all out of the chamber. I suppose none but a Queen could have cast such a scowl.” Nature had formed Henrietta to be charming and haughty ; a volatile, vivacious woman, who sometimes remembered that she was the daughter of Henry the Fourth.

In his new Parliament Charles discovered a more sullen bride, and the youthful Monarch, warm with hope and glory, with all the impatience of a lover, was ungraciously repulsed even in the first favours.

Charles, in his anxiety to assemble Parliament, had proposed to summon the body which had last met. The Lord-Keeper, Williams, reminded the King, that the late Parliament had naturally expired with him who had called it in his own name. Charles then commanded that writs should be issued “without the loss of a day.” The Lord-Keeper observed, that it had been usual to take certain precautionary measures to allow the King’s trustiest friends “to deal with the counties, cities, and boroughs where they were known, to procure a promise for their elections.” The King refused the counsel, and Buckingham opposed Williams. With the generous earnestness of his age, Charles had resolved to throw himself unreservedly into the arms of his Parliament, looking to no other party to maintain a war of their own, than the Parliament itself.

Amid the pomp of the regal office, and in the view of the French nobility who had accompanied his Queen, Charles studiously dignified his first meeting with the representatives of his people by the peculiar solemnity of its ceremonial. As yet uncrowned, on this day, the first on which he addressed the Lords and Commons, Charles wore his crown, and veiled it at the opening and at the close of his speech, a circumstance to

which the Parliament had not been accustomed. Still more to solemnise this meeting, the King would not enter into business, till they had united in prayer; commanding the doors to be closed, and a bishop to perform the office. The suddenness of this unexpected order is said to have disconcerted the Roman Catholic Lords, of whom the less rigid knelt, and the moderate stood; one startled Papist did nothing but cross himself.

The King addressed both the Houses with an earnestness of manner, and a plainness of style which strongly contrasted with the oratorical elocution of the late monarch, and with the solemn honours by which Charles had, as it were, recognised their dignity and their authority.

The speech may be found in Rushworth—the friendly tone must be shown here:

“I hope that you do remember that you were pleased to employ me to advise my father to break off the treaties (with Spain). I came into this business willingly and freely, like a young man, and consequently rashly; but it was by your interest, your engagement. I pray you remember that this being my *first action*, and begun by *your advice and entreaty*, what a great dishonour it were to you, and me, that it should fail for that assistance you are able to give me.”

It cannot be alleged against Charles the First that he preceded the Parliament in the war of words, or in those slights and insolences which laid the seeds of civil war. But the simplicity of his style, the friendliness of his demeanour, the modest allusion to his own youth, and the gentle intimation that this war had been entered into by their desire, excited no sympathy. They voted not a seventh part of the necessary expenditure.

Unquestionably this first reception which the King met with from Parliament was, by him, altogether unexpected. Thus early his first Parliamentary distresses opened on him. His ardent and impatient hopes were baffled, the season for action had advanced; that frequent affliction of the times, a pestilence, was raging in the metropolis; most of the members were flying from their station; few remained but a party which was, as it seemed, that wormwood from which his servants in office could never extract the bitterness. To keep them together with death

hovering about them, when as one of the speakers emphatically exclaimed, "while they were now speaking the bell was tolling every minute," was deemed a cruel manœuvre to hasten their supplies, and to break up the Parliament was the ruin of the Sovereign's hopes, his honour, and his power.

There was also a fatal discord among the King's intimate counsellors. The secret history of the Lord-Keeper Williams, and Buckingham and Laud, would show a chain of cabinet intrigues, whose links are more perceptible to us, than they were probably to the parties themselves.

Of these eminent political rivals, the Lord-Keeper Williams—then Bishop of Lincoln, and afterwards Archbishop of York, was the master genius. As a scholar he partook, in common with many of that learned age, of that prodigal erudition which delights in inexhaustible quotations from writers whom we now deem obscure—but whose aptitude or felicity startle us, while we are reminded, that what lies forgotten may be as valuable as that which is remembered. But the native faculties of Williams excelled his acquired powers. His scintillant wit, his acute discrimination, his vigorous eloquence, come vitiated to our taste, by the quaintness or the pedantry of the prevalent style; his great powers seem encumbered by their worthless ornaments, but this ecclesiastical Lord-Keeper had far advanced beyond his age in the wide comprehension of his mind. His practised touch opened the hearts of men, and his commanding spirit appeared as much in the magnificence of his life, as in the might of his genius.

As a statesman, his quick apprehension acted like inspiration; his sagacity struck with the force of prediction; but his restless ambition, though capable of more noble designs, and even of more generous feelings, had systematised intrigue; and what he could not obtain by wisdom and integrity, he would circumvent by servility and cunning. A great politician, but as subtle a Machiavellian, he maintained a whole establishment of the "juggling fiends" of espionage, and a long line of secret communication made him the centre of every political movement. It was a maxim with him, that no one could be a statesman without a great deal of money, and he once confessed that from his studies of divinity he had gleaned another principle, *licet uti*

altero peccato, to make the sins of others useful. As he was not scrupulous in his means, among other extraordinary methods of gaining men for a temporary purpose, he exercised a peculiar faculty, which, if it deserve a name, we may call political imagination. Clarendon tells us, that on any particular occasion he could invent entire scenes and lengthened conversations, perfectly appropriate to the persons, all which had never occurred. Such artful fictions had all the force and nature of truth. These apparent confidential disclosures made the stubborn, credulous; and the irresolute, firm.

During the absence of the Favourite in Spain, the Lord-Keeper had practised on the fears, and perhaps on the wisdom, of the aged monarch. We discover papers slipped by sleight of hand into that lion's mouth for state-accusations—the pocket of the King,—midnight interviews—addresses *ab Ignoto*—mysterious suggestions,—by which our wily politician at length possessed himself of the royal confidence, and had so effectually undermined his patron Buckingham, that had James not died at the critical moment, the fall of the great Favourite had certainly been resolved. With the most refined duplicity, this Episcopal Lord-Keeper was conducting two opposite systems. He was combining with the Earl of Bristol and the Spanish interest, at the moment the faithless confidant was warning his absent patron of “ingrateful devils at home.” Williams displayed the ambi-dextrous felicity of one who pursues his certain end by uncertain means. Master of himself on all occasions, he would show himself in all forms; and versatility with him seemed no change in the unity of his designs.

But these subterranean workers are frequently countermined, and are often taken by surprise as they grapple together in darkness. The mysterious conduct of the Lord-Keeper could not entirely hide itself from the jealous eyes of the Duke, who once avowed to Lord Bacon, as his settled principle, that “the man who would not live by his smile, should perish by his frown.” On his return from Spain, Buckingham found that Williams was running a course opposite to his. The Lord-Keeper was neglected; their intercourse was neither friendly nor frequent; his counsels were no longer required; and though he remained in office, he was in fact discarded.

When the Parliament met, the practices of the Lord-Keeper, with some of the leading men in the House of Commons, had insured him a strong party. This party was an awful engine, which his potent hand might wield at a secret touch. The Lord-Keeper, observing the rising faction which had threatened to call him to account, in the very presence of the King, on the first day he delivered his official speech,—soon turned round. He knew the lawyers were more particularly vehement against a churchman holding the seals, which they deemed to be the privilege of their brotherhood. Williams, conscious that he himself was one of “the fatted calves” for sacrifice, directed the storm from bursting on his own head. By his reluctant confession it appears that he had held a secret intercourse with some of that party whom the courtiers called “the chief tribunes of the Parliament.” He urged them to look about for nobler game, “fitter for such hunters than a silly priest.” The suggestion was not whispered to the deaf or the dumb. The hunters soon chased the Duke, and in the reaction the Duke chased the Lord-Keeper.

Intriguers usually drink out of the same poisoned chalice. The betrayer of his patron, in his turn was betrayed by him whom he had patronised. This person was the famous Laud; he for whom Williams had procured his first rochet, and who then declared that “his life would be too short to requite that goodness.” This new Bishop, ere his linen robe had hardly fallen into its folds, within eighteen months of his gratitude,—so short is its term in politics!—observing that his patron was incurring the anger of Buckingham, avoided the falling greatness; while in that fall he meditated, night and day, on his own rise. If the worldly passions of a mere laic can work among churchmen at the distant prospect of a peaceable mitre, they rise with redoubled violence when churchmen are ministers of state, and ascend to pre-eminence in power by the dislodging of a rival. In this particular instance these passions so strongly affected the busy brain of Laud, that they painted their scenes in his very dreams. These he has superstitiously chronicled; they were the terrors and the jealousies, the hopes and the pleasantness, of his political day.*

* Certainly Laud had “an alacrity” at dreaming; but at that day, which, in the annals of human nature, is not very distant from our own times, dreams—omens—

At the accession of the new sovereign, the Lord-Keeper, ere he sunk on the arena, would wrestle with his mightier rival, the Duke. The young King was unhappily placed amidst the struggle, and had to choose between the cold policy of an artful statesman, whom his Father's wisdom had sanctioned, and the warmer influence of affection for the companion of his youth, and one on whom his hope now rested, as the hero and administrator of his glory.

apparitions, and a long train of vanished superstitions, were chronicled in diaries. I shall leave to the reflection of the reader those relating to his rival, the Lord-Keeper, Williams. Such dreams, combining politics and fancy, form a very entertaining mode of writing secret history.

"1623. October 3, Friday.—I was with my Lord-Keeper, to whom I found some had done me some very ill offices. And he was very jealous of L. B.'s (Lord Buckingham's) favour.

"December 14, Sunday night.—I did dream that the Lord-Keeper was dead; that I passed by one of his men that was about a monument for him; that I heard him say, his lower lip was infinitely swelled and fallen, and he rotten already. This dream did trouble me.

"December 15.—On Monday morning I went about business to my Lord Duke of Buckingham. We had speech in the shield gallery at Whitehall. There I found that the Lord-Keeper had strangely forgotten himself to him; and I think was dead in his affections.

"December 27, St. John's Day.—I was with my Lord of Buckingham. I found that all went not right with the Lord-Keeper, &c.

"January 25.—It was Sunday. I was alone, and languishing with I know not what sadness. I was much concerned at the envy and undeserved hatred borne to me by the Lord-Keeper.

"February 18, Wednesday.—My Lord Duke of Buckingham told me of the reconciliation and submission of my Lord-Keeper; and that it was confessed unto him that his favour unto me was a chief cause. *Invidia quo tendis? &c. At ille de novo fœdus pepigit.*

"March 17.—Lord-Keeper his complimenting with me."

Three years after, his political dreams of Williams followed fast on one another.

"January 13, Saturday.—The Bishop of Lincoln desired reconciliation with the Duke of Buckingham, &c.

"January 14, Sunday.—Towards morning I dreamed that the Bishop of Lincoln came, I know not whither, with iron chains. But, returning, loosed from them, leaped on horseback; went away; neither could I overtake him."

However Laud did overtake Williams some years after, and kept him in the Tower for three long years.

March 27.—A certain person appeared to him who was dead, and, "whispering in my ear, told me that I was the cause why the Bishop of Lincoln was not again admitted into favour and to court."

I have sometimes thought that some of these strange *dreams* were an allegorical representation of his own state of mind and circumstances, which he wished to conceal by this cryptical mode of writing.

When Charles found that the inexorable Parliament would offer but scanty supplies, and that the contagion at London was spreading, he was at a loss how to act. To dissolve them was to leave himself amidst his utmost wants. Buckingham proposed to adjourn to Oxford; but was immediately opposed by the Lord-Keeper, who advised the prorogation. "It was not," he said, "a change of place, but a change of time, to which the King might look for a favourable change; six months hence might alter the spirit of the Commons." The Duke, casting an angry glance on his opponent, impatiently cried out, that "Public necessity must guide us more than one man's jealousy!" On this the Lord-Keeper prayed the King for a private audience, which was granted. In this interview, Williams informed his Majesty that the Lord-Duke had enemies in the House of Commons, who had no other aim but to bring the Duke on the stage. "Let this malady, or malice, call it which you will, sleep till after Christmas. There is no time lost in whetting the scythe well. At that time I hope to give such an account, by managing the *chief sticklers*, that they shall abate their bitterness against your great servant, and your Councils shall be peaceable."

The King was startled. This was probably the first moment that he learnt that a faction was formed against his minister and his friend. "Why," he asked, "do you conceal all this from Buckingham?"

"Good Lord, Sir!" was the reply, "fain would I begin at that end, but he will not treat me with moderation."

It was obvious that the Lord-Keeper was now staking all his winnings on a single card, in a desperate game of political intrigue. He had succeeded in alarming the father, and now he hoped to lure the son into his tutelage. He failed with Charles, whose affections were too real to be shaken, and whose fears were not less genuine of trusting himself in the hands of a powerful intriguer. The Parliament, therefore, according to the advice of Buckingham, assembled at Oxford.

Charles now expressed his disappointment at their ineffectual grant. Still no echo of sympathy responded in the House! And now they asserted in a vain and quibbling manner, that "this Parliament was not bound by another Parliament," and,

with a cruel mockery, suggested that "the King should help the cause of the Palatinate with his own money." The King in vain pressed for dispatch of business, lest the season should be lost for the navy; observing that, "it was the *first request* that he had ever made to them." The words "first request" had an instant effect on some few; but his "poor Commons" offer their "dear and dread Sovereign" only protestations of duty, alarms of Popery, and petitions on grievances; a term which Coke acknowledged to be premature at so early a period of this reign. There were a few whose hearts had still a pulse to vibrate for a young Prince perplexed by a war which themselves had instigated, and which, by having placed him at the head of a confederacy in Europe, had involved his own and the national honour in the awful issue. But "the chief sticklers," as the Lord-Keeper had called the rising opposition, and which afterwards he designated by a variety of denominations, as "the stirring men,"—and "the dangerous persons of the House of Commons,"—and "those disaffected persons who appeared so opposite to the royal ends"—these chief sticklers, when the pressing necessity of the times was urged, rejected Necessity as a dangerous counsellor, who would be always furnishing arguments for supplies. "If the King were in danger and necessity, let them answer for it who have put both King and kingdom into this peril." This oblique stroke, which aimed at the favourite, Charles resented, declaring his ignorance of the cause by which the Duke had incurred their dislike,—he whom, not long since, they had spoken of with the language of idolatry. The King, in despair, dissolved this uncompliant Parliament.

To judge rightly of the feelings of Charles at this moment, we must adopt them, in assimilating ourselves to him and to his situation. The writers of history are too apt to invest their personages with all the knowledge, and make them influenced by all the views, which time unrolls in that vast commentary, which can only be opened for their posterity. It would not be difficult to account for the opposition to Government which had partly shown itself under James, but which started up so unexpectedly in the new reign, when Charles felt that he was abandoned by his Parliament.

Although the Lord-Keeper had failed in the hardy attempt

to carry away the royal favour, he had left behind him all the awfulness of a predictor. All things had occurred in the Oxford Parliament as he had anticipated. But the fulfilment of his prophecy was no consolation for the loss of his power. Williams summoned up his strength. One great last stroke seemed reserved. If he could not govern his royal master, might he not conduct the favourite by his hopes and his fears?

While the King and the Duke, disconcerted, were deciding on a dissolution of Parliament, at this very moment the Lord-Keeper, with all the devotion of ancient friendship, though unsent for, suddenly appeared before the Duke.

The creature of his favour addressed his old patron. "Your Grace made me, and I must and will serve you, though you are one who will destroy that which you made. I am as earnest as any friend your Grace hath, to save you from perishing. You brought the two Houses hither, my lord, against my counsel, and my suspicion is confirmed that your Grace would suffer from it. What's now to be done, but wind up a session quickly? Let the members be promised that they shall meet again after Christmas. Requite their injuries done to you with benefits, and not revenge; for no man who is wise will show himself angry with the people of England. Fear them not when they meet again in the same body. I will instigate their ill affections; if they proceed trust me with your cause; and when it comes to the House of Lords, I will lay my life upon it to preserve you from the least dishonour."

The haughty Buckingham felt the insult of equality of power; and was indignant at the proffered protection of the political vassal, who had once professed "to love and hate as the Duke loved and hated;" and who, in his letters, which I have seen, advising Buckingham to accept a place by which he would be always nearer the King, used this emphatic style:—"In your young, your middle, your decreasing age, be upon earth, as your piety will one day make you in Heaven, an everlasting favourite!" Thus had spoken the sycophant. At the present moment the Duke started at the winding serpent which had once licked the dust, but which he now viewed climbing amid the topmost branches of the forbidden tree.

Buckingham sent forth a mingled glance of anger and

contempt on Williams. "I will look whom I trust to," exclaimed the Duke, and flung out of the chamber with a menacing countenance.

It is evident that, by this master-stroke to inveigle the favourite into his net, the wily politician would have entangled the noble victim, either for his destruction or his subserviency, as his own superior genius willed.

This political game for place and power was not played ill by the Bishop of Lincoln, although his lordship lost his stake.

The Lord-Keeper perceived that his real power depended on its exercise in the House; and that an opposition, presuming to act on popular principles, was the only means to balance the preponderating influence of the favourite, and to awe and overshadow the Court. He therefore studied to flatter the Parliament, and at that moment, he saw no danger in running all lengths with their accelerating pace: he had provided for them the State victim, whose head would save his own. He now affected the highest reverence for Parliament, he entreated Charles not to break with them, that it might not disseminate unkindness through all the counties of his realm. He told the King, "the love of the people is the palladium of your crown. Continue this assembly to another session, and expect alteration for the better. If you do not do so, the next swarm will come out of the same hive." Such was the patriotism and sagacity of the Lord-Keeper! Fenelon could not have expressed himself with more political wisdom to his Telemachus; but so ambiguous is the character of the mere politician, that we must suspect the Lord-Keeper to have been a patriot out of pique, and wise from the spirit of opposition. We do not discover him the same under James, as he was under Charles. Not further back than three years, our Lord-Keeper did not profess this reverence for the House of Commons, nor this earnestness to prolong their sessions. Then the party with whom he now sided, were alluded to as "the spiders which infest that noble House of Commons, who convert the honey of his Majesty's letter into poison to feed upon." He then deemed their privileges to be only favours of former kings, and not their inheritance, or their birthright. Where were the Commons before Henry the First gave them authority to meet in Parliament?

and he advises that the King should "break up this Parliament without any prorogation, that the kingdom may know their undutifulness and obstinacy," and proposes that his Majesty should "supply the present wants by other means;" in a word, that the sovereign should make himself independent of Parliament! So diametrically opposite were the principles adopted by Williams, that the chance was equal on which side of the House he took his seat.

The Lord-Keeper, in his dark and secret intercourse with the heads of the opposition, was like that lover who stole in the winter nights to his mistress till at length his footsteps were tracked in the snow. Buckingham had detected and reproached the insidious courtier, who could no longer deny that he was engaged with the Earl of Pembroke, and others, to labour the redress of the people's grievances, and concluded that "he was now resolved to stand on his own legs."—"If that be your resolution, look you stand fast!" replied the Duke, and they parted.

The Lord-Keeper now found it necessary to lay before Charles an account of "my carriage all this last Parliament." In this paper, he artfully declares that he never spake at Oxford with any of "the stirring men." These were they, whom he had formerly designated as "the sticklers." As he proceeds, however, he excepts some. This paper was graciously received, and the fate of the Lord-Keeper was suspended. Meanwhile, as politicians in distress, like frightened mice, will creep into new corners, the Lord-Keeper now turned his views towards the Queen. He had ingratiated himself with her, on the occasion of the introduction of the bishops to her Majesty, by fascinating the young princess with a French oration, which he had most happily studied; and by showing himself an active patron to her servants. This perfect politician had anticipated an influence, which did not yet exist.

It is a curious trait in the character of the subdulous Williams, that, during the Spanish match, he applied himself to the Spanish language, and under his eye entertained a Spaniard to translate the English liturgy, and printing a limited number, presented them to the Court of Spain. Williams must have been enabled to taste the Spanish humour of Cervantes, for he

had sufficient time allowed him, during the Spanish match, to study his Don Quixote. On the appearance of the French match, the political bishop dropped the Spanish, and was as earnestly conning his French task—which he appears, however hastily he got through the grammar, and however unaccented his orthography, to have sufficiently well accomplished by the smiles of the French Princess. This perhaps is the only instance on record, where a learned Bishop learnt two languages—to cajole a Queen, and possess her ear by whispering in her own idiom.

The Lord-Keeper was doomed to fall, but he was a body too weighty and considerable to be precipitated at a blow. His genius rebuked even the impetuous spirit of Buckingham; nor was the elected counsellor of his father, whose mind seemed wisdom, and whose voice seemed prophecy, lightly revered by the royal son. Charles appears for some time to have been awed by the statesman, whom he equally feared to disgrace or to employ.

The intended removal of the Lord-Keeper threw "the Duke's cabinet," as it was called, into a variety of dilemmas; perhaps the greatest was the difficulty of framing some decent excuse for the act. They proposed his immediate dismissal, on the plea of certain accusations, for which afterwards they were to look for their proofs in his conversations and his letters, both of which seem to have been occasionally free and pungent. This having reached the Lord-Keeper's ear, he let them know by a friendly messenger, that at the council-table, speaking in the style of the times, "He would not fly the tilt,"—but if they designed first to punish, and afterwards to judge a man, he bade them have a care, lest such a preposterous course would not make every man in England feel himself in danger. The greatness of Williams lay not in his place, but in his popularity; and no one was yet found hardy enough to beard the lion in his lair.

But Buckingham and Laud had not relented, and the King was urged to rid himself of one whom they considered as a communicator with his enemies, and whose counsels tended to lower his sovereignty. Once more, Williams, in a letter to the King, asserts that he could not have held any intercourse with *those dangerous persons of the House of Commons*—these were his

former "sticklers" and "stirring men"—and at the same time have concealed this intercourse in "a family of sixty persons," of which his large establishment consisted.

It is evident that Charles, notwithstanding the importunity of Buckingham, would not consent to dismiss the Lord-Keeper with any impeachment of his services. A less painful decline, a smoother passage, was to break the abruptness of the fall.

At length a searching eye peered into a dormant resolution in council, which, whatever had been the occasion that gave rise to it, neither James nor Charles had thought on—that the Keeper of the Great Seal of England should not continue in that high office longer than a limited period, to be renewed every three years.

On this principle, a message was conveyed by Lord Conway, to command the Lord-Keeper to deliver up the Great Seal at "Allhallow-tide," and a desire was intimated, that his lordship should retire to his bishoprick.

The Lord-Keeper now read his fate. He fell with dignity, and made his terms. His firmness carried every point throughout the whole of this political transaction. He demanded to be admitted to a last conference with the King. Charles, who in more than one instance has shown that he was conscious of the infirmity of his own warm temper, declared that he would not, in conversation, assign any reasons for his lordship's dismissal; and it seems that the King was troubled, lest this subdulous and eloquent man should shake his resolution.

It was therefore preconcerted, as is not uncommon on such occasions, that this painful topic should not be touched on. A letter from Williams was presented to his Majesty after dinner, while the writer waited for an audience; in this again he protests, that he was "as great a stranger as any lord who served his Majesty, to all *those disaffected persons who appeared so opposite to the royal ends in the House of Commons.*" One more description of the rising opposition.

The King admitted him into his presence, and twice held out his hand to kiss, granting all his requests, relating to his places and pensions, for which he betrayed great anxiety, and farther, the King renewed his promise of future church preferment. Williams intreated the King would intercede for him with the

Lord Duke. Charles replied, "that it became not him, a King, to take up the quarrels between his subjects; nor had the Duke ever expressed such enmity in his presence." "Your Majesty," said the Lord-Keeper, "may hear reports of my discontent, which I pray may not be credited, comfortable as I feel in your Majesty's favour." The King replied, that "he would do him that justice," adding, that "he little valued reports." Presenting his hand once more to the discarded statesman, the King dismissed him with a smiling countenance, and a cordial farewell.

When Sir John Suckling brought the warrant to receive the great seal, Williams gave it with an unusual solemnity of form, which may account for Heylin's observation, that "it was unwillingly done." The dismissed Lord-Keeper inclosed the great seal in a costly cabinet in Sir John's presence; but he refused to trust the key to Sir John's hand. Folding it up in a letter addressed to the King, he sealed it with the episcopal seal of Lincoln. This would appear to have been designed either as a reprimand for the inferior rank of the messenger, or as a last hint to the sovereign, that he should be cautious into whose hands he confided the custody.

From that moment, with no diminished greatness, Bishop Williams retreated to the princely hospitality of his seat, where he busied himself in his studies and the cultivation of his grounds, and, at that day a novel taste, in forming a gallery of pictures. But his symposia attracted a closer observation from the freedom of his conversation, and some cursory strictures on the political movements of those inferior minds, who had ejected the master-spirit from their councils.

Bishop Williams, great in his retirement, still presented the same object of uneasiness to the jealous Laud, who surrounded him with spies and eaves-droppers, too faithful reporters of the biting sarcasms of his late rival. Williams was teased by the petty persecutions of the irritable Laud. Their principles were for ever irreconcilable. These political rivals stood on the sharpest and the extremest points of opposition. Laud stigmatised Williams as a Puritan; Williams inveighed against Laud as a Papist: the limited capacity of Laud would have approached without uniting with the Church of Rome, and inculcated pas-

sive obedience; the hardier character of Williams had cast him among the innovators of the age, with whom he went on, till he found that bishopricks were in danger: Laud detested Williams for his deficient zeal in church discipline, and Williams held Laud in contempt for his unstatesmanlike qualities. Often must Williams have remembered the prescient sagacity of James the First, when Laud was thrust on him by Williams himself and Buckingham: "Laud," observed James, "is a restless spirit, to be kept back from all places of authority, for he cannot see when matters are well, but loves to toss and change and bring things to a reformation floating in his own brain." And when at length the old monarch, as was usual with him, yielded to their importunities, he exclaimed, "Take him to you, but on my saul you'll repent it!" This was not the only political prediction of his father which Charles lived to see verified.

At length Williams overwhelmed Laud with all his learning, his wit, and his severity, in the volume which he published against him; but the vindictive Laud, with a meaner victory, inflicted ruin on his antagonist in dragging him before the inquisitorial Star-chamber.

Such mutual persecutions do the heads of parties endure from each other,—and so often do they involve the public in their private hatreds.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CORONATION: POLITICAL ETIQUETTE.

AT this gloomy moment the coronation was to take place. The King had been compelled to practise the most humiliating economy, and the coronation, as a contemporary letter-writer observes, seemed a private, not a public ceremony. The customary pomp of the procession from the Tower through the City to Whitehall was omitted; the alleged reason was, "to save the charges for more noble undertakings," that is, for means to carry on the Spanish war without supplies.

The Bishop of Lincoln, as Dean of Westminster, should have assisted at the service of the coronation, but receiving no summons to attend, he addressed his late patron. The corona-

tion had stirred a courtier's flame in a bosom still agitated by its reminiscences. The Bishop thus writes to the Duke—
 “ Beseeching your Grace *to revive a creature of your own, struck dead only with your displeasure*, by bringing of me to kiss his Majesty's hand, with whom I took leave in no disfavour at all. I was never hitherto brought into the presence of a king *by any saint besides yourself*; turn me not over to *offer my prayers at new altars.*”

This last paragraph is an extraordinary amalgamation of flattery and menace, and the whole an example of that sycophantic blasphemy, which the court-bishops of that day carried to an incredible excess; a perpetual blot on these political prelates! Poets, mad with poverty and dedication, at all times have transgressed on decency and sense in their bribing panegyrics; but the present inflated court style in epistolary composition was not the natural style of that day, for the letters of Mede, and other contemporaries, to which I have so often referred, are examples of colloquial force and simplicity, free of those pedantic and far-fetched allusions.

The bishop received a royal command to depute one of the prebendaries; this, to use the quaint style of Heylin, “ put him into some dispute with himself;” a dispute, however, from which he extricated himself with his usual prudence. As he did not care to honour his co-rival Laud, and as the putting him aside by electing another, might have gained him the ungracious reproach of malice, the Dean furnished his Majesty with a list of the prebendaries, that the King might make his own election. Laud was nominated.

The coronation, it was imagined, would prove a joyous season, in an oblivion of all miscarriages, and a renewal of the loyalty of the people, whose imagination, awakened by their senses, would be struck by the hallowing ceremonies, and the binding oaths of that regal solemnity. But Fate had commenced her work early with him who was to be crowned, and the scene which naturally tended to reconcile the popular spirit, aroused its jealousy under the conduct of Laud.

It is a curious fact, that, among many things left unreformed by the Reformation, the forms and order of the coronation had retained the rites, the ceremonies, and the style of the Roman

Pontificals. Edward the Sixth and Elizabeth had been crowned after their predecessors' custom, and the coronation of James, which had been got up in haste, had retained many ceremonies of the old leaven. Charles, therefore, issued a commission that this solemn ceremony should be altered in happier accordance with the spirit of the Church of England. Alterations and additions were left to Laud. Among the innovations he restored a clause in a prayer, that "the King might have Peter's key of discipline, and Paul's doctrine." The clause had been omitted since the days of Henry the Sixth, as it seemed to confer a higher ecclesiastical jurisdiction on the sovereign than accorded with the Papal supremacy. As extremes of opposition at length meet when opposite means are pointing to the same end, and as under a different name the same thing may be concealed, so the Pontiff and the Presbyter, however they reverse each other's scheme, finally agree that the monarchs of the world are "to lick the dust of the feet of the Church." This restoration, therefore, now offended the Puritans as well as it had formerly the Papists. The jealousies of the Commons were awakened by another clause, in which Laud, placing the sovereign next to the Divinity, ranks the clergy in an odious pre-eminence over the laity, and exhorts the King to mediate between them. This imprudent division of subjects was not forgotten many years after, for, in the trial of Laud, the Long Parliament accused him of altering the coronation oath, and of conferring on the King absolute power, to the detriment of the people.

Some persons at the coronation watched with jealous eyes, and listened with a malicious ear. Laud, having accidentally found an ancient crucifix among the antique regalia, which was always locked up with great secrecy in the abbey, and brought out on these occasions, and which consisted of the staff, the sword, the spurs, and the sceptre of Edward the Confessor—the Bishop displayed this ancient crucifix with great form on the altar, and this was alleged as evidence of a papistical prelate! but in restoring that clause which transferred the Pope's supremacy to the King as the Head of the Church, Laud had performed a Protestant's part.

As this too was an age of omens, trifles as light as air were afterwards expounded into presages. The King's grave character

had already at the meeting of his Parliament given some indications of that solemn dignity which would consecrate every great public ceremony—and in the present, contrary to the custom of his predecessors, who when crowned were clothed in purple, the King now appeared in white satin. Perhaps he fancifully considered that the day of his coronation was as the marriage of the sovereign with his people; but the rejection of the regal purple for the robe of purity was variously commented on. Heylin, considering it ominous, as “fore-signifying that he should divest himself of his regal majesty, which might have kept him from affront and scorn, to rely solely on the innocence of a virtuous life, which finally exposed him to calamitous ruin.” A wing of the gold dove on the sceptre was discovered to be quite broken off, “by what casualty God himself knows,” observes Fuller, who calls the omen, “a maim on the emblem of peace.” Another omen was the unlucky text of his chaplain, “I will give thee a crown of life.” Apoc. ii. 10. This was thought to be a text reminding the King more of his death than his crown; and the expounders of presages discovered, that it seemed “as if the King was to listen to his funeral sermon when he was alive, as if he were to have none when he was to be buried.”

Such was the temper of the age; and though these, to us, are very foolish trifles, yet the modes of public feeling are to be recognised by them, as a straw or a feather, light as they are, serve to point the course of the wind, as much as the most elaborate weather-vane.

The Queen refused to be present in the Abbey church at the ceremony of the coronation; and the Marquis de Blainville, the French ambassador, who had recently arrived, had also excused himself. His motive was evident; for though Blainville, among the apologies offered to the Master of the Ceremonies, had declared that, from respect to the King of England, he would have risked making a small breach in his conscience, being bound by his religion not to assist at our prayers and church ceremonies, yet it would be incongruous that he should be a spectator where the Queen, his master's sister, had excused her participation of the solemnity of crowning, and even her presence; and to this declaration he added, as he was perpetually

doing throughout his short embassy, some captious "exceptions" of etiquette. A place was offered to be fitted up for her Majesty, but she chose for her station the window of an apartment at the gate-house of the Palace-yard. The good Catholics made it a *jour de fête*; the Queen and her ladies were seen "frisking and dancing in the room," during the procession and on its return, in company with the Marquis, who attended not as ambassador, but in his private character. Henrietta was never crowned Queen of England; and, for a long while, she did not seek to create popular favour by any appearance of public regard, estranged as were her tastes, her language, and her manners, from those of the people.

The refusal of the French ambassador to be present at the coronation occasioned much inquiry. Was the spirit of Catholicism implacable? or was it the prognostic of a war? In that golden age of court-etiquette, when the peace of empires sometimes was disturbed by the jealousies of the drawing-room, this unexpected absence of the French threw into consternation the Venetian ambassador, who presumed to be his equal and his ally. This creature of etiquette, "tremblingly alive all o'er," breathed only by the nicest punctilios, and rested the glory, if not the existence of his republic, on the jealous maintenance of being considered *pare alle teste coronate*; an unquestioned parity with crowned heads.

When precedence becomes politics in the wars of peace, the diary of a Master of the Ceremonies becomes a record of mischances and misadventures, of despair and of stratagem, which must be consulted to be credited. A visit out of time, may be a visit never to be returned; an informal invitation may occasion a fit of indisposition; or a reception at the stairs'-head, or at the door, may produce a protest or a remonstrance; and a political contest about a chair, or a stool, may open a campaign. It happened unhappily for our Venetian victim of etiquette, that he had recently been most deeply affected by an irregular invitation to the funeral of the late monarch. His *Excellentissimo* did not deny that he had received "the Blacks in the same full proportion for quality and goodness of cloth, as were sent to the two French ambassadors, who were then at the English Court." But Sir Lewis Lewknor, our first Master of

the Cérémonies, was suspected to be of the Spanish faction, and not disinclined to put a slight on the jealous Venetian, who stood with the French. The two French ambassadors, the resident and the extraordinary, having inspected the *programme* of the procession, on a sudden changed their mind, and refused to assist at the solemnity. The Venetian, in consequence, was compelled to invent some excuse for his own absence, and, with Italian *astuzia*, he fell upon the Master of the Ceremonies for an informality: a message having been sent, which should have been personally delivered. On this the remonstrance was so serious, and the Spanish partiality of Sir Lewis Lewknor so strongly insinuated, that to appease the Venetian, our Master of the Ceremonies was actually put under restraint, and suspended from his office. Yet the real cause of the Venetian's mortification, as the secret was rumoured among the diplomatic corps, was, that one of the French ambassadors could not stomach having a third person—and that, too, the Venetian ambassador!—marching in even rank with the representatives of France.

The Venetian, thus already too sensitive by the malice of a former French ambassador at the funeral, was now thunder-struck that the same affront had again been put on him at the coronation. This forlorn victim of political etiquette, in his dilemma, debated the whole affair with himself—"If the French ambassador be absent at the coronation, I cannot be present; not from any scruples of conscience as the Frenchman pretends, for I must understand it as an act of state, and not of religion. I cannot appear by the side of the upstart ambassador of the new States, a power of yesterday! without incurring the odium not only of joining with a heretic, but with a man whom the Spaniard would not sit with in his Majesty's presence—a man whom he calls 'the representative of his Master's vassals and rebels.'" The affair ended miserably for the Venetian. He who would have died rather than have been seen in public violating a point of etiquette, now tried, by the connivance and aid of the assistant Master of the Ceremonies, to slink into some corner where, unseen, he might be present at the coronation; but his late unrelenting persecution of the Master of the Ceremonies himself had extinguished all sympathy in the breast of the assistant, Sir John Finett, who observed, with equal judg-

ment and malice, that if he attended on the Venetian, his official character would betray his Excellency to be a public Minister; and as no man more learnedly than himself could decide in all *punctilios*, as indeed his Excellency had of late most memorably proved, he must excuse the assistant Master of the Ceremonies from doing that which might again bring the Master of the Ceremonies himself into disgrace. Such was the history of this forlorn victim of etiquette, who had to memorialise his Ducal Republic, that he was neither present at the funeral of the one King, nor the coronation of the other,—because from malice or design their French allies had hindered him from taking his station *pare alle teste coronate*.

CHAPTER X.

THE EXPEDITION TO CADIZ.—THE EARL OF WIMBLEDON.

THE first Parliament abandoned the King. Charles was left without other means to dispatch the army and fleet, in a late season, than by voluntary loans on privy seals. These were circular letters, in which were stated the name of the person to whom they were addressed, and the sum required from him, the amount varying according to his condition. They took their title from bearing the private seal of the King. When those who either delayed or excused themselves from complying with the request, discovered that they were reported to the Exchequer, they were taught that when a king requests a voluntary loan, his request implies a forced one.

It was undoubtedly the King's intention to pay off the privy-seals by some future grant; yet many considered that the next Parliament would not sanction the people giving what they themselves had denied. If the form of levying these contributions at an immediate urgency was unpopular, yet it bore no character of tyranny. The loan exacted was as small as the style was humble. The privy-seals specified that—"This loan, without inconvenience to any, is only intended for the service of the public; such private helps for public services, which cannot be refused, had been often resorted to; but this being *the first*

time that we have required any thing in this kind, we require but *that sum which few men would deny a friend.*" The claims on great personages did not exceed twenty pounds. The King was willing to suffer any mortification rather than endure the obdurate insults of the Parliament—even that of the mockery of an alms-basket; for by letters of the time which I have seen, the charity of shillings was accepted! With such trivial contributions, demanded with a warm appeal to their feelings, was the King to send out a fleet, with an army of ten thousand men.

The political design of this expedition was to alarm the coasts of Spain; and thus to draw to various points the forces of the enemy. "Our allies," says Buckingham, who opened his cabinet secret to the Commons, "can only scratch with the King of Spain, taking a town to-day, and losing it to-morrow; now they will be strengthened by the dispersion of the Spanish power by land. By this kind of war you send no coin out of the land; you issue nothing but beef, mutton, and powder, and the kingdom is not impoverished, but *may make good returns,*"—that is to say, let us wage a predatory war—hostilities so undefined in their nature, that our enemies formerly considered us as a people of pirates. Indeed the Minister lets us a little more into his secret hopes; let us listen to him. If it be asked "Where is the enemy? the King bids you name the enemy yourselves. As you issue nothing that is loss, so you will bring home something that is gain, and henceforward maintain the war *by its perquisites.* When the enemy is declared, you may have letters of marque, none shall be denied; yourselves may go and have *the honey of the business.*" It is said that an occasional Spanish war was always popular in this country; no doubt, for "the honey of the business"—when Spain had her galleons.

Like many similar attempts from the days of Charles the First, to those of the great Lord Chatham, and to our own, this predatory attack concluded in a nullity.

It is the consequence too of this principle of action, that such predatory expeditions instigate the enemy in return to menace our own shores. Ireland was now alarmed by invasion from a Dunkirk fleet, designing to land an army, in case they failed in a descent on some parts of the English coast. While we were

hastening to attack Cadiz, London was in dismay ; “ the trained bands were to be in readiness with complete armour, to march upon all alarms to what place soever.”

The history of this expedition offers no imperfect picture of what such enterprises have but too often proved.

A veteran admiral, beloved by the seamen, put aside to make room for a chief commander unskilled in naval operations, raised an inextinguishable jealousy between the united services of land and sea. Each bitterly laid the fault of the failure on the other, but while they were retorting and recriminating, possibly neither party deserved the disgrace which they incurred by an ill-planned expedition.

It was rashly determined to attack Spain, without having fixed even on a point. A plan of attack, drawn up by the old Admiral, Sir Robert Mansel, was not attended to, and he was removed from his command for Sir Edward Cecil, created on this occasion Earl of Wimbledon, and made Commander-in-chief. He was a military man who had grown grey in the wars of the Netherlands, but was totally unacquainted with naval operations.

All our historians condemn this unlucky veteran, and agree with Dr. Lingard, that the public voice pronounced that he was unequal to so important a command ; but of what matter is the subject of this public voice often composed, and who are the utterers of this voice ?

Perhaps this Earl of Wimbledon has received more than his share of the disgrace. Historians have usually neither space nor inclination for some necessary details. I shall give a series of absurdities, that are sometimes instructive as well as amusing—and they may teach a Commander-in-chief not to command those who have not yet learnt to obey. We may conceive the relaxed discipline of the army during a peace of twenty years. We had some able military men who had seen service under the New States of Holland. That young republic was a nursery for military adventurers ; but our soldiers and our seamen had long been unaccustomed to warlike enterprise. They were now hurried together to go on an unknown service, with little affection for the King or his Minister, who had never mixed in their ranks. The talk of the town ran on this mysterious

design, while the Government seemed so destitute of adequate means, that the very household of the King was reduced to contribute its small savings. "The beggarliness" of the march to Plymouth, which is the term Lord Wimbledon uses, was a popular subject of raillery. They were laying wagers that the fleet would not go, and they punned on the names of some captains, among whom were Bag, Cook, and Love; for which, said they, the fleet would not speed the better; for they were Bag without money; Cook without meat; and Love without charity. It was also probable the party of the discarded Admiral, who were complaining of "young and single Council," alluding to the Duke—and Lord Cromwell, in a confidential letter, reported to him "the discourse of the world." If Buckingham went not out with the fleet, his personal bravery would be suspected; if it prospered, it would be thought no act of his; if unsuccessful, the blame would be laid wholly on him. How the thoughtless Minister felt on this occasion we know not, but he was too far engaged to deliberate, and every day pressed for the departure of the fleet.

The Commander-in-chief, from the first moment, despaired of success, and reluctantly complied with the desire of his royal Master, or rather his injudicious patron, the Duke. "This expedition I was content to take upon me, though against my judgment, as I did secretly deliver to his Majesty and your Grace before I departed from the coast."

A character of hopeless indecision is fatal to military success; but the veteran, who was now to be the victim, felt his disobedience to his Sovereign's command stronger than his own particular judgment. "I would rather have been torn in pieces than to have gone with so many ignorant and malicious people." The truth is, the opposition party was already formed, before they set sail, and the deepest anxiety and incessant occupation clouded over the faculties, or exhausted the frame of the despairing Commander-in-chief. "When my adversaries slept I waked, when they made good cheer I fasted, and when they rested I toiled."

At length eighty ships, with ten regiments of a thousand men each, sailed from Plymouth. A storm disperses them. When they collect, a council of war is held to fix on a point of

attack, for their instructions left them at liberty to choose. The Duke and his council left all things to chance; this was not a greater evil than the blunders they had unwarily committed; had they taken on themselves to prescribe the course the fleet was to have pursued, they might not have blundered less.

The Earl of Essex, Vice-Admiral, warned by the glory his father had won at Cadiz, deemed it right for him to attack the Spanish fleet; but difficulties were started, and they debated so long, that the coast had time to be alarmed.

The Earl of Essex, we are told by some, wished to attack the Spanish fleet; but Lord Wimbledon is surprised "that the Earl is not called into question for letting pass the King of Spain's ships that offered him fight." Probably some heroes are disposed for fighting at one hour, and not at another.

It is agreed that the ships in the port of Cadiz might have been taken, the Dutch ships, which had leagued with us on this occasion, were not wanting, but twenty English ones never stirred. Wimbledon asserts, that he has proved several persons guilty, whom he could never get examined by the council. Wimbledon went personally from ship to ship to enforce his commands. A body of seamen were landed with difficulty, but being resisted, they retreated. Sir John Burroughs, one of our ablest officers, who was afterwards fated to perish in another expedition, at the head of his regiment, attacked and carried the fort of Puntal. The troops now landed; and the only enemy they had to encounter were the wine-cellars of Cadiz. Every man was his own vintner, as a contemporary expresses it; and had the fugitive Spaniards returned on such invaders, they had found an easy conquest.

The Commander-in-chief had published his orders expressly to warn them of the Spanish wines, but his undisciplined troops had not yet been habituated to the severity of orders from headquarters, and the General gladly re-shipped his bacchanalian troops—no ships were burnt in the harbour—and they left the coast of Spain in no worse condition by their inroad, than what the morning showed the Spaniards in a vast number of empty casks.

Their intemperance was punished by sickness, which spread

in the ships—and by the ingenious contrivance of taking two sick men out of the sick ships to supply their places by two sound men, they propagated the contagion through the whole fleet. They lay in wait twenty days for the Plate-fleet, which either passed in the night-time, or the day after they sailed ; they could no longer keep their station, and returned to Plymouth with the loss of a thousand men, not occasioned by the enemy. The Earl of Wimbledon was for a considerable time denied the King's presence. An inquiry was opened to criminate the military veteran,—journal was opposed to journal—opinions of landsmen were given on seamen, and of sailors on the tactics of the military. “He that commandeth is but one man, and the rest are many thousands”—pathetically exclaims this hapless Commander-in-chief—and he has declared that “many who should have assisted me, were more careful in betraying me than in forwarding his Majesty's service.”

This inquiry, like so many others of the kind, got more intricate and confused the farther they proceeded ; accusers were themselves accused—witnesses were themselves criminals. In the cross interests of parties, one shielded the guilty, and the other aspersed the innocent. All parties were blamed, but none could be punished.

So unhappily for the feelings of the youthful monarch, terminated his first great enterprise. Glory had been changed into dishonour ! Scarcely had a few months elapsed since he was seated on the throne ere he was doomed to taste that bitterness of government which sickens the secret heart of majesty. Already thorns were in the ermine of his crown—and although he had not himself committed a single censurable act, yet he had found a Parliament hostile to the purposes for which they had clamoured—an army disorganised—a navy discontented—the affections of the people declining. His partial hope was still leaning on Buckingham, while he was looking for his urgent wants to be supplied by those who were intent to refuse their aid ! There were greater evils in futurity !

CHAPTER XI.

MEETING OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT.—THE CONTENTION BETWEEN THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND THE EARL OF BRISTOL.

FROM the commencement to the disastrous termination of the ill-concerted and ill-conducted expedition to Cadiz, which from the destitution of Parliamentary supplies had been hastened by the most disorderly ways, Buckingham had been absent from England, actively negotiating in person at the Hague with the northern powers, a treaty respecting the restoration of the Palatinate, the incessant object of popular clamour, and for neglecting which the pacific counsels of the late Monarch had been reproached with pusillanimity.

Now the scene had changed. A spirited and enterprising young Prince, under the influence of the Minister whom he loved too well, and the Minister under the influence of popular feeling, which he too vainly courted, had adopted rather the politics of the English public, than the policy of the English Cabinet. Buckingham, on his return from Spain, had been saluted as “the saviour of his country,” and there was nothing this warm and volatile man aspired to more ardently than popularity.

Buckingham was in earnest, for it was in a stormy season, and in considerable peril, losing a vessel in the passage, that he had reached the Hague to hasten the treaties by his own personal zeal. After a month's absence, he returned home to witness the most sudden mutability of his fortune! All his anxieties, his official labours, and according to his statement, large sacrifices of his private fortune had been devoted to this disastrous expedition, and now he had to encounter a more unexpected storm than that which had dispersed the fleets, and which, as sudden, but more terrible, was to overwhelm the Minister.

It is probable that a party against the Royal favourite had been silently forming, and now found a voice in his ill-fortune; but it seems that the overt personal attacks came unexpectedly.

Whatever the world thought, Buckingham in his own mind felt the change that was prepared for him undeserved, and this feeling is finely touched on by Sir Henry Wotton. "It could not but trouble him the more by happening when he came freshly returned out of a meritorious employment in his inward conceit and hope."* Buckingham found that he was even reproached for not having himself taken the command of the army and navy, and the Lord High Admiral and Commander-in-chief was accused of sparing his person from an ignoble motive. Sir John Eliot taunted him in the House when he said, "the Lord-General has the whole command both by sea and land, and can this great General think it sufficient to put in his deputy, and stay at home?" The intrepidity and daring of Buckingham yielded to no man's, as was afterwards proved. Charles knew that in this respect the character of his friend was unjustly aspersed, and the King did not wish to see his Minister's courage put to the test, when the venture was not absolutely required; but it was probably the bitter taunt of Buckingham's unsparing enemy, soon echoed by the public, which induced the Duke to take the command in person in his future fatal expeditions.

Buckingham had a foresight of the approaching Parliament. He took certain precautionary measures, and was particularly desirous of keeping out of the House his future great opponent, Sir John Eliot, among others. Bishop Williams, who was always stirring at a crisis, though now in disgrace at Court, pretended that, in communicating with Buckingham's enemies, he was warding off the threatened attacks of a barking opposition. It was, however, a dubious argument which he urged to protect the Minister, repeatedly reminding the party, that when "a beast got into the midst of a field of wheat, if the neighbours ran in and hunted it about with their dogs, they would run down more corn than five beasts could devour." Williams well knew, that the simile was no argument for "the dogs" themselves. With the Duke's friends he used another counsel. He urged them to advise the Duke to retire to some great embassy, "as distant as that of Vienna, if he durst trust

* *Conceit* here means *idea*.

the King of Spain's nearest ally." To them Williams's advice seemed but an ambiguous friendship, as if this politic genius looked to clear the stage, and himself again to play a part to which he had been long used.

Charles summoned his second Parliament, as he said, "in the midst of necessities," and to learn from them "how he was to frame his course and councils." To induce their compliance for immediate supplies, he laid before the Commons the most urgent reasons. "The unseasonable slowness may produce as ill effect as a denial," said the message.

The Commons, as duteously as ever, profess that "no King was ever dearer to his people, and that they really intend to assist his Majesty in such a way as may make him safe at home and feared abroad." They acknowledge—and this point has not been sufficiently observed—that "they will support that cause wherein your Majesty and your allies are now justly engaged." They sanction the principles and the design of the war entered into, while they pertinaciously are withholding the necessary supplies!

Before the supplies, the King was first to accept the information and advice of Parliament in discovering the causes of "the great evils, and redress their grievances." The King accepted this "as a satisfactory answer," and thanked them for it. In regard to grievances, Charles said, "for your clause of presenting of grievances, I take that for a parenthesis and not a condition; apply yourselves to redress grievances, but not to *inquire* after grievances." The fact was, that the Commons were preparing an impeachment of his Minister; and the King's style first betrays angered feelings. "You specially aim at the Duke of Buckingham; I wonder what hath so altered your affections towards him." Charles felt that the Commons designed to control the Government itself: and in his view, he could only ascribe their antipathy to Buckingham to the capriciousness of public favour and to the envy of a few.

The Commons had now begun to practise the refined art of voting supplies, without giving them. They were to be received virtually on some "condition;" thus avoiding the term to which the King objected, but not the practice.

The affair, however, was not long doubtful. Dr. Turner, a

physician, a class of men which it is unusual to find in Parliament, was chosen for the onset against the Duke. There were also rumours of a close intelligence, which had for some time been kept up with certain persons in the Upper House.

Dr. Turner adopted an extraordinary mode for impeaching the Minister; or, as the King described it, "The House had emboldened one to do a strange act in a strange way." He drew up six queries. They were soon commonly called "Buckingham's Queries." Their object was, to inquire if the Duke were not the cause of the six monstrous grievances therein specified? concluding, that "all these were famed to be so."

This led to a singular debate, where "common fame and rumour" were separated by a curious distinction. "The general voice, the *vox populi* is common fame; and if common fame might not be admitted as an accuser, great men would be the only safe men; for no private person dare venture to inquire into their actions." The House resolved, that "common fame is a good ground of proceeding for this House, whether by inquiring or presenting the complaints to the King and Lords." This was a bold and novel principle. Thus a Minister was liable to be impeached merely on *rumours*, which Parliamentary philology had discriminated by its own dictionary of synonyms. It is, however, rather curious to observe, by the "remonstrances" of the Commons, that they did not think that "rumours" *against themselves* should be thus elevated into evidence. They close their remonstrance by "beseeching that his Majesty would not give ear to the officious reports of private persons for their own ends." Were the Commons certain that the reports which they themselves so eagerly adopted, might not also have originated in *private persons for their own ends*?

Some of "the bold speakers," as the heads of the opposition are designated in the private letters of the times, had now risen into notice. They poured themselves forth in a vehement, not to say, seditious style, with more daring invectives than had ever before thundered in the House of Commons. The party against the Duke had now found a voice. One had declared that the cause of all the grievances, as was said of Louis the Eleventh of France, is, that "all the King's council rides on one horse."

Charles now sent for both Houses to meet him at Whitehall. Thanking the Lords for their care of the kingdom, he was sorry he owed no thanks "to their fellow-house of the Commons." "I must tell you, that I am come here to show you your errors, and as I may call it, unparliamentary proceedings in this Parliament; but I do not despair, that this Parliament shall end comfortably, though, at the beginning it hath had some rubs." The King left to the Lord-Keeper to say the rest. His lordship assured them, that "when the irregular humours of *some particular persons* were settled, the King would hear and answer all just grievances; but the King would have them also to know that he was equally jealous of the contempt of his royal rights, which his Majesty would not suffer to be violated by any pretended course of parliamentary liberty." The King considered the Parliament as his council; but there was a difference between counselling and controlling, and between liberty and the abuse of liberty. He particularised their conduct in sanctioning the strange unparliamentary way of Dr. Turner, who, without any ground of "knowledge in himself, advised the House to inquire concerning the Duke of Buckingham,—it was an example which the King could not suffer, though it were against his meanest servant. His Majesty wondered at the foolish insolency* of that man who could think that his Majesty should be drawn out to offer such a sacrifice so unworthy of a king or a good master." The Lord-Keeper closed by observing, that his Majesty "holds as insufferable" that they had signed a warrant for the signet-office to produce their records, books and private notes—made for his Majesty's service.

The King resuming his speech, remarkably reproached the Commons. "Now that you have all things according to your wishes, and that *I am so far engaged, that you think there is no retreat, now you begin to set the dice and make your own game.* It is not a parliamentary way, nor is it a way to deal with a king. Mr. Clement Coke told you, 'It was better to be eaten up by a foreign enemy, than to be destroyed at home.' Indeed I think it more honour for a king to be invaded and almost

* This expression indicated a personal feeling of the King's, which I shall notice hereafter.

destroyed by a foreign enemy, than to be despised by his own subjects." *

There was a lofty tone in this reprimand, ill-adapted to soothe the inimical and jealous spirits which had to listen; it was indeed the indignant voice of Sovereignty in its wounded feelings—and since Mr. Clement Coke had elevated the tone of debate into something like heroism, it was not irrelevant in Charles, in the exultation of his emotions, to have responded by a sentiment equally heroic. †

But there was a sting in the close of this address, which reminded them that "Parliaments are altogether in my power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution; therefore, as I find the fruits of them good or evil, they were to continue, *or not to be.*" He finally conjured them "to look to the distressed affairs of the kingdom, so they would do themselves honour, and he hoped that all Christendom shall feel the good of it."

The Commons retreated after their lecture, closed their doors, and debated in an open committee, on certain parts of these speeches. Whether they dwelt on those ominous words, *or not to be*, (the germ of the civil wars,) does not appear by their "Remonstrance." All that we know is, that Charles commanded

* That the reader may have a specimen of that sort of comment with which the preconceived notions of party-writers have always so cruelly treated the memory of this hapless Prince, I shall give the remarks of Mr. Brodie upon this passage; and if the reader admire either the discernment or the feelings, he will thank me for informing him that he may find a hundred similar instances in the greater portion of Mr. Brodie's pages. This writer says, "By stating, that he thought it more honour for a king to be invaded and almost destroyed by a foreign enemy, than to be despised by his own subjects, he *distinctly declared, that in his opinion he reigned for himself alone, and not for the benefit of his people*, whose utmost miseries, for they must suffer the evils to which he alluded, were in his idea trivial, in comparison of his being crossed in his arbitrary measures."—ii. 104.

† The Commons *deny* that these were the express words of Mr. Coke—that he spoke nothing seditious, "howsoever he let fall some few words whereat the House being displeased, it was expressed by a general and instant check." Charles was then more right in the spirit than in the letter; but to have produced "a general and instant check" from the House,—that is from the majority, who were not yet seasoned by the party,—it is not impossible that Mr. Coke may have delivered something worse than what had been conveyed to the King. We learn from another quarter, that Sir Edward Coke reprimanded his son very severely for his words, and would not receive him for a considerable time after. (Carte, iv., 156.) The Commons' denial of the King's accusation altogether was unworthy of themselves.—Thus it happened also on a subsequent occasion.

the Duke to explain some misunderstandings to which his language on this occasion had given rise ; this Buckingham did in a most conciliatory speech, and by the King's command informed them that his Majesty intends to trust to a committee of both Houses to take a view of his whole estate, " the defects of which are not fit for the eyes of a multitude, nor any weakness that may bring shame upon us abroad." The personal distresses of the monarch were humiliating, whatever might be his style.

Buckingham took this opportunity of addressing them on his own behalf. He gave them an ample account of his arduous negotiations ; of his suspected religion, which, had he had any ill inclinations, might have allowed him to have been tempted by the offers made him in Spain. He assured them that nothing was adopted by single counsels, and for the proof appealed " to a journal which my Lord Conway keeps,"* and that if the late expedition had proved unsuccessful, it had not been without its use.

There is an apparent openness in the speech, which gives a favourable idea of the man. It might have been a premeditated address, and perhaps was written for him, which was not unusual ; but the sentiments were his, and could only have originated in his instructions. He speaks of himself not without modesty : " I should be glad, before I end, to say something of myself ; but I shall request your favourable construction, for I fear that I shall offend."—" If in any of these employments my errors may be showed me, I shall take him for my best friend that will manifest them in particular. I have bent all my thoughts on nothing but my master's honour, the service of the State, and safety of them both. I never had any end of my own, and that may be perceived and proved by the expense of mine own estate. I am ashamed to speak it, and it would become another man's tongue better than mine own." But " his own estate" had entirely been derived from the prodigal favours heaped on him by his royal master. This is obvious ; but what is not obvious, and which I am anxious shortly to show, is, that Buckingham was zealously active for public ends, and that the

* This " Journal" has not escaped the ravages of the steward, the cats, and the rats, who committed such depredations on the Conway Papers. I could not discover it among them.

favourite was in earnest to merit the honours of a patriot. At his death, his family discovered that he had supplied unlimited sums to the King to aid him in carrying on the war, amidst the royal distresses, and had kept no vouchers or any accounts whatever.

“ I am accused by common fame to be the cause of the loss of the narrow seas. I have always had twelve ships on the coasts, and allowance but for four—the rest my own care supplied.

“ When you know the truth, and when all shall appear, I hope I shall stand right in your opinions. It is no time to pick quarrels one with another—follow not examples. Gondomar and Inojosa would have had my head when you thought me worthy of a salute. Now, though I confess there may be some errors I will not justify, yet they are not gross defects as the world would make them appear. They are no errors of wilfulness, nor of corruption, nor oppressing of the people, nor injustice.”

“ Now, gentlemen, you that were eminent Parliament-men when this council was first given, make good your own engagement for the honour of your King and your own safety; and you that are young men in these active times, gain honour and reputation, which is almost sunk in the glory of your predecessors.”

There was a spirit in this address designed to infuse confidence among those who could feel none in the mercurial Minister. Neither the King's explanation, nor the Minister's conciliatory tone, delayed the articles which the Commons were preparing against him, while at the same moment Buckingham witnessed a rising adversary in one whom of all men he most dreaded,—the Earl of Bristol. He had hitherto succeeded in removing this nobleman to a distance from the Court.

The quarrel of two jealous and powerful Ministers, both entangled in the most intricate and the darkest of negotiations, as the Spanish match still remained to all the parties concerned, was now to close in a fierce encounter *à l'outrance*, armed by mutual impeachments.

The Earl of Bristol, on his return from Spain, had been unquestionably estranging the late Sovereign's affections from the favourite. James had called the Earl “ an honest man

whom he would answer for." The death of James occurred at a critical hour. Buckingham, on his side, had early indisposed the tender mind of the young Prince against Bristol, and he had directed all the royal influence to keep Bristol in restraint. Two years had now elapsed since the Earl of Bristol had suffered the exile of retirement, and that repose, if exile can be repose to a discarded Minister, was only conditional, that he should "sit still without being questioned for any errors past" in the Spanish negotiation.

The present moment seemed favourable to any design against the favourite. Bristol broke the silence of two years by claiming his seat in the House. The Earl now decided to appeal to Parliament in vindication of his honour, and to throw off the political imprisonment, so long endured under the disguise of domestic privacy. A struggle ensued between the King and the Earl. Charles issued his writ to summon him to Parliament, in compliance with the desire of the Lords, who asserted their privileges, but at the same time insisted that he should forbear his personal attendance, in compliance with the condition of his former restriction. Bristol's resolute decision, to take his place in the House of Lords, was remarkable. It was therefore on this occasion that Buckingham showed the Lords the copy of a letter to the Earl of Bristol, in which the King himself, in unqualified terms, criminated the Earl for his conduct in Spain, and by which the Lords were to infer that Bristol was put in restraint for State affairs.

Bristol then petitions to be heard in accusation of Buckingham. Instantly the Earl is himself charged with high-treason. The artifice of preventing a blow by inflicting one, was defeated by that perfect indifference in the House of Lords, which seems to have divided them by an equal interest for both the rival ministers. They therefore agreed to hear each cause in succession. By this means the accusations of one delinquent would not prevent the accused from making the accuser an equal delinquent; the criminations and recriminations of two great ministers would furnish all that fuller information and entertainment which both their Lordships and the public were quite prepared to expect.

Buckingham, who had hitherto succeeded in keeping Bristol

in restraint, and absent from Parliament, well knew that the dignified character of the Earl would shake his lighter and vacillating conduct in public opinion. He feared the tale which yet remained untold; not the perplexed narrative of the Spanish match, which it would be more easy to contradict than to comprehend, nor the charge, that for the purpose of gratifying his own passion he had raised the Spanish war, conscious that Charles would sanction the whole, and that the Parliament would not care to look too scrupulously into a war of their own choice. In truth, whatever secret motive Buckingham might have indulged in a war with Spain, he well knew that he was acquiring popularity by humouring the present temper of the nation. It was another tale than all this which the Duke feared—the history of himself! The indecorous carelessness of the favourite had held in scorn all prescribed modes of conduct in life, and in diplomacy; there was too a tenderness sore to touch in the religion of Buckingham; for, though James had furnished him with the result of Protestant arguments, he confessed that the Duke could not retain the arguments themselves, and though Laud, by hard conferences, steadied him from backslidings, it was credited that a certain bigoted Romanist, under whose influence he often acted, had more secret influence than the polemical Sovereign, or the casuistical Archbishop—the old lady, his mother, who could not conscientiously suffer her son to stray from the only infallible Church.

Bristol charged Buckingham with being “popishly affected, absenting himself from all exercises of religion in the Earl’s house, frequented by all Protestants, and conforming so closely to the rites of the Spanish religion, as to kneel and adore their sacrament, endeavouring to procure the Prince’s conversion by all possible means, and receiving a bull in parchment from the Pope, to thank him, and to encourage him in the perversion of the Prince.”

To all these allegations, Buckingham might have replied that he was only practising a deception on the Spaniard, which might assist in hastening the torpid negotiation. But he could not have pleaded as successfully for “the scandal given by his personal behaviour, things neither fit for the Earl of Bristol to speak, nor indeed for the House to hear, however he leaves

them to your lordships' wisdom how far you will be pleased to have them examined."

Bristol, and, indeed, all Madrid, had been as watchful as they were cruel observers of Buckingham's indecencies and eccentricities; and this great statesman has condescended to furnish himself with a *Chronique Scandaleuse*, a diary of licentious follies, supplied by the domestic spies of a most inconsiderate master. One of these communications exists.

Whoever will examine the elaborate articles of the Attorney-General against the Earl of Bristol, formidably classed into "offences before his Majesty's going into Spain, at the time of the Prince's being in Spain, and after the Prince's return," and the replies of Bristol to each article, minutely curious, will have before him one of the most extraordinary documents of the perversity of the human understanding, and the mysterious complexity of human events. According to Bristol, the Court of Madrid were at first not sincere in their propositions, but at the end they became so; but when we find such perpetual misunderstandings requiring explanation, where so much was said which was never meant, so much done which remained to be undone, when the most equivocal language and the most suspicious actions were to be commented on at a distant day, we are not surprised that each party looked on these strange transactions according to his own particular view, and accounted for them on very opposite principles. But what is startling is the direct contradiction of facts asserted by one party, and denied by the other. Where the accusations are positive, and each accuses the other of doing the very thing he is himself taxed with, we start at the hardihood of perjury, or we may suspect that both parties are alike criminal.

The Earl is accused of offering to concur with the Prince in his presumed conversion to the Roman faith. At the Prince's first coming to the Earl, he asked the Prince for what he came thither? The Prince at first, not conceiving the Earl's meaning, answered, "You know as well as I." The Earl replied, "Sir, servants can never serve their masters industriously, although they may do it faithfully, unless they know their meanings fully. Give me leave, therefore, to tell you what they say in the town is the cause of your coming—that you mean to

change your religion, and to declare it here, and yet cunningly to disguise it." The Earl added, "Sir, I do not speak this to persuade you to do it, or that I will promise you to follow your example though you do it; but, as your faithful servant, if you will trust me with so great a secret, I will endeavour to carry it the discreetest way I can."* At this the Prince expressed his indignation, and, as appears by the Earl's answer, asked "what the Earl saw in his Majesty, that he should think him so unworthy as to change his religion for a wife, or any earthly respect whatever?" And the Attorney-General goes on to show the treason of the minister, in the dangerous consequences of his conduct to the true religion and to the State.

The Earl, in reply, does not deny the charge, which, says he, refutes itself; for he exultingly points out that he, at that very moment, had declared himself a Protestant. The truth is, that on the portentous arrival of the Prince with his companion, there was a general rumour among the Spaniards, that Charles came to make his conversion. This seemed to be a State secret, which the jealousy of Bristol attempted to fathom, and, in secrecy, he tampered with the Prince to start a discovery, with all the guarded caution of a sage politician, by which conduct he had not compromised himself, while at the same time, whether the Prince were Catholic or Protestant, he had equally offered to exert, on his side, the same unalterable zeal.

The Earl of Bristol was an able single man in the Cabinet, but the tumult and passion of the Senate disturbed the gravity and reflection which he had, perhaps, contracted from his long residence at the Court of Madrid. Hence his famous son, Lord Digby, we are told, looked on his father with more affection than respect, and as this son, in his versatility of opinions, came round to astrology and Catholicism, it has been suspected that the Earl of Bristol was himself inclined to the religion of Spain. Some persons contract more local habits than they are aware of. But it was the political creed of Bristol which was most relaxed, or rather enlarged, and which occasioned at times some ambiguous conduct and language which a rigid Protestant might suspect. He once advised a bold measure, when he

* Rushworth, i. 252.

recommended that the young Palatine, Charles's nephew, should be educated in the Roman Catholic Court of the Emperor, in order that a royal marriage might conciliate two opposite interests; and when Sir Walter Aston, in a passion, declared that, "He durst not for his head consent to any such proposal," Bristol replied, that he saw no great inconvenience in it; the Prince might retain his religion; and without some such great action, it was desperate to hope for the peace of Christendom. This great statesman had an odd notion respecting the state of Protestantism in his day. He declared that "conscience, and love to truth only, not any temporal respects, made men constant to the Protestant religion—for that they suffered too much, which was to their honour," and he was fond of repeating James's observation, that "he was the true martyr that suffered more for his religion than all the princes of Christendom besides," which he could instance in various ways. As mere political men, in balancing opposite interests when a great design is in hand, have not always discriminated the fine shades of conviction, these calamities of Protestantism sounded suspiciously from the lips of the statesman, and it might seem dubious, had Charles been a converted Romanist, whether the minister who offered to remain equally zealous, might not have slid over like his son.

The Earl is positively accused by Charles not only of concurring with Charles's presumed conversion, but of enforcing it by pointing out to him its conveniences, it being impossible to effectuate any great purpose by other means. In what degree Spanish politics might mingle with English Protestantism in the breast of this able statesman, it might have been difficult even for himself to have discerned. The wisdom of a statesman was wrestling with the faith of a martyr. But assuredly it might have been expected that a zealous Protestant would not have advanced so far in such arguments, and that his indignation at this treason of loyalty in an English sovereign might have overcome the cold policy of the statesman, which, to say the least, had too evidently characterised these secret conferences.*

* Mr. Hallam acknowledges that "the Earl of Bristol might be more partial to Spain than we may think right, or even he might have some bias towards the

This Earl offers a curious evidence of the variable conflict of politics and religion in the same breast. In my own mind I entertain no doubt of the Protestantism, perhaps weak, of Bristol: he gave the Parliament the most ample testimonials from his earliest days and through his whole conduct in Spain; and Fuller has distinguished him, probably from his own testimony, as "a stout champion of the Church of England." But, be it remembered that the Digbys were a family of Romanists, and that their historian, Dodd, has inscribed the name of this Earl of Bristol in his catalogue, with a remark, that "though he was always a Protestant, yet he discovered himself both in the treaty of the Spanish match, *and on several occasions*, to be no enemy to the Catholic interest." *

CHAPTER XII.

IMPEACHMENT OF BUCKINGHAM BY THE COMMONS.

AFTER the maturing silence of two years, Bristol could bring forward against Buckingham nothing but vilifying personalities, more adapted to supply the month's talk of news-writers and gossippers, than to furnish an Attorney-General with articles of high treason.

A parliamentary anecdote on this occasion has come down to us. When the Earl of Bristol had ended his charge against

religion of Rome. The last, however, is by no means proved, for the King's word is no proof in my eyes." Mr. Brodie is blamed by Mr. Hallam for his severe attack on Bristol; the acknowledgment of the veracity of Charles would assist Mr. Brodie's arguments, nevertheless he could not let slip this opportunity of throwing great doubts over the royal honour. "It is impossible to determine what degree of credit is due to the statement." Yet probably overcome for a moment by the very conviction which I feel myself, Mr. Brodie adds, "though it is amazing to think, that a person in his elevated sphere should have had the frontless assurance to accuse one of his subjects to his face of such an offence, without foundation." *Amazing* indeed, because it seems to me *impossible!* I shall never believe that Charles was capable of the guilt of inventing an entire conference, particular in its detail and express in its language; particularly as we find from other sources that Bristol entertained in other instances the same equivocal notions and conduct.

* Dodd's Church History of England, ii. 357.

Buckingham, Lord Spencer rising, inquired, "Is this all you have to say against the Duke?" "Yes, my Lord, and I am sorry it is so much." "Then," rejoined Lord Spencer, "if this be all, *ridiculus mus!*" and sat down. Lord Cromwell hastened to Mr. Richard Spencer, the younger son of his lordship, and who was zealously acting with the party in the Commons against the Duke, "Dick, what is done in your house to-day against the Duke?" "My Lord, he is charged with no less than high treason."—"High treason! tush Dick! if this be all, *ridiculus mus!*"* This humorous application of Lord Cromwell's seems like a comment on the opposite politics of the father and the son; but it is not quite evident which side the humourist himself would have adopted.

A theme of loftier interest, an accusation far more solemn, where orators were to be the witnesses, and public opinion the tribunal, were now to open for the sovereign and the minister, in the impeachment of the favourite by the Commons.

But the Commons did not come forward, as is admirably remarked by Hume, to accuse Buckingham for his conduct in the Spanish treaty. They approved the Spanish war too well to quarrel with its origin. Its object was English, for it was to wrest the Palatinate from ambitious Austria and to reduce Catholic preponderancy. The unanimous voice of the nation had sanctioned it, and the Lords and Commons on that occasion responded "as if the two Houses had been twins; what the one had thought and said and done, the other had thought and said and done." They chose the war, but they refused the supplies. To palliate this sudden change in the measures of the Commons, party-writers have imagined, that the Commons had now discovered that Buckingham had deceived them, and that they had been seduced by his statement. Not a single member raised any objection of this nature. If Buckingham had hastened a war, he knew that by such conduct he should acquire the popularity which it, in fact, brought him; and so far from the Commons having been seduced by Buckingham, it would be more just to say that Buckingham had been seduced by the Commons.

In one respect, however, the charges made by the Commons

* Hamon L'Estrange, p. 32.

against the favourite resembled those of Bristol: they turned chiefly on personalities.

The impeachment of Buckingham was opened before the Lords by Sir Dudley Digges, who afterwards was one of those who went over to the Court party. Professing to deliver himself, "in plain country language, setting by all rhetorical affectations," he informed the Peers that the Commons had discovered that all the evils which they suffered were drawn like one line to one circumference from one centre, which met in one great man, whom I am here to name—the Duke of Buckingham.

In mentioning the name, Sir Dudley looked up and made a sudden stand. The courtly patriot was disconcerted;* the undaunted Duke was facing his accuser. Sir Dudley held in his hand a voluminous roll, and in the preamble of the charge, he had to read the lengthened and the multiplied titles of the plurality of offices, and all the honours held by, as the words run, this "young and inexperienced Duke."

The lofty titles resounding through the House, raised our orator's spirit with a *paulo majora canamus*—and "the plain country language" rolls on in a folio metaphor. Earth and air are ransacked to describe the manufactures, the husbandry, and the commerce of the industrious Commons. The sun in the firmament is the glorious King, the fixed stars their Lordships, the elements of fire are the clergy, and the judges are the air they breathe. Amidst this elemental imagery, the discovery of a blazing meteor troubles the Commons, "who though they be the footstool, and the lowest, yet may well be said to be the settled centre of the State." But as for this "prodigious comet" they cannot look upon it, and for want of a "perspective, commend the nearer examination to their Lordships."

Such a prologist as Sir Dudley seemed scarcely to threaten in the circumlocutions of his ornate style. He left the less graceful parts to men who were less awed by courtly dispositions, and who did not cherish a concealed hope of one day climbing into that radiant firmament which he had so painfully delineated.

* The circumstance of Sir Dudley's sudden stop is noticed by Hamon l'Estrange, whence Rushworth appears to have drawn his curtailed information.

On the first day, the Duke sat outfacing his accusers, and outbraving their accusations; but he absented himself on the following day, when the epilogue to this mighty drama was elaborately delivered by Sir John Eliot, with a force of declamation and a hardiness of personal allusion, which have not been surpassed by the anonymous invectives of the modern Junius.

Eliot, after expatiating on the favourite's ambition in procuring and getting into his hands the greatest offices of strength and power in the kingdom, drew a picture of "the inward character of the Duke's mind, full of collusion and deceit. He was a chimerical beast, called by the ancients *Stellionatus*, so blurred, so spotted, so full of foul lines, that they knew not what to make of it. In setting up himself, he hath set upon the kingdom's revenues, the fountain of supply, and the nerves of the land.—He intercepts, consumes, and exhausts the revenues of the crown, and by emptying the veins the blood should run in, *he hath cast* the kingdom into "a high consumption."

Eliot descends to criminate the Duke's magnificent tastes, he who had something of a congenial nature; for Eliot was a man of fine literature. "Infinite sums of money, and mass of land exceeding the value of money; contributions in Parliament have been heaped upon him: and how have they been employed? Upon costly furniture, sumptuous feasting, and magnificent buildings, the *visible evidence of the express exhausting of the State!*"

One dark insinuation ambiguously expressed crimes more dreadful, relating to the King. "Not satisfied with injuries and injustice, and dishonouring of religion, his attempts go higher, to the prejudice of his sovereign. The effects I fear to speak, and fear to think. I end this passage, as Cicero did in a like case, *Ne gravioribus utar verbis quam rei natura fert, aut levioribus quam causæ necessitas postulat.*"

The implacable Eliot eloquently closes:—

"Your Lordships have an idea of the man, what he is in himself, what in his affections! You have seen his power, and some, I fear, have felt it. You have known his practice, and have heard the effects. Being such, what is he in reference to

King and State; how compatible or incompatible with either? In reference to the King, he must be styled the canker in his treasure; in reference to the State, the moth of all goodness. I can hardly find him a parallel; but none were so like him as Sejanus, who is described by Tacitus, *Audax, sui obtegens, in alios criminator, juxta adulator et superbus*. Sejanus's pride was so excessive, as Tacitus saith, that he neglected all councils, mixed his business and service with the Prince, seeming to confound their actions, and was often styled *Imperatoris laborum socius*. Doth not this man the like? Ask England, Scotland, and Ireland, and they will tell you! How lately, and how often, hath this man commixed his actions in discourses with actions of the King's! My Lords! I have done—you see the man!"

The parallel of the Duke with Sejanus electrified the House. It touched Charles on a convulsive nerve. The young King was here not great, but indignant. Charles complained of Eliot's comparing the Duke with Sejanus; "implicitly he must intend me for Tiberius," said the King.*

The last charge against Buckingham was at least as merciless as it was offensive. Without possessing any other evidence than the appearance of the corpse, which, in a body of such gross humour as James's, seems not difficult to account for—the charge sanctioned the rumour of the poisoning of the late King, "by the plaister and the posset administered by the means of Buckingham." That rumour, at the time of which we write, was so rife, that even that political and dignified courtier, Bristol, in a moment of irritation, ventured on a painful allusion, when he had occasion to notice the late King's promise to hear him himself—"I pray God," he added, "that that promise did him no hurt, for he died shortly after." On a subsequent appearance at the bar of the House of Lords, Bristol craved pardon for his late earnest speech, confessing it to have been in passion. Whether Dr. Eglisam's famous libel originated in this rumour, or whether it were the contrivance of a party, is not now, perhaps, to be ascertained; but the cruelty of such

* I find this piece of secret history inclosed in a letter of the times, with a solemn injunction that it should be burnt.

dreadful accusations is, that they survive their victim, whether criminal or innocent.*

The foulest taint of suspicion must remain attached to the character of Buckingham. I repeat, what I have formerly observed, that it requires more time and cost to repair an edifice than to damage it; and more zeal to defend the calumniated than care to raise the calumny. An attack, if it deserve notice, is necessarily lively, but a defence can only boast of an honest intention; and nothing short of a miraculous demonstration will so completely eradicate a false or an aggravated charge, as to leave no traces of it behind in the minds of those who have long received the erroneous impression.

The conduct of Charles on this occasion, irritated as he evidently was, proved to be the beginning of his troubles, and the first of the more open attempts to crush the popular party.

The King came down to the House of Lords to vindicate the Duke from the charges of the Commons. "I can bear witness," said Charles, "to clear him in every one of them;"—but "he thought fit to take order to punish some insolent speeches. I have been too remiss in punishing such speeches as concern myself, but Buckingham would not suffer me to take notice of them, lest he might be thought to have set me on. My Lords, I hope you will be as tender of my honour as I have been

* "The Forerunner of Revenge" is a tract well known to collectors. It bears every feature of a dreadful political libel; the aggravating minuteness of its narrative betrays the extravagant imagination of the writer. The account of the presumed poisoning of the Marquis of Hamilton by Buckingham is ridiculous; and the description of the appearance of the corpse is perfectly grotesque. Mr. Brodie has entered largely and fairly into this investigation. Referring to Sanderson's testimony, that Eglisbam wrote as many lies as lines, who was told by Gerbier, that Eglisbam, when abroad, offered to publish a recantation for four hundred guilders, Mr. Brodie does not incline to give credit to the tale. I find it, however, confirmed in the manuscript memoir of Sir Balthazar Gerbier himself. "The falseness of his libels," says Gerbier, "he hath since acknowledged, though too late. During my residency at Bruxelles, this Eglisbam desired Sir William Chaloner, who was then at Liege, to bear a letter to me, which is still extant. He proposed, if the King would pardon and receive him into favour again, with some competent subsistence, he would recant all that he had said or written, confessing that he had been urged thereunto by some combustious spirits, that, for their malicious designs, had set him on work." Sloane MSS. 4181.

sensible of yours." The King evidently alluded to the last charge against Buckingham, which involved his own honour.

Digges and Eliot, the prologue and the epilogue orators, were called out of the House by two messengers, who, showing their warrant, took them to the Tower.

On this memorable day, a philosophical politician, had such a character existed at that time, might have presciently marked the seed-plots of events, which, not many years afterwards, were apparent to all men. The passions of Kings are often expatiated on, but in the present anti-monarchical period the passions of Parliament are not imaginable.

The Commons, with a fierce spirit of reaction for the King's threat of "punishing some insolent speeches," sent up to the Lords for the commitment of the Duke.* The same eager spirit which afterwards pursued Strafford to the scaffold had now appeared, though it was yet unrecognised.

The Duke's speech to the Lords in answer to this arbitrary conduct of the Commons, must have been unpremeditated. It betrays neither the fears of a State criminal, nor the arrogance of a royal favourite. We may form some notion of the man himself, by the disclosure of his own genuine emotions.

"My Lords,

"If I should hold my peace, it would argue guilt; if I should speak, it would argue boldness. Your Lordships see what complaints are made against me by the House of Commons. How well I stood in their opinions not long since, your Lordships know; what I have done since to lose their good opinions, I protest I know not. I cannot so distrust my own innocency, as to decline any course or court of justice; they have done me a favour to deliver me out of their hands into your Lordships'.

"I will not speak anything to cast dirt at those who have taken pains to make me so foul, but I hope to prove my innocency before such just judges. I desire my trial may be hastened, that I may no longer suffer than I must needs; but

* Mr. Hallam confesses, that as the Commons heard no evidence in support of their charges, it was rather unreasonable in them to request that he might be committed to the Tower.

since my accusers have not been content only to make my process, but to prescribe to your Lordships the manner of your judgment, and to judge me before I am heard, I shall not give way to any of their unjust demands.”

When the fate of the two patriots was known, the Commons instantaneously broke up, and in the afternoon assembled in Westminster Hall, to interchange their private sentiments on the fate of the two imprisoned members in sullen indignation.* The flame which had broken forth and had shown itself, now seemed to sink within its own volcano, feeding itself on its own bed, to rage the more at a fresh eruption.

The following day, the Commons met in their own House. When the Speaker reminded them of their usual business, with one unanimous shout they cried out, “Sit down! sit down!” they would touch on no business till “they were righted in their liberties.” An open committee of the whole House was formed, and no member was suffered to leave it, yet no one spoke. They were either at a loss how to open this awful conference, or they expressed their indignation by a sullen silence.

At moments like these, an accidental folly, which another time might pass away, may render permanent the mischief it would prevent.

The Vice-Chamberlain, Sir Dudley Carleton, who had long been one of our foreign ambassadors, and who, having witnessed the despotic governments on the Continent, imagined that there was no deficiency of liberty at home, ventured to break the harrowing silence.

“I find,” said the Vice-Chamberlain, “by a great silence in this House, that it is a fit time to be heard, if you will grant me the patience.” He opened with an idle tale of having in his voyage to Marseilles been cast on a variety of sands, and when the passengers were in despair, an old mariner looking on the compass, told them that to clear themselves from the sands, they ought to know how they came there, for by taking a new point it would bring them out. The book of orders was the compass here, and he beseeched them to look, whether the gentlemen (in the aggravation of their charges, particularly the last, of the

* The Diary of Sir Symonds D'Ewes, 646.—Harleian MSS.

cause of the King's death) did not go farther than the orders did warrant them, and how easy it would yet be to bring us from these rocks.

Alluding to one of the King's messages, where it was hinted, that "if there was no correspondency between him and the Parliament, he should be forced to use new counsels;" he added, "I pray you consider what these new counsels are and may be; I fear to declare those I conceive." However, Sir Dudley Carleton plainly indicated them. "When monarchs began to know their own strength, and saw the turbulent spirit of their *Parliaments*, they had overthrown them in all Europe, except here only with us." The Vice-Chamberlain had not yet learnt to distinguish our own *representative* Parliament, from the *Parlementaires* of Lawyers in France. Our old ambassador drew an amusing picture of the effects of arbitrary governments on the Continent. "If you knew the subjects in foreign countries as well as myself, to see them look, not like our nation, with store of flesh on their backs, but like so many ghosts, and not men, being nothing but skin and bones, with some thin cover to their nakedness, and wearing only wooden shoes on their feet, so that they cannot eat meat, or wear good clothes, but they must pay the King for it; this is a misery beyond expression and that which we are yet free from." A long residence abroad had deprived Sir Dudley Carleton of any sympathy with the elevated tone of freedom, and the proud jealousy of their privileges, which though yet depending only on precedents, unascertained, undefined, and still often contested, was breaking forth among the Commons of England. At the close, Carleton remarked on the tartness and personal attacks of Eliot, and here he was more reasonable.

The speech was designed to be conciliatory—but the physician had unskilfully applied an emollient, which produced inflammation. "These imprudent suggestions rather gave warning, than struck terror," observes Hume. It was evident, that "new counsels" meant, what subsequently was practised, a monarchical government without a Parliament! As for the ghosts with wooden shoes, to which the House was congratulated that they were not yet reduced, the House could only infer, that it was necessary to prevent the possibility of any such clouded apparitions.

Some offensive words, in allusion to the death of the late King, the Duke persisted in asserting, had dropped from Digges, and to prove which assertion, he appealed to notes taken at the time. After an equivocal termination in the House of Peers, these were explained away, Digges declaring that they had not been used by him. It seems probable that he was suffered to eat his words. The implacable Eliot was made of "sterner stuff." He explained a good deal, without retracting much.

But peace did not return with the two imprisoned patriots. It was fated, that the celestial spirit of our national freedom should not descend among us in the form of the mystical dove. The Commons did not decline in the serpent's wisdom with which they had begun. They covertly aimed at once, to subjugate the sovereign, and to expel the minister. A remonstrance was prepared against the levying of tonnage and poundage, which constituted half of the Crown revenues, and a petition "equivalent to a command" for removing Buckingham from his Majesty's "person and councils."

The Remonstrance is wrought up with a high spirit of invective against "the unbridled ambition of the Duke," whom they class "among those vipers and pests to their King and Commonwealth, as so expressly styled by your most Royal Father." They request that "the King would be pleased to remove this person from access to his sacred presence, and that he would not balance this one man, with all these things, and with the affairs of the Christian world."

He who would enter into the views and feelings of Charles at this moment, should consult another immortal page of the philosophical historian.*

In the eyes of Charles, Buckingham was not criminal, but the Commons were. They had engaged him in a war, and deserted their sovereign when they saw that for him a retreat was impossible. And to what amounted the charges against the Duke? The heaviest, that of the loan of the ships to France, to serve against the French Protestants, Charles knew to be a mere popular error, as we shall shortly show. Could they allege the ineptitude of the minister? Great evils under his administration

* Hume, vi. 221.

had not yet occurred, and the people sent forth no cries of oppression. Could the young King sacrifice his friend to the clamours of a party, and, as it seemed to him, for the mean motive of pecuniary purposes? Long after, Charles, even at a more critical period, vowed that "He and Buckingham should perish together!" It was at this time that Sir Robert Cotton, returning from an interview with the King and the favourite, observed, that "the King will never yield to the Duke's fall, being a young man, resolute, magnanimous, and tenderly and firmly affectionate where he takes."* Charles, besides these private motives, had public ones. He considered that in yielding, the sovereign authority would become "contemptible, and carried to the lowest extremity."

With the Commons, Buckingham was criminal enough, for they were not within the spell of his fascination. He was the splendid creature of the royal favour of two sovereigns. His youthful presumption, his towering ambition, and his undisguised enmities, had sickened the hearts of the envious, and stung the spirit of the vindictive. His enemies too were orators.

Charles, under the influence of angered feelings, hastily dissolved the second Parliament; and when the Lords petitioned for its continuance, the King warmly exclaimed, "Not a moment longer!"

From the opening of this Parliament, the style of Charles the First had changed. It was now stately, and the courteous solicitation he once used,—the language of his heart—was no longer theirs!

CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE PRINCIPAL ARTICLE OF THE IMPEACHMENT OF BUCKINGHAM: SECRET HISTORY OF THE LOAN OF ENGLISH SHIPS TO SERVE AGAINST THE FRENCH PROTESTANTS.

OF this impeachment by the Commons of a minister invested with such a plurality of offices and honours—an individual so potent by situation, and so inconsiderate by disposition, as the Duke of Buckingham, it must be candidly acknowledged, as

* From a manuscript letter.

assuredly it might satisfactorily be shown, that Hume has not exceeded the truth in asserting that “the articles were either frivolous, or false, or both. After canvassing the matter near three months, they found themselves utterly incapable of fixing any legal crime upon the Duke.”

I regret that Mr. Hallam has too hastily assumed a sweeping conclusion on the articles of this impeachment. “He tells us many of them were *probably* well-founded.” *Probably* is a term of nullity in historical evidence; it includes neither the labour of research, nor the force of argument; it is the cypher of prejudice, which, placed by an unit of fact, swells out into a mighty sum what in itself is of very small amount. A more accurate knowledge of the prevalent customs of the age, a very little candour, and a closer investigation of the articles themselves, would have deterred the constitutional historian from this unjust severity to “the minion.” Rapacity and avarice were not the vices of Buckingham. Even Mr. Brodie lays no stress on the impeachment, though he affects a solitary triumph by asserting, that by Hume’s own account of the loan of ships to France, which were employed by that State against the French Protestants, Buckingham was guilty on this charge, which Mr. Brodie considers as “a principal article of the impeachment.” The parliamentary historian, May, had indeed considered as among the chief causes of the civil war, and as “most destructive to the Protestant religion, that King Charles lent a strong navy to the King of France, by whose force the Protestant ships were vanquished and scattered.”*

Buckingham, in reply to this heavy charge, in his able defence, drawn up by Sir Nicholas Hyde, declares that “He did that which belonged to an Admiral of England and a *true Englishman*.” A forcible expression, and in my mind at all times adapted to his genuine character. Buckingham certainly was always English in his feelings. But having made this declaration the Duke faltered, and acknowledged that, to clear himself, it was necessary to disclose a *State Secret*. On his solicitation

* May’s “Breviary of the History of the Parliament,” p. 7. This little volume must not be considered as a mere abridgment of his larger work; it is an original one on the same subject.

to his Majesty, he afterwards obtained leave to do this, but the whole affair was interrupted by the dissolution of Parliament. On this Mr. Brodie observes, "The Duke had the effrontery to state, that he had been over-reached by the French Court, who pretended a design against Genoa, and that when he discovered the imposition, he frustrated it, and by his measures in favour of Rochelle, the strong place of the French Protestants, he had hitherto saved it from destruction." All this Mr. Brodie considers as "the subterfuge of a State criminal."

We are deeply interested to ascertain the truth of this mysterious transaction. It will illustrate that important principle which I have already developed in a preceding chapter, and which throws a new light over those ambiguous events in our history, when the Government, from a secret policy buried in the Cabinet, and concealed from the public eye, appeared to act in opposition to the interests of the country, when, in short, State reasons prevailed over popular feelings.

The State secret, alleged by Buckingham, not having yet been disclosed, our historians have been thrown into the most conflicting reasonings, and the most fallacious statements, but this loan of English ships to the French Government, for the purpose of opposing the French Protestants, ceases to be a strange and ambiguous transaction, when its secret history is unfolded.*

The loan of a single man-of-war and seven merchant vessels to France, which France afterwards employed against the Reformed of Rochelle, certainly without the consent or the intention of our Government, was always looked on suspiciously by the English nation. Even Gerbier, the confidential agent of Buckingham, and to his last day the faithful servant of three English sovereigns, acknowledges, that "when these ships were employed contrary to the intention, it gave more colour to such as love to find fault than could have been wished."

The history of this loan of ships we shall trace from the beginning. When James the First, on the rupture with Spain, formed a strict alliance with France, the French Cabinet decided, however contrary to the private feelings of the French monarch,

* I draw my information from the MS. memoir of Sir Balthazar Gerbier, to which I have already referred.

to head a league of the Protestant powers. The English government was cherishing the aid and amity of France for the recovery of the eternal Palatinate, as likewise were the Hollanders, with the view of weakening the power of their ancient enemy and sovereign. Spain, on her side, was not less active, and to avenge herself on her great rival, whose aid had essentially contributed to the emancipation of the New States of Holland, she had stirred up the malcontents of France into open insurrection. The Duke of Rohan, and his brother, Soubise, were the great chiefs of the Huguenots, and were raising an independent Government in France itself.* On the remonstrances of the French Government, the Protestant allies of France could only consider the French Princes in the class of rebels, and in intimate connexion with Spanish interests.

The French Cabinet had promised to conclude a treaty on favourable terms with their Protestants; but ere this could be effectuated, the French Government pleaded the absolute necessity of suppressing the insurrection in their own realms before they signed the terms already agreed on with the Reformed, that for their own credit it should appear that these conditions had been granted by good will and favour, and not by compulsion. The French marine was then at so low an ebb, that Soubise seemed master of the seas. It was at this moment, and under these circumstances, that France urged the performance of a defensive treaty with England and Holland. The Dutch statesmen, conscious of the State necessity of supporting France against the power and intrigues of Spain, furnished their great ally with twenty ships, according to an existing treaty, in return for money and other aid lent the infant Republic by France; and James, learning from his ambassadors at Paris, that the treaty between the French Cabinet and the Reformed was nearly concluded, agreed to the loan of a single man-of-war and seven vessels, on the proviso, that they were never to be employed against the Rochellers, for whom the English Monarch

* This circumstance is alluded to in the "Testament Politique du Cardinal de Richelieu."—The Catholic style is remarkable. "L'Espagnol fit un Traité avec le Duc de Rohan, pour former un corps de rebelles à Dieu et à V. M., tout ensemble moiennant un million qu'il lui devoit donner tous les ans, et dont par ce moien il rendoit les Indes tributaires à l'Enfer."

had already obtained favourable conditions; it was stipulated that these English vessels were to act against Genoa, or any other ally of Spain.

This affair now assumed to the public eye the most perplexed appearance. This State policy produced in Holland the very same consequences as in England. The Duke of Rohan, and his brother Soubise, having openly adopted the cause of the Huguenots, remonstrated on the iniquity of Protestants warring against Protestants for a Catholic power! It was proved against the States, that while they had indeed promised the Protestant deputies of the Rochellers all they required, they, at the same time, had dispatched secret orders to their admiral to join the French.

Such are the high mysteries of "King-craft," as James the First described the intrigues of Cabinets. Each State, to obtain its own purpose, is apparently acting against its own interests. The people, who know nothing of such political involutions, revolted in Holland at the present one. The clergy declaimed from their pulpits, the populace was incited to pull down the house of the admiral and his friends, and the public spirit was so uncontrollable, that the Dutch Government deemed it proper to give way to it. They were suspected by the French Cabinet of having connived at these tumults, though it appears that they did not dare to exercise any authority, dreading a general insurrection throughout the United Provinces.

The promised treaty with the French Protestants was still delayed, and Rohan and Soubise were still in revolt. When Charles learnt that the treaty was uncertain, Gerbier tells us, that the King began to act with great caution and suspicion. To prevent any injury to the Huguenots of Rochelle, in whose interests our Cabinet was engaged, and which afterwards led to the French war, the King commanded Gerbier to write in cypher to Captain Pennington, that though he had cast anchor in the roads of Dieppe, and the Marquis d'Effiat expected to have the eight ships given up to French officers, on the receipt of Gerbier's letter he was to weigh anchor and return to the Downs. Pennington gladly obeyed, which threw the Marquis into a violent rage, he declaring that for this open act of disobedience of orders nothing less than the life of Pennington

should satisfy him, and he instantly dispatched a messenger to Charles. For the truth of this statement, Gerbier appeals to Mr. Secretary Nicholas, then secretary to the Admiralty.*

Pennington returned home, and proceeded to Oxford, where the Parliament sat. Buckingham is accused by the Commons that knowing from Pennington the state of affairs, he subtly concealed it from Parliament, observing "boldly and untruly," say the Commons, that "it was not always fit for Kings, to give account of their counsels, and that five or six months had already passed, and the ships were not employed against Rochelle,—and prayed their lordships to judge the things by the event, to which he would refer the whole matter." "By which cunning speeches," so the Commons animadvert, "he made the Lords and Commons believe that the ships were never meant to be employed against the Rochellers."†

In the meantime, Charles having received satisfactory accounts from his agents at Paris, concerning the treaty with the French Protestants, Pennington was again commanded to return to Dieppe, and give up the ships to the French officers. Mr. Larkin, who was an able and confidential agent of the English Government,

* In the charge made by the Commons, the curious reader will find a most abundant detail of all the transactions relative to the loan of these ships.—Rushworth, i., 322 to 333. And when he shall have read the present chapter, he will learn how a heap of cross-purposes may furnish out a most formidable body of evidence against a State delinquent. A round-robin by the sailors was laid under the Prayer-book of Pennington. It is evident that the English sailors were in as great a consternation as the Hollanders at fighting against their brother Protestants, and the Commons, as Hume says, "showed the same attachment with the sailors for the Protestant religion, nor was their zeal much better guided by reason and sound policy." Hume has taken the most profound views on this curious state of affairs. Such noble passages discover that political sagacity which confers immortality on his pages.—vi. 209.—Smollett seems at a loss to solve the riddle. "Even these Huguenots were supported by the King of Spain, and their revolt prevented Louis from assisting the English monarch in his designs against the House of Austria."—A valid reason for the King of England assisting his brother and ally of France to put down the insurrection of the French princes.

† It is useful to notice what sort of evidence a party will get up against a State culprit. A Monsieur *de la Touche*, probably a French Protestant, meeting at Salisbury, Mr. Sherwell, a member, going to Parliament, and informing our member that the Duke had assured him these ships were not to act against his countrymen, notwithstanding they had since, concluded that, *le Duc est un mechant homme*. The charge in the Impeachment winds up with this positive evidence of this good Monsieur de la Touche, of the delinquency of this impeached minister!

had inforced the return to Dieppe, assuring our Cabinet, that the peace was settled between the French Government and its Reformed; but a sudden change in the French councils occurring, that Charles might be aware of this important information, Larkin set off himself post from Paris; embarking in stormy weather he was cast away, and arrived too late. Another agent, one Clarke, who had also been employed in this negotiation, lost himself in the opinion of Buckingham, and was so sensible of his inept conduct that he died of grief.

Such is the secret history of this ambiguous transaction; and when Buckingham was accused of having betrayed the English cause, it was not wonderful that he should have faltered, and declared, that his vindication could only be effected by the revelation of a State secret; but he boldly assured them, that he had acted like "an Englishman."

We are now enabled to confirm the allegation of Buckingham. It now appears that the original destination of the ships was Genoa, with the design of alarming the Spanish coast. We can also explain certain obscure passages which Dr. Lingard has brought forward to criminate this minister. "The offence said to have been committed by the Duke, was, that he, as High-Admiral, had lent English ships for the purpose of opposing the Protestants. That Buckingham's allegation was false, is evident from the whole tenor of the transaction, from the unwillingness of the Duke to give an explanation, from a passage in his letter, dated Paris, May 30, 1625: 'The peace with them of the religion depends upon the success of that fleet they (the French) had from your Majesty, and the Low Countries.'* And from another passage in the instructions given to him on the 17th of October: 'We conceive that the work which was required to be done by them, (the ships,) *being the suppression of Soubise*, is accomplished.'"

The reader will now, for the first time, understand these obscure passages, which perfectly accord with Gerbier's statement. "The peace with them of the religion, *i.e.* the French Protestants, depended on the success of the ships borrowed from the two countries." This success refers to the suppression of

* Clarendon Papers, ii., Appendix, xxv.

Soubise's maritime force, as it is precisely so stated in the instructions. The King, concluding that work had been done, now insisted on the final termination of the treaty of peace so long depending between the French Government and their Protestants.

The story of this loan of ships to France, is a very striking example of the effects of popular exaggeration. It is curious to discover, on turning to the French historian's account of this transaction, that the aid of the English on this occasion was deemed so inconsiderable, that he almost passes it over in silence. I give Pèrre Griffet's own words, as they confirm the truth of Buckingham's statement. "Comme on vouloit attaquer les Genoïs par mer et par terre on envoya demander des vaisseaux au Roi d'Angleterre et aux Hollandois. On ne tira du Roi d'Angleterre que des promesses vagues qui demeurèrent sans effet ; mais les Hollandois s'engagerent à donner vingt vaisseaux bien armés." *

We must consider the subject of this chapter, not only historically curious, as throwing a new light over the administration of Buckingham, but as developing political instruction of far higher interest. It proves that there are State secrets which cannot either in honour or in policy be trusted to the public ear; and that when the Cabinet appears to be acting contrary to the desires of the country, the Government, with more wisdom than public newswriters and clamorous party-men will be willing to allow them, may be advancing the complicate objects of national interests. We see, in the present case, how the Dutch Government was right, as statesmen, in adopting their unpopular measures; and we also see how fatally, by submitting to the dictate of popular prejudices, they impeded the great design of reducing the mighty strength of Spain, the success of which design could only be insured by maintaining the interests of the only power which could balance Spanish predominance. In combating, then, with the Protestant insurgents of France, under Soubise, England and Holland were hastening that peace for the Protestant cause which had been so long delayed. There are paradoxes in history which conceal truths.

* Histoire de France, xiii. 442.

CHAPTER XIV.

MEANS RESORTED TO BY THE KING TO RAISE SUPPLIES
WITHOUT THE AID OF PARLIAMENT.

WHEN the Patriots abandoned their Sovereign to his fate, they retreated home sullen, indignant, and ready to conspire among themselves for the assumption of their disputed or their defrauded liberties. They industriously dispersed their "remonstrance," and the King replied by "a declaration;" but an attack is always more vigorous than a defence. The "declaration" is spiritless, and evidently composed under suppressed feelings, which, perhaps, knew not how to shape themselves. The "remonstrance" was commanded every where to be burnt; but the effect which it produced on the people we shall shortly witness.

The King was left amidst the most pressing exigencies. Charles the First has never been accused of a wanton profusion of the public wealth. Rapin even lays to his charge his strict economy in living, even to penuriousness. His tastes and his habits were those of privacy, and his claims on Parliament were solely for national objects, yet we now find him involved even in personal distresses. The King, from the first, had given up the pomp of his Coronation as "savings for more noble undertakings." He had mortgaged his lands in Cornwall to the Aldermen and Companies of London, to possess and enjoy till their money was repaid, and he had reduced his household.

Hume has alluded to the numerous wants of the Monarch, but he was unacquainted with the King's extremest necessities. To raise immediate supplies, the King's gilt plate was sold, and the royal distress was carried so far, that all the tables at Court were laid down, and the courtiers put on board wages. I have seen a letter that gives an account of "the funeral supper at Whitehall, whereat twenty-three tables were buried, being from henceforth converted to board wages." Wages, pensions, and debts, undischarged, filled the Court, not indeed with faction,

but with discontent. We are not therefore surprised, that "since this dissolving of house-keeping his Majesty is but slenderly attended." Even long after this period, the poverty of the royal establishment was observed. Another letter-writer, describing himself to be only "a looker-on," alludes to the famous Masque of the Inns of Court, whose reminiscence charmed even the sage Whitelocke in the times of the Puritanic Administration, when he feelingly regrets that all these elegant "dreams had vanished." The "looker-on" exclaims, "I see a rich people, and the Crown poor!" This strange poverty of the Court seems to have escaped the notice of our general historians. Charles was now to victual his fleet with the savings from the board-wages; for, in this humiliating economy, this "surplusage" was taken into account to carry on the war with Spain—without supplies!

The unpopular conduct of Charles the First, in abandoning his intractable Parliaments, who, in truth, had early deserted him, and in attempting to raise supplies by expedients of his own device, flattering himself, as he declared, that he could supply his wants "by other means than by the grants of his Commons," we must consider as a political error—and it was an unavoidable one! It is this which renders the fate of the victim-Monarch still more pitiable. To reign without a refractory Parliament, and to seek among the people subjects more loyal than their representatives, was an experiment—and a fatal one!

Charles imagined that he should have been able to reign by the aid of his people, separated from Parliament;—but Parliament was separating him from the people. He forgot that orators are heard, and that the multitude are all ear.

We have no reason to suppose that the King designed to wrest from the people more than he would have been empowered to exact by the accustomed legal grants, or than his present exigencies required. On his accession, Charles generously scouted the political management of Bishop Williams to secure a majority of the members for Court-interests. The young Prince, open and impatient, rejected the mean expedient. He was desirous of throwing himself into the hands of his Parliament. His conduct on this occasion has even melted into an effusion

the cold drop that lingered in the pen of Mr. Brodie,—for even he has recognised the honourable impulse of the young Monarch.

It is, however, unquestionable, that Charles was early displeased with the obstructions he had unexpectedly encountered in the great national assembly; for so early as in 1626, speaking of Parliaments, the King declared in council that “he abominated the name,” and no affection grew up between them as he advanced in his reign. In 1634, alluding to the Irish Parliament, his imagination forcibly conjured it up as “a hydra, which at home he had found as well cunning as malicious.” And still later the King declared to Strafford that “Parliaments are like cats; they grow curst (*i. e.* cross) with age.” All these notions of Charles respecting Parliaments, however arbitrary they seem to us, were, in truth, not so much the ideas of a despot, as of a monarch aggrieved. In that day the privileges of Parliament were more unsettled than those of the royal prerogative. Mr. Hallam has candidly observed, that “no statesman of that age was ready to admit the new creed of Parliamentary control over the Executive Government.” “Executive Government!” is the purified and more definite term of the sovereignty of England, but the phrase could not have been comprehended by the political student of the age of the first Stuarts.

What is tyranny but a rule cruel and injurious, unjust and arbitrary? These are the epithets which now must describe, or rather stigmatise, the conduct of the Commons. It was cruel to the Monarch, whose best feelings it outraged, and whose situation it embittered and degraded. It was injurious to the State, whose honour it violated, and whose interests it impaired. It was unjust, because it was a direct infringement of the sanctity of existing engagements. And it was arbitrary, because it was wilful, absolute, irresponsible, despotic, and as little founded on principle, or required by necessity, as it was authorised by custom, or supported by law.

Was there not quite as much of “tyranny” in the Parliamentary denial of revenue, as in the regal force which attempted to supply a craving exchequer? This determination of a party to withhold supplies from the Throne, is an important point in

the moral history of Charles the First. The enemies of the King cannot pass it over silently. The philosophic Hume has cast the dishonour for ever in their face. They cannot deny it, they cannot even palliate it. What therefore remains? The insolence of him who exults in the dexterity of a criminal act—or the sneer of vulgar and heartless spirits who love to bring down the great or the dignified, to their own base level. They triumph that the Commons were reducing the Sovereign to the sharpness of his extremest necessities — those Commons who flattered themselves that, in rendering the Sovereign their abject pensioner, they might wrest into their own hands that sovereignty which they were subverting. No one can deny that the first Parliament refused the supplies for a war in which their young King had engaged with the sanction of the former Parliament. The Commons might have escaped from this eternal reproach, had they consulted their dignity, perhaps their policy, in raising a bold distinction between the inexperienced Monarch and the unpopular Minister. Had they held their loyalty sacred and inviolable, by supporting the Sovereign, however energetically they might have protested against the unpopular Favourite, although Charles might have denied the resemblance of the man to the portrait they would have painted, still would they have left posterity a glorious lesson,—nor was Charles the First one on whom it would have been lost. In this manner, the first Parliament would have nobly acted, with wisdom, and not with cunning; with justice, and not with malice; with the elevated dignity of senators, not with the petty policy of vulgar burghesses.* By the reverse conduct which the Parliament held,

* The most recent writer on this subject is Mr. Hallam, who, though not insensible to the injuries inflicted on the Monarch, has palliated the conduct of the Parliament. I transcribe the passage for the benefit of the reader: "The first Parliament of this reign has been severely censured, on account of the penurious supply it doled out for the exigencies of a war in which its predecessors had involved the King. I will not say that this reproach is wholly unfounded. A more liberal proceeding, if it did not obtain a reciprocal concession from the King, *would have put him more in the wrong.*" This sentence must have cost Mr. Hallam some trouble—not in the arrangement of so many monosyllables, but rather in the nice adjustment of that delicacy of decision, which, while it discovers that the King was wronged, indicates how "he might have been put more in the wrong." More!—why, as it happened, and as we have shown, he was not in the wrong at all. This is a sharp conflict between the truth the historian loves, and the party which he loves more. What follows is much special

Charles the First only felt that he was betrayed by Parliament ; and he scorned to barter their favour by that vulgar traffic of treachery—the immolation of the single victim who had long attached his personal affections, and who was a man at least as much envied as he was hated. That cruel duty had not yet been inculcated on a British Sovereign, that his bosom must remain a blank to all private affections,—that severe lesson Charles the First was hereafter to be taught.

Amid this world of troubles which was now opening on the nation, particularly after the return of Buckingham from the disastrous expedition to the Isle of Rhé, hard was the conflict of contending duties between the Sovereign and the people. The spirit and sense of the country gentlemen claim our sympathy ; for many of this honourable class, willing to assist the King in his distresses, but dreading lest such illegal shifts and arbitrary demands for levying money from his subjects might, if they yielded, be established into precedents, entered their prisons with patriotic fortitude. One instance represents many. George Catesby, of Northamptonshire, being committed to prison as a loan-recusant, alleged, among other reasons for his non-compliance, that “ he considered that this loan might become a precedent ; and that every precedent, he was told by the Lord President, was a flower of the prerogative. The Lord President told him that ‘ he lied ! ’ Catesby shook his head, observing, ‘ I come not here to contend with your Lordship, but to suffer.’ Lord Suffolk then interposed, to entreat the Lord President not too far to urge his kinsman, Mr. Catesby. This country gentleman waived any kindness he might owe to kindred, declaring that ‘ he would remain master of his own purse.’ The prisons were crowded with loan-recusants. The friends of these knights and country gentlemen flocked to their prisons, and the disturbed scenes in the country assumed a more alarming appearance. The great novelty and symptom of the times was the scattering of letters. Sealed letters, addressed to the leading men of the country, were found hanging on bushes ;

pleading about the necessity that “ a foundation of confidence should be laid between the Crown and Parliament.” Heaven knows, that Charles the First had on his side confidence “ over much ” in his first Parliament. He had trusted all his hopes to them—and they were bankrupts in their promises.

anonymous letters were dropped in shops and streets, which gave notice that "the day was fast approaching when such a work was to be wrought in England as never was the like, which will be for our good." Addresses multiplied "to all true-hearted Englishmen!" When the country gentlemen petitioned for more liberty and air during the summer, it was policy to grant their request. But it was also policy that they should not reside in their own counties; the relaxation was only granted to those who, living in the south, consented to sojourn in the north; while the dwellers in the north were to be lodged in the south. These country gentlemen insured their popularity by their committals, for many stout resisters of the loans were returned in the following Parliament against their own wishes. About eighty of these country gentlemen were imprisoned; they were not hardly treated, and the King granted them an allowance according to their rank and fortune. By an anecdote which Carte has given, there was a colonel who declared that he had cost his Majesty fifteen hundred pounds for his weekly allowances.

These country gentlemen and the Sovereign were thrown into the same unhappy predicament. Neither party could relieve the other, though unquestionably both would gladly have avoided their mutual persecution,—the enforcement of his claims by the Sovereign, and the refusal of them by his subjects. The party who had for ever divided them alone triumphed. Many were heavily fined for declaring that "they knew no law besides that of Parliament to compel men to give away their own goods," and the cry in return for "a subsidy" was ever "a Parliament!" The King ordered that those who could not subscribe to the loans should not be forced; but it seems there were orders in council to specify the names of those householders who would not subscribe, and that those who could not pay in purse should pay in person. This proceeding is one of many evidences of a weak Government and strong measures,—of Charles's disposition to respect the rights of the people, and of the distresses which urged him to circumvent those rights.

What was the result? Every mode that the Government invented seems to have been easily frustrated, either by the

intrepidity of the parties themselves, or by that general understanding which enabled the people to play into one another's hands. Those who were pressed were sent to the depôt; but either the soldiers would not receive these good citizens, or they found easy means to return. Whenever they levied a distress in consequence of a refusal to pay the imposition granted by the Common-Council at Guildhall, which the people called *Yield-all*, there was nothing found but "old ends, such as nobody cared for;" or if commodities were seized on, it was in vain to offer pennyworths, where it was a point of honour that no customer should be found. A wealthy merchant, who had formerly been a cheesemonger, was summoned to appear before the Privy Council, and required to lend the King two hundred pounds, or else to go himself to the army and serve it with cheese. It was not supposed that a merchant so aged and wealthy would submit to resume his former mean trade; but the old man, in the spirit of the times, preferred the hard alternative, and baulked the new project of finance by shipping himself with his cheese. When at Hickeys's-hall the Duke and the Earl of Dorset sat to receive the loans; the Duke impatiently threatened, and the Earl affected to treat with levity those who came before them, with all the suppressed passions of popular indignation. The Earl of Dorset, asking a fellow who pleaded inability to lend money, of what trade he was, and being answered "a tailor," said, "Put down your name for such a sum; one snip will make amends for all." The tailor quoted Scripture abundantly, and shook the bench with laughter or with rage by his anathemas, till he was put fast into a messenger's hands. This tailor was a remarkable person, one Ball, renowned through the parish of St. Clements, not only as a tailor, but as a prophet. He had formerly discovered that Prince Henry was prefigured in the Apocalypse, and had prophesied that his Royal Highness should overthrow "the beast." The honest prophet, crediting his own prophecy, lent out money to receive it back double or treble, when King James should be elected Pope! He was now consigned to a messenger; but hardly could even this prophet have foretold that twenty years after, tailors and prophets should employ messengers themselves!

Men of a certain rank, for their contumacy, were menaced to

be sent to serve in the army for the Palatinate, or on other foreign employment. Among these, Sir Peter Hayman, a member of the House of Commons, opened his own case, and told his own story. The characteristic style of our sturdy patriot is amusing, and tempts me to lay it before the reader—

“ I was called before the Lords of the Council, for what I know not. I heard it was for not lending on a Privy Seal. I told them, if they will take my estate, let them, I will give it up; lend I will not. When I was before the Lords of the Council, they laid to my charge my unwillingness to serve the King; I said I had my life and my estate to serve my country and my religion. They put upon me if I did not pay, I should be put upon an employment of service. I was willing. After ten weeks' waiting, they told me I was to go with a Lord into the Palatinate, and that I should have employment there, and means befitting. I told them, I was a subject, and desired means. Some put on very eagerly, some dealt nobly; they said I must go on my own purse. I told them, *Nemo militat suis expensis*. Some told me, I must go; I began to think what must I? None were ever sent out in that kind. Lawyers told me, I could not be so sent. Having that assurance, I demanded means, and was resolved not to stir upon those terms, and in silence and duty I denied. Upon this, they having given me a command to go, after some twelve days they told me they would not send me as a soldier, but to attend on an ambassador. I knew that stone would hit me. I settled my troubled estate, and addressed myself to that service.”

That great lawyer, Sir Edward Coke, pithily observed on these odious imprisonments and forced foreign employments:—“No restraint, be it ever so little, but is imprisonment, and foreign employment is a kind of honourable banishment. I myself was designed to go to Ireland: I was willing to go, and hoped if I had gone, to have found some Mompessons there. There is a difference when the party is the King's servant, and when not.”

These illegal and irregular contributions of money, to which Charles the First was forced in his great distresses, have furnished some scenes of arbitrary power, and even of tyrannical courses, for those historical painters, who, with a hatred of the

Monarch, have left us such a distorted portrait of the Man. The King declared, that "not one penny borrowed by loan should be bestowed or expended but upon those public and general services wherein every one of them, and their wives and children, and posterity, have their personal and common interest." The Court party pleaded, that the sums thus reluctantly wrested from individuals were much less than the subsidies which, had Parliament sympathised with their Sovereign, would have been granted. Lilly, who had himself been a collector of the ship-money, and who had no prejudices in favour of Charles, tells us that his proportion of taxes in the King's time was twenty-two shillings and no more; while the assessments which he had to pay at the time he was writing under the Commonwealth were nearly as many pounds! The Commonwealth then sold their liberty dear. Cromwell did not dispense it at a cheaper rate. However, the nation, it appears, was more glorious, but the individual was pinched for it!

To discover the fairest means of raising supplies was the great financial difficulty of Charles the First. This investigation formed the perpetual discussion in Council—but the contrivances and the artifices to disguise the forms of the royal exactions, as is in the nature of such things, were often equalled by the contrivances and the artifices of the people to elude them: and the King's exchequer often drew little profit by the odious measures in which there was at least as much of distress as of tyranny.

At first, Charles had hoped by the pathetic appeal to a "Benevolence," that he should have touched the hearts of the resisters of unparliamentary taxation, but the term proved unlucky, and was construed into a "Malevolence," for the nature of the thing, said a member, does not agree with the name. When Benevolences lost all their virtue, the subject was cautiously informed that the sum demanded was a *loan*—or he was honoured by a letter under the *privy seal*, till privy seals got to be hawked about to persons coming out of church. At length, as the distresses of the Monarch rose on him, appeared the *general loan*, which in fact was a forced loan. Ingenious in the destruction of his own popularity, a new mode of "Secret instructions to Commissioners" was contrived.

Those gentlemen were to treat apart with their lenders,—never in the presence of any other person; beginning with those who were likely to set the best example, they were then to show the roll to the more reluctant. Their skill was to find out those who could afford to bear the largest rates; but how were they to acquire this secret and inquisitorial knowledge? After a number of interrogatories had been put to a person concerning others who had spoken against loan-money, and after having drawn from him the arguments which had been used against these loans, the communicator was to be charged in his Majesty's name, and upon his allegiance, not to disclose to any other person the answers which had been enforced from him by the Commissioners. This is a striking instance of human fatuity. A weak, rather than a tyrannical Government is attempting arbitrary measures; and they seek to obtain a secret purpose by the most open and general means; a self-destroying principle!

Shall we at once condemn the King for his arbitrary measures in levying money? It is possible that such were never in his contemplation. Charles, whose favourite literary amusement seems to have been our dramatic writings, when once reading a manuscript of Massinger's, entitled "The King and the Subject," found this not unappropriate passage was given to the tyrant Pedro of Spain:—

"Monies! we'll raise supplies what ways we please,
And force you to subscribe to blanks, in which
We'll mulct you as we shall think fit. The Cæsars
In Rome were wise, acknowledging no laws
But what their swords did ratify."

Against this passage Charles the First wrote

"This is too insolent, and to be changed."

The criticism of Charles was not as excellent as the feeling which dictated it. The Master of the Revels, who has afforded us this anecdote from his office-book, adds, "It is here entered for ever, to be remembered by my son, and those that cast their eyes on it, in honour of King Charles my master." The courtly Master of the Revels might have been surprised that the King appeared to have been disgusted with his own practice.

The expedients which Charles the First was often reduced to practise, sometimes placed him in a very ridiculous position, from his earnestness to obtain his purpose without a manifest injury to the subject.

The oppressive system of monopolies still practised on the Continent, had long been a grievance in this country. Monopolies were a wretched mode of drawing a certain revenue from a particular article, by the contractors engaging to make a stipulated annual payment for their privileges. When Government grants such a patent for the sole vending of an article or manufacture, it extinguishes the highest virtues of commerce; competition and its consequences, improvement and low prices.

A monopoly of soap was granted by Charles the First to certain courtiers. To render this company more odious, in a pamphlet of the day we are told, it was composed of "Popish Recusants." Connecting Popery with soap-boiling was, it seems, no clumsy artifice to rouse popular clamour. But as these monopolies were often in the hands of Roman Catholics, it is probable that the Catholics, thrown out of the more honourable professions, may have turned their attention to this species of commercial speculation. The Roman Catholics at that time in our country occupied the same station as the Hebrews—they were driven to pursue baser occupations, from being prohibited the more liberal ones.

The proposal for making soap, no doubt originated with one of those projectors who abound in periods of public distress. In the new patent, every good quality of soap was specified, a lower price was fixed on, and the King was to receive ten thousand pounds per annum. On these specious pretences this monopoly was granted. The regular traders would in their own defence practise every artifice to damnify the new invention, and a civil war was carried on between the old and the new soapers. It was alleged that the new soap blistered the washer's hands, burnt the linen, scalded the laundresses' fingers, wasted infinitely in keeping, being full of lime and tallow. In its defence, it was urged that barrels of the new soap had been sophisticated by the malice of the old soapers, throwing in a quantity of rhubarb, or a glass of sack, with other adulterations, and finally that "the King and the Lords were well satisfied

with the goodness of this new soap." Complaints, however, were still rife. "The new company of *gentlemen soap-boilers*," however, procured Mrs. Sanderson, the Queen's laundress,* to subscribe to the goodness of their soap; but Mrs. Sanderson "told her Majesty that she dare not wash her Majesty's linen with any other but Castile soap;" and, to the shame of those ladies who had subscribed their names to the certificate of the excellence of the new soap, it was known that they, like the Queen's laundress, privately did, what they publicly professed they did not,—use the Castile soap! "On Sunday last," says a letter-writer, "the *King and Council* set again upon the soap business. On Monday the *Lord Mayor* was sent for to the Court, where *His Majesty and the Lords* rebuked him for his partial proceeding in favour of the old soap, disparaging the new! Their lordships sent a warrant, with four of their hands to it, to bring a poor old woman out of Southwark before them, for speaking invectively against the new soap! She was well chidden and dismissed." On this occasion there seems to have been more than one old woman present at the Council. "Four Lords" actually signed the warrant!

And in truth the Lord Mayor had not fairly incurred the royal rebuke! His lordship and the whole *Court of Aldermen* had consented to join with the *Lieutenant of the Tower*, and several *Knights*, to hold two general washing days at *Guildhall*, where every one might come and wash their linen before the worshipful assembly. Many came, but chiefly of the feminine gender, who, as all washerwomen are accustomed at their work, could not hold their clack. So loud and clamorous was the babble against the new soap, that it appears that his lordship with the Court of Aldermen and the Lieutenant of the Tower, and the Knights were panic-struck. The letter-writer proceeds, "The *Lord Mayor*, by the King's commandment, received a shrewd reprimand for his pusillanimity in this business, being afraid of a troop of women that clamorously petitioned against the new soap. My Lord Privy-Seal (the Lord Mayor's brother-in-law) was to give it him at the Board, and

* Bridget, daughter of Sir Edward Tyrrell, Knt., and wife to William Sanderson, the historian, who, at the Restoration was made gentleman in ordinary to the King's Privy Chamber, and knighted.

did it very sharply." In a word, the Lord Mayor was treated by "the King and Council" as they had before used the "old woman from Southwark," who, probably on the occasion of "the two general washing-days at Guildhall," avenged her cause among the heroines who, armed only with their tongues, put to flight the whole Court of Aldermen and the Lieutenant of a royal fortress.

All this was only ridiculous. The monopoly did not perform its promises, the soap grew worse and worse, and the King's revenue less and less. After many vexatious persecutions, for "the new soapers" made "forcible entries and seizures" on the old, the new yielded up their patent to the old. So that these were compelled to re-purchase at an enormous rate the right of following their own trade, and having the duties doubled.

The patent professed that this monopoly arose from the royal care to promote the home manufactory, in preference to the foreign commodity.* This soap monopoly was, no doubt, considered by the Cabinet as a fortunate measure, for the Lord Treasurer, finding himself opposed by the Lord Marshal, observed, "If you will be against the things that are for the King's profit, so that he cannot have money, your pension must be unpaid." †

An instance more honourable to the honest feelings of Charles the First, on another financial expedient, is sufficiently curious.

Among the extraordinary expedients of the Duke of Buckingham, was that of a new coinage, which offered an immediate certain profit. The King was to have more than a double number of shillings out of a pound of bullion. The Duke had already executed the project, and sixty thousand pounds of these debased shillings were actually issued. Most of the merchants who were summoned before the Lords in Council, to deliver their opinions, declared it to be a ruinous scheme; ‡

* The Patent, with its particulars, may be found in Rushworth, ii. 189.

† Strafford's Letters, i. 372.

‡ Perhaps our political economists may be curious to learn the arguments which their homely fathers used on this occasion. The merchants said that at first the King might perhaps gain largely by this new coinage, but it would ruin trade by the alteration of the exchange, would greatly reduce the revenues of the King and all men, enhance the price of all things, raise the value of Spanish bullion, and afford a

but the Duke found supporters with an opposite party. On a second meeting, Sir Robert Cotton drew out a paper, and by his Majesty's command, began to read.*

The third article startled the Duke, who, looking sternly, and leaning over Sir Robert's shoulder, exclaimed, "Sir Robert Cotton, are you come hither to instruct the King and Council?" This silenced Sir Robert, but in defiance of the looks and taunts of Buckingham, who stood beside the royal chair, Cotton, kneeling down, delivered the paper into the King's hands, beseeching his Majesty would by no means omit reading it over. Charles graciously accepted the paper. The Duke, who counted on the strength of his present party, and the absence of most of the others, eager to conclude, moved that the Lords might sit instantly to close the Council. Again Sir Robert Cotton cast himself on his knees, requesting his Majesty to observe, that the majority of the Council were absent, and that a business of vital importance to the nation might not pass so imperfectly examined, and humbly entreated that the Council might adjourn to the next day. The King granted his request against the Duke's motion.

The same night, before he retired to rest, the King studiously perused Sir Robert's paper. On the following day, when his Majesty appeared in Council, no one could discover by his countenance to which side he inclined. Having heard different opinions, the King, with his peculiar ability in summing up arguments, convinced the Lords of the Council, that he had made himself perfectly master of the subject, and decided against the Duke.

The Master of the Mint was severely reprimanded for having issued out this new coinage, and a proclamation was sent out,

new profit to foreign countries by counterfeiting our coin, and by this means even deprive the King of his expected profits. On a similar conduct under the inept administration of the Duke of Lerma, by doubling the value of the copper coin, copper money was poured into Spain from all parts, and their silver suddenly swept away, as if it had been by enchantment. It is evident that Government acquires nothing by raising or lowering the standard of the circulating medium.—Mariana.

* This paper, which we have found in a MS. letter, dated September, 1626, is however printed among the posthumous pieces of Sir Robert Cotton, which Howel edited. It could not therefore be *Sir Thomas Rowe's speech*, made at the Council-table in *July*, 1640, though, as such, it is published by Rushworth, in his Collections.

that "all monies of gold and silver coined since the issues of this debased coin, should be esteemed as bullion, and not be current." Charles, in his distress, not only would not do wrong, but eagerly repaired the mischief which had been done, and this public repulse of an adopted measure of the Favourite's, with the judicious preference he gave to the knowledge of Cotton, is not only said to have greatly mortified Buckingham, but appears "to have raised some hopes and exultation among the moderate part of the Opposition."

The result of our researches must be, that the arbitrary mode of levying supplies without the aid of Parliament, when Parliament refused to aid, does not prove, as is usually assumed, any preference in Charles to tyrannical modes of raising money. Had Charles been a tyrant, like other tyrants, he would have opened a much shorter and an absolute way.

CHAPTER XV.

SECRET HISTORY OF THE QUEEN'S HOUSEHOLD, AND OF THE ATTEMPT TO ORGANISE A FRENCH AND CATHOLIC FACTION IN THE ENGLISH COURT.

CHARLES THE FIRST, at this early period of his reign, had not only to encounter the troubles of his Parliament, the disaffection of the people excited by his financial difficulties, and the anxieties attendant on his military expeditions; but even his own household opened for him a long scene of mortification, such as has rarely been exhibited under the roofs of the palace of the sovereign.

Charles and Henrietta had met in youthful love; ardent and heartfelt had been their first embrace; but the design and results of a POLITICAL MARRIAGE could not long be concealed, and their personal happiness was soon not in their own power to command.

Henrietta, among her French household, forgot her endearing entreaty to Charles, which had so gracefully opened her lips on her arrival, that "he would ever himself, and by no third person, correct her faults of ignorance, youthful and a stranger

as she was." In thanking her, the young Monarch desired that "she would use him as she had desired him to use her."

But Henrietta had the whole French Cabinet invisibly operating on her conduct. Her mother, the Dowager of France, and her brother, the Monarch, flattered their hopes that a ductile princess of sixteen might serve as an instrument to maintain the predominance of the French interest in the English Court, nor does the English King appear to have been insensible to their attempt. It is only by entering into the domestic privacies of these royal personages, that we can do justice to Charles in a dilemma equally delicate and difficult.

Of this political marriage, as of so many others, we may detect the secret motives of an union of adverse interests.

No one, I think, has noticed the character of the French ambassadors who were sent immediately after the marriage. Every ambassador sent by France was acting under the councils of the Louvre to influence the Queen. The Count de Tillières, who had first come over here as Chamberlain to Henrietta, and was afterwards appointed ambassador, was dismissed with the rest of the French; and Charles sent an express prohibition to Tillières, that he should not presume to set foot on English shore to be near her Majesty, for that "he would no longer suffer his sworn servant to be check-mate with him."*

De Tillières was succeeded by the Marquis de Blainville, whom we find keeping up a secret intercourse with the Queen and her numerous establishment. His official capacity was favourable to this disguised *espionage*; and his conduct here was such as to have incurred the peremptory refusal of Charles to allow his admittance to the presence either of the Queen or himself.

One of the objects of the mission of De Blainville was to remonstrate on the protection which the English Court afforded to Soubise, one of the chiefs of the French Protestants.

But De Blainville had other important objects, and Charles was aware of them. Our acute English commentator on Bas-sompierre's journal of his short embassy to the English Court, in alluding to Father Sancy's conduct, one of her Majesty's

* Sloane MSS.

political attendants, observes, that "one is surprised to find the English Court so early and so well apprised of this man's mission, as it appears they were." The fact is, that Charles had no careless intelligencers at the French Court. Larkin was an active agent of the Duke's; and before De Blainville's arrival in England, his designs had been detected, and Larkin had anticipated his views. He had watched closely for them, and two dark speeches of the Queen-Mother and the Cardinal were for some time riddles hard to unriddle, but he succeeded by the open confession of the Duke de Chevreux. "De Blainville comes," says Larkin, "to spy and discover what he can, and, according as he shall find cause, to frame cabals and factions, whereunto he is esteemed very proper, being characterised with the marks of a most subtle, prying, penetrating, and dangerous man."*

At that time, it was the usage for ambassadors to be maintained at the expense of the Court, who provided them with house, diet, and even post-horses; and the ambassadors, on their return home, left the marks of their liberality, or their parsimony, in gratuities to the Master of the Ceremonies, and other attendants. This absurd custom was productive of perpetual jealousies on the side of the ambassadors, and at length was found so inconvenient at the Exchequer, that Charles was compelled in his distresses to curtail, and finally, to refuse this established mode of royal reception. De Blainville, from the moment of his arrival, insisted on being lodged in the King's Palace, and had reverted to some precedent as far back as the reign of Elizabeth; but Charles firmly objected to any foreign ambassador residing so close to him. De Blainville was ever on the watch to make what, in the style of the Master of the Ceremonies, is called "an exception;" that is, an allegation of something irregular in etiquette; and this French ambassador proved the most troublesome of guests to the hapless Master of the Ceremonies. Vaunting his high rank at his own Court, as *Monsieur le premier*, the first Gentleman of the Chamber, and his own great means, he threatened to refuse his Majesty's diet, and live at his own cost. This seemed tantamount to a procla-

* Cabala, fo. 320.

mation of war to the urbane Master of the Ceremonies, who in his curious diary has registered these "stomachous speeches" with great indignation, and some trepidation. This wayward guest drove poor Sir John Finet to many a cruel shift to allow the ambassador, as a private person, what, if acknowledged to have been granted to him in his public capacity, might have become, that most serious of solemn affairs in the eyes of a Master of the Ceremonies—a precedent!

How De Blainville occupied himself here, was doubtless not unobserved; but the best accounts of an ambassador's secret proceedings will usually come from the other side of the water. In a confidential dispatch of the Earl of Holland at Paris, our minister was informed of what he could not himself have so well discovered. "I must tell your Grace, that by a friend whom I am tied not to name, I was showed the private letter that Blainville wrote to the King, in the which he sent him the whole proceedings of the Parliament, and concludes they will ruin you, naming great factions against you."*

De Blainville was evidently exerting an undue influence over the Queen, and sometimes outwitted the most correct arrangements of Sir John Finet. Once, on the removal of the Court, and the Queen staying behind, the Marquis's train of coaches and attendants having also set off, and all being prepared for the Marquis's stepping into his own carriage, at this instant he called for the Master of the Ceremonies to confide to him the important secret, that he should stay behind—"pour se purger, as he professed"—a stratagem for his greater freedom of access to the Queen! His mysterious intercourse became evident, and one day, when the King was going to Parliament, a difference arising between Charles and the Queen about the place where she was to stand, De Blainville was discovered to have occasioned her Majesty's obstinacy. From that moment the ambassador was forbidden any farther access to their Majesties. The Frenchman stormed, and required an audience; Charles replied, that "If he demanded an audience for any business of the King his master, it should be readily granted; but if it was to expostulate about his own grievances, his Majesty refused to see

* Cabala, p. 252.

him." The ambassador replied, that he was here for the King his master, and not for himself; the audience, therefore, referred to the person represented, and not to the representative. On the following day, dispatching couriers, and refusing the King's diet, he prepared for his departure. His imperious conduct had often excited the indignation of the mob: the ambassador was assaulted in his house; and the Master of the Ceremonies notes down, that "the Marquis de Blainville was reputed to be the main *boutefeu* of our war with France." He has made a lamentable entry in his diary: "the Marquis, after all the vaunts of his own great means, seemed to prefer his ill-humour, for he left the King's officers and servants, (myself in particular, after my so long and painful attendance) ill-satisfied with his *none at all*, or most unworthy acknowledgements."

By the marriage contract, Henrietta was to be allowed a household establishment composed of her own people. As this arrangement was made during the life of James, it was limited to one hundred and twenty persons, in her state as a Princess of Wales. The French afterwards pleaded for an increased establishment for her rank as the Queen of England.* Thus they gradually contrived to form nothing less than a small French colony, and, by a private account, it is said to have branched out, with their connexions, to about four hundred persons. This French party was forming a little republic within themselves; a political faction among them was furnishing intelligence to their own ambassadors, and spreading rumours in an intercourse with the English malecontents; while the French domestics, engaged in lower intrigues, were lending their names to hire houses in the suburbs, where, under their protection, the English Catholics found a secure retreat to hold their illegal assemblies, and where the youth of both sexes were educated and prepared to be sent abroad to Catholic seminaries. The Queen's palace was converted into a place of security for the persons and papers of every fugitive.

They had not long resided here, ere the mutual jealousies between the two nations broke out. All the English who were not Catholics were soon dismissed from their attendance on the

* *Mercure Français*, xii. 224.

Queen, by herself; while Charles was impelled, by the popular cry, to forbid British Catholics serving the Queen, or even to be present at the celebration of her mass. Pursuivants would stand at the door of the Queen's chapel to seize on any of the English who entered, while, on these occasions, the French would draw their swords to defend the concealed Romanists. "The Queen and Hers," became an odious distinction with the people; and what seems not improbable, the Papists, presuming on the protection which the late marriage seemed to afford them, frequently passed through the churches during divine service, "hooting and hallooing." A Papist Lord, when the King was at chapel, is accused "of prating on purpose louder when the chaplain prayed," till the King sent his message, "either let him come and do as we do, or else I will make him prate farther off." Such were the indecent scenes exhibited in public; in private they were, of course, less reserved.

Those who have portrayed the Queen as displaying an ascendancy over the political conduct of Charles the First, must at least acknowledge that she had not become a politician by any previous studies, or any disposition towards deep councils. Henrietta first conducted herself as might have been rather expected, than excused, in an inconsiderate Princess of sixteen; and exhausted her genius and her temper in the frivolous interests of her bed-chamber ladies and her household appointments.

Henrietta yielded herself wholly to her confessor, Père Berulle, afterwards Cardinal, who was soon succeeded by a more offensive character in Father Sancy. The genius of Catholicism is that of Proselytism; for in that Church, out of whose pale there is no salvation, it is charity to inveigle every human soul to enter, and pious frauds or a more terrific force are alike sanctioned by the only true Church. The Queen, in her zeal, obtruded her papistical ceremonies on the observations of her Protestants. Even at a later period, I find by a Roman Catholic manuscript, that "on a certain fast-day, the Queen being with child, and refusing to eat flesh, even at the King's request, his Majesty desired the French ambassador to procure a licence from the Roman Catholic Bishop of Calcedon, who, the King knew, lay hid in his house," notwithstanding that a proclamation had been issued against him. This is one more

evidence, had any been wanting, of the royal connivance with which James and Charles frequently indulged their Roman Catholics, at the moment they were compelled, by some public remonstrance, openly to put the penal laws in force against them.

Henrietta indeed, as we have seen, on her first arrival, had affected to disregard her ghostly confessor. This piece of acting was probably a French lesson, retained for the moment, but it was never got by heart. The Queen's priests, by those well-known means which the Roman religion sanctions, were drawing, it was alleged, from the Queen the minutest circumstances which passed in privacy between her and the King. They indisposed her mind against her royal consort; they impressed on her a contempt for the English nation; and as was long usual with our egotistical neighbours, they induced her to neglect the English language, as if the Queen of England held no common interest with the nation. Yet all this seemed hardly more offensive than the humiliating state to which they had reduced an English Queen by their monastic obedience. The ascetic austerities of Catholicism, in its daily practices, had occasioned the death of a female of distinction among her attendants, who, on her death-bed, had complained of such rigid penances.

On the Queen they had inflicted the most degrading or the most ridiculous penances and mortifications. Her Majesty was seen walking barefoot, or spinning at certain hours, and performing menial offices. She even waited on her own domestics; but the most notorious was her Majesty's pilgrimage to Tyburn, to pray under the gallows of those Jesuits who, executed as traitors to Elizabeth and James, were by the Catholics held as martyrs of faith. This incident Bassompierre, in the style of the true French gasconade, declared that "those who formed the accusation did not themselves believe." The fact however seems not doubtful; I find it confirmed by private accounts of the times, and afterwards sanctioned by a State paper.

Priestly indiscretion was perpetually exploding. Once, when the King and Queen were dining together in the Presence,*

* There is a curious picture of Charles and Henrietta dining in the Presence, which may be seen at Hampton Court.

Hacket being to say grace, the Queen's confessor would have anticipated him, and an indecorous race was run between the Catholic priest and the Protestant chaplain, till the latter shoved him aside, and the King pulling the dishes to him, the carvers performed their office. Still the confessor, standing by the Queen, was on the watch to be before Hacket for the after-grace; but Hacket again got the start. The confessor, however, resounded his grace louder than the chaplain, and the King, in great passion, instantly rose, taking the Queen by the hand.

When Henrietta was unexpectedly delivered of an infant, which afterwards died, the Popish priest ran forwards, but the King insisted that the royal infant should be baptised by an English clergyman. A ludicrous anecdote has come down to us, respecting the birth of the Duke of York, afterwards James the Second. The nurse being a Roman Catholic, Sir John Tunstone offered the oath of allegiance. She refused it; they tampered with her to convert her. This threw her into a fright, and spoilt her milk; the infant suffered. They then resolved to change her, but the Queen was so evidently affected at the proposal, that it was considered necessary for her own health and the nurse's milk, to pass over in silence the oath of allegiance.

One of the articles in the contract of marriage was, that the Queen should have a chapel at St. James's, to be built, and consecrated by the French bishop. The priests became very importunate, declaring that without a chapel mass could not be performed with the state required before a Queen. The King's answer at this moment, as it is mentioned in a letter of the times, betrayed no respect for Popery. "If the Queen's closet, where they now say mass, is not large enough, let them have it in the great chamber, but if the great chamber is not wide enough, they might use the garden, and if the garden would not serve their turn, then was the Park the fittest place."

Such was the state of mutual displeasure! The French priests and the whole party slighted, and sometimes worse treated, were wearying others, as they themselves were wearied. To English notions, there was something ludicrous in the person of a lively juvenile Bishop, hardly of age, whose authority was but irreverently treated by two beautiful viragos, Madame

St. George and another Lady of the Bed-Chamber, in a civil war of words. The young Bishop, however, became a more serious personage in his eager contests with the Earl of Holland, about the stewardship of the manors which had been settled on the Queen for her jointure, that office being conferred on the Earl by the King, while the French Bishop claimed it by a grant from her Majesty.

In the marriage treaty, many points had been arranged, with small attention to their nature. The French had secured the dower of Henrietta, in case of the death of the King; but they afterwards discovered that her revenue or jointure during the King's life being a custom unknown to France, had been omitted. This, therefore, though not refused, led to questions whether a Frenchman or an Englishman should be the receiver.

Bluster and broils, chatter and clamour, were never ceasing in this troubled French household in an English palace. Madame St. George, her former governess, who stood paramount in the graces of the Queen, was most intolerably hated by the English. Vivacious and high-spirited, she stood on the perpetual watch to claim her right of place as first Lady of Honour to the Queen. In the full dignity of office, she would thrust herself into the royal carriage, seizing on that seat as her due; which it appears, by De Brienne's Memoirs, was her right, according to the French appointments. She insisted on this, in preference to the English Ladies of higher rank. From the carriage she was once repulsed by the King's own hand, and never was Charles forgiven! notwithstanding the blandishment of his munificent presents when he finally dismissed the lady.

The custom in France of purchasing appointments in the Royal Household, which some did with all their means, seemed a monstrous anomaly to Charles; nor would he submit to a foreign regulation, which forced on him domestics who were nominated by his brother of France. The unhappy foreigners passed their days in jealousies and bickerings among themselves, which exposed them to the ridicule of their sarcastic neighbours. We smile at the dispatches of the Ambassador Extraordinary, this great mediator between two kings and a queen, addressed to the minister in France, acknowledging that "the greatest obstacle in this most difficult negotiation, pro-

ceeded from the bed-chamber women!" for Marshal Bassompierre found more trouble to make these ladies agree, than to accommodate the differences between the two monarchs.

A year had not elapsed, when we find Charles himself opening his griefs to the French Monarch; he complains of the difficulty of access to the Queen; he is compelled "to manage her servants" to obtain an interview. The King has described her conduct in a very particular manner, in regard to her revenue. "One night, when I was a-bed, she put a paper in my hand, telling me it was a list of those that she desired to be of her revenue. I took it, and said I would read it next morning; but withal told her, that by agreement in France, I had the naming of them. She said there were both English and French in the note. I replied, that those English I thought fit to serve her I would confirm; but for the French, it was impossible for them to serve her in that nature. Then she said, all those in the paper had breviates from her mother and herself, and that she would admit no other. Then I said, that it was neither in her mother's power nor hers to admit any without my leave, and if she stood upon that, whomsoever she recommended should not come in. Then she bade me plainly take my lands to myself, for if she had no power to put in whom she would in those places, she would have neither lands nor houses of me, but bade me give her what I thought fit in pension. I bade her then remember to whom she spoke, and told her that she ought not to use me so. Then she fell into a passionate discourse, how she is miserable, in having no power to place servants; and that businesses succeeded the worse for her recommendation; which when I offered to answer, she would not so much as hear me. Then she went on saying she was not of that base quality to be used so ill. Then I made her both hear me, and end that discourse."

An interesting bed-curtain lecture! We may be sure of its accuracy, not only as it bears the sign-manual, but because it is full of nature and truth, as some critics will be more able to decide than others. It is evident that Charles must have acquired a perfect mastery of the language of his pouting Queen, to have been enabled so completely to have maintained his rights, and so successfully to have circumscribed hers.

The French establishment was daily increasing in number and expense, but the grievances were of a more delicate nature. The personal happiness of the King and the tranquillity of the people were involved in a French and Roman Catholic faction in the English Court. The most obnoxious person was Father Sancy, who was instigating the Queen to the most unqualified demands, urging the treaty to a tittle. He was extremely offensive to Charles, and is unquestionably the person alluded to in Charles the First's letter to Louis the Thirteenth. "I will also omit the affront she did me, before my going to this last unhappy assembly of Parliament, because there has been talk enough of that already, &c. The author of it is before you in France." Charles indeed had expelled Father Sancy, and sent him back. We shall shortly see what sort of an actor he was in this political pantomime.

The single act of sovereignty alone could triumph over these domestic and public troubles. And this Charles at length resolved on, at the risk and menace of a war with France. In November 1625, Charles wrote to Buckingham, who was at Paris, that he was then deliberating on the most convenient means "to cashier" the whole party, for "I am resolved it must be done, and that shortly." He transmits by the same courier a double letter to Buckingham, which he might read to the Queen-Mother, that the measure might not come unexpected. The firmness of Charles on this occasion originated with the King himself, and not with the Duke, as the French themselves and some historians have supposed. The dismissal of these persons was not the act of a hasty and vindictive monarch; for though his resolution appears in November 1625, it was delayed till July of the following year. One evening, accompanied by his officers of state, he summoned the French household to Somerset House. He addressed them without anger.

"GENTLEMEN AND LADIES,

"I am driven to that extremity, as I am personally come to acquaint you, that I very earnestly desire your return into France. True it is, the deportment of some amongst you hath been very inoffensive to me; but others again have so

dallied with my patience, and so highly affronted me, as I cannot, and will no longer endure it." *

The King's address implicating no one, was immediately followed by a volley of protestations of innocence. The Bishop desired to learn his fault, that he might defend himself while here: while the haughty Madame St. George, now seconding the young Bishop in their common cause, referred the King to her mistress. "Sir, I make no question but the Queen will give a fair testimonial of my conduct to your Majesty." The King, in departing, only replied, "I name none." All bowed to the King, and he returned the compliment.†

The Queen, overcome with grief and anger, impetuously remonstrated with the King. Her tender years had not yet suffered so open an indignity. Was a daughter of France and a Queen of England to be treated like a prisoner, rather than a Princess? — Was she not to retain even a domestic, but at the precarious pleasure of her husband's will? It required the strength of character of Charles not to have yielded to the tears or the rage of his youthful Queen, who, in her vehement anger, is said to have broken several panes of the window where she stood taking a sad farewell of her confidential companions and servants, till the King forcibly dragged her away, and bade her "be satisfied, for it must be so."

An hour after the King had delivered his commands, Lord Conway announced to the foreigners, that early in the morning carriages and carts and horses would be ready for them and their baggage. Amid a scene of confusion, the young Bishop protested that this was impossible, that they owed debts in London, and that much was due to them. On the following day, the *Procureur-General* of the Queen flew to the Keeper of the Great Seal at the Privy Council, requiring an admission to address his Majesty, then present at his Council, on matters important to himself and the Queen. This being denied, he

* L'Estrange.

† The account of the *Mercure Française*, drawn up by one of the parties, closely agrees with that which I find in Hamon L'Estrange, the first English historian of Charles. The French writer, however, adds, that "Some of us observed that the King's countenance was sad, and he seemed to hesitate in speaking to us, which the Earl of Holland perceiving, he whispered three or four words behind the King."

exhorted them to maintain the Queen in all her royal prerogatives, and he was answered, "So we do."

Their prayers and disputes served to postpone their departure. Their conduct during this time was not very decorous. It appears, by a contemporary letter-writer, that they flew to take possession of the Queen's wardrobe and jewels. They did not leave her a change of linen, since it was with difficulty her Majesty procured one. Every one now looked to lay his hand on what he might call his own. Everything he could touch was a perquisite. One extraordinary expedient was that of inventing bills to the amount of ten thousand pounds, for articles, and other engagements in which they had entered for the service of the Queen, which her Majesty acknowledged, but afterwards confessed that the debts were fictitious. Even "the Bishop's unholy water" served to swell the accounts. In truth, the breaking up of this French establishment was ruinous to the individuals who had purchased their places at the rate of life-annuities. The French party were still protracting and resisting. The King's verbal dismissal had been delivered on the 1st of July, and the French were still here on the 7th of August, as we find by a note from the King to Buckingham. Its indignant style, some historical critics, with too little knowledge of personal history, have quoted as an evidence of Charles's unfeeling, tyrannical temper.

"STEENIE,

"I have received your letter by Dic Greame (Sir Richard Graham). This is my answer. I command you to send all the French away to-morrow out of the towne, if you can by fair meanes, (but stike not long in disputing,) otherways force them away, dryving them away lyke so manic wilde beastes, until ye have shipped them, and so the devil goe with them. Let me heare no answer, but of the performance of my command. So I rest

Your faithful, constant, loving friend,

"C. R."

"OAKING, the 7th of August, 1626."

Charles wrote in honest anger; yet, notwithstanding his personal provocations, he was still tender of their feelings and their interests. He discharged even the fictitious debts, and

provided for their pensions, at the cost, as it appears, of fifty thousand pounds. Even the haughty beauty, Madame St. George, was presented by the King, on her dismissal, with several thousand pounds and jewels.

The French Bishop and the whole party having contrived all sorts of delays to avoid the expulsion, the yeomen of the guards were sent to turn them out of Somerset-house, whence the juvenile prelate, at the same time making his protest and mounting the steps of the coach, took his departure "head and shoulders." In a long procession of near forty coaches, after four days' tedious travelling, they reached Dover, but the spectacle of these impatient foreigners, so reluctantly quitting England, gesticulating their sorrows, or their quarrels, exposed them to the derision and stirred up the prejudices of the common people. As Madame St. George, whose vivacity is always described as extravagantly French, was stepping into the boat, one of the mob could not resist the satisfaction of flinging a stone at her French cap. An English courtier, who was conducting her, instantly quitted his charge, ran the fellow through the body, and quietly returned to the boat. The man died on the spot, but no farther notice appears to have been taken of the inconsiderate gallantry of this English courtier.

To satisfy the King and Queen of France, Lord Carleton was sent over to Paris, and very ill received; Marshal Bassompierre was dispatched to London, as ambassador extraordinary, to remonstrate with Charles.

The first open insult from the French Court was the reappearance of the obnoxious Father Sancy, in the suite of Bassompierre. Charles signified his instant command that he should be sent back to France, but this the Marshal, according to his instructions, refused; observing, that the King could have nothing to do with his domestic arrangements, by which Father Sancy occupied the place of his confessor. This, however, was but the public language of that adroit ambassador, and not his private opinion; for he had remonstrated with his King and the Queen-Mother of France, on the impropriety of forcing this intermeddler on him, and he had foreseen the offence the presence of Sancy would occasion to the English monarch. The commentator on "the Embassy of the Marshal Bassompierre

to the Court of England," in perceiving the jealousy which Charles entertained of this embassy, could not discover "why this man was so peculiarly agreeable to one Court, and so peculiarly offensive to the other." This knot is not difficult to untie. This political religionist, by consulting in his conduct the pleasure and interest of one Court, was, in fact, necessarily incurring the jealousy and anger of the other. We have already shown that Father Sancy was expelled by Charles, and there is no doubt that he was secretly invested with some dominant authority from the Queen-Mother; for Bassompierre discovered, that when the Queen quarrelled, both with her husband and with himself, as ambassador, Father Sancy was at the bottom of the intrigue, and maintained his authority with such audacity, that Bassompierre found out that the ambassador was not the chief person in the embassy.

Charles thrice insisted on sending back Father Sancy, before he would grant a private audience. The Marshal could only promise that the Father should remain confined to his house, nor ever show himself either at Court or in the city. No specific ground of complaint had been produced against this "domestic;" as Bassompierre observed, "This Father was neither guilty, nor condemned, nor accused;" and yet we see that Charles would tolerate his presence on no account. It is evident that his offences were of a nature not less grievous than delicate; offences which Charles would not condescend to detail, but which, if we connect with the circumstance alluded to in his letter to his brother of France; the former expulsion of Father Sancy when Henrietta's confessor from the English Court; the intriguing character of this political instrument of the Royal Family of France; the promise of Bassompierre that Sancy should not be seen either at Court, or in the city; and certain rumours prevalent at the time that the Queen had violated her secret intercourse with the King, by disclosures to her confessor, we cannot but infer that this *espion* of a priest would be meddling with other matters than religion.

The reception of Bassompierre, before he reached London, was studiously uncivil, in order to balance the cold entertainment which Lord Carleton had suffered at Paris. The Master of the Ceremonies was ordered not to meet him nearer than at

Gravesend, and to prepare no house, all which the Marshal perfectly understood, and refused the King's diet, for that "he would not eat at another's expense in his own house." And at his first interview with the King, at Hampton Court, he came too late, "purposely it was thought," for the dinner which had been prepared; and when "a collation was then set on the table, it remained untasted by him or his fellows," from whence Sir John Finet, in the ambassador's loss of appetite, sagaciously predicted *war! war! war!*

We have a curious account by the French Marshal, how Charles was so personally indignant at the matters proposed to be discussed, and so disconcerted lest the womanish passions of the Queen would break out at a public interview, that he refused to grant one. This intelligence was conveyed by Buckingham, who was at a loss how to proceed in this delicate conjecture, and confidentially begged for the advice of the French Marshal. The vivacious Gaul, who found himself on the point of receiving this affront, to save himself, and at the same time to insinuate himself into the good graces of Buckingham, hit on an expedient worthy of French diplomacy. After a pompous declaration, that "he could not act otherwise than as had been prescribed by his royal master, he granted that the King of England might shorten or lengthen the audience he demanded, in what manner he would." It was then the French Marshal threw out a project how both parties might save their honour. This cunning child of diplomatic etiquette suggested that the King, being then at Hampton Court, might, "after having allowed me to make him my bow, and having received with the King's letters my first compliments, when I should come to open to him the occasion of my coming, the King may interrupt me, and say, Sir, you are come from London, and you have to return thither; it is late, this matter requires a longer time than I could now give you. I shall send for you at an earlier hour, &c., and after some civil expressions about the King, my brother-in-law, and the Queen, my mother-in-law, his Majesty will add, that he would not further delay the impatience of the Queen, my wife, has to hear of them from yourself. Upon which I shall take my leave of him, to make my bow to the Queen." Buckingham appears to have been enraptured by this notable

preconcerted public interview. The English Duke embraced the French Marshal, exclaiming, "You know more of these things than we!" and went away laughing, to tell the King of this expedient, who accepted it, and it appears most punctually conned over his part.

At length, a stormy interview took place. De Blainville appears to have been sent to quarrel with the King, but Bassompierre to hold him in awe. Charles could not restrain the heat of his temper, and once exclaimed to the ambassador, "Why do you not execute your commission at once, and declare war?" Bassompierre's answer was firm and dignified—"I am not a herald to declare war, but a Marshal of France to make it when declared." The King was firm, and even stern during the discussion, but he seems to have been struck by the temper, the presence of mind, and ingenuity of Bassompierre. At the close of the audience, his own temper became more mollified, and the King himself conducted the Marshal through several galleries to the Queen's apartments, where he left him, and subsequently honoured the French Marshal with all the civilities, in his private character, which Charles had denied to his public.

This mission was a total failure, and the French Marshal, with all his vaunts and his menaces, discovered that Charles was inflexible, and sternly offered the alternative of war, rather than permit a French faction to be planted in an English court. At this moment, Charles the First was the true representative of his subjects, and the sovereign participated in the same feelings with his people. Four years afterwards, when the attempt was again revived, of settling a French bishop and a French physician about the Queen, Charles absolutely refused them admittance; and it appears by Panzani's Memoirs, that when Charles learnt that the Abbé du Perron, the Queen's confessor, was raised to a bishoprick in France, he was earnest in desiring his recall. So jealous was the English monarch of any Catholic bishop at London, and in close communication with the Queen, without his sanction. The Court of England, too, was always wary of the liberties which foreign ambassadors took in admitting English Catholics into their chapels, for the English Catholics would be divided into French and Spanish factions by the bishops of either nation.*

* Panzani, 185.

Bassompierre returned home mortified at the intractable character both of the English monarch and the English nation. In addressing the former French bishop who had been sent off, the Marshal writes, "See, Sir, to what we are reduced! and imagine my grief, that the Queen of Great Britain has the pain of viewing my departure, without being of any service to her; but if you consider that I was sent here to make a contract of marriage observed, and to maintain the Catholic religion, in a country from which they formerly banished it to break a contract of marriage, you will assist in excusing me of this failure."

This affair of the French Household, which constituted a party of French politics and Roman Catholicism under the roof of the Sovereign, was one of those intricate cases, where political expediency seems to violate all moral right. The Queen and her party were obstinately pressing for the treaty, but all promises and conventions in State-treaties imply, that affairs should not change, so as to affect the interests of the State. The intention is more concerned in these treaties, than that strictness of terms which might possibly exact the performance of that which should never have been required, any more than it should have been granted. If French politics were fomenting civil discord, and Roman Catholicism exciting odium among his own people,—Charles would have indeed betrayed his weakness as a Sovereign, had he not dismissed the French party.

Louis the Thirteenth had found himself in a parallel, though not so perplexing a state, with his own foreign Princess, and was compelled to discard her Spanish household; and while the French monarch was now complaining of the violation of the treaty, he well knew that it could never be carried into execution. The subscribing parties to this deed of imposture and insincerity, had never imagined that the treaty in all its details should be carried into effect; and this was honestly acknowledged by the very Ambassador Extraordinary who came to complain of its infraction.

This history of the household of the Queen of Charles the First, would be imperfect were we to pass unnoticed the return of a certain number of priests for the religious service of the Queen, four years after this dismissal. The *rentrée* was granted at the peace, at once public and domestic, between the two Courts.

The manuscript memoir of one of the Capuchins who was employed in "the Mission of England," as he denominates his residence here, supplies some curious particulars. Of these missionaries, for such they deemed themselves, and as such they were regarded by Urban the Eighth, we may observe their system, their designs, the little artifices they practised, and other details of the conversions of many English persons of both sexes.

The Capuchins was an order which professed the severest asceticism; and the English Catholics rejoiced as if these men had come from Heaven, that those who had abandoned the faith of their ancestors might once more contemplate, in the very habits worn by these missionaries, the poverty of Jesus; in their manners, the humility of the Gospel, and in their language the contempt of riches and pleasure. The people were struck with their long beards and their monachal dresses, and crowds came to see a class of men, whose voluntary mortifications seemed to have been long forgotten among a people, who, even at this period, according to the representations of many foreigners, enjoyed more personal comforts, a word said to be peculiar to ourselves, than were to be found among other nations. The good fathers, discovering that their apparent state of self-mortification seemed to raise the wonder of their visitors, practised a little pious fraud. The Capuchin historian ingenuously observes, "*The land of the English is abundant, and without taxes; the inhabitants lead easy lives, far removed from the miseries of other places, which accounts for the surprise with which the sight of our austerities strangely affected them.*" To edify them and incline them to a holy conversion, they resolved, with one common consent, to add something striking and sensible to their usual austerities. Their beds consisted of a paillasse, a straw pillow, and a coverlet. They took out every morning the paillasses and the pillows, exposing to the eye the rough naked boards on which they lay, and placed an unhewn block of wood for a pillow-case. This apparent rigour was admired by the English, whose curiosity led them into the chamber of the Capuchins, and when they seemed touched by the inspection of this hard life, then they were reminded of the suffering life of Jesus; that they must imitate St. Paul, who, confirmed in grace, mortified his flesh; and at last, with a gentle close, they

were exhorted to think of the importance of living and dying in the true religion where these things are practised. These showy austerities seem to have produced a certain effect. The fathers, too, without loss of time, among their penances, had set about learning the English language, and within a year were capable of receiving confessions in the native language of their penitents; but the greater number of confessions were made after the building of the chapel, of which her Majesty laid the foundations with her own royal hands.

The detail of the remarkable opening of the Queen's Chapel is a curiosity of picturesque devotion. It may serve, at least, as a splendid evidence of a scenical religion, and the art of getting up something like a modern opera, or rather an ancient mystery, aided by all the magic of the voice and the instrument, and the optical illusions of perspective.

In 1636, the Queen's Chapel was erected, and "to give greater glory to God, and esteem for the Roman Catholic religion to the Huguenots, her Majesty would hear the first mass celebrated with all the pomp and magnificence possible." The Capuchins were commanded to omit nothing which they could invent to render the solemnity more august. An illustrious sculptor had recently arrived from Rome, to whom they applied to assist the pious design. He graciously assented. He raised a machine, the admiration of the most ingenious artists, to exhibit the most holy sacraments with the greatest majesty.

A paradise of glory, adapted to the dome of the chapel, was raised forty feet in height; a broad arch was sustained by two columns before the great altar; the spaces between the columns and the walls served as passages to pass from the sacristy to the altar; the choirs of music were placed with the organs and the other instruments at both sides of the empty spaces. In the opening on each side appeared a prophet with a scroll of prophecy, and above the arch was viewed the portative altar, to which they ascended by three divisions of steps. The greatest, in front, had a balustrade, which admitted a full view of the altar to the assistants, and those on either side were surrounded also by balusters, where the priests, dressed in their pontifical habits, without interruption of the people, were viewed ascending or descending to and from the altar.

At the back of the altar was the Paradise elevated above circles of clouds, in which were intermingled the figures of angels, archangels, of cherubims and seraphims, to the number of two hundred: there some seemed adoring the holy sacrament, others were singing, or touching all sorts of musical instruments, —painted according to the rules of perspective; the most holy sacrament was the point of sight where the concealed lights, which were of graduated dimensions, made the depth and the distance appear very great; and the number of figures seemed doubled, deceiving by an ingenious artifice, not only the eyes but also the ears, for every one imagined, on looking on that Paradise, that they were listening to the melodies played by angels.

Of the circles of clouds, the first were the widest, diminishing in proportion to the last. The three first circles contained the angels larger than the natural size, seated on clouds, singing and playing; in the fourth and fifth were also angels, habited as *Diacres*, holding censers; others *Navettes*, those silver vessels in the shape of a ship, in which incense is burned; while others, on their knees, were suppliants; and others, prostrated, were pointing to the holy sacrament; all of size proportioned to their distances. In the sixth and seventh circles, winged children, in various attitudes, like young angels, were seen coming out of a cloud, playing together, but with gestures full of respect, inviting the people to rejoice with them at the sight of the adorable sacrament. In the eighth and ninth circles, appeared the cherubim and the seraphim, among the clouds, surrounded by luminous rays, contrived by a most singular artifice. The place where was laid the holy sacrament, had a ground of gold, surrounded by a deep red oval, with golden beams, so that it seemed a celestial fire. Four hundred lights, besides a great multitude of tapers, artistically arranged upon the altar, lighted the first circle.

These things being thus disposed, the whole was covered over by two curtains. When the Queen entered with her Court to celebrate mass, and had taken her seat, the curtains were drawn, and these wonders suddenly burst on the spectators, to the admiration, the joy, and the devotion of her Majesty, and all the Catholics; at the same moment, the musicians and choristers

resounded a motet of soft harmony, seeming to come out of the clouds and the angelic figures. Paradise was opening, and the angels were musicians! so it seemed, for the singers themselves were hidden, and thus the eye and the ear rejoiced in this subject of piety and artifice. The motet or hymn finished, the Accolytes, the Soudiacres, and the Diacres, and my Lord du Perron, Bishop of Angoulême, and grand almoner to the Queen, dressed in their pontifical habits, issued from the sacristy, mounted the eight steps of the altar, celebrated with the greatest solemnities the holy mass, which was chaunted in eight divisions so melodiously, that nothing less than a heart of stone but would have been deeply touched; tears of joy were seen to fall from the eyes of the Queen, considering in this pious and splendid ceremony the grace which God had bestowed on her, to raise a church where the divine offices were celebrated, which heresy had banished from England for more than one hundred years. The mass celebrated, a multitude of Catholics crowded to receive the holy communion from the hand of the bishop, who gave his benediction and dispensed his indulgences.

After dinner, her Majesty again returned to vespers, and complines, and the sermon. Messieurs the musicians, perceiving the effect they had produced on the Queen at the morning service, now surpassed themselves. At the close of vespers, the Archbishop delivered a pathetic sermon, congratulating the Queen on having a Catholic church, and publicly celebrating divine service, which had been abolished so many years in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Great was the applause of the audience. Those who were in the chapel, found it difficult to issue from the vast confluence of people, who forced their way to witness the magnificence. This continued influx lasted so long, that it was impossible to close the gates of the church till the third night, when the King commanded that they should all retire. He came himself to be a spectator of this magnificent representation, accompanied by his Grand Marechal, the Comptroller of the Household, and other Lords—he admired the *artifice*—he kept his eyes long on the beautiful scene—declared that he had never viewed anything more beautiful, nor of a happier invention. The chapel thus ornamented, was kept open from the 8th of December to Christmas, consecrated

to the immaculate conception of the most holy Virgin. Crowds flocked, and waited two or three hours before they could enter a confessional. They held controversies and conferences, to confirm the Faithful and to reclaim the Heretic. The historian exults in a favourite argument, by which it was inevitably shown that there could be no salvation for separatists from the true Apostolical and Roman Church; but some Protestants, who had conceived that this glorious proposition was false, were desirous of receiving more solid reasons for their maturer consideration—of these, we are told that many, convinced of its truth, renounced their errors.

One of the Capuchins held secret interviews with some of our divines, intimate friends of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, with the Archbishop, were desirous of approximating the two churches so nearly together, that an union might be insensibly formed.

Before the arrival of these Capuchins, we are told that the schismatics had a strange aversion to the Pope and the Catholics—they really believed that his Holiness was the Antichrist,—and the Catholics, idolaters, persecutors, seditious, and enemies of peace and kings. Our memorialist describes the Representatives of the English people: “So many persons collected together from all parts of the country, who compose the Parliament, had issued against them (the Papists), the most terrible ordinances—for the simplicity of the more moderate had been sadly imposed on.” The Capuchin has collected together all the penal laws against the Roman Catholics—a code of blood and persecution equal to any they could themselves have dictated!

But “the ancient piety of the English,” which our simple fathers were flattering themselves they were to revive, and which had even lasted through the reign of “the barbarous Queen” (Elizabeth), could only be beaten down by “the cruelty of the Protestants” in “the mad fury of a regicide Parliament.”

As a prelude to what is to follow, I find a parallel closely run through a long page or two, between the Jews mocking at Jesus Christ, and the Protestants, who had lately pulled down a crucifix, and were very nearly pulling at the beards of *les Pères Capuchins* themselves. At length, when the day arrived that the Queen unexpectedly left her palace, never to return to it, the

mission, which had hitherto proceeded quietly, became strangely inconvenienced. Nothing now but spitting and coughing at their sermons. "The Puritans" had now resolved to abolish the very name of Catholic in England—*Exinanite, exinanite, usque ad fundamentum!** The solemn omen of their impending destruction has been chronicled by our memorialist. One morning they assembled to perform the august ceremony of the most holy mass—preparing to take out the *Ciboire*, the vase which held the body of their God—in opening the cupboard—the host was not there! Tremour and agony and despair shook the brotherhood, who looking on each other in dismay, felt like the ancient Jews when the Shekinah had departed from them,—when the veil was rent from the Holy of Holies, and nothing was to be seen but a naked wall. What followed shortly after, seemed to be connected with the malicious sacrilege of all their consecrated wafers. The Puritans sent three thousand apprentices to the Parliament, to demand the expulsion of the Capuchins from England. The fathers awaited their death by the side of their altars, where they were prepared to suffer the blessings of martyrdom; but they were only sent to prison for a month, and then shipped off for Calais.

Thus terminated the history of the household of our Catholic Queen, Henrietta-Maria.

CHAPTER XVI.

WAR WITH FRANCE.—CAUSES OF THE WAR.—NATURE OF THE PROTESTANT PARTY IN FRANCE.—EXPEDITION TO LA ROCHELLE.

"CHARLES," says Hume, "as if the half of Europe, now his enemy, was not sufficient for the exercise of military prowess, wantonly attacked France."

The war with France has been traced to the personal

* Observe the nature of intolerance. This very passage was applied by the Jesuits when they razed the foundations of the *Port Royal*. Whenever the persecutors in their turn become the persecuted, they speak alike.

resentments of Buckingham, for an affront he received from the French monarch, in consequence of his ambitious gallantries with "a lady of a very sublime quality," as Lord Clarendon, in his courtly delicacy, guardedly describes the eminent female. She was a lady who exercised in "a sovereign degree all the coquetry and intrigue of her nation," says Cardinal de Retz, furnishing us even with a list of her lovers, in which he has not omitted the English Duke. When Buckingham proposed to revisit the French Court as ambassador, Bassompierre, in conformity with his instructions, assured him, that for reasons well known to himself, he would not be received. Lord Clarendon's anecdote, that Buckingham "swore in the instant, that he would see and speak with that lady in spite of all the power of France," may be true enough, and in this lover's vow his lordship detects the origin of the French war!

Our philosophic Hume, with his habitual ease, adopts the Court-gossip of Clarendon, which was too pleasant and romantic entirely to be passed over by memoir-writers, but his sagacity could not fail to betray its astonishment. "All authentic memoirs," says Hume, "both foreign and domestic, represent him (Buckingham) as actuated by motives which *would appear incredible*, were we not sufficiently acquainted with the violence and temerity of his character."

If we have now learnt the cause, the story would remain imperfect, were we not also informed of the intention of the war, and the means of carrying the covert point here alleged.

Buckingham's end in a war with France was the remote view of being employed as the ambassador, who was to reconcile the two crowns, and by this circuitous route to arrive at length at the Louvre and visit his mistress.

Were this the fact, Buckingham must be considered as a more intrepid hero, than any we may find in a folio romance; for well he knew that, though by no means a disappointed lover, his double rival in love and politics, the famous Cardinal, had an eye over him, whose glances were poignards; and that the French noblesse had vowed to avenge in the blood of the foreigner the honour of their Sovereign. He knew this, for he had hardly escaped assassination. It must be acknowledged that, when we calculate the nice contingencies and the uncertain

chances of the plan which made a war between two great nations, because, in accommodating a consequent peace, an errant knight might acquire an opportunity of visiting a fair lady, at whose feet he was to perish, the adventure might enter into a political system, which would have illustrated the history of the immortal Don of Cervantes.

Well may we exclaim with Hume, that the assigned cause of this war with France "is incredible." Hume, in his day, was not supplied with some of the most valuable materials of our history at this period.

Dr. Lingard has sensibly observed, that "it is plain that whatever may have been the secret motives of Buckingham, he must have alleged some very different reason in defence of a measure which threatened to prove so prejudicial to the interests of his own Sovereign." And, surely, had our historians less servilely copied such unhistorical facts, and such unnatural pretexts from the Lord High Chancellor of human nature, and had looked into what had recently occurred between the French and English courts, and what was then passing in France, they might have discovered causes more obvious, and interests far deeper, to instigate a French war than the "incredible one."

The elements of war are often gradually accumulating before they settle into an open rupture. Like petty domestic quarrels, they seem insignificant and partial, till at length we are surprised that these fractional disputes close into one mighty and irreconcilable enmity.

The marriage of Charles was highly political on both sides, and as such it was acted on immediately by the French Cabinet. The French party here, we have seen, was obnoxious to Charles. The dismissal of the French Household had nearly produced a war. Charles was prepared to offer the alternative, and it would have been accepted by Louis, had the French monarch at that moment been in a condition to maintain one. This is the opinion of one of the Capuchins who at a later day attended on the Queen, and it seems probable, when we observe the French Government so fully occupied in putting down the Huguenot Insurgents; a war with England would have reinforced the French Protestants with a potent ally.

But a more pressing motive for war with France originated

in that system of politics which since the administration of Elizabeth, had created one of our great State-interests—the adoption of the cause of foreign Protestants. Whenever the standard was raised by those of “the Religion,” as the term was applied at this period, they always looked up to England as their nursing mother, or their armed champion; and in England the malecontents of France were sure to find a secret or an open ally. But war on these occasions did not always show itself with an open front, nor was it always heralded by generous principles; it crept out of secret intrigues, and wound about in concealment, till concealment ceased to be practicable.

The leading chiefs of the French Protestants, or as the French describe them, the Calvinists of France, were the Duke of Rohan, and his brother Soubise. Of a princely origin, the Duke was allied to many crowned heads, but his genius was even more elevated than his rank. His heroism was only equalled by his fortitude; he was one of those great commanders who remain unconquered when the enemy is most successful. Such were his talents, that he would have been a distinguished man in Europe, had he been born among the obscurest classes of society.* His brother Soubise, with whom our own history is more intimately connected, participated in all the party or the factious zeal of his eminent brother, without any portion of his courage or his capacity.

The Protestants of France then constituted a more formidable body in that kingdom, than the Roman Catholics in England. Their general assemblies, which annually met, always occasioned great uneasiness in the French Cabinet, and they were so numerous and powerful as to have their resident deputies at the Louvre, ever prompt to disturb the royal audience by voluminous *cahiers* of remonstrances and petitions. If Henry the Fourth, as a great Statesman, had complied with the forms of the national religion, he had never forsaken the cause of those to whom perhaps he was secretly attached; and the tolerating

* His “Memoirs” are well known, but a little volume composed in his retirement at Venice, *Les Intérêts des Princes*, was long the manual of politicians, and may still be studied. It is here we find this curious reflection, “England is a great animal which can never die, unless it destroys itself.” The Duke was in England and Scotland. Elizabeth called him “her knight,” and James the First requested him to stand sponsor at the baptism of Charles the First.

Edict of Nantes had conferred on his Protestants, as large a portion of freedom as could be safely allowed to a hostile minority in the State.

The regency of Mary of Medicis had passed in struggles with the haughty Princes of the blood, and a nobility not less potent than factious; insatiate in their claims, and restless with ambition, they seemed at times to aspire to separate sovereignties. Disdaining the feeble government of a female, whose views seemed narrowed to her palace, and who had concentrated her passions in her Florentine favourites, these Princes and Dukes were in a perpetual state of confederacy and rebellion. At length the favourites fell the hateful victims of the State. Among the powerful malecontents the Huguenot party had found friends and chieftains, who had often coalesced with the Protestants, without always being Protestants themselves. Four civil wars, and frequent revolts, were as often concluded by a peace with an unvanquished party. Such a peace could only be a truce; a suspension of hostilities till one party regained the superiority they had lost; deceptive treaties were signed, and when the Deputies of the Huguenots insisted on the demolition of certain forts, according to the articles of the treaty, the demand was never refused but only evaded. The Huguenots might learn, that in a treaty, when one party requires the other to do that for them which they cannot do themselves, the compact will be most obstinately violated. The French Cabinet, before Cardinal Richelieu's accession to the fulness of his power, was a miserable junto of intriguing Ministers, solely intent on dislodging each other. The genius of Richelieu alone could at once subdue an indomitable aristocracy, and a whole people of heroes—the Huguenots of France.

But the day of Richelieu's triumph had not yet arrived. The Protestants of France were as formidable as ever.

The sea-port of La Rochelle might be considered as the metropolitan city of the Protestantism of France. It was a town haughty from its independence, for its citizens had never forgotten that a Sovereign of France, Louis the Eleventh, had sworn on his knees never to invade their privileges. It had long formed a Government in France, independent of France; it was a Republic in a Monarchy.

The Catholic had long looked on La Rochelle with horror as the nest of heresy and rebellion ; and among the most curious circumstances in the early life of the renowned Cardinal, is, as he has himself told us, that when only a juvenile and obscure Bishop residing in his diocese of Luçon, in the neighbourhood of La Rochelle, among his dreams and vain imaginations, often would his solitary thoughts turn towards that unholy spot, musing on means to reduce it to that obedience which it had long rejected. This reverie of his youth he had cast aside among other chimerical fancies.

The cause of the French Protestants could not be separated from that of civil freedom and political independence ; and La Rochelle was to be in France, its cradle or its grave. The independence of the party and the place was so deeply cherished in the minds of the nobles of France, as a balance in the State against the despotic predominance of royal authority, which already appeared in the rising Favourite, that Bassompierre, with his characteristic frankness, revealed the secret thought of his companions, when serving against La Rochelle he sarcastically observed, " We shall be mad enough to take it."

Historians, who have considered La Rochelle merely as the strong hold of the Reformed, and beheld in its terrific siege only a spectacle of sectarian fanaticism, have fallen into a great error. So easy is it to mistake that spirit of political independence, whose devotion is fervid as that of religion, and which can boast of martyrs not less numerous. In the afflicting history of La Rochelle, through all its unparalleled sufferings, the Protestants have only viewed an immolation to the Moloch of Catholicism. Even a great philosopher, in an unguarded moment, once adopted the popular appearance of this memorable scene. It is a curious fact, that Hume, in the first edition of his history, in alluding to the horrors of the siege of La Rochelle, closed with this observation : " Such mighty influence had the religious spirit over that sect, and so much did it overbalance in their breasts every motive of self-preservation, of duty to their friends, and of regard to their native country." This reflection was erased in a subsequent edition. It is probable that, on maturer study, Hume discovered the secret connexion between the higher political parties in France and the

French Protestants; that the cause of civil freedom was entangled with the cause of the "new religion;" that if they suppressed "every motive of self-preservation," it was because they well knew that, after four civil wars and continual revolts, there were no longer any terms for the citizens of La Rochelle; and that so far from violating their "duty to their friends, and their regard to their native country," they perished by the inspiration of their patriotism and their honour. Perhaps, too, Hume might have discovered the fact, that in the eventful siege of La Rochelle, all those who would have sacrificed their lives for its preservation were not contained within its walls, for many such might have been found in the ranks of that very army which came to annihilate it. These were not sectaries: they held not the same religious creed; but in the fate of La Rochelle, they contemplated the fall of political freedom in France.

A secret correspondence with the citizens of La Rochelle had been opened with England. Already Soubise had assumed the novel style of "Admiral of the Churches," on the coast of Saintonge, Aunis, Poitou, and Bretagne. Soubise, accompanied by Saint-Blancard, the confidential friend of his brother, had passed over into England, as deputies or agents for the Rochellers, and though they were not yet publicly received at our Court, the repeated complaints of the French ambassadors prove that the secret intercourse must have been uninterrupted.

Vast plans of ambition were opened in the bold sketches of these French princes, not ill-adapted to dazzle the eyes of a young monarch and a young minister. One of the reveries of the Duke of Rohan was to form federative republics in France; to create independent Protestant States between the Loire and the Garonne. The English were to invade France at three different points. They found that a single one proved fatal. Mr. Montague was negotiating with the Duke of Savoy, the Duke of Lorraine, and the Duke of Rohan. Richelieu suffered the youthful statesman to mature his negotiations, till the Cardinal contrived to lodge him in the Bastille. When his Eminence had digested at leisure all these ingenious schemes, which let him into the secret designs of the enemies of France, he had obtained all the good he could by the imprisonment of the young diplomatist, and raised no objection, on the intercession

of our Henrietta, to restore the baffled envoy for some happier mission. Soubise charmed the imagination of the English minister, with the prospective view of the fleet and army of England appearing before La Rochelle,—Rochelle herself opening her gates, Rohan raising his standard, and a hundred thousand Huguenots flying to arms, to greet the deliverer of the Protestants in the person of Buckingham. Such are the visions by which clandestine suppliants enchant our ministers, when our ministers are sanguine and determined!

The expedition to Cadiz, though it had performed no exploit, was, however, in some respect beneficial, as Buckingham told the Parliament; for this demonstration of our national energy had not only struck a terror into Spain, and, by intercepting her trade, had prevented supplies being sent to her army in Flanders, but employed her in fortifying her coast. It had, however, considerably alarmed Richelieu, and that great minister, with his statesman-like sagacity, foresaw the danger of its direction against France, and we are positively assured, that he prognosticated that one day our fleet would be seen before La Rochelle.* This is not improbable. The reverie of his ambitious youth was still hovering in his brain, and the minister wanted no evidence of the secret communications of the parties.

Richelieu anticipated these projects. Conscious of the miserable state of the marine of France, an inferior genius might have exhaled his despair in some solitary Jeremiad, but Richelieu, once resolved, never quitted his object till it became his own. He laboured day and night; he made every public and even private sacrifice to encounter a naval enemy. He hastened an alliance with Spain, whose interests were adverse to those of France, and whose friendship was incompatible with his remoter designs, that he might combine with her fleet to attack Ireland and England; but he soon discovered that the Spaniards were not in earnest, and were not less desirous than the English to witness the success of the French Huguenots.† Still the vigilant minister of France preceded his enemy's movements. Toiras, who commanded at La Rochelle, was warned for preparation, and the Isle of Rhé had been for some time strengthened in its fortifications.

* Père Griffet, *Histoire de France*, xiii. 537.

† *Ibid.* xiii. 555.

Buckingham, who had now felt the capriciousness of popularity, imagined that it might be as easily regained as it had been easily lost. A chivalric adventure would restore to him that favour which, at this moment, might have been denied to all the wisdom, all the policy, and all the arts of an experienced statesman. Unquestionably his imagination had been kindled by the flatteries and by the promises of Soubise and Saint-Blancard; and in the eagerness of his hopes, he declared, that "before midsummer he should be more honoured and beloved of the Commons than ever was the Earl of Essex,"* the romantic hero and favourite of Queen Elizabeth. In such cradled fancies he rocked his own and his master's imagination.

A fleet and an army, sufficiently formidable to assure the Rochellers of their security, were now collected, and the Lord Duke, anticipating a conquest by their open reception, went to war as if he had been hastening to a tournament. "Buckingham," says De Brienne, "appeared in this expedition with the equipage of an amorous knight, rather than the equipage of a general." Splendour, however, not effeminacy, characterised the romantic warrior; for he afterwards honourably vouched his words by his deeds.

The preparations for his departure attracted the public eye. Even his provisions, his stalls for oxen, and his coops for poultry, and the beautiful horses, richly caparisoned, presented by his friends, seemed "as strange and exceeding," as the magnificent train of his trumpeters, and the bands of his musicians, in yachts lined with crimson velvet, playing their melodies to the rough waves. They saw even his coach and litter shipped, and it was rumoured that he had taken his jewels. Our Lord High Admiral and General had made himself ready to attend either a ball or a siege, whichever the Rochellers might prefer. It was an armament not solely devoted to the Graces; for there were armories and arms, and the most able military and naval officers were selected for the occasion. The destination of the fleet and troops was not known, but Soubise had been seen in the King's coach.

This expedition at length appeared before Rochelle; but Buckingham, who had too long listened to the vague hopes of

* I learn this from a manuscript letter.

the two Frenchmen, was surprised that he had to force a landing, that troops came down to oppose him, and that the Rochellers neither advanced nor communicated. The town, in fact, was divided between two opposed parties; those who indulged the hope of peace with their sovereign, hesitated to join the English, lest they should irrecoverably forfeit his favour; the uncompromising Calvinists, who preferred death to submission, were for opening their gates to their potent ally. Amidst this conflict of irresolute prudence and obstinate revolt, the aged Duchess of Rohan, in her ninetieth year, stole to one of the gates, and having collected some scattered friends, pleaded for the admission of her son, Soubise, and his companions. Accompanied by the Secretary of Buckingham, Sir William Beecher, these chiefs of the Huguenots harangued their own party, and Saint-Blancard was dispatched to the English fleet to assure Buckingham that the town would shortly declare itself. Meanwhile they returned their thanks, and left their new ally to combat alone.

The English left behind them the Fort of St. Prie, called by Rushworth "the meadow-castle," which must have surrendered on the first summons. They might also have taken possession of the fertile Isle of Oleron; but though this had been agreed on, Buckingham changed his descent for the rocky Isle of Rhé, where they made good their landing, after a sharp resistance, gallantly driving the French before them to their strong hold.

Four months afterwards, when the active enemy, landing from the French coast, poured down from both these neglected quarters, the military blunder was detected, of having passed by the fort, and the isle, of which possession might have been easily obtained.

The Rochellers remained immovable, and the English were stopped in the Isle of Rhé by the formidable citadel of St. Martin, which had been not unprepared to receive them. Entrenching themselves, they sat down before this impregnable citadel, which could only be forced to surrender by a blockade at sea, and a tedious siege at land.

Buckingham, unwearied in his ardent duties, at least had resolved by his zeal to discover, as Charles the First said, "his proficiency in the trade which he so happily began." He failed

not to be in every part of the camp, he was in the trenches, he inspected the batteries, he observed where the shot lighted on the enemy, and was present in the most imminent dangers, unsparing of his person more than befitted a Commander-in-Chief. His life was attempted by an assassin, a fanatical Catholic, whose knife, of a peculiar construction, was found slung in his sleeve. Its singular construction attracted notice, and it was engraved in a published narrative at London; but the Lord-General was not doomed to be struck by this French Felton. The intrepidity of Buckingham was not exceeded by any of the heroes of Plutarch. It was said, what one is unwilling to believe, that the assassin was instigated by Toiras, but the conduct of Buckingham towards that Governor seems to exculpate the Frenchman from such a violation of legitimate warfare.

With Buckingham, it seemed a war of courtesy and magnificence. When Toiras sent a trumpet to request a passport to convey some wounded officers to the coast, Buckingham sent them his grand chaloupe, or yacht, furnished with every elegant convenience, and lined with *très belle escarlatte rouge*; while his musicians, with all the varieties of their instruments, solaced and charmed the wounded enemy in crossing the arm of the sea. Toiras, next day, expressed his grateful sense, by sending back five English soldiers, who had just been taken.

In a private letter of the times, it is mentioned, "That my Lord Duke being offered a thousand pounds for one of the dead bodies (there were thirty Marquises, Earls, and Barons, reported to have perished), he nobly refused the money, and offered his own waggons to carry back the bodies, taking especial care of those who are hurt amongst his prisoners." Buckingham addressed a letter to Toiras, where he said, "That every person of merit would always be treated by him with the courtesy which is their due, and he hoped that hitherto he had shown himself not more negligent in this respect than the laws of war allow; but if affairs should compel him to adopt other modes of conduct, he exhorted Toiras to consider his own necessities, which indeed he had endured with heroic patience. If his courage still led him to form vain hopes of relief, it might prejudice his safety, which would be avoided by accepting the most honourable conditions."

Toiras was not deficient in the same style—"The courtesies of the Duke of Buckingham are known to all the world, and as they are bestowed with judgment they can only be truly valued by those who merit them. I know of no greater merit in a man than to devote his life in the service of his King. Many brave men here are of the same opinion, and they would be ill-satisfied with themselves if they could not overcome any difficulties whatever. I should be unworthy of your favour, were I to omit a single point of my duties. It is yourself, Sir, who will contribute my glory, whatever may be the issue."

These letters were afterwards followed by an intercourse of civilities. Even in little matters the same attentions delighted. Toiras once inquiring, "Whether they had saved any melons in the island?" was the next day presented, in the Duke's name, with a dozen. The bearer received twenty golden crowns, and Toiras dispatching six bottles of orange-flower water, and a dozen jars of cypress powder, the Duke presented the bearer with twenty jacobuses. After a sharp action, when Toiras sent one of his pages, with a trumpet, to request leave to bury some persons of distinction, the Duke received the messenger with terms of condolence.

But amidst this profusion of mutual civilities, perhaps more crafty on one side than the other, neither party was less intent on fighting. At London, however, this intercourse of civilities and messengers, it was reported, gave the enemy an opportunity of seeing the works and the army. Many inauspicious rumours were bruited among the people, "and some of higher rank gave out that nothing could go well at the Isle of Rhé; that there must be a Parliament, some must be sacrificed, and Bishop Laud was as like as any." Laud, who was easily alarmed, repeated these rumours to Charles, who desired, that "he would not trouble himself with reports, till Laud saw him forsake his friends." Thus early was threatened the sacrifice of Laud; but the connecting his name with a military expedition, is an evidence from what party it proceeded. A French song at Paris bore for its burden, that if the Duke of Buckingham could not take the citadel at Rhé, he would succeed in taking the Tower of London.

Buckingham and Toiras, in truth, were both looking for reinforcements: Buckingham had been disappointed in his reception by the Rochellers, and his inactivity may be fairly attributed to his difficult position. He was anxiously waiting for the Earl of Holland, who, when he was ready at Plymouth to embark, found that the ships were provisioning at Chatham. When the provisions were shipped, it was some time before they could get the men to a rendezvous; and when the fleet was ready to sail, the winds proved contrary. Charles, in a letter to Buckingham, laments the slowness of the promised supplies. "Now we know how to prevent those faults which we, without some experience, could hardly foresee." A young monarch, and a nation long unaccustomed to military enterprise, knew little of the cares, the disappointments, and the management of a large expedition, which depend so much on the "commissioners," as Charles denominates them; who, he adds, are "subject to such slow proceedings." We were then but in the infancy of war and glory, and we suffered in the weakness of that condition.

Toiras, on his side, was reduced to misery. His provisions had alarmingly diminished, and he could hold no communication with the French army on the coast. In despair, how to convey a dispatch to the camp, three soldiers offered their lives to be the bearers, by swimming through the English fleet, and far across the ocean to the distant land. The dispatch, in cypher, thickly coated with wax and inclosed in a tin-case, was fastened to the necks of these patriotic Leanders. One soldier sunk, another exhausted was shot by the English, the third, discovered at a distance, was pursued by an English cutter. To escape from them he dexterously floated and dipped in two opposite currents; occasionally raising his head from beneath the waters to respire, he would again bury himself in the ocean. The English perceiving an object which was continually disappearing, imagined it to be a fish, and gave up the idle chase. A storm arose, and as he could no longer swim, the messenger in despair cast himself upon the waves, till the waves at length threw him on the shore. There he lay exhausted; he was found crawling on his hands and feet covered with blood, which he declared to have been occasioned by the frequent bites of

fish, which had pursued him during half a league in this remarkable passage.*

I shall preserve one of those inexhaustible expedients, by which the universal capacity of the Cardinal enabled him to overcome difficulties in matters which did not seem to come under his cognizance.

The victualling of the citadel of St. Martin, which was blockaded on the sea-side, became every hour more urgent. It was deemed impossible to convey supplies in the face of a fleet of a hundred sail. At this moment Richelieu recollecting a chance conversation in which he had heard of certain skiffs which the peasants of Bayonne and Juan de Luz, in carrying their provisions to market, dexterously run through the narrowest channels, using at once *oars and sails*, he instantly ordered from Spain some of these light pinnaces, which floated like cork.

One night the sea-watch struck up an alarm; a light and shadowy fleet was suddenly seen gliding among the thickest of our ships. Buckingham himself started out to sea, and commanded it to be set on fire. He was ill-supported. Their admiral was taken, but a great part got into the citadel: the others, dispersed, returned to Oleron. The provisions which these skiffs conveyed, though but small, diffused joy and confidence through the famished garrison, who, in the morning, held out in triumph, on their pike-heads, the mutton and turkeys. Their provisions would not have lasted two days,—they were now safe for a month. On this incident, perhaps, the fate of this expedition turned. Our soldiers and seamen were weary, wasted, and discontented. The vintage is an auxiliary to an invaded country; half the army were nearly perishing by their immoderate eating of grapes; they expected to return home in a few days, and now the fresh supply which they had witnessed, announced that the siege would still be long. A sudden and great change was observed among the English, their confidence sunk into despair, they no longer thought on victory, but on retreat. “It could not be fear, but it was very

* This great swimmer, who swam for his country's good, became the theme of poets, and received a pension secured by the Salt-tax of the province where he landed. *Mercure*, xiii. 857.

like it," observed a letter-writer from our camp. The uxorious talked of their wives, and those who were tired of their salt meats, of the Christmas beef they should eat by their firesides: all dreaded the hard duties of a winter in the face of an enemy invulnerable as the stony ground they were daily treading. Buckingham was often assailed in plain language, both by officers and men. Four months were elapsing: the reinforcements were still delayed. Soubise's party, though they had raised their standard at Rochelle, rather required protection than afforded aid. It was evident that preparations were making to embark. Batteries were dismantled, cannon were shipped. At this moment dispatches from the Earl of Holland announced that he was on the point of setting sail; and Soubise, accompanied by the deputies of La Rochelle, on their knees were imploring that the Duke would not abandon them, promising every sort of aid, far beyond their ability to perform. At this moment Buckingham was irresolute, and scarcely knew what to decide on. He had already lost some of his best officers, particularly Sir John Burroughs, and Saint-Blancard, a leader of great spirit and ability, far superior to Soubise,* and he had now resolved to retire. The French had been for several days past landing detachments at the fort of St. Prie. The adventurer Soubise and his small body of partisans, in despair, urged that a general assault should be made on the strong fort of St. Martin. It was to satisfy the Rochellers, and to evince how earnestly England had fathered their cause, that Buckingham consented to this desperate movement; he was not sanguine of the result,—for just before it took place, a passport being requested for three wounded officers, he declared that "the sick

* The character of Saint-Blancard indicates the temper of the party of the resolute Rochellers, from the mayor to the humblest inhabitant, after they had declared themselves. That conflict terminated with one of the most dreadful sieges of famine and death recorded by history.

The Duke of Rohan, in his Memoirs, in lamenting the death of this young man, his confidential friend, describes him as one equally remarkable for his piety, his courage, and the solid qualities of his mind. Père Griffet, who, though a Jesuit, has written history with impartiality, tells us, that he was one of the most determined Calvinists in the whole kingdom:—He has sold his estates to live in a foreign country, that, as he said, he might have nothing more to lose in France, and only return to make war as often as he could, to live at the expense of the King.

and the healthy would soon have a free passage, having resolved to quit the island." The English were seen in motion. Toiras armed himself with his cuirass at the break of day, which was not his usual custom, and it announced to the garrison what he expected. The English bravely mounted the walls, but were so warmly received that they made but one step from the top of their scaling-ladders to the bottom, as the *Mercure* reports. Another point of attack at a bastion was not more fortunate. After a combat of full two hours, the English were beaten off, with the loss of several hundred men in that assault. On the succeeding day Buckingham sent a message to Toiras, to bid him a farewell, and to assure him that he was hastening to embark, that Toiras, whose valour and patience he admired, might have the entire honour of his retreat unshared by others.

It is positively asserted, that Buckingham designed to have shipped his troops that day, when his evil genius in Soubise again implored only for the suspension of a single day, that they might remove in security all the corn in the island of La Rochelle.

This was on a Sunday, and it was in the night of this very day that Marshal Schomberg advanced with six thousand infantry and some cavalry, and early in the morning of Monday suddenly appeared in view of the citadel. Toiras hastened to the French army, and a council of war was immediately held whether they should allow the English to re-embark without attacking them? There are always two opinions respecting the attack of a retreating enemy. Toiras, now the active general, and no longer the courteous correspondent, decided for immediate combat; the honour of France required that the English should be chased from their shores. On the other side, Marillac, Marechal-de-camp, was averse to risk the flower of the King's army; were the English reduced to despair, they might become formidable. He reminded them of the battle of Poitiers, and offered a more recent instance, when at the siege of Amiens the late King (Henry IV.) was satisfied to retake the city, but suffered the Spaniards to depart, without risking an unnecessary battle, though certain of victory; and according to the proverb, the Marechal-de-camp cautiously reminded them, "to a retiring enemy we should offer a golden bridge." There

were others who were for suffering the English to retreat without pursuit, but the French officers were in general inflamed with military ardour. They ridiculed the timid prudence of the Marechal-de-camp, and from that hour Marillac was nicknamed "the golden bridge."

The English were retiring, slowly marching in good order. They had first to cross a wide plain of more than half a league. It was here that the French came down in considerable numbers. Buckingham drew up in line, several times offering battle. It was refused by the enemy. They were more certain of their prey by its pursuit. The retreat was covered by the cavalry. To reach the ships the English had to pass over a narrow causeway among the marshes and salt-pits, thence to cross a wooden bridge which Buckingham had erected for that purpose, to collect together on a small island. Part of the army had passed over the bridge, but on the causeway the destruction began. Charged furiously by the French, the cavalry disordered the infantry. Our own horse rode over our own men, and no man could find his officer. The van was unconscious of what was passing in the rear; no one seemed to know what had happened, or what he was to do. In the rush and flight of that *déroute*, less fell by the sword than were buried in the marshes and drowned in the river. We lost our men and our standards, but hardly our honour. Buckingham, sword in hand, attempted in vain to rally his scattered troops; the enemy was content to see us perish. They could not, however, force a passage over the wooden bridge, where, though the English had neglected to erect some defensive works, they faced about, and maintained that post by their firmness and courage till the remains of the army had re-embarked. The last person seen on the beach was the unhappy General. He departed, but not without a promise to the Rochellers, that he would again come to their relief. So firm at least was his dauntless spirit, and we know that the promise was a solemn pledge.

This, like all similar expeditions, was oppositely discussed at home. Historians have echoed the condemnation of Buckingham for the faults committed at the Isle of Rhé; and had the Duke enjoyed the advantages of historians who write after the

fatal results, he might have agreed with their opinions, he might have heard of certain matters which perhaps had never reached him, and he possibly might have informed the historians of others which they knew nothing about.

What, however, has not been noticed, even by the later writers of history, is an admirably written dispatch from Buckingham in July to Lord Conway, by which we learn that he foresaw the possible dangers which afterwards were so fatally realised. Alluding to the fleet, he says, "All our shipping is so dispersed round about the island, that unless some fatality happens, which cannot yet be foreseen, no considerable force can come to them." The unforeseen fatality happened! He was aware of the possible result of Cardinal Richelieu's preparations of "the shipping preparing at various places, which once joined, would make such a strength, as if they did not endanger us by sea, yet would they so divert our forces, now scattered about the island, as we must of necessity gather our fleet into one body, and so leave the other places naked for the enemy to come in with succours, which he would not fail to have in a readiness to put over on such an occasion." In this observation, Buckingham discovers the prescience of a military mind, for thus it was that the affair terminated. His description of the sort of soldiers he had to encounter, and their commander, is an evidence of his diligent information and lively judgment. "They are strong in number, both of horse and foot, their horse consisting most of gentlemen,—and their foot, of the regiment of Champagne, which in this kingdom is called the 'Invincible.'" He hits off at a single stroke, "The governor (Toiras) who had made the preservation of the citadel, the scale of his honour and fortune, out of which, having the Queen-Mother and Cardinal for enemies, he will find no safety; so that before he will yield up the place he will make it his death-bed,—and if he cannot live, surely he will die for it." Such is the dispatch, which none but Buckingham could have written; and when we compare this letter, dated "from the camp in July," with the catastrophe of the expedition in November, it will prove that the real Buckingham is a very different individual from the fictitious Buckingham in our history, that rash and hare-brained creation, of whom Hume says, and others will repeat, "all his

military operations showed equal incapacity and inexperience." The writer of this energetic letter could never be condemned for "incapacity," and Buckingham never displayed more sedate thought than in this enterprise.*

The Duke in his defence asserted, that he had always consulted his council of war, and that he had been ill-supported on various occasions. Some officers on their return from this expedition, which, after all, was only disastrous in the fatal march to the ships, pleaded in favour of the council of war. The veteran officer of the highest reputation was Sir John Burroughs, who was unfortunately shot in reconnoitring the enemy. Gerbier assures us that this officer was in the closest confidence of Buckingham; but he also tells us that "the Duke would have taken the fort, making use of their present fear, and the heat of his own men, if Colonel Burroughs, having the reputation of the elder and more experienced soldier, had not crossed his more wise and gallant resolution."†

It sometimes happens,—as after the battle of Vimeira, where the pursuit of the enemy might have closed in the capture of Lisbon, and not in the nullifying Convention of Cintra,—that old officers act more prudently than happily, and the fortunate audacity of Buckingham might have been more wise at the moment than the caution of the veteran. In the game of war is there to be no venture? On the other hand, I find another witness of a very opposite character to Gerbier. The patriot, Dr. Turner, member for Shrewsbury, alluding to the death of Sir John Burroughs, said: "The man for whom I wear this black riband counselled the Duke, at his very first sight of the fort, that he should never put spade into the ground, but embark, and undertake some other design."‡ This confirms Gerbier's account, that Sir John Burroughs "crossed" the Duke's resolution. I can give no opinion on the other part, whether it were "more wise and gallant."

If Buckingham had possessed the skill of the great Duke of our days, as well as the intrepidity, which he certainly did possess, we should not hesitate to censure the veteran adviser.

* The curious inquirer may consult this letter in Lord Hardwicke's Collection. Vol. ii.

† Sloane MSS. 4181.

‡ Harl. MSS. 383. Letter 435.

War, like Love, has its moments for capture, which may never return.*

Soubise does not appear to have afforded Buckingham any other advice than the most fatal one which could have been adopted, and, in truth, Soubise was an unworthy brother of the illustrious Duke of Rohan. He was an adventurer, who, having possessed himself one night, by a surprise or stratagem, of a French man-of-war and some smaller craft, set himself up as "Admiral of the Churches," and roamed the seas as a corsair. That he was deficient in physical courage,—at any rate one of the great essentials of military character,—appears from various facts. He was sick in the assault, and sane in the retreat. So far from distinguishing himself in action, he was present only in one, where he stood aloof, and was the first to fly. Soubise's courage was the jest of the French Court. On his flight from the action alluded to, it was observed, that if he continued this mode of combat, he would probably be the oldest general in Europe. When Buckingham made his descent on the Isle of Rhé, the filial Soubise set off to visit his mother at La Rochelle; on which Monsieur observed, that he acted in conformity to the commandment, *Honora Patrem et Matrem*, so doubtless his days would be prolonged for him.

Thus, while it was the evil chance of Buckingham to listen to the counsels and to embrace the views of this adventurer and partisan, the luckless Admiral and General was to encounter the invincibility of Toiras, the French commander; while it may be said that the more awful genius of the Cardinal met Buckingham at the Isle of Rhé. It is a fact worthy of record, that such were the foresight and preventions which Richelieu had taken for the

* Observe how unfortunate heroes are condemned by their later historians. Hume has said of Buckingham, assuming all that he found in Rushworth to contain "all the truth, and nothing but the truth," that "having landed his men, though with some loss, he *followed not the blow*, but allowed Toiras, the French governor, five days' respite." The reader now learns, for the first time, by Gerbier, that the Duke would have "*followed the blow*;" and from Dr. Turner, that the veteran officer, whose opinion was the oracle, entertained a very opposite notion of "following the blow" than Sir Balthazar Gerbier and our Philosopher, who was melodising his pages on a sofa. Smollett echoed the opinion of Hume; but when history is to be composed by the sheet, in weekly numbers, the animated writer can have no time to scrutinise into opinions and statements. The first, which is usually the popular one, is always the best for sixpence!

defence of La Rochelle and its neighbouring islands, that the discomfiture of the English was not so much ascribed to the firm and intrepid resistance of Toiras, the commander, as to the sagacity and wisdom of the minister. "I do not deny," said the Keeper of the Seals to Toiras, "that you have served well and defended your island; but what have you done more than five hundred gentlemen in France would have done in your place?" Toiras bitterly replied: "It would, indeed, be unfortunate were there not more than five hundred men who knew their duty as well as myself: I have done it, but there are in this kingdom also more than five thousand as able to hold the seals as yourself." The Keeper of the Seals had published an account of the siege of the citadel of St. Martin, in which he had highly extolled the Cardinal de Richelieu and little Le Sieur de Toiras. "To what end," adds the sensible Père Griffet, "would all the cares of the Cardinal have tended, had Toiras been less obstinate in his defence with a courage, a patience, and a firmness of which we have few examples?" In history this is not a singular instance of men of the cabinet valuing their own services above those which they possibly conceive to be less intellectual.

What were the feelings of Charles the First on this trying occasion—this second baffled expedition? Awakening from the dreams of Monsieur Soubise and Saint-Blancard, he saw his unhappy friend, who he well knew was devoting his life to secure his master's power and his nation's glory, returning with obloquy to encounter fiercer enemies at home than those who had chased him from their shores. With Charles, nothing could shake the strength of his tenderness, and the fulness of his confidence. His agitated spirit could only deeply sympathise with the misfortunes of his friend, and regret that he had not lightened these griefs by a nearer participation of them. The monarch still flatters his discomfited general with honour and reputation, and still leaves to him the brilliant hope of some new design, or the consolation of returning to his sovereign in the entireness of his affections.

All this appears by a letter which Charles the First had dispatched to Buckingham during his uncertain return, at a moment when the last retreat from Rhé had been resolved on,

but had not yet occurred. That letter, which the King was not sure would reach its destination, came to Buckingham on his first landing in England. I have transcribed it from the original preserved in the great treasury of our national manuscripts. It is an overflowing effusion of friendship from the heart of a monarch. We feel the hurried and the deep emotions in every sentence.

STEENIE,

I pray God that this letter be useless, or never come to your hands, this being only to meet you at your landing in England, in case you should come from Rhé, without perfecting your work, happily begun, but, I must confess with grief, ill seconded. A letter you sent to Jack Epslie is the cause of this, wherein ye have taught me prudence, and how to seek the next best in misfortunes. This is, therefore, to give you power, in case ye should imagine that ye have not enough already, to put in execution any of those designs* ye mentioned to Jack Epslie, or any other that you shall like of, so that I leave it freely to your will, whether after your landing in England ye will set forth again to some design before you come hither; or else that ye will first come to ask my advice before ye undertake a new work, assuring you that, with whatsoever success ye shall come to me, ye shall be ever welcome; one of my greatest griefs being that I have not been with you in this time of suffering, for I know we should have much eased each other's griefs. I cannot stay longer on this subject for fear of losing myself in it. To conclude, ye cannot come so soon as ye are welcome, and unfeignedly in my mind ye have gained as much reputation with wise and honest men in this action, as if ye had performed all your desires. I have no more to say this time, but to conjure thee, for my sake, to have a care of your health, for every day I find new reasons to confirm me in being your loving, faithful friend,

CHARLES R.†

WHITEHALL, 6 Nov. 1627.

* One was an attack on Calais; the Duke of Rohan had pointed out several others.

† Harleian MSS. 6988 (30).

CHAPTER XVII.

STATE OF AFFAIRS AFTER THE FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION
TO LA ROCHELLE.

BUCKINGHAM was received by his royal master with all the sympathy of a common affliction—his own spirit was still undimmed, and still intent on some future triumph. But he had returned to witness the miseries of his calamitous retreat in the griefs of domestic privacy. There were few families who had not to mourn a father, a husband, or a brother. Some of our officers appear never to have overcome their utter dejection at the recollection of the scene they had just quitted. Sir Henry Sprey, one of the commanders, when his lady, joyfully embracing him, asked him how he did? answered, “Though I am returned safe, yet my heart is broken”—and telling over the names of those slain in his sight, many of whom had determined to sacrifice themselves, to avoid the imputation of cowardice, with which they had been reproached by the Duke’s party, men far superior to himself, he modestly added, “and he cared not to outlive the memory.” His death, which shortly after happened, was believed to have been hastened by grief.

The public talk was disturbed by daily rumours. They reproached the pride of the Lord Duke, that seemed as if he had scorned to retreat; and ascribed the cause of the disaster to an over-daring delay in marching, that the English might not seem to fly; otherwise the army might have been out of danger before the French could have overtaken them, and more than two thousand brave men had not been slaughtered in a short passage. The clergy were prohibited alluding to the dismal expedition; an Oxford man, who preached at the cross, had his sermon castrated before it was delivered. The King’s physician was committed, for contradicting the Duke on the number lost, and a lady, for calling the Isle of *Rhé*, the Isle of *Rue*.

The spirit of the people had been at first elated by the promise of some splendid enterprise, and the more active spirits of the

times, who had so long been crying out upon the dull and sleepy time of peace, and had so often dinned the ears of James the First, how the country was dishonoured, and religion endangered, while the Palatinate was lost, were now incurring all "the pains and penalties" of war, and of unsuccessful war. Their wits and their murmurs now ran as fast on the other side. Since the war, all trading was dead, their wools lie on their hands, men were without work, and our ships were rotting in our ports, to be sold as cheap as fire-wood. Besides, if the wars continued, more forced loans must supply the Lord Duke's prodigality, which was the same either in peace or in war, in his banquets or his campaigns.

The King was now involved in a more intricate and desperate condition; the nation was thrown into a state of agitation, of which the page of our popular history yields but a faint impression. The spirit of insurrection was stalking forth. The imprisonment of the Loan Recusants had alarmed their counties, and a mutiny of the soldiery and the mariners was terrifying the metropolis. It was an unarmed rebellion.

An army and a navy had returned unpaid and sore with defeat. In the country, the farmer was pillaged, and few could resort to church, lest in their absence their houses should be rifled. London was scoured by seamen and soldiers, roving even into the palace of the Sovereign. Soldiers, without pay, form a society without laws. A band of captains rushed into the Duke's apartment as he sat at dinner, and when reminded by the Duke of a late proclamation, forbidding all soldiers coming to Court in troops on pain of hanging, they answered that "whole companies were ready to be hanged with them, that the King might do as he pleased with their lives, for that their reputation was lost, and their honour forfeited for want of their salary to pay their debts." When a petition was once presented, and it was inquired who was the composer of it, a vast body tremendously shouted "All, all!" A mob of seamen met at Tower-hill, and set a lad on a scaffold, who with an "O yes!" proclaimed that "King Charles had promised their pay, or the Duke had been on the scaffold himself." It is said that thirty thousand pounds would have quieted these disorganised bodies, but the Exchequer could not apply so mean a sum.

These, at least, were grievances more apparent to the Sovereign than those vague ones so incessantly reiterated by his querulous Commons. There remained only a choice of difficulties between the disorder and the remedy. At the moment the Lord High Admiral got up what he called "The Council of the Sea," to afford the sufferers relief; he was punctual at the first meeting, but afterwards was always engaged on other affairs; and "the Council of the Sea" turned out to be one of those shadowy expedients which only lasts while it acts on the imagination.

A general spirit of insurrection, rather than insurrection itself, had suddenly raised some strange appearances throughout the kingdom. "The Remonstrance" of the late Parliament, unquestionably, had quickened the feelings of the people, but more concealed causes may be suspected to have been working. Many of the heads of the Opposition were busied in secret confederacy, a mode of conduct which was afterwards adopted with great success. About this time I find many mysterious tales,—indications of secret associations, and other evidence of the intrigues and the machinations of the popular party, who became now more active as the distresses of the Government became more complicate and desperate.

We may conceive the disordered state of the administration, from some secret histories which have been preserved in the private correspondence of the times. When the King was urging the general loan, and committing the Loan Recusants, which raised such a ferment in the country, a rumour ran that the King was to be visited by an ambassador from "the President of the Society of the Rosy Cross." He was, indeed, an heteroclite ambassador, for he is described "as a youth with never a hair on his face," in fact, a child, who was to conceal the mysterious personage which he was for a moment to represent. He appointed Sunday afternoon to come to Court, attended by thirteen coaches. If the King accepted his advice, he was to proffer three millions to fill his Majesty's coffers, but his secret councils were to unfold matters of moment and secrecy. A letter in Latin was delivered to "David Ramsey of the Clock," to hand over to the King. A copy of it has been preserved in a letter of the times, but it is so unintelligible, that it could have had no effect on Charles, who, however,

declared that he would not admit this ambassador to an audience, and that if his Majesty could tell where "the President of the Rosy Cross" was to be found, unless he made good his offer, he should be hanged at the Court Gates. This served the town and country for talk, till the appointed Sunday had passed over, and no ambassador was visible! Some considered this as the plotting of crazy brains, but others imagined it to be an attempt to speak with the King in private on matters respecting the Duke.

Later, when the King had consented to call the third Parliament, a sealed letter was thrown under the door, with this superscription: *Cursed be the man that finds this letter and delivers it not to the House of Commons.* The Serjeant-at-Arms handed it to the Speaker, who would not open it till the House had chosen a committee of twelve members to inform them whether it was fit to be read. Sir Edward Coke, after having read two or three lines, stopped, and, according to my authority, "durst read no further, but immediately sealing it, the committee thought fit to send it to the King, who, they say, on reading it through, cast it into the fire, and sent the House of Commons thanks for their wisdom in not publishing it, and for the discretion of the committee in so far tendering his honour, as not to read it out, when they once perceived that it touched his Majesty."*

Others, besides the freedom of speech in the House, which they justly insisted on, introduced another form, of "A speech without doors," which was distributed to the Members. We are glad to possess it, for it exhibits the popular grievances with

* I deliver this fact as I find it in a private letter; it is, however, noticed in the journals of the House of Commons, 23 Junii, 4 Caroli Regis: "Sir Edward Coke reporteth that they find that enclosed in the letter, to be unfit for any subject's ear to hear. Read but one line and a half of it, and could not endure to read more of it. It was ordered to be sealed and delivered to the King's hands by eight members, and to acquaint his Majesty with the place and time of finding it, particularly that upon the reading of *one line and a half*, they would read no more, but sealed it up and brought it to the House." That *one line and a half* should contain such infamous matter, as is reported "unfit for any subject's ear," may excite surprise. It must either have been some horrid charge accusing the King of his father's death, which the malignant spirits of the times dared to insinuate, or *the line and a half* must have contained some intolerable appellations of the unfortunate monarch by one of that party, which at length laid his head on the block.

tolerable impartiality—without any deficient terror of “him who hath the Prince’s ear open to hearken to his enchanting tongue.” *

Some in office employed proceedings equally extraordinary. An intercepted letter, written by the Archduchess to the King of Spain, was delivered by Sir Henry Martin at the Council-board on New Year’s Day, who found it in some papers relating to the navy. The Duke immediately said he would take it to the King; and, accompanied by several Lords, went into his Majesty’s closet. The letter, written in French, advised the Spanish Court to make a sudden war with England for various reasons. First, his Majesty’s want of skill to govern of himself; secondly, the weakness of his council in not daring to acquaint him with the truth; want of money; disunion of the subjects’ hearts from their Prince, &c. &c. The King only observed, that the writer forgot that the Archduchess writes to the King of Spain in Spanish, and sends her letters overland.

These minute facts exhibit an extraordinary state of the public mind, and the feebleness of the Government which had made itself liable to experience this disaffection, and to endure this contempt and these public reproaches. At such a moment, Buckingham, in despair at the popular prejudices “growing with their growth,” was busily planning a fresh expedition to relieve the Rochellers, who were hard besieged by their Sovereign.

The deputies of La Rochelle, with Soubise, as early as in January, were urging the hastening of the promised expedition for the relief of the besieged. Charles could not overcome his repugnance to try a third Parliament; he still hoped to provide for his army and navy by levying his usual contributions. They were moderate, but in the present temper of the nation they were intolerable. There was a race of divines, whom a member of the House, in the preceding King’s time, had severely characterised as “spaniels to the Court, and wolves to the people.” The pulpits were resounding the most slavish tenets, and proclaiming as rebellious those who refused their aid to Government. One of these had dared to avow in his Lent sermon, that “all we have is the King’s by divine right.” The sermon

* This speech without doors occupies ten folio pages of Rushworth, i. 489.

was published, and the sermoniser's house was immediately burnt down!

Many of the divines, more learned than this hardy theological adventurer, were searching for ancient precedents to maintain absolute monarchy, and inculcate passive obedience; nor were there wanting lawyers to allege precedents for raising supplies in the manner which Charles had adopted. At this moment the King vacillated between his urgent wants, and his legal rights; he was momentarily pressed by his new and distressed ally; he was disgusted with Parliaments; and yet was unwilling to enforce what his judges had declared to be illegal,—Charles instantly recalled the new duties on merchandise, which he had imposed on his own authority—and for this manifestation of the very opposite quality to arbitrary measures, Charles is so unfortunate as to have incurred the censure of Dr. Lingard for his “vacillating conduct!”* Had the King designed to have been the monstrous tyrant which the democratic writers in their historical calumnies have made him, he might at least have escaped from the censure of “vacillation!”

CHAPTER XVIII.

MEETING OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT. 1628.

THE Favourite, who was always seeking for that popular favour which his envied greatness had lost him, is said in private letters to have been twice on his knees to intercede for a new Parliament. At length the King consented, and in March, Parliament assembled.

The elections foreboded no good; the country gentlemen recently discharged from their confinement were chiefly the favourite members. A courtier in describing the new Parliament, prophetically declared, “we are without question undone!”

The wealthiest men in the country now composed the House of Commons. A Lord, who probably considered that property, or as it was then usually called “propriety,” was the true

* Lingard, ix. 376.

balance of power, estimated that they were able to buy the Upper House, his Majesty alone excepted! The aristocracy of wealth had already begun to form a new class in the community, influenced by new interests, new principles, and a new spirit of independence.

In the Westminster election of two centuries past, we witness one of our own. The Duke had counted by his interest to bring in Sir Robert Pye. The contest was severe, and accompanied by the same ludicrous electioneering scenes which still amuse the mob in their saturnalia of liberty. When Sir Robert Pye's party cried out "a Pye! a Pye!" instantly resounded "a pudding! a pudding!" or "a lie! a lie!" At the present election, whoever had urged the payment of the loan was rejected, and passing over such eminent men as Sir Robert Cotton, and their last representative, a brewer and a grocer were actually returned as the two members for Westminster.

The King's speech opens with the spirit which he himself felt, but which he could not communicate.

"The times are for action, wherefore for example's sake I mean not to spend much time in words. Your good resolutions, so I hope, will be speedy, for tedious consultations at this conjuncture of time are as hurtful as ill resolutions.

"The common danger is the cause of this Parliament, and supply at this time, is the chief end of it. I will use but few persuasions; for if, as now the case stands, the just defence of our true friends and allies be not sufficient, then no eloquence of men or angels will prevail.

"If you, as God forbid! should not do your duties in contributing what the state at this time needs, I must in discharge of my conscience use *those other means*, which God hath put into my hands, to save that, which the follies of some particular men may otherwise hazard to lose.

"Take not this as a threatening, for I scorn to threaten any but my equals; but an admonition from him, who, both out of nature and duty, hath most care of your preservations and properties. And though I thus speak, I hope that your counsels will lay on me such obligations as shall tie me by way of thankfulness to meet often with you.

"My Lord-Keeper will make a short paraphrase upon the

text I have delivered you, which is, *To remember a thing, to the end we may forget it.* You may imagine I came here with a doubt of success of what I desire, remembering the dissensions of the last meeting, but I assure you that I shall very easily and gladly forget and forgive what is past.”*

This speech from the throne, is of so different a nature from any King’s speech to which we are accustomed, that the reader may exercise his acumen in detecting the secret conflict of the feelings by which it was dictated. If we discover in it some touches of that lofty conception of majesty which inspired Charles, whether on the throne, in the prison, or at the scaffold, there are others, which betray the sensibilities of the monarch who felt himself aggrieved, and of the man who would infuse friendliness into those obdurate tempers, whose national energy alone could retrieve his honour, and give peace to his private hours. But we see that Charles still looked on Parliaments with hopelessness. A letter-writer represents the opposite feelings of the day. “Some of the Parliament talk desperately—while others, of as high a course to enforce money, if they yield not.” This is the perpetual action and reaction of public opinion. When one side refuses what is just, the other insists on more than is right.

Some ill omens of the Parliament appeared. Sir Robert Philips, the member for Somersetshire, moved for a general fast: “We had,” said he, “one for the plague, which it pleased God to deliver us from, and we have now so many plagues of the Commonwealth about his Majesty’s person, that we have need of such an act of humiliation.” Sir Edward Coke held it most necessary, “because there are, I fear, some devils that will not be cast out, but by fasting and prayer.” The Romanists were always a burnt-offering on the altar of the Parliament, and a petition to renew the penal acts against Popish Recusants, was as pious an act as a penitential fast for all good Protestants. Secretary Cooke, however, was by no means averse to frighten them into supplies. In the last Parliament, he had discovered “a whole Parliament of Jesuits sitting in a fair-hanged vault”

* The critical reader may observe how all parties alike agree either in colouring highly, or casting into shade everything relative to Charles the First. It accorded with Dr. Lingard’s system to give only the ungracious parts of this speech. Lingard, ix. 378.

in Clerkenwell, and he would then have alarmed the Commons that these Jesuits, on St. Joseph's day, had designed to have occupied their own places. It was a gun-powder plot, without the gun-powder. Cooke, too, insinuated that the French ambassador had persuaded Louis, that the divisions between Charles and his people had been fomented by his ingenuity, and he assured the House that he knew the ambassador had been rewarded for his efforts. In all this there was some truth: a party, or rather a small college of Jesuits, had been discovered, and the intrigues of the French ambassadors with the French household of the Queen, as we shall soon see, appear sufficiently evident; but ministers are supposed sometimes to have conspirators for "the Nonce," and ambassadors occasionally flatter themselves that they do more mischief than the world suspects them capable of. At this moment, the old secretary insisted, that though "the Lords of the Council had dug out of the earth this nest of wasps," still were the seculars and the regulars of the Romish priests more active and dangerous than ever. "Even at this time, they intend to hold concurrent assembly with this Parliament."* By this portentous secret, did the wily Secretary attempt to strike a panic through the bench of Bishops, by a hierarchy of the square-caps, and terrify the Commons by a phantom-parliament of Jesuits!

The speeches in the great council of the kingdom at this particular period, which forms an era in the history of our constitution, from the circumstance of the PETITION OF RIGHT having been passed into an act, must have remarkably struck the mind of the philosophical historian; for Hume has transcribed entire pages of their noble sentiments and their irrefutable arguments. It seemed a grave and dignified assembly, who were solemnly met, perhaps for the last time, to ascertain the personal liberty of the subject, and the sacredness of property. Though perhaps somewhat awed by the lofty style of Charles, and somewhat touched by his more relenting emotions, still conscious of the dignity of their senatorial character, and indignant at the arbitrary acts which they had witnessed, the Commons now deeply entered into constitutional points, and

* Rushworth, i. 514.

the cases and the precedents gleaned by antiquaries and lawyers were animated by the living spirit of patriotism, glowing with public reverence, and sore with private injuries.

It is remarkable, that in the early speeches of the Commons, the name of the unhappy favourite no longer served as the war-whoop of a party. No historian has noticed this extraordinary change in the conduct of the Commons; but, although we are not positively and entirely furnished with the secret history of its cause, it reveals itself in the course of the events. Charles, we find, had laid a solemn injunction on the Speaker, that the House, in their debates, should abstain from any personal allusions to Buckingham. On this agreement, probably, had the King consented to call a Parliament. We shall trace the effects of this feeble expedient as we proceed.

The House unanimously voted against arbitrary imprisonments, and forced loans, and the Court party extenuated the past grievances. Charles, they observed, was a young monarch, who, on his accession to the throne, found himself engaged in war; and urged by his extreme necessities, which had solely originated in the refusal of supplies by the two former Parliaments.

The Commons voted five subsidies, about three hundred and fifty thousand pounds. This was considered as a liberal grant, although inadequate to the pressing exigencies and the pending enterprise.

Secretary Sir John Cooke, having brought up the report to the King, Charles expressed great satisfaction, declaring that at that moment he felt more happy than any of his predecessors. Inquiring of Sir John by how many voices he had carried it? Cooke replied, "But by one." At which the King seemed appalled, and asked how many were against him? Cooke answered, "None! the unanimity of the House made all but *one voice!*" The King was so strongly affected as to weep.* The emotion must have been indeed profound, for on all sudden emergencies Charles displayed an almost unparalleled command over the exterior violence of his feelings.

* This circumstance is mentioned in a manuscript letter, but the tears of Charles on this occasion have also got into history. What the Secretary declared to the House is in Rushworth, i. 525.

The Favourite himself was in transports. Sympathising with his royal master, he voluntarily offered himself as a peace-sacrifice. In an admirable effusion of his feelings at the council-table, he said, "I now behold you a great King, for Love is greater than Majesty; opinion that the people loved you not, had almost lost you in the opinion of the world; but you who are now loved at home will be feared abroad. I, who have been your favourite, may now give up that title to them; they to be your favourites, and I your servant. Consider them as a body of many members, but all of one heart. This is not the gift of five subsidies alone, but the opening a mine of subsidies that lieth in their hearts." At the close, the touches of personal feelings gush out of every sentence.

"To open my heart, please to pardon me a word more. I must confess I have long lived in pain, sleep hath given me no rest, favours and fortunes no content; such have been my secret sorrows to be thought the man of separation, and that divided the King from his people, and them from him; but I hope it shall appear they were some mistaken minds that would have made me the evil spirit that walketh between a good master and a loyal people."

Buckingham added to this warm effusion, that, for the good of his country, he was willing to sacrifice his honours, and, since his plurality of offices had been so strongly excepted against, that he was content to give up the Master of the Horse to the Marquess of Hamilton, and the Warden of the Cinque Ports to the Earl of Carlisle, and was willing that the Parliament should appoint another Admiral for all services at sea.*

It is as certain as human evidence can authenticate, that on the King's side all was grateful affection, and that on Buckingham's there was a most earnest desire to conciliate the favours of Parliament. The King, undoubtedly, sighed to meet Parliament with the love which he had at first professed; he declared that "he should now rejoice to meet with his people often;" but Buckingham, at times, was susceptible of misery,

* The Duke's speech at the council-table is preserved in Rushworth, i. 525. The offer of his personal sacrifices I found in MSS. Letters. Sloane MSS. 4177. Letter 490, &c. &c.

amid his greatness. He feared the friends around him, and the terrific Opposition, which seemed a growing monster, haunting his footsteps.

It could not have been imagined that the luckless favourite, on the present occasion, should have served as a pretext to set again in fermentation the chaos of evil. Yet it so happened, when Secretary Cooke, in closing his report of the King's acceptance of the subsidies, too imprudently or too zealously mentioned, that the Duke had fervently beseeched the King to grant the House all their desires. As Charles had laid an injunction that no personal allusion should be made to the Duke, it was but fair for the patriotic party to insist that the rule should equally be observed by the friends of the Court, and that the name of Buckingham should not be thrust forward to receive honours which, even when deserved, they abhorred to bestow.

At the name of the Duke, Sir John Eliot caught fire, and vehemently checked the Secretary for having dared to introduce it, declaring "they knew of no other distinction but of King and subjects. By intermingling a subject's speech with the King's message, he derogated from the honour and majesty of a King. Nor would it become any subject to bear himself in such a fashion, as if no grace ought to descend from the King to the people, nor any loyalty ascend from the people to the King, but through him only."

This speech was received by many with acclamations; some cried out, "Well spoken, Sir John Eliot!"* It marks the heated state of the political atmosphere, when even the lightest coruscation of a hateful name made it burst into flames.

But the supplies, which had raised tears from the fervent gratitude of the distressed monarch, though voted, were yet withheld. Charles had already reminded them that "if they did not make provision speedily, we shall not be able to put one ship to sea this year."

It was now resolved that grievances and supplies were to go hand in hand. Several ineffectual messages came from the

* I find this speech, and an account of its reception, in manuscript letters; the fragment in Rushworth contains no part of it. Sloane MSS. 4177. Letter 490, &c. &c.

King for turning the vote of the subsidies into an act. The negotiations of the Cabinet were said to be at a stand, nor could the soldiers either be disbanded or put into service. A startling message, on the 12th of April, came down from the King for dispatch of business. The House, struck with astonishment, desired to have it repeated. They remained sad and silent. No one cared to open the debate. A whimsical politician, Sir Francis Nethersole, suddenly starting up, entreated leave to tell his last night's dream. Some laughing at him, he observed that "Kingdoms had been saved by dreams." Allowed to proceed, he told them, that "he saw two good pastures, a flock of sheep was in the one, and a bell-wether alone in the other, a great ditch was between them, and a narrow bridge over the ditch."

He was interrupted by the Speaker, who told him that it stood not with the gravity of the House to listen to dreams, but the House inclined to hear him out.

"The sheep would sometimes go over to the bell-wether, or the bell-wether to the sheep. Once both met on the narrow bridge, and the question was who should go back, since both could not go on without danger. One sheep gave counsel, that the sheep on the bridge should lie on their bellies, and let the bell-wether go over their backs. The application of this dilemma he left to the House."* It must be confessed that the bearing of the point whether the King or the Commons were to give way, was more ambiguous than some of the important ones which now formed the matters of their debates. *Davus sum, non Œdipus*. It is probable that this fantastical politician did not vote with the Opposition; for Eliot, Wentworth, and Coke, protested against the interpretation of dreams in the House.

The House of Commons sat four days without speaking or doing anything.† Two months had elapsed since the meeting of Parliament, and the voted supplies were still doubtful.

* Manuscript Letter.

† This appears in a MS. Letter.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HISTORY OF THE KING'S CONDUCT WITH REGARD TO THE
PETITION OF RIGHT.

THE Representatives of the people were now laying down some foundations for the establishment of their "Right," which produced the famous "Petition." They felt that they required a stronger security against the late irregular acts, than the passing of a mere vote of censure by their House. They projected the enactment of a law against arbitrary imprisonments; but in the discussion of this project, the highest principles of the constitution were as often disputed by one side as they were maintained by the other.

Selden with learned industry, vast as the amplitude of his mind, had to unbury the personal freedom of the subject in the dust of the Tower-records; and Coke, the greatest of lawyers, was still poring into Parliamentary rolls for precedents. Some even would have awakened the hoar antiquity of popular liberty among our rudest ancestors. In what was called the conference of the Commons, held before the Lords, the argument for the personal freedom of the subject was admirably conducted, and yet the Lords considered that the Crown lawyers urged the more cogent reasoning. Heath, the Attorney-General, affected to slight the precedents and arguments offered, and to consider the one as mutilated out of the records, and the other as proving rather against than for the Commons. Then it was that Sir Edward Coke rose, affirming to the House, upon his skill in the law, that "It lay not under Mr. Attorney's cap to answer any one of their arguments." Selden declared that he had written out all the records from the Tower, the Exchequer, and the King's Bench, with his own hand, and "would engage his head Mr. Attorney should not find in all these archives a single precedent omitted." Mr. Littleton vouched that he had examined everyone *syllabatim*. Sometimes the references were to the articles of the Great Charter, "in a book to be seen in a library at

Lambeth." An expression in Magna Charta admitted of a great latitude and difference in exposition, whether *Lex terra* was to be expounded by *Lex Regis*?* But the personal liberty of the subject was rested on twelve direct and thirty-one indirect precedents. Of so ambiguous and delicate a nature was then the liberty of the subject, that it might depend on even the syllables of some forlorn precedent.

At that day what would have become of those "Rights and Liberties" which long after were declared to be "undoubted," but which, in the reign of Charles the First, could not have been established by any precedent? Precedent is but an ancient superstition, the wooden idol of the lawyers; for many things are practised on the plea of a precedent, which should rather have been a warning than an authority. Evil times have produced evil precedents; and the antiquity of a precedent may be an argument, not to prove its validity, but its obsolete nature. Before there was a precedent, there existed a cause to constitute one—the cause of a precedent then is the elder-born, and it is the philosopher who searches into causes, not the lawyer who hunts for precedents, whose wisdom will safest enlighten his fellow-citizens. Charles the First had the records searched, as well as the lawyers of the Commons; both found their authorities, and both alike eulogise "the wisdom of former ages." Both pretended that our ancestors had obtained a perfection of judicature; but for ancient laws to retain their perfection, every thing must remain in the same state as when these laws were planned; but as all things have altered, do alter, and will alter, an amazing absurdity is the consequence of resting laws on precedents, since by adopting this popular error we shall find that we have laws for things that no longer exist, and none for things that do exist.

Any observation which I may here make is not meant as offensive to the gown, whose sons have often ranked with men of sublime integrity. We have our Selden and our Somers, as our neighbours have their L'Hôpital and their D'Aguesseau. But lawyers are not the purest sources of our political principles, nor the most philosophical of our inquirers. Their position in

* Hacket's Life of Archbishop Williams, ii. 79.

society ties them down to special views; and thus the very excellence of lawyers becomes their inevitable defect; for the speculative judgment of the philosopher would only impede them in their single course. They must light up their object on one side, and they must offuscate it on the other. In their argument they appeal to precedents, assuming that whatever has been, is authority for what now should be. In their eloquence to catch that momentary glory which vanishes around them, there is no sting in their conscience; with what artifice they first mould the bosoms of their auditors, and then cast the warm and melted metal of the passions into the form already prepared to return the impression! The great lawyers at this period on the side of the Commons, as on that of the King, equally succeeded in maintaining their adverse causes; and as a lawyer in the habit of facing a question but on one side, can rarely be a philosopher, who looks on both, we may easily conceive that both parties were equally convinced of the force of their own logic, and the validity of their own proofs.

All historians condemn Charles the First for his evasions, his equivocations, and his delays in not at first assenting to the "Petition of Right," to which he afterwards acceded; and his conduct on this occasion has further involved the character of this monarch in one of the heaviest denuncements of insincerity by our last historian, Mr. Hallam. That political school, who hold for their first principle that Charles the First had resolved to govern by arbitrary principles, ascribe his conduct on this memorable occasion to his utter reluctance to grant the just liberties of the subject. The motives of no historical character are so clear and definite as those of the unhappy Monarch whose reign I am recording; his private and his public history often reflect a mutual light; and it is on this historical principle that we may view in a new, and surely in a truer light, the history of Charles the First as it concerns the "Petition of Right." It remains still untraced, and involves many singular points of considerable interest and curiosity.

At the momentous crisis when the "Petition of Right" was framing, the royal prerogative and the subject's privilege were more closely brought into contact, and it seemed as if they could not touch without endangering each other, so hard was it

to distinguish limits which seemed lost in their shadowy separation. Sometimes Charles imagined, that "the House pressed not upon the abuses of power, but only upon power itself;" and sometimes the Commons doubted whether they had anything of their own to give, while their property and their persons seemed equally insecure. With Despotism on one side, as it appeared to the people, and Faction on the other, as it appeared to the Government, Liberty herself trembled.

The main point in the "Petition of Right" was the inviolability of the personal freedom of the subject. The Commons asserted that they were requiring no new law, but simply confirming the old: when Charles offered his "royal word" that he would preserve all the rights of the subjects, "according to the laws and customs of the realm," and as this assurance, however solemnly pledged, did not make them the less urgent for their "petition" being granted, he was suspicious that under the modest title of "a Petition for Right" his unfriendly Commons were tying him up by new bonds, and striking at the monarchy itself.

In this dilemma the King listened to his Attorney and his Serjeant, and they, as defenders of *his* "Right," declared that the propositions of the Commons tended rather to an anarchy, than a monarchy—that if they put a sword into the King's hand with one hand, they took it out with another—that a King must be allowed to govern by acts of State, otherwise he is a King without a council, or a council without a power. Serjeant Ashley, who advanced these principles of absolute power, was committed by the Lords, and, as was not unusual at that moment, was compelled to recant before the House of Commons; but the man of law probably never considered his principles as erroneous as they appeared.

The Serjeant had said that "a king must be allowed to govern by acts of state." But if this new act altogether deprived the sovereign of the power of infringing on the personal freedom of the subject, how could he act as the preserver of the state in those sudden exigencies which sometimes occur, as in secret conspiracies, or early seditions? There are moments when Government and Liberty cannot coexist. In a political convulsion, is the supreme magistrate to be reduced to the helplessness of the people themselves,

incapacitated to apply a timely, though an irregular remedy? Charles considered, that to be altogether divested of this power, so long acted on, was dissolving the very foundations and frame of monarchy, and surrendering, to "the petitioners for right," the rights of the throne, established in all preceding reigns. No state, at times, can exist without exercising this secret and instantaneous power. It was the dictatorship of the Roman Republic. So true is the principle, abstractedly considered, which the Crown Serjeant was compelled to recant on his knees, that in our own enlightened period of national freedom, after all which the revolution of William has done for us, we have often been constrained to submit to Serjeant Ashley's principle of government. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act with us, places in the hand of Government this absolute power, for the exigencies of the State. But in the days of Charles, such an expedient was yet unknown. "The omnipotence of Parliament," if any assembly of men, subject to the illusions of the hour, and to the infirmities of all the passions, may be invested with such supernatural greatness, had yet no existence, and the idea would have been as anomalous and incomprehensible in those days, as the now portentous political style of "The Sovereignty of the People," which, it appears, is so familiar to us, and so obvious and undeniable in its sense, as to have become the echoed toast of political meetings.

The King was hedged in by the most thorny difficulties. He considered that the Royal prerogative was bleeding on all sides, and however the House protested against republican principles, even at this early period, as we shall hereafter see, there were some who had incurred the suspicion of being anti-monarchical.

The assent of the King to the "Petition of Right," at this precise moment, was not, as the matter now appears to us, a mere form. We must place ourselves in the situation of Charles, with all the inherited prejudices of the English monarchy; we must attend to his fears, and we must listen to his lawyers and judges; and we must allow him what in his own breast he felt, the consciousness of his rectitude. If his necessities had compelled him to carry on the affairs of the

State, as he had done, we know to whom he would ascribe those cruel and woful necessities. If the King hesitated, and vacillated, and evaded and delayed, these very circumstances, in my mind, prove the sincerity of his conduct, as well as the affliction of his mind. If Charles were really insincere, as his inimical historians assert, nothing need have hindered him from according his assent to that which he never designed to execute. That artifice has not been unusual with faithless governors. Or if Charles were truly that tyrant, which republican writers maintain him to have been, he could have put an end at once to the painful discussions, by alleging the custom, if not the law of his predecessors, who would never admit the Prerogative Royal even to be discussed. Charles gave leave, as he has himself expressed it, “of *free debate* on the highest points of our Prerogative Royal, which, in the time of our predecessors, kings and queens of this realm, were ever restrained as matters that they would not have discussed.”* Happily for us, Charles allowed the yet infant genius of the British Constitution, all its nascent energies—it was still but a cradled Hercules, and many a serpent wound about the child. Rushworth, who never hazarded a reflection in delivering the speeches and pleadings at this crisis, has ventured to make an observation which I shall adopt. “Though,” says our collector, “the matter delivered, by the length of it, may seem tedious to the reader, yet if he observe the language and style, as well as the subject-matter, perhaps it will be no penance unto him.” Certain it is, and glorious as it is certain, that at this period arose a generation of thinking men and active spirits, such as England had never before witnessed, and such as no other people can parallel. Charles, through the Lord-Keeper, in vain inquired “What need of a new law to confirm the old?” In his repeated messages he solemnly assured the Commons that “their liberties were not of grace, but of right;” and that he would “govern according to the laws of the realm.” He was willing to satisfy all moderate minds, but there were inconveniences in compelling a government in all cases to proceed in a legal and ordinary way of justice, for there were some where judges could not have

* Rushworth, i. 560.

the capacity of judicature, nor rules of law to direct them. Laws must be sometimes broken for the safety of the Commonwealth. Meanwhile he promised that in all future extreme cases, on the petition of the parties themselves, or address of the judges, the King would declare the cause of their commitment or restraint, as soon as it might be safely declared. We may perceive the insurmountable difficulties of describing that absolute power which Government may sometimes require, and which is so incompatible with the genius of a free people.

In a manuscript letter it is said that the House of Commons sate four days without speaking or doing any thing.

The King made an attempt to get rid of the "Petition" altogether. On the first of May, Secretary Cooke delivered an extraordinary message. It was an inquiry whether they would rely upon the royal word, which should be royally performed? This startling question was followed by a long silence.

The awed messenger himself broke it. Cooke painted the hard situation in which a young king, newly come to his crown, had found himself, "but his Majesty assures us we shall not have the like cause to complain. Should we desire more than the established laws? Shall we strive after greater liberty than our fathers had, and put the crown into less? Do not think that by cases of law and debate we can make that not to be law which in experience we every day find to be necessary. In discharging the duties of my office I must commit men, and must not discover the cause to my gaoler or judge. If I commit without just cause, the responsibility falls on me." He concluded that Government was a solid thing, and must be supported for our good.

Such were the chief points urged by the feeble Secretary of State, who, however, was the organ of the real opinions of the Council-table.

Debates, of a nature as extraordinary as the question propounded to the Commons, shortly after broke forth. The whole scene exhibits a remarkable evidence of the great intelligence and powerful talents of the leaders of the Opposition, who so judiciously disposed of so tender and novel a point as the positive refusal of the King's word. Several speeches are reported in letters of the times which we do not find in Rushworth, whose

collections here are disjointed, and seem very imperfect. Sir Nathaniel Rich observed that "Confident as he was of the royal word, what did any indefinite word ascertain?" Pym said, "We have his Majesty's coronation oath to maintain the laws of England, what need we then take his word;" and proposed to move, "Whether we should take the King's word or no?" This was indignantly resisted by Secretary Cooke. "What would they say in foreign parts, if the people of England would not trust their King?" and desired the House to call Pym to order. Pym replied, "Truly, Mr. Speaker, I am just of the same opinion I was, viz. that the King's oath was as powerful as his word." Sir John Eliot moved that it be put to the question, "because they that would have it do urge us to that point." In one of these debates Coke wound up all possible arguments in all the majesty of an oracle of law; a memorable speech, of which the following passage is not given in Rushworth.

"We sit now in Parliament, and therefore must take his Majesty's word no otherwise than in a Parliamentary way; that is, of a matter agreed on by both Houses. His Majesty sitting on his throne in his robes, with his crown on his head, and sceptre in his hand, and in full Parliament; and his royal assent being entered upon record *in perpetuum rei memoriam*. This was the royal word of a King in Parliament, and not a word delivered in a chamber, and out of the mouth of a secretary at a second hand; therefore I motion, that the House of Commons, *more majorum*, should draw a petition *de droiet* to his Majesty, which, being confirmed by both Houses, and assented unto by his Majesty, will be as firm an act as any. Not that I distrust the King, but that I cannot take his trust but in a Parliamentary way."*

The Commons were as rocks, but there was a melting stream in the Lords thawing into conciliatory measures. A wise statesman, though a great political intriguer, was returning from his secession; Bishop Williams was once more in the busy scene. Although still deeply engaged with the Opposition, and viewing the popular cause with an intelligence which had anti-

* These speeches are entirely drawn from those manuscript letters to which I have frequently referred, in the Sloane MSS. transcribed and collected by Dr. Birch.

culated by a century the comprehension of his contemporaries, the Bishop nevertheless loved power too well to decline those means which were likely to obtain it. Perhaps few statesmen would have guided it with a more dexterous hand. A reconciliation between Williams and Buckingham was at this moment preparing by some intermediate connexions; and we discover by the biographer and confidant of Williams, that the Bishop had a secret interview with the Favourite, who promised to reinstate him in all his former power. Meanwhile Williams was allowed to hold his present situation among the ranks of Opposition, where his popularity might enable him to do more service, than an open "ratting."

The biographer acknowledges, in his quaint manner, alluding to his conduct at this moment, that "it caused the Bishop to be suspected at first, as if he had been sprinkled with some Court Holy-water," but by the flattering pencil of this portrait-painter, this ugly feature is softened down, and even a grace added, by his insinuation, that the feeling spontaneously flowed from his own breast, to bear witness to the grandeur of majesty; and as this singular biographer scarcely ever ventures on a single idea without some learned reference, he applies a passage in Xenophon, who commends such "unbespoken service," when he says that Hystaspes would do all that Cyrus bade, but Chrysantus would do all he thought was good for Cyrus before he bade him.

Our political Chrysantus, ambidextrous as he was, would have found it more difficult than his biographer, to have shown that his conduct was animated by any better spirit than that of intrigue. Guile and treachery were unhappily combined with great wisdom in the remarkable character of Bishop Williams. On the present occasion, though this might have been "unbespoken service," it was a proffer that the gentleman was prepared to wear the livery, which, not unreluctantly, he had left off. There were fierce patriots among the Opposition, who as we now well know, were abject enough to creep into places, without the lofty ambition of this sagacious minister.

Although Bishop Williams, in conformity to his new system, was a stickler for the "Petition of Right," he proposes a clause by which the Lords declared that "they would leave entire the

SOVEREIGN POWER which was trusted to the King for the protection of his people." This clause, which they pronounced was not an alteration, but only an addition, seemed to neutralise the whole "Petition of Right."

The awful words "Sovereign Power" inspired debates as extraordinary as that on taking "the King's word."

"Let us look into the records to see what is Sovereign Power,—let us give that to the King which the law gives him, and no more," said one member, who desperately quoted Bodin to get at some idea of "Sovereign Power."*

Pym's speech is remarkable: "I am not able to speak to this question. I know not what it is. All our Petition is for the laws of England, and this power seems to be another distinct power from the power of the law. I know how to add Sovereign to his person, but not to his power. We cannot leave to him a Sovereign Power; we never were possessed of it."

"I know," said Coke, "that prerogative is part of the law, but Sovereign Power is no Parliamentary word. It weakened Magna Charta and all our statutes, for they are absolute without any saving of Sovereign Power. If we now add it, we shall weaken the foundation of law, and then the building must needs fall."

The Lords at length consented that their clause should not be inserted in the Petition to the throne, which should be presented as originally found.

All the messages of the King and all the firm resolutions of the Commons, only protracted their mutual anxieties. It now appears, by the recent researches of Mr. Hallam, that the King, before he would grant his assent to the "Petition of Right," propounded to his Judges certain questions relative to his power of committing State prisoners.† Their answers were sufficiently favourable for the maintenance of his royal prerogative; and in consequence of their decisions Charles went down to the House,—and, having heard the Petition, gave his assent, not in the accustomed concise and positive form, but in a peculiar manner. He seemed to elude the Petition he granted by a long explanatory declaration, that "the King

Rushworth, i. 468.

† Hallam, i. 422.

willed that right be done according to the laws and customs of the realm," &c. &c., he sought to set at rest the spirit which had so long tormented him, and flattered himself that by this contrivance the object remained in the same original vague state.

Charles the First, by this "deceit," if it be deceit, expected, as a modern writer* observes, "to *outwit* the Commons." If Charles imagined that he could, by such a simple artifice, "*outwit*" a senate of the most intelligent men ever assembled, there was a degree of weak simplicity in his character which I have never detected. Charles, indeed, is reproached for this evasion, and, we shall shortly find, loudly denounced for his insincerity. In all these unhappy evasions and delays I can see only the unhappy conflicts of a royal mind, agitated by distrust and alarm at a novel State instrument, which, if it asked, as it avowed, no new law, he must, in his mode of reasoning, have considered as a supererogatory act; but which, from the tenacity of the Commons, who had even refused accepting his royal word, he probably suspected as concealing some latent mischief.

The uncustomary and declaratory form which the King used on first giving his assent to the "Petition of Right," disappointed the Commons, and renewed their fears. The Commons sullenly returned to their House.

Instantly to assuage their stifled indignation, and not to be idle in idling times, for no subsidies were yet to be raised, they were seized with a sudden fit for religion. The halloo was again raised at the trembling hares of Papistry. They were particularly alarmed at all "*Innovations* in religion." What could the Romanists think when they saw their own style adopted? The *Quintain* they selected to shoot their arrows at, was a Court chaplain, Dr. Roger Manwaring. He had published by the King's special command, a pair of sermons on "Religion and Allegiance." Pym, to judge by the length of his oratory, in divisions and sub-divisions must have spoken a large volume on these two little sermons, and Rouse, who opened the charge, compared the Court-divine to Guy Faux and his gang who sought "to blow up the Parliament."

The political divine was compelled to recant on his knees all

* Mr. Brodie.

“the errors and indiscretions” of his “crown-divinity” as it was then caustically termed; he recanted, dropping some hypocritical tears, either of terror or vexation, for the Court thought proper at this moment to leave their doctor of divinity to his fate. Without a single complaint against the King’s taste for political divinity, they indirectly attacked him in his chaplain, and, as was wittily observed on that occasion, “as keepers beat whelps before their lions, to make them gentler.”

On Tuesday, June 5th, a royal message announced that on the 15th the present sessions would close. This utterly disconcerted the Commons. They now gave vent to their suppressed feelings; they counted up all the disasters which had of late occurred, for a second expedition to Rochelle, in May, under the Earl of Denbigh, had entirely failed.

All now was charged on one man. They knew not at a moment so urgent, when all their liberties seemed at stake, whether the Commons should fly to the Lords, or to the King!

“As they intended to furnish his Majesty with money, it was proper that he should give them time to supply him with council,” said Sir John Eliott, who was renewing his old attacks on the Duke, when he was suddenly interrupted by the Speaker, who starting from the chair, declared that he was *commanded* not to suffer him to proceed. Eliot sat down in sullen silence. Here we find acknowledged, the secret order confided by the King to the Speaker, that the Commons should abstain from introducing the Duke’s name in their debates.

On Wednesday, Sir Edward Coke broke the ice by an allusion to Buckingham—“That man, is the grievance of all grievances! as for going to the Lords that is not *Via Regia*: *our* liberties are impeached; it is *our* concern!”

On Thursday, the vehement cry of Coke against Buckingham was followed up—“as when one good hound recovers the scent, the rest come in with a full cry.” A sudden message from the King absolutely forbade them to asperse any of his Majesty’s ministers, otherwise his Majesty would instantly dissolve them. Another confirmation of the secret determination of the King to which I have alluded.

The royal message fell like a thunderbolt; it struck terror—and at the instant, the House of Commons was changed into a

scene of tragical melancholy. All the opposite passions of human nature, all the national evils which were one day to burst upon the country, seemed, on a sudden, concentrated in this single spot! Some were seen weeping, some were expostulating, and some in awful prophecy, were contemplating the future ruin of the kingdom; while others, of more ardent daring, were reproaching the timid, quieting the terrified, and infusing resolution into the despairing. Many attempted to speak, but were so strongly affected, that their very utterance failed them. The venerable Coke, overcome by his feelings when he rose to speak, found his learned eloquence falter on his tongue; he sat down, and tears were seen on his aged cheeks. The name of the public enemy of the kingdom was repeated, till the Speaker, with tears covering his face, declared he could no longer witness such a spectacle of woe in the Commons of England, and requested leave of absence for half an hour. The Speaker hastened to the King to inform him of the state of the House. They were preparing a vote against the Duke, for being an arch-traitor and arch-enemy to the King and kingdom, and were busied on their "Remonstrance," when the Speaker, on his return, after an absence of two hours, delivered his Majesty's message, that they should adjourn till the next day.

This was an awful interval of time; many trembled for the issue of the next morning. One letter-writer calls it "that black and doleful Thursday!" and another, writing before the House met, observes, "What we shall expect this morning, God of heaven knows! we shall meet timely."*

Charles, probably, had been greatly affected by the report of the Speaker, on the extraordinary state into which the whole House had been thrown; for on Friday the royal message imported, that the King had never any intention of "barring them from their right, but only to avoid scandal, that his ministers should not be accused for their counsel to him; and still he hoped that all Christendom might notice a sweet parting between him and his people." This message quieted the House, but did not suspend their preparations for a "Remonstrance," which they had begun on the day they were threatened with a dissolution.

* This last letter is printed in Rushworth, i. 609.

On Saturday, while they were still occupied on the "Remonstrance," unexpectedly, at four o'clock, the King came to Parliament, and the Commons were called up. Charles spontaneously came to reconcile himself to Parliament. Hume observes that "Charles was apt hastily to correct any hasty steps which he had taken." This at least evinces an earnest intention to correct error. The charge of insincerity, of which Charles the First is so generally accused, frequently requires to be explained; his situation was often a critical one. On the present occasion he hastened to comply with the joint request of the two Houses, suggested by the moderating language of an independent country gentleman, Sir Robert Philips, to give his assent in the usual form. It is probable that Charles might have quickened his motives on this occasion, to save, if possible, his unfortunate minister from the impending storm of "The Remonstrance."

The King now commanded to cut off from the Bill his former answer, and replace it by this second assent, according to the ancient form: *Soit droit fait come il est désiré*. "Let it be law as it is desired." But Charles at the time observed, that "his second answer in no wise differed from his first, for I always meant to confirm your liberties, trusting to your protestations that you neither mean nor can hurt my prerogative. It is my maxim, that the people's liberties strengthen the King's prerogative, and the King's prerogative is to defend the people's liberties." Are we to consider this declaration as phrases to which the King really affixed no ideas? Are we to condemn the elevated spirit of Charles the First, as destitute of all honour and sincerity, intent solely on governing by absolute power? are we to believe that at no time whatever he wished to reign as a constitutional monarch? Yet were he the tyrant which a party has proclaimed, it must then follow that Charles the First, after such frequent retractations, and such continued compliances with the wishes of Parliament, at least yielding to them as often as commanding them, was a tyrant unskilled in tyranny, which always takes the shortest courses to obtain its purposes.

The King concluded by reminding the House that "he had done his part, and that if the Parliament had no happy termination, the sin was theirs—he was free from it!"

Popular gratitude is as vociferous as it is sudden. Both Houses returned the King acclamations of joy. Every one seemed to exult at the happy change which a few days had effected in the fate of the kingdom. Everywhere the bells rang, bonfires were kindled, an universal holiday was kept through the town, and spread to the country; but an ominous circumstance has been registered by a letter-writer; the common people, who had caught the contagious happiness, imagined that this public joy was occasioned by the King's consent to commit the Duke to the Tower!

At this moment a foreigner would have imagined that he beheld a happy nation, and even an Englishman might have imagined that the discontented were satisfied! Yet the joy of the Commons did not outlast the bonfires in the streets. They resumed their debates as if nothing had occurred—they handled the same torture by which they had before racked their victim—there was no sympathy for the feelings of the man whom they addressed as their Sovereign; that common sympathy was denied which man owes to man, and which, if it be not granted, exasperates our infirmities, and renders them still more obdurate.

The active spirits in the Commons were resolute in hunting down the game to the death. After all the secret management of Charles with the Speaker, that no personal allusions should be made to the Duke, and when the House had nearly closed with their chief grievances, the debate was as hot as ever, and now they distinguished how the Duke was "*the cause of some, and a cause of other grievances.*" One member, seeing the temper of the party, reminded them of the King's earnest desire that all personal aspersions might be forborne, which the King would accept as a proof of their moderation. Another member prayed that "*the Remonstrance*" they were preparing, should convince the King that it comes from a *public sense*, and not from *private ends*. Sir Benjamin Rudyard suggested that the subject of excessive power should be urged home; thus, without a name, it will reach the Duke, and all others in future times. He declared that the Duke was a man of honour, who had done many great and good offices to this House. The close of the speech of this pure patriot is somewhat remarkable, and I con-

ceive in favour of Buckingham. "If the forfeiture of my life could breed an opinion that you should have no occasion to complain at your next meeting, I would pawn it to you. Nor let any man say, it is fear which makes us desist; we have showed already what we dare do."

The offensive "Remonstrance" against the Duke was sent up, though the Speaker prayed to be excused presenting it, but the House would not concede that favour. Charles received "the Remonstrance" like a man who felt an injury.

After having granted the famous "Petition," he declared, that he had not expected such a return as this "Remonstrance." After the reading of the Remonstrance, the Duke fell on his knees, desiring to answer for himself, but Charles no way relaxed in testifying his personal favour.*

The temperate manner in which the King received this Remonstrance, was a disappointment to its framers, who were now convinced that the King would not give up his friend. It sharpened their spirits. "The chief tribunes," as Hacket designates the leaders of the Opposition, "spoke their discontents aloud—they had given a bountiful levy of five subsidies, and were called fools for their labour."

This is a curious instance of the style reflecting the ignoble feelings of a party, where what should be elevated is mean, and what should be indignation, sinks into spite. Their deeds were now in unison with their style.

To avenge themselves for the little effect produced on the King by "the Remonstrance," they immediately fell on Tonnage and Poundage. They struck at, as the King observes, "one of the chief maintenances of my crown." The legal discussions are of the most subtle nature.†

One of the great sources of the royal revenues was Tonnage and Poundage, or what we now understand as "the Customs." At the commencement of every reign, they formed the usual grant. No complaint had been raised about them pending the fate of the "Petition of Right." Now the petitioners unexpectedly declared, that these rates could no longer be levied without a grant of Parliament; they must be considered as a

* This interview is taken from a MS. letter.

† Rushworth, i. 628.

free gift, not an inherent right; and for this they at once appealed to their recent "Petition of Right."

They flattered themselves that the King would barter the Minister to provide for his own necessities. They hardly yet knew the force of Charles's character.

The Duke was often charged with actions and with expressions of which unquestionably he was not always guilty. At this moment he came down to the House to clear himself of certain calumnies, and personally to face certain members, with whom they appear to have originated. On all such occasions there was a singular openness in his conduct.

Charles at this moment, to repel the preparatory accusations of the Commons, ordered that the information which had been preferred in the Star-chamber against Buckingham, should be taken off the file, as "his Majesty is fully satisfied of the Duke's innocency, from his own certain knowledge, as by other proofs."

A most offensive "Remonstrance," for the Petition accorded did not prevent remonstrances from multiplying apace, was now framing against the Duke, and to be more than personal, if possible, they condescended to drag in his mother as a patroness of Popery. It was ungenerous to afflict the solitary Sovereign, who on his side had yielded—by these more poignant insults which he could less endure. Their conduct had nothing dignified in its proceedings, for their boldness on this occasion was artful. They imagined that they held the Sovereign at their own disposal, by the power they were assuming of renewing or withdrawing his revenues from the Customs. If they acted with the daring of the lion, they did not forget the cunning of the fox; and if the mane of the nobler creature was erected, there was also seen hanging the obscene tail of the meaner animal; that miserable conjunction of the political chimera, which in the frontispiece of an edition of Machiavel's Prince typifies the great politician.

On the 26th of June, the Commons were in the act of the last reading of their "Remonstrance," the object of which was to dispute the King's right to levy duties and customs. The Remonstrance was already engrossed and would have been presented within two hours—suddenly the King hastened to the House, sent for the Speaker, and prorogued the Parliament.

The unpremeditated address from the throne has all the freedom of a conversation; its simplicity of style betrays the warmth of injured feelings, and it essentially enters into a history of the "Petition of Right," for it throws a clear and steady light on the vacillating conduct of Charles the First, and more particularly on the extraordinary circumstance of his withdrawing his second answer to the "Petition of Right," which had satisfied the Commons, and substituting the former one, which they had rejected.

Charles told the Parliament—"It may seem strange, that I come so suddenly to end this session, before I give my assent to the Bills. I will tell you the cause, though I must avow, that I owe the account of my actions to God alone.

"It is known to every one, that a while ago the House of Commons gave me a remonstrance; how acceptable any man may judge. I am sure no wise man can justify it."

This alludes to the late Remonstrance about Buckingham. There is nothing insulting in the style of Charles the First, in his reflection on the painful personalities included in that Remonstrance; yet to show in what spirit many have written on this unfortunate Monarch, it may be worth noticing, that for this very passage, Oldmixon, a violent party-writer, accuses Charles with having insulted the House of Commons by "calling them fools."

"Now a second Remonstrance is preparing for me, to take away one of the chief maintenances of my Crown, by alleging that *I have given away my right by my answer to your Petition.*

"This is so prejudicial to me, that I am forced to end this Session some few hours before I meant, being not willing to receive any more Remonstrances, to which I must give a harsh answer; and since I see that even the House of Commons begin already to make false constructions of what I granted in your Petition, *lest it be worse interpreted in the country, I will now make a declaration concerning the true intentions.*"

Charles proceeds, "The professions of both Houses in the time of hammering this Petition, were no way to trench upon my Prerogative, saying, they had neither intention nor power to hurt it. Therefore, it must needs be conceived, that I have granted no new, but only confirmed the ancient liberties of my

subjects." "On the word of a King," Charles then promised that for the time to come they should not have the same cause of complaint, and that what had been done should never be drawn into example to the prejudice of the subject. "But as for Tonnage and Poundage, it is a thing I cannot want, and was never intended for you to ask, nor meant by me, I am sure, to grant.

"I command you all that are here to take notice of what I have spoken at this time, to be the true intent and meaning which I granted you on your Petition; but especially you, my Lords, the Judges; for to you only under me, belongs the interpretation of laws, for none of the Houses of Parliament, either joint or separate, *what new doctrine soever may be raised*, have any power either to make or declare a law without my consent."

It was necessary to furnish the reader with this address of the King's to enable him to decide on the final circumstance, in this history of the "Petition of Right;" a circumstance which has called down on the unhappy monarch a remarkable reprobation of his faithlessness by our last writers—by Dr. Lingard, who is always indifferent to the fate of Charles; by Mr. Brodie, who sees nothing but a tyrant in the monarch, and by Mr. Hallam, who sometimes alarms us with his eloquence.

"Charles had the *absurd and audacious insincerity*, for we can use no milder epithets, to circulate one thousand five hundred copies of it (the Petition of Right) through the country, after the prorogation, with his first answer annexed; an *attempt to deceive without the possibility of success*. But instances of such ill-faith, accumulated as they are, through the life of Charles, render the assertion of his sincerity a proof either of historical ignorance, or of a want of moral delicacy."*

This impassioned passage has been transcribed with trembling nerves—it bears about it something of the thunder and the infallibility of the Vatican, and casts a reforming historian like myself into a forlorn state of excommunication.

There seems to me to have been much curious misconception concerning the "Petition of Right." Even Lord Clarendon

* Hallam, i. 432; Brodie, ii. 196.

deemed that "it did not prejudice the crown;" why, therefore, was it delayed? Charles the First has been blamed even by contemporaries* not hostile to him, for deferring the grant of this "Petition," to which at length he acceded, but the grace of a ready compliance was lost. Those, however, who were of this opinion, decided by the open profession of the Commons, that they were requiring no new law, and that the subject was only claiming what he already possessed. Even Hume censures Charles the First for his evasions on this occasion; but at the same time, his philosophical mind could not pass by such a political crisis without taking the most enlarged view—for after all which has been said on this subject, this new law, professing to be nothing but an old one, was an innovation involving the most unexpected consequences.

"The King's assent to the 'Petition of Right,' produced such a change in the Government as was *almost equivalent to a revolution.*" Such is the forcible precision by which the philosophical historian conveys the result of his opinions—and in four immortal pages he has separated the ramifications of the question on both sides. Mr. Brodie, repeating the avowed principle of the Commons, insists against Hume, that the "Petition of Right" merely confirmed statutes, which, though occasionally eluded, were sufficiently clear in favour of personal liberty.† But neither the philosopher Hume nor the Monarch himself were of Mr. Brodie's opinion, since the one has explained, and the other was alarmed at the complicate difficulties of the question.

Before Charles the First gave his assent to the "Petition of Right," he secretly propounded certain questions to his Judges relative to arbitrary commitments. Their opinions being such as to induce the King to conclude that the royal prerogative was left sufficiently free for the great purposes of government, he then gave his *first* assent—but as the judicial decisions had not entirely removed his apprehensions, his first assent to this novel state document was given in an unusual form, being explanatory of what he conceived to be its intent. Afterwards

* Hacket's Life of Archbishop Williams, ii. 77.

† Brodie, ii. 188.

he conceded it as the petitioners wished, in the accustomed words. This discovery of Charles the First's secret conference with his Judges, before he had granted his first assent, Mr. Hallam fortunately made in the Hargrave collection, but his inference is more particularly his own—for he alleges the fact to show how “the sincerity of Charles, in according his assent to the ‘Petition of Right,’ may be estimated.”

When, shortly after the Commons attacked the sources of the royal revenue, appealing to this very “Petition of Right” for their plea, it realised all those fears and doubts which had occasioned the King's former hesitation and delay, Charles the First started like a man entrapped. In his closing address to Parliament, he returned to his *first* qualified or explanatory assent. In publishing this “Petition of Right,” if the King retained an atom of sincerity, he could not append the *second* unqualified assent, for the reasons which he had himself alleged in his speech—“lest it should be worse interpreted in the country.”

Assuredly, Charles the First could never for an instant imagine that he was *deceiving* the public by withdrawing his last, and substituting his first assent; the public were too well acquainted with both the assents—and they had now before them his speech from the throne. Whatever might have been all along his hesitation and his doubts, any deception now would have been, as Mr. Hallam acknowledges, “an attempt to deceive without the *possibility of success*”—an absurdity too great to suppose, which, however, Mr. Hallam does suppose!

To this, then, amounts the denouncement of Charles the First's “absurd and audacious insincerity;” and to the papal excommunication which I have already noticed, must the historian be damned, who like myself gives this “proof either of historical ignorance, or of a want of moral delicacy.” Had Mr. Hallam and preceding writers compared the speech from the throne, addressed to the nation, before the King published the “Petition of Right,” at least they would have found the reasons which induced Charles the First to withdraw his second assent. No deception was, or could be attempted. Had the King issued the “Petition of Right” with the second assent, *after what had occurred*, the document indeed would have been a

faithless one, and the King would have indeed then practised a gross deception; but in the substitution of his first assent, explanatory of the intention of the Petition, I see only an evidence of his sincerity, and not of his deception.

CHAPTER XX.

RECONCILIATION WITH WILLIAMS: SIEGE OF ROCHELLE, SECOND EXPEDITION: ASSASSINATION OF BUCKINGHAM.

DURING this ardent political contest, and the vacillations of Charles the First in granting the "Petition of Right," and his alarm at being left at the mercy of the Commons for one of the constant sources of his revenue, affairs not less urgent were agitating the Cabinet.

It is evident that Buckingham found himself inadequate to stand against the popular odium which had been successfully raised against him; the defeat at Rhé had not inspired confidence in the House of Lords, where he counted on securing most friends.

Amid the disordered state of the nation, an army, more formidable than ever, was immediately required for a fresh expedition to relieve the brave Rochellers, who were closely besieged by the sovereign of France, and were at their last extremities.

At this critical moment the Bishop of Lincoln, that instrument of state whom Buckingham hated, and whom he had utterly rejected, was gladly embraced. The Minister possibly imagined that he might graft the popularity of a leader of the Opposition on his own measures, and that the administration was likely to be materially assisted by his secret communication. Necessity can convert the oldest enmities into fresh friendships; so quickly political antipathies may turn to political unions!

The Bishop of Lincoln had put forth the signs of a relenting sympathy to his former masters; first by suggesting that clause which had been designed to neutralise any latent mischief in the "Petition of Right." This had obtained him an interview

with the Lord Duke ; and now on the subject of the Customs, which the Commons were attempting to wrest from the Sovereign, Williams had concurred with the King's interpretation, maintaining that these duties were inviolably attached to the royal prerogative, and were absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the sovereignty, more particularly in securing our maritime dominion. The subtle politician had even ventured so far as openly to censure the conduct of his friends in the Commons ; but he found that their natures were a metal too obdurate for his polisher to work on.

The King was not insensible to the reconciling spirit of an able though discarded servant of the crown, and the Bishop of Lincoln was favoured by kissing the King's hand, and admitted to a private audience. Charles the First was extremely anxious to learn Williams's opinion of the means by which he might win the affections of his Commons. There was nothing the King, like his Minister, had so much at heart as to become popular : but they were both much too young for hacknied statesmen !

In this conference with the King the Bishop recommended that temporising measures should be tried on the numerous party of the Puritans ; he considered that it was possible by connivance and indulgence to bend their rugged stubbornness —“ Not,” as he remarkably added, that “ he would promise they would be trusty very long to any government.” The King approved of the counsel, declaring that he had had some thoughts of the same kind himself.

By this observation of Bishop Williams, made in 1628, it would appear that he conceived that those who are here designated as Puritans, were then intent on overthrowing the Government ; either as State Puritans, the Monarchy, or as Religious Puritans, the Hierarchy ; but, as under the present Sovereign, the one could not fall without the other, in the party described by Williams, we must include both of them. Indeed in modern history it seems to me always impossible to separate religion from politics ; religion engenders politics, and politicians eagerly adopt that most certain mode of enlisting the people on their side. This last secret was confessed by one of our great leading patriots of this period. Predominance in the

Government is a term much clearer than any which may be put forth by a sect of religionists, or a faction of politicians.

It was now June, and the Deputies of La Rochelle with Soubise, since January, had been daily urging Buckingham to redeem his plighted honour by hastening an effectual aid to their compatriots. The Earl of Denbigh, in an expedition in May, had reached the Mole, but declaring it impregnable, after firing some cannon, had ingloriously retreated home. Yet though the Rochellers had witnessed this mortifying scene of an English fleet disgracing itself before the eyes of France, still were those unbroken spirits looking towards the shores of Britain, where, amid their feverish dreams, they seemed to behold, as in a vision, the single saviour of their liberties, and of the independence of Protestant Europe. But now the hour had struck, when those unconquered men were fast perishing, suffering as human beings had never suffered before.

The town of La Rochelle held fifteen thousand Huguenots. It stood a siege of more than a year, and the French monarch with the royal army, were so outwearied with the impregnability of the town, and the still less yielding nature of the inhabitants, that Louis the Thirteenth was displeased with Cardinal Richelieu for not abandoning the siege. But that great minister had now before his eyes the mighty vision of his youth, inspired with the double inspiration of an apostolical minister sent forth to establish the faith of Rome, and of a minister of state to trample on rebellion. Imploring the King to consider the enterprise as necessary as it was glorious, the Cardinal assumed the command over the discontented army. The versatility of his genius was here shown; he restored its discipline with such severity, or with such impartial justice, that in his "*Testament Politique*" the Cardinal exults how "during thirteen months an army of twenty-five thousand men were as obedient as if they had consisted of a religious order bearing arms."

The story of the siege of La Rochelle is one of the most extraordinary events in modern history. It opens for our contemplation the glorious but the painful spectacle of an immolation to the spirit of Liberty, inspired by a human being who seemed at that time, and at no other, to have been placed above our common humanity.

The extraordinary character of Jean Guiton, the heroic mayor of La Rochelle, was known to Buckingham. The diminutive person of this man concealed a heart impregnable to fear, and a mind superior to calamity. Guiton had wished to decline the mayoralty; but his fellow-citizens, as if conscious of their man, pressed his acceptance of the office. It was then that Guiton, holding up a poignard to the commonalty, declared, "Since you persist in having me for your mayor, I will take the painful office, on condition that it be permitted to me to plunge this poignard into the breast of the first man who shall talk of a capitulation; and I consent that it be used on the same terms on myself should I ever propose the surrender of this place. I therefore demand that this poignard remain on the table of our council-chamber, ready to be used for this sole purpose."

Through all the trying horrors of scenes which seemed to pass beyond the imagination, or at least the endurance of man, this immoveable spirit witnessed the desolation around him in all the forms of death. The miserable citizens of La Rochelle were driven to the sharpest and the most frightful extremities. Provision now became the most precious treasure, and was as secretly hidden. At length not an animal, not a reptile which had life in it, was remaining in the town; and they were reduced to feed on what had never before been food, on old leather and skins, which they had made succulent by soaking them in tallow, parchment boiled in sugar was then an exquisite and costly meal. When Guiton was told that the people were perishing in heaps in the streets, and that it would not be long ere famine would carry off all the inhabitants: "It is sufficient," coldly replied the glorious or the insensible patriot; "it is sufficient should there remain but a single man to close the gates." A female of his acquaintance was shown to him, whose life was passing away in its last puff of breath; "Are you surprised at this?" said Guiton, "it is what must very shortly happen to us all, if we are not soon succoured." It was no unusual sight to observe the dying bearing their own coffins to burial-grounds and laying themselves down to die in them; and on the entrance of the French army, one of the most frightful spectacles were the vultures hovering over the unburied dead. Once a tumult gathered to force the Mayor to capitu-

late—but at the sight of the heads of twelve of their fellow-citizens affixed to one of the gates, the vociferous mob slunk away in horror and in silence. Once Guiton seemed touched by the cries and tears of helpless women and their expiring children,—“ We can never surrender to an implacable enemy,” he cried, “ there are no terms for us ! but if my flesh can afford you a meal, you may share it ! ” In the night-time some half-famished beings were observed stealing out of the town, hanging like shadows on the outer walls, to pluck the wild plants, growing out of the stones, or might be seen crawling to the shore for the chance of picking up some shell-fish ; this was a melancholy contrast with what often occurred on those same walls in the morning ; there a troop of Burghers, armed and shouting, would show themselves in sport, laughing and singing in chorus, to convince the besiegers that the Rochellers were not yet reduced to despair ; but the truth of the night-scene had betrayed the illusion of the morning.

Guiton, in this government of terror, rarely broke his sullen silence, except to assure his people that they might depend on the King of England : sometimes he showed a letter from Charles the First, sealed with the arms of England—he positively fixed on St. Michael’s day for the arrival of the English. But he had too often repeated the information—even Guiton himself, as well as others, began to suspect the perfidy of Buckingham. This Mayor of La Rochelle, to the last moment of the siege, maintained the same unchangeable character—but with no favourable impression of the English—and he observed, when Rochelle at length was given up to the French King on the last ineffectual expedition, after Buckingham’s death, that “ it was better to yield to a King who knew how to take the town of La Rochelle, than to him who had not known how to succour it.” This has ever been the usual style of foreigners when they have looked to England for that independence which they could not secure for themselves ; it has been too often our fate, to have found that our aid to foreign intriguers has been thwarted by difficulties at home, or our efforts have been returned by the ingratitude of the foreigners. Guiton concluded his course like others of his class ; he gladly retired to London, where the heroic Mayor of La Rochelle appears to have lived in obscurity and quiet.

At London, the Deputies of La Rochelle had to perform a task of the most delicate nature: they suspected the sincerity of Buckingham. It was not impossible, they thought, that he might make use of them as a means to act on the French Cabinet, and it had been rumoured among the Rochellers, that the Cardinal had said there was nothing to fear from the fleet of England; they ascribed the delays for their relief to purposed negligence; they considered the parade of the English fleet, under the Earl of Denbigh, to have been a mere show and deception. But all these surmises were to be a close secret suppressed in their own aching hearts; for the Deputies feared to displease Charles, if they complained of the minister.

On the 23rd of July, they however ventured to present a petition to the King. The style is pathetic. "Sire, pardon men on the borders of their graves, if involuntary groans escape from them; it is natural with those who are at their end, to close their lives by sighs, and certainly this is our condition, if, after all which has been done, it should now be succeeded by the least delay. We were consoled by the promise that the fleet would sail in a fortnight, twenty days past; fourteen more were added, and now the second month is complete. Good God, Sire! how long is this time for men who want a mouthful of bread. We conjure your Majesty by the tears and the cries of thousands languishing to die, and by the interests of a million of others, who will be crushed under their ruins on that day which shall witness the destruction of La Rochelle. We conjure you, Sire, by the glory of your sceptre, under whose shadow they have placed themselves, not to suffer this innocent blood to tarnish, for ages to come, the splendour of your crown." They declared, with policy, not with confidence, that they were well persuaded of the zeal of the Duke of Buckingham and the Council, to hasten the promised aid; but when they had already witnessed these fatal delays, they had reason to fear that his Majesty was ill-served, and that some hidden hand had clandestinely stopped what the zeal of others had advanced. "It is too usual," they concluded, "with the miserable to be suspicious—we may err."

And err they did! These foreigners seem not to have been sensible of the difficulties which Charles the First had himself to wrestle with. In vain the King had repeatedly reminded the

Parliament that "the times were for action," and it now appears, that even the fleet, which was then collecting at Plymouth, could never have been dispatched, had not Buckingham drained all his own resources. After his death, it appeared that he had furnished unlimited sums to the King, without keeping any accounts whatever, and we are told his family could never establish their claims. Profuse of his fortunes in the cause which he had adopted, he had resolved by a nobler profusion of life itself, to perish or conquer on that impregnable mole, which the great genius of Richelieu had thrown out for above a mile in the ocean. This solemn determination in Buckingham, I have observed in more than one quarter. He swore to Soubise and the Deputies, on departing from Plymouth, that he would die in combat, or enter La Rochelle.* In the manuscript of Gerbier, his confidential agent, architect and engineer, Gerbier, after describing some tremendous machines, projected for blowing up the dyke, modelled by works which the Prince of Parma had employed at the siege of Antwerp, tells us that by command of the Duke he wrote to the Rochellers, and had himself paid the secret messenger a hundred jacobuses. The note run, "Hold out but three weeks, and, God willing, I will be with you, either to overcome or to die there." The Duke, a little before his departure from York-house, being alone with Gerbier in his garden, giving his last commands for Gerbier's journey towards Italy and Spain, one of his gentlemen communicated to him a prophecy of Lady Eleanor Davies, the Cassandra of those days, "that the Duke should end his life that month,"—Buckingham observed that he had also received a letter from a considerable personage to substitute another in his place; but no art of man should prevent him. "Gerbier, if God please, I will go, and be the first man who shall set his foot on the dyke before Rochelle, to die, or do the work, whereby the world shall see the reality of our intentions for the relief of that place." He had before, in his closet, declared himself to the same purpose.

Of Buckingham's magnanimity in this desperate enterprise there can be no question, nor of the motive. Yet in his day

* *Mercure François.*

his sincerity was strongly suspected, and until he had left his corpse on the mole of La Rochelle, never would his faith or his honour have been credited. He will, however, be found to deserve even a higher eulogy, when it is known how incessantly he resisted the superstitions of the age, demonstrated in reiterated omens and prodigies and prophecies of his fate. On this occasion they even raised the apparition of his father, who, however, thought it best not to come in contact with his son, appearing by the circuitous means of an old steward; yet the ghost, to prove himself genuine, we are told, communicated some secret intelligence to the steward, which staggered Buckingham, who declared that "it was unknown to any but himself, and could only have been revealed by God or the Devil." All these omens, such as his picture falling out of its frame, and even the secret whispered from the ghost, might be not so difficult to account for, when we consider that the old Countess, his mother, who was in tears all day since the Duke had taken his final resolution, was practising her own superstitious fancies, to work on the imagination of her son. Many a warning too of assassination had the Duke received; but so utterly reckless was he of his person, that once on a journey he left his company and rode forwards to join a stranger, who was said to have had a sinister design, and conversing with him, so delighted the man, that he declared the Duke was quite a different person to what he had been made to believe him. When the remonstrance of the Commons was distributed among the nation, he had been frequently advised to wear a quilted coat of mail, or other secret armour; but he contemptuously replied, "There are no Roman spirits left."

A few days before the Duke set off on his last expedition, he gave a farewell mask and supper, at York-house, to their Majesties. In the mask the Duke appeared followed by Envy with many open-mouthed dogs; these represented the barkings of the people; they were followed by Fame and Truth. The courtly allegory expressed the King's sentiment and the Favourite's sanguine hope.

The circumstances of Buckingham's assassination have varied in the detail, as they were reported by different persons. The blow was instantancous—the effect immediate—terror and cou-

fusion darted among all who saw, and spread to all who heard. None at first really knew how the affair had happened, or who could be the assassin. Even the papers discovered in Felton's hat, Lord Clarendon supposed consisted of a few lines from "the Remonstrance." Lord Carleton's letter to the Queen, which I have elsewhere given,* and who was himself present and saved Felton from the vengeance of the military, is imperfect; so careless are hurried transcriptions in a moment of agitation. Since then, I have seen in a collection of autographs, the identical paper, which differs from all these accounts. It may surprise the curious reader to be informed that Felton's paper appears in the *Mercure François*, literally translated; so that the French actually possessed the document in 1628, which never entered into our history till 1825, when Dr. Lingard first printed it from the original. I notice this circumstance as one evidence of the authenticity of the secret history, often preserved in the *Mercure*; sometimes the production of Louis the Thirteenth and Cardinal Richelieu.†

The deputies of La Rochelle had been warmly engaged with the Duke in conversation: still fearfully suspicious that he designed to delay the expedition, Buckingham showed them fresh letters, which noticed that the Rochellers had within a few days received a convoy of provisions, and that fifty head of cattle had entered La Rochelle. They exclaimed against the intelligence as only an artifice of the Cardinal's to retard the departure of the fleet. They declared that oxen must have wings to fly before they could enter that fated town. Soubise joined them, protesting against the Duke's trusting to such perfidious intelligence. The noisy vivacity which the French usually assume when they would carry their point, accompanied by strong gesticulations, induced the bystanders to imagine that they were speaking to the Duke with great animosity. Buckingham assured them that not a day should be lost; he was hastening to take his last leave of the King, who was four miles from Plymouth. Turning from them, on leaving the apartment,

* *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. iii.

† *Mercure François*, xiv. 650; Dr. Lingard, ix. 394. In the French the two paragraphs are transposed. If I am not mistaken, the original consists of two papers joined together, which would account for the transposition.

he stopped in the passage where Sir Thomas Frier waited to show him a plan: Buckingham was considering it with deep attention, when an unseen hand, reaching over the shoulder of this officer, who was a short man, struck a knife into the left breast of Buckingham;—it pierced the lungs, and was left plunged into his heart. “Villain!” was the single interjection uttered. Yet Buckingham had then the fortitude to draw the murderous instrument from his own heart:—he would have advanced, as if he meant to reach the assassin, but, staggering, he fell, and was caught up in the arms of his attendant. The Duchess and her sister rushed to the scene of horror—there lay their loved and ill-fated lord, bathed in his blood. All the predictions, all their long daily fears, were at length realised by a single blow from an unknown hand, at a spot and at a moment when it could have been least dreaded. The assassin might have escaped detection had he chosen it.

Thus resolutely engaged in the cause which the people had so much at heart, the blood with which Buckingham would have sealed it was shed by one of the people themselves, the enterprise designed to retrieve the national honour so long tarnished, was perhaps fatally prevented, and the Protestant cause suffered by the hand of one who imagined himself to be, and was, blest by nearly the whole nation as a patriot. Such are the false appearances of things in the exaggerations of popular delusion.

The hand which struck Buckingham was not, indeed, guided by “a Roman spirit,” though Felton mistook himself to be one, and the whole nation imagined him such. In Felton we see a man acting from mixed and confused motives. Of melancholy and solitary habits, and one of the many officers who had brooded over disappointments both in promotion and arrears of pay, he felt a degree of personal animosity towards Buckingham. With great integrity of truth and honour, he was deservedly known by the nickname of “Honest Jack.” The religious enthusiasm of the times had deeply possessed his mind; and when “the Remonstrance” appeared, it acted on his imagination, as probably on many others—and he believed that the Duke was “one of the foulest monsters upon earth.”

“When I struck, I felt the force of forty men in me!”

exclaimed the melancholy hypochondriac. Thus, with a personal dislike to Buckingham, having conscientiously tendered four propositions to some divines, whose nugatory solutions were no impediment to what, in his mind, he was covertly driving at—Felton wandered about, watching his opportunity, till he struck the meditated blow.

The political martyr was entirely lost in the contrite penitent; and even Mrs. Macaulay would not condescend to rank him among her republican patriots, because the Duke had not been assassinated on the right principle. Felton, in his own day, was considered as a being almost beyond humanity. But while the name of Felton was echoing through the kingdom, our modern Brutus was exhibiting a piteous spectacle of remorse—so different often is the real person himself from the ideal personage of the public! The assassination had been a theoretical one—depending on the four propositions Felton had submitted to his inept casuists. When the King's Attorney, as the Attorney-General was then called, furnished the unhappy criminal with an unexpected argument, Felton acknowledged that he had been in error, and his conscientious spirit sunk into despair. A long agonising scene of contrition succeeded. Naturally brave, this "stout soldier" was seen always shedding tears. In the open court he stretched out his arm, offering it to be first cut off—he petitioned the King to wear a halter about his neck while he lived—and prayed to be allowed to ask pardon on his knees to the whole establishment of Buckingham, from the Duchess to the scullion.

Yet the name of John Felton may fill a date in the annals of our constitutional freedom. It is a bright passage in the history of this unhappy man, that when broken down in spirits and menaced with torture, he firmly asserted the rights of a Briton. When Lord Dorset told Felton that it was the King's pleasure that he should be put to the rack to make him confess his accomplices, Felton answered, "My Lord, I do not believe that it is the King's pleasure, for he is a just and [gracious Prince, and will not have his subjects tortured against law. I do affirm upon my salvation, that my purpose was not known to any man living; but if it be his Majesty's pleasure, I am ready to suffer whatever his Majesty will have inflicted upon me: yet

this I must tell you by the way, that if I be put upon the rack, I will accuse you, my Lord Dorset, and none but yourself." * This firm and sensible speech silenced the court. A council was held, the Judges were consulted, and delivered an unexpected decision, that "Felton ought not to be tortured by the rack, for no such punishment is known or allowed by our law." Thus the Judges condemned what the Government had long practised. Blackstone yields a fraternal eulogium to the honour of the Judges; but Hume more acutely discovers the cause of this sudden tenderness; "so much more exact reasoners, with regard to law, had they become from the *jealous scruples of the House of Commons.*"

CHAPTER XXI.

CHARACTER OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

It may justly excite the surprise of the unprejudiced, that the dissipated, the prodigal, and the impetuous Buckingham should have possessed such a strong hold of the affections of the grave, the temperate, and economical Charles, and finally, should have obtained the young monarch's entire confidence in his administration. No royal favourite ever so suddenly reached to such an ascendancy in power, nor was there ever one more likely to have retained the envied position as long as his master could have maintained him there, however little the minister might have been capacitated from his inexperience and his sanguine temper to have become a great statesman.

The portrait of Buckingham is usually viewed in the caricature of a royal minion, one of those profligate men, who, reckless of all means, concentrate their passions into one ignoble selfishness, a political monster, whom a party would send out into the wilderness with all the curses of the people on his devoted head.

It certainly was not his least crime, in the eyes of some, that Buckingham had been the permanent favourite of two monarchs, who had spoiled their child of fortune. Perhaps his greatest

* Harleian MSS. 7000, J. Mede to Sir Mat. Stuteville, Sept, 1628.

crime was, as Sir Henry Wotton expresses it, that "his enterprises succeeded not according to the impossible expectation of the people."

The portrait of Buckingham, by Hume, seems to me a character dove-tailed into a system adjusted to the historian's plan of lightening the errors of Charles the First, by dividing them among others. Hume hits off at a single stroke a true feature, that of "his English familiarity and his French vivacity." A feature, however, is but the part of a likeness; and even a characteristic trait may conceal the more favourable, but the less obvious parts of no ordinary man. All the fascination of Buckingham's character is lost in the general shade cast over it by the niggardly commendation that "he possessed some accomplishments of a courtier." Some indeed, but not all, for dissimulation and hypocrisy were arts in which this courtier was unskilled. His sweet and attractive manner, so favoured by the Graces, has been described by Sir Henry Wotton, who knew him well: and though he had a British roughness at command, which the haughty Olivarez experienced, another contemporary observes on that occasion, that "if he taunted or derided their stateliness, it must have been on provocation; or at least what he considered as such, for he was as well studied in blandishments as any courtier in Europe."

Clarendon, another living witness, when in the prime of life, as yet untouched by party anger, having no cause to advocate, and no quarrel with truth, detected a more forcible feature in the mind of Buckingham; for he tells us, "that he was the most rarely accomplished the Court had ever beheld, while some that found inconvenience in his nearness, intending, by some affront, to discountenance him, perceived *he had masked under the gentleness a terrible courage* as could safely protect all his sweetness."

If Buckingham were indebted for his first advancement to the beauty and graces of his person; and to those lighter accomplishments which adorn the circle of a palace life, these were adventitious circumstances, which could never have obtained an undiminished influence over the mind of Charles. The Duke must have had qualities of a better nature, to have secured the constancy of Charles's personal attachment. The

inexperience of his age when the King ascended the throne, in some respect will account for the fascination; but the royal affection was never more fervent, than when Buckingham was involved in defeat and disgrace, and hunted down as a state-victim.

Had Buckingham been that creature of effeminacy which party has represented him, or "an enemy to his country," as their declaration denounced him, could he have cherished that nobler spirit, which twice staked his life for the glory of his sovereign, and to win the love of the people? The Memoir of Gerbier, with some unpublished letters of his Duchess, which I have read, authenticate this magnanimity. The Duke, in confidential interviews with Gerbier, repeatedly declared his solemn resolution, in his last expedition, to be "the first man who should set his foot upon the dyke before Rochelle, there to die, or do the work." In that devotion of patriotism, there was more heroism than we now can easily imagine; for Buckingham, before his departure, as we have seen, had to resist the strange superstitions of the times, in prophecies, prognostics, and certain domestic omens, which rapidly followed one another. These had raised the terrors and the intreaties of the bigoted Countess, his mother, whose counsels had often governed him, and the bitter raillery and remonstrances of the Duchess, his wife, who in her letters ridicules the folly of courting the people, assuring him, that do whatever he would, never could he become popular. The tide of public opinion had set so strongly against the Duke, impelled by the odium which the Opposition had stuck to his name, and his own luckless fortune, that the Duchess deemed it a hopeless folly to struggle any more.

But the spirit of this favourite of two monarchs had never been dissolved in that corporeal voluptuousness which his habits indulged. We conceive him an Antinous when he would have been an Alcibiades—restless for glory, amid splendour and power, possessed by few in the whole history of civilised ages.

Buckingham had lofty aspirations; a spirit which was fitted to lead others by its own invincibility; a mind of quick conceptions, which an early practice in the world had sharpened, but this practice was unaccompanied by that rare judgment which is only tutored by the severities of time, and exercised by patient thought. It was his misfortune to have encountered

but few obstacles in his rapid advancements, and his hardy self-will disdained to imagine any. The genius of the man was daring and magnificent, and his elocution was graceful as his manners; but these were natural talents—he possessed no acquired ones. “Had the Duke of Buckingham,” observed Lord Clarendon, “been blessed with a faithful friend, the Duke would have committed as few faults, and done as transcendent worthy actions as any man in that age in Europe.”

But Buckingham, with all his heedless impetuosity, was by no means insensible to his deficiencies, particularly on the object of his neglected studies, and the profounder science of politics. When Lord Bacon presented the Duke with his *Novum Organum* in Latin, Buckingham returned his acknowledgments, lamenting his unskilfulness in the language, with a graceful elegance and vivacity of ideas, which convey a high notion of his fine talents. This consciousness of his own deficiencies is an interesting trait in his character. He was so ardent to possess that knowledge which he could not acquire by study, and that wisdom which his love of pleasure and his irregularities too frequently forbade, that he consulted every man of eminent knowledge in his peculiar department. He was importunate with the illustrious Bacon till that great man furnished him with counsels to direct him in his place of the King's Favourite. That volume of a letter has come down to us, and the curious and philosophic will look over the observations of the master-mind, who tells us that “his life hitherto had rather been contemplative than active; I have rather studied books than men; I can but guess, at the most, at those things in which you desire to be advised.” We have, however, his practical advice, and the first he gives is, “not to trust only to his servants, who may mislead you, or misinform you, by which they may perhaps gain a few crowns, but the reproach will lie upon yourself.” Thus even the sage predicts his own fate, without suspecting the prophecy! The arrangement of his dispatches—the choice of the bishops and the judges, even of the serjeant-at-law—the privy counsellors—the conduct of foreign negotiations in the choice of ambassadors—the management of our marine, and our armies, and our trade—of our young colonies—of the King's household, and “the lords and

chivalry of the court"—the planting of orchards, hop-yards, and woods, draining of lands, and the making of navigable rivers,—these are the comprehensive and curious subjects which are treated of in the philosopher's epistle. Whether Buckingham ever read the letter twice may be doubtful; we trace none of its designs attempted in the short and hurrying course he ran. In the political wisdom of the Lord-Keeper Williams, Buckingham had sought for that aid which his warm patronage had, he considered, ensured to him; and admirable advice, and prompt expedients, he often received, mingled, however, with the adulations of a courtier. But it is the misfortune of the great, however honest their desire, to find, when they would be led by others, that such a servant may become the rival of his master. To direct his taste in architecture and pictures, Buckingham selected a remarkable man, Sir Balthazar Gerbier, the pupil of Rubens, and who was at once a secret agent of Government, and the inventor of his patron's magnificent masques and banquets; which reached to such a perfection of art, as to have extorted the wonder of all foreign ambassadors. Buckingham was a votary of the fine arts, for we find no less a personage than the critical and refined Wotton, at Venice, procuring pictures for the Duke, and, among others, sending over "a work of Titian's, wherein the child in the Virgin's lap playing with a bird is so round, that I know not whether I shall call it a piece of sculpture or picture, and so lively that a man would be tempted to doubt whether nature or art hath made it." Nor was Buckingham, in the munificence of his tastes, inattentive to literature, for it was he who purchased from the heirs of Erpinus a collection of Arabic manuscripts, which the University of Cambridge possesses as his gift.

The very errors and infirmities of Buckingham seem often to have started from more generous qualities. Too devoted a friend, and too undisguised an enemy, carrying his loves and his hatreds on his open forehead; too careless of calumny, and too fearless of danger; he was, in a word, a man of sensation, acting from impulse; scorning, indeed, prudential views, but capable, at all times, of embracing grand and original ones. He cannot be fairly accused of having been indifferent to the honour of his country, or of being an enemy to the people. Popularity, indeed, was his passion. He seriously engaged

himself in the best designs, but volatile in the midst, his greatest error sprang from a sanguine spirit; a circumstance finely touched on by Sir Henry Wotton.—“He was ever greedy of honour, and hot upon the public ends, but too confident in the prosperity of beginnings.”

With the defects of this man's character the reader is acquainted. His temerity was flushed by insolence, and his ambition panted impatient of emulation; he would have had every man his friend, and every friend too, sensible that his enmity was terrible. In the sunshine or the lightning of his eye, men were to flourish or to fade. Loaded with that plurality of offices which rendered him odious to the public, on one occasion, as we have shown, he had generously, or perhaps from policy, offered to lay them down. But so unfortunate had the expeditions to Cadiz and Rochelle proved in the hands of others, that Buckingham seemed urged rather by necessity than choice, to retain his offices of Lord High Admiral and Commander-in-Chief, with a resolution to carry on his great objects by his own decisive exertions, and even to perish rather than to fail. But to others it seemed also that he would have conferred all the offices of the three kingdoms on his kindred and his friends, dispensing his favours, regardless of their value, and which was more mischievous to himself, of the merits of the claimants—“delighting too much in the press and affluence of dependants and suitors, who are always burrs and sometimes the briars of favourites.” Thus, has that long-experienced politician, Sir Henry Wotton, observed, on the crowd who waited at the levees of this Duke, and had obtained from the people the odious distinction of the “Dukelings.”

But the misery of Prime Ministers and Favourites, is a portion of their fate which has not always been noticed by their biographers. Buckingham, so sensitive to the jealousy of power, tasted all its bitterness. During his absence from England, that wily courtier, his humble friend, the Lord-Keeper Williams, had certainly supplanted him in the favour of his Royal Master; he was turning towards the Earl of Bristol, and balancing between the old favourite, who had ceased to be one, and him who was about to become one. The mighty shadow of a greater statesman had crossed Buckingham in his path.

A piece of secret history has come down to us, which exhibits the joyous and volatile Buckingham in a situation which we could hardly have suspected in the life of this Favourite. When abroad, his confidential secretary, Dr. Mason, slept in the same chamber with the Duke. To his amazement, he then observed that at night the Duke would give way to those suppressed passions which his unaltered countenance had concealed by day. In the absence of all other ears and eyes, Buckingham would break out into the most querulous and impassioned language, declaring that "Never had dispatches to divers princes, nor the great business of a fleet, of an army, of a siege, of a treaty of war and peace, both on foot together, and all of them in his head at a time, so much broke his repose, as the idea that some at home under his Majesty, some of whom he had so well deserved, were now content to forget him." So short-lived is the gratitude observed to an absent favourite. The opportune death of the old King saved Buckingham from the disgrace he had anticipated.

To Charles and to the patriotic party, Buckingham appeared in very opposite characters.

To envy, to the common passion of vulgar envy, Charles traced their personal rancour to the friend of his heart. On the expedition to Rochelle, the King accompanying the Duke to inspect the ships at Deptford, observed, "George, there are some that wish both these and thou might perish together; but care not for them, we will both perish together if thou doest." Unquestionably, such was the unchangeable determination of Charles; and Sir Robert Cotton, who was often near both the King and the Favourite, and often wisely opposed the minister without offending the master, has truly touched on the King's affection—"Certainly," Sir Robert concluded—"the King will never yield to the Duke's fall;" and then he finely characterises the youthful monarch, "being a young man resolute, magnanimous, and tenderly and firmly affectionate where he takes."* So unchangeable indeed was Charles's affection for Buckingham, that he cherished his memory as warmly as his life, and designed to

* A libel had been taken down from a post in Coleman Street, by order of the Lord Mayor, who sent it to his Majesty. "Who rules the kingdom? The King. Who rules the King? The Duke. Who rules the Duke? The Devil. Let the

raise a monument to the unfortunate minister, whom he called "his martyr." "The world is much mistaken in his character," said the King: "he did not govern me, but much the contrary; he has been a most faithful servant, as I will show the world." The King here alluded to his own consequent conduct; for after the death of Buckingham, there were no changes, but the King was extremely active in business. "The King holds in his own hands," writes Lord Dorchester, "the total direction, leaving the executory part to every man within the compass of his charge."*

For Charles, Buckingham had been the fascinating companion of his youth, and had either caught from the Prince, or had infused into his tastes, a congenial passion for those arts which were yet foreign in England, and which constituted the supreme delight of his happier hours. It is strange to observe, what however is true, that the King, at no period of his reign, was enabled to indulge that gorgeous magnificence in masques and banquets, in which Buckingham, expending for the evening from one to five thousand pounds, entertained the court. And Buckingham, too, was the man on whose commanding spirit the young sovereign fondly rested the prosperity and even the glory of his reign; for Buckingham had frequently boasted that "he would make Charles the greatest monarch in Europe." What "the greatest" meant in this courtier's vocabulary we may easily conceive.

The pacific reign of James had dimmed the glory of our country in the eyes of foreigners, with whom we are never great, unless we are fighting their battles, and confederating for their interests. The Machiavels of foreign cabinets will

Duke look to it; for they intend shortly to unhand him worse than they did the Doctor; and if things be not shortly reformed, they will work a reformation themselves." This alludes to Dr. Lambe, who was called "The Duke's Devil," an old conjuror of infamous character, whom the mob had actually torn to pieces, for which the City was imprudently fined for not delivering up the murderers. Harleian Collection, 383, letter 322.

Many strange stories are told of this octogenarian Pander, particularly of his intercourse with Buckingham. It is, however, a curious fact, which Carte has positively given, that the person of the Old Conjuror was even unknown to the Duke. If this fact be true, it is a striking instance of those false rumours which are kept afloat by a party, till those historical calumnies become traditions. "The Duke's Devil," after all, was no Devil of Buckingham's!

* Sloane MSS. 4178, letter 519.

look with contempt on the domestic blessings which a British sovereign would scatter among his subjects, and his presence with the foreigner is only felt in his armies. The new reign had opened with enterprise, and the glory of our arms was now to reinstate the nation in its military character; but a peace of twenty years had rusted the arms of our soldiers, and most of our commanders were unskilled in the art of war. Buckingham had indeed triumphed in the rivalry of courtly grandeur with the other two mighty statesmen, who were conducting the fortunes of Europe, in the persons of their young sovereigns; but the completion of his views was to be reached by a more daring spirit. To the romantic and spirited Prince it seemed a generous ambition, a conflict for national honour, at home and abroad; and the Duke who had wrestled with the awful ministers of Spain and France, felt not the less a passion for popularity, spurning at life to obtain it from the people of England. Charles then, while he more intimately knew and admired the dazzling qualities of his friend, with an eye of youth and affection, was yet unpractised in discerning the shades of ambiguous virtues; and the King seems never to have suspected that the resolute but ill-regulated spirit of his favourite was more likely to plunge him into many fatal efforts, than able to extricate him from them.

The virtues of a man who cannot be deemed virtuous; the talents of a man who so frequently was mortified to discover their incompetence; and the passion for popularity which possessed one who never was popular, are the paradoxical qualities which may instruct us in the very interesting character of the Favourite of Charles the First, who had in vain attempted to become the favourite of the world!

Had Buckingham escaped from the knife of the assassin, he would most probably have preceded Strafford and Laud to the scaffold. He was not that spiritless and corrupt Favourite who could have crept into obscurity.*

* It was the opinion of Clarendon that had Buckingham lived longer, the observation and experience he had gained had very much improved his understanding; which, with the greatness of his spirit and jealousy of his Master's honour, to whom his fidelity was superior to any temptation, might have repaired many of the inconveniences which he had introduced, and could have prevented their mischief. I. 73.

CHAPTER XXII.

OF ROYAL FAVOURITES.

THE fate of the Duke of Buckingham enters into the history of ROYAL FAVOURITES; but histories of royal Favourites consist only of satires and invectives, or, if they aspire to the dignity of a narrative, present but a shapeless mass put together by those who collect every thing and discern nothing. The subject, however, forms a chapter in the history of man, and political sagacity may yet unravel some truths out of the complicated knots and twistings of prejudice and passion.

We perpetually find accounts of royal Favourites, and it is sufficient to have been one, to incur the condemnation of historians, too apt to echo the cries of the past. Those monsters, or ministers, are sometimes exhibited as remorseless criminals, or wretches dissolved in wanton corruption. It is difficult to conceive how kings can be so insensible to their own interests, as voluntarily to choose such inept beings for Favourites; but we are still more surprised when we discover the activity of these men, who having obtained all things by favouritism, without a solitary talent, or an obscure virtue, still like other men who have a name to create, and a career of glory to run, pursue life agitated by the same hopes, and mindful of the same labours. How did it happen that the dissolute or the trifler quitted the bed of roses on which he slumbered? The Favourite who fills a space in history, who was the object of contemporary hatreds, and who still furnishes the declaimer with invectives, however his enterprises may have succeeded, or may have failed, is a distinct personage from the minion of caprice who remains buried in his own inglorious obscurity. Attached to the household, the name of the latter personage rarely appears, his actions—never. We may therefore suspect, whenever we discover any one of these royal Favourites prominent in history, that his spirit was of another cast than it appears in this disguise

of favouritism, and that he aimed at being something more than a royal Favourite.

It would not be difficult to show that some have had the misfortune of being royal Favourites who have not been what is called in party-writing, "wicked Ministers;" and that others whom we would not eulogise, have, notwithstanding, betrayed some redeeming public virtues. Many Favourites have been given up as a concession to the public voice, and what was hardly to be expected, from the very jealousy the Favourite had excited in the breast of his royal Master. If Elizabeth feared the greatness of the heroic Essex, we should not be surprised that James the First became alarmed at the influence of Buckingham. The lamentation of Wolsey has been repeated by several fallen ministers much in the same words. Louis the Thirteenth was visibly jealous of all his favourites, from his first, Luynes, whom he bitterly nicknamed "the King," to Cardinal Richelieu, whom he felt he could only obey, and not command. The gratitude of kings is often an ambiguous virtue—it is always an uncertain one.

A royal favourite, whatever he may be, has the two great divisions of mankind arrayed in hostility against him: the great, into which class he has been obtruded; and the obscure, which he has for ever abandoned—and still his most formidable enemy has usually been found in himself. Many have been torn to pieces by the triumphant people; for whether the unhappy man be a Sejanus, or a Marshal d'Ancre, the populace in every age, agitated by the same hatred of the abuses of power, imagine that they are satiating their vengeance in the single State-victim which has been cast out to them. We may, however, be struck by this curious fact, that there is hardly one of these renowned favourites but has found an unimpassioned apologist: and on a calmer investigation than their contemporaries were capable of exercising, they have been considerably exculpated from the errors or the crimes imputed to them; and some better designs have been manifested in these contemned men, than the passions of their enemies could discover.

The memorable fate of the Marshal d'Ancre and his lady, the Italian favourites of Mary de Medicis, is a striking instance of the terrific malignity of popular rage, even on insignificant

characters. The single passion of D'Ancre was inordinate avarice; he gorged on wealth; but no act of oppression had marked the career of this grasping Florentine: it is not known that he had any personal enemy, while his obliging temper had secured many friends. The Marechalle was a superior genius; and her famous reply, when on her trial for witchcraft, was dignified and great. "By what magic," she was interrogated, "had she obtained such an ascendancy over the Queen-Mother?" — "By no other magic," she replied, "than that power which a firm spirit possesses over a weak mind." After D'Ancre's assassination, the mutinous populace, furious as a herd of maddened elephants, unburied his corpse, burnt his heart, sold his flesh by pieces, and his ashes by the ounce, and cast his remains into the river. Never did human being suffer so much for being an Italian, and for growing too opulent in France. Marshal d'Etrèes, in his *Memoirs of the Regency*, though on the side of the French Princes in opposition to Mary of Medicis, could not avoid expressing his astonishment at these horrid circumstances, and on the public execution of the Marechalle—he acknowledged the D'Ancre's general benevolence, and that personally they had few, if any, enemies. He ascribes the singular and undeserved catastrophe of the family of the D'Ancre to fate; but another cause, more obvious, was the monstrous libels which his party had heaped on these royal favourites, by which they had rendered them hateful to the people; and as Marshal d'Etrèes was the ablest writer of his party, the surprise he felt, and the enormities which he describes, shrewdly observes the historian of Louis the Thirteenth, were in great part his own work.*

The immortal chisel of Tacitus has sculptured the colossal statue of a Royal Favourite. The characteristics, the manners, and the principle of action of this species of personage, may be detected in the Sejanus of History. But who was Sejanus himself? Tacitus is the most awful genius whom the Muse of history has ever inspired, but he contemplates on human nature in masses. In the ideal of this master, the portrait resembles life; but we may suspect that, placed by the side of the living original, the portrait might have lost in truth what it had

* Père Griffet, *Hist. de France*, xiii. 196.

gained in effect. The monster-minister of Tacitus appears more naturally human in the portrait of Velleius Paterculus, whose personal knowledge has preserved for us a dignified characteristic of the man.* Place this by the side of the important confession of Tacitus himself—that while this minister lived, he repressed the dark passions of Tiberius; and further, that the extinction of this State-victim afforded no relief to the Commonwealth, since, for many years after, the master continued the system of his condemned servant; and we may be induced to ask with Juvenal—

Sed quo cecidit sub crimine? quisnam
Delator? quibus indicis? quo teste probavit?
Nil horum?

But, tell me, why was he adjudged to bleed?
And who discovered? And who proved the deed?
Nothing of this?

If the administration of Sejanus were not his own, but his master's, this royal favourite, flattered by a greater dissembler than himself, was probably one of those mighty machines of tyranny which are used till no longer serviceable. How skilfully at times Sejanus interposed between the people and the passions of their tyrant, is at least hinted at by the great historian. Sejanus perished, for he found a jealous master. But RICHELIEU in France, and POMBAL in Portugal,—there are those who would add PITT in England,—actuated by the same principle of a severe administration, have been considered as the greatest statesmen of modern Europe. Richelieu, by many an immolation, saved his country from intestine wars, and trode down an aspiring aristocracy of Princes; his genius survived him in the glory of the future reign. Pombal, anticipating the spirit of our own century, with no other aid than his own philo-

* All the critics repeat after one another that Velleius has disgraced himself by his adulation of this model of all unpopular ministers. They cannot imagine that any single feature of humanity can form a part of their political phantom. The charm of a brilliant style may seem that of courtly panegyric; but allowing for the times, the writer, and the minister, he must possess little knowledge of human nature who does not discern some personal strokes which betray the intimacy of the writer. Velleius describes Sejanus as a person well adapted for his laborious office. "A vast frame was joined with as vigorous an intellect. His severity was often enlivened by the old Roman pleasantry: in the midst of business, he seemed like one at leisure; ascribing nothing to himself, he obtains everything from all, and his countenance and his life are as tranquil as his genius is vigilant."

sophical fortitude, doomed the extinction of the Jesuits, and established the commerce of the country; nor could the stability of his designs be interrupted by a conspiracy which menaced the throne, and an earthquake which shook his metropolis into ruins, and persuaded the people that Heaven warred against the Minister. But the towns of France were turned into garrisons by the despotic Richelieu, and the dungeons of Lisbon were enlarged by the inexorable Pombal. These are ministers whose administrations only differed from that of the Sejanus of Tiberius, in the character of their sovereigns. But Sejanus himself, had there been a free press at Rome, could not have been rendered more odious by a swarm of satires and libels than were these two great statesmen. Whenever there happens a crisis in the fortunes of an empire, and a minister is compelled to adopt a cruel administration, he cannot escape from the hatreds of his contemporaries.

An opposite species of royal Favourites has attracted the partialities of their sovereigns by their agreeable qualities, insinuating themselves into the affections of their prince, perhaps by accident, and often for trivial or unworthy purposes. But were they only puppets to amuse their prince? Piers Gaveston, the playmate of Edward the Second, has always been condemned as a dissolute minion. We know but imperfectly those times, when the historians were as barbarous as the events they record, and when the nation was divided between conspiring barons and a murderous adulteress. Yet of this person, whom his enemies have made infamous in history, we should form a very erroneous notion, if we cannot discriminate truth amidst passion and prejudice. This young Gascon possessed many interesting qualities; he was loved by many; nor have his generous nature and brilliant genius been concealed by his imprudent contempt of jealous nobles, whom he stung by his wit, and foiled by his lance: he might have gained them by his favours. Their vengeance was an act more criminal than any he had committed in his life. Much that age owed to his elegant accomplishments; and the six years of his administration softened the warlike barbarism of the day, and opened the polished chivalry of a happier reign.* Luynes became

* Turner's History of London, ii. 128. Mr. Turner has skilfully collected the more interesting particulars of Gaveston. The reader may be amused at "the con-

a similar favourite with Louis the Thirteenth. He had taught the young Prince the art of bird-catching. After the assassination of the Marshal d'Ancre, the *protégé* of the Queen-Mother, Luynes rapidly ascended to favour. As Minister and Constable of France he excited the indignation of the nation—in all probability, chiefly the indignation of the nobility. But are we to imagine that “King Luynes,” as Louis the Thirteenth himself had nicknamed him, was only dexterous at liming speckled magpies? He had caged his sovereign—and large was his aviary. The man who could retain his administration shaken by so many powerful factions, we may be assured practised deeper arts than those of a bird-catcher. He triumphed over all, and oppressed none; he was prodigal to his friends,—a certain means to make enemies. As a French statesman, he first opened a war, however then unsuccessful, with the Huguenots; a system which the great politician Richelieu continued, and which in the end subdued that “ambitious sect,” as they are called in French history. Could such a man as Luynes have been destitute of talents and all good qualities? But we must not expect to discover a single one in that heap of satires and lampoons which accompany his name.* Posterity must decide by the acts of this favourite, whom, though envied or detested, the impartiality of time acknowledges to have rendered important services to his sovereign.

Thus two contemptible royal favourites appear to have been very different characters from those which the popular impressions had received of them.

“But sovereigns should have no favourites!” is the universal cry. A learned historian of stoical morals observes that “Judicious friendship is honourable and beneficial to the throne; favouritism implies imbecility.” Such is the abstract counsel of a sage! And whenever man ceases to be a bundle

tumacious nicknames by which he taunted the haughty nobility.” They are evidence of the wanton wit and poignant pleasantry for which Gascony was long famed.

* These are collected in a considerable volume: “Recueil des pièces les plus curieuses qui ont été fait pendant la faveur du Connétable de Luynes, en 1619, 1620, et 1621”—1623. They consist of prose and verse.—A compiler of modern history describes Luynes as “equally ignorant and presumptuous,” in his unsuccessful attack of Montauban. He died of a fever in the camp. But a man may be “ignorant and presumptuous,” particularly if he fail in a great enterprise, yet the enterprise itself may indicate no want of wisdom or courage.

of sympathies, and tastes, and passions, some patriot king, in the apathy of his philosophy, may easily distinguish the rigid line which for ever separates friendship from favouritism. But till the day arrives of the perfectibility of man, we can only consider this advice as offered on the principle by which medical men usually warn their unhappy invalids—"to be careful not to eat heartily of what they like best."

Kings, in their peculiar situation, must always remain uncertain whether they inspire the sympathy which some monarchs would rejoice to create. The throne for ever stands between the monarch and his friend. Unhappy sovereigns! denied participating in the devotion of friendship and the adoration of love! There can be no friendship where there is no equality; and what female ever loved the object of her fear? Monarchs must descend from their throne to find a friend or a lover; and it is only by their magnanimity in adversity that they can kindle the social affections in their companions. Charles the First possessed more devoted friends in the days of his sorrows than he ever found when on his throne.

But a prince must have a Favourite, since he can have no friend; and one of the greatest difficulties has been often acknowledged in supplying this want. A piece of secret history will show us the critical niceties of the providers of royal favourites. Once when the Marshal d'Ancre and his lady, in a secret conference with Mary of Medicis, had alarmed her on the growing favour which her son, the young Louis the Thirteenth, had bestowed on his companion De Luynes, it was resolved to remove the favourite from Court, and by renewed attention to the amusements of the youthful monarch, prevent him from feeling his loss. When the plan was arranged, the Marshal suddenly observed that Sauveterre, the King's first valet, and usher of the Queen, stood at the door, and had probably overheard their State conversation. The Marshal, as an expedient, politically proposed to admit him to their councils; he was the friend of De Luynes. The Queen-Mother then confided to Sauveterre her inquietude at the ascendancy of his friend over her son; and that either her Majesty or the Favourite must retire. "In that extreme case," observed Sauveterre, "it is necessary that my friend should be sacrificed.—But, Madam," he continued, "when

you have got rid of this favourite, have you thought of one to supply his place? The King must have his companion; and if his Majesty should choose one more enterprising and more elevated in rank, you may repent of having removed this man, of whose conduct you are more certain than of any successor." This difficulty had not occurred to the D'Ancre: they were embarrassed—they examined the merits of a great number; but, after long deliberation, they could fix on no person who was not objectionable; and at length it was agreed that they should leave De Luynes as the King's favourite, till they were able to find out the proper man for his substitute.

The fears of the D'Ancre were not imaginary; the Marshal, however, perished by the command of the favourite De Luynes, who acted under the auspices of the young King. The Italians were more odious to the French people. Even the Prince of Condé, father to the great Condé, offered to assassinate the Florentine with his own hand.

The greatest sovereigns, as well as the weakest, have ever required some partner in the state, to alleviate its burthens; to inspire their hopes, and to guide their fortunes. Hence Wolsey, Leicester, and Bute, were the royal favourites of monarchs who cannot be classed among ordinary princes. But this class of favourites, as well as those of a more capricious choice, have excited the same unpardoning envy of the people, by their immense wealth and power. Sovereigns who flatter themselves that in a favourite they have found a friend, charmed even by this illusion of natural feeling, usually dispense their favours royally, destitute of all calculating arts; and Osborn, an old courtier, observes, with great knowledge of the royal character, "All the kings I have known were found to do more for their Favourites than they could be tempted to have done for themselves." The favourites themselves are acted on by their locality; seduced by power, and corrupted by office, personal pride covers itself with titles as substitutes for ancestral nobility, and palaces are built by subjects. The public odium of private fortunes gathered from the common weal is attached to the favourite, and his tribes of relatives and friends who flocked at the call, are counted over till factions are formed, and sedition has often triumphed.

This is the history of man as much as of Favourites. Man is a corruptible creature. Even patriotic statesmen have been disgraced by the passion of avarice, which with them is connected with the more elevated feeling of ambition. Sully, who may be distinguished as the friend rather than the favourite of his King, did not serve himself with less zeal than he served his country; and this severe minister having amassed vast possessions, when he left his public station, retreated into a princely life. Clarendon in place, after that long abstinence from power, when he often wanted the price of a dinner, was as a famished man in office. He sullied his hands by the most ordinary corruptions; and there is every reason to believe, that a wider grasp built Clarendon House, which was better known under the more popular names of Dunkirk House, or Tangier Hall. In the history of Walpole, we must not omit Houghton and family sinecures.

One of the great odiums cast on favourites, arises from what no disguise can conceal from the people's view—the elevation of a whole family and its multitude of creatures. The people, as one of them observed in revolutionary times, need care little who are in administration, since whoever they are, still the people must work; but the great families in the state, thus thrown out of power, find it no difficult art to convince the discontented, that every public grievance may be traced to the prosperity of the favourite and his countless dependents.

In our political history, we observe the alarm spread by party against the Hyde family,* and the Bute ministry.†

* The bitterness of the wit of a lampoon on Lord Clarendon, which I recovered from its manuscript state, will show how a political family is treated by their contemporaries. It turns on the family name of the Clarendons.

When Queen Dido landed, she bought as much ground
As the *Hyde* of a lusty fat bull would surround;
But when the said *Hyde* was cut into thongs,
A city and kingdom to *Hyde* belongs;
So here in court, church, and country, far and wide,
Here 's nought to be seen but *Hyde!* *Hyde!* *Hyde!*
Of old, and where law the kingdom divides,
'Twas our *Hydes of Land*, 'tis now *Land of Hydes!*

† The caricatures relative to Lord Bute's favouritism and Scottish patronage have been collected into volumes, and they may be accompanied by shelves of libels and pasquinades, as well as by Churchill's satire.

The case of the Duke of Lerma, the favourite of Philip III. of Spain, will illustrate this point in the history of royal Favourites. On his entrance into power, this minister resolved that his nation, after the long struggle with the new republic, should repose in peace: he hastened a peace with England on the best conditions he could procure, and concluded a truce with Holland, which secured her independence. During an administration of twenty years, the pacific Favourite courted all classes. To conceal the embarrassed state of the finances, he amused his master with festivals, and instead of suppressing a vast number of useless offices, which the caprice of the preceding reign had created, fearful of raising up enemies, he increased the evil, by making additional ones for his friends. His administration was a contrivance of expedients, and his perpetual hope lay in the galleons of Mexico, which have always kept down the national industry. The Duke of Lerma's mode of conducting affairs is curiously described by Sir Charles Cornwallis, our ambassador in Spain. The Duke deferred an appointment with him, till his return from the Escorial, which visit occupied the minister three or four months: "he deferred business in the winter, and absolutely hid himself from it in the summer." But this Favourite had his own Favourite; and to supply his own mediocrity of genius, he had fixed on a man of active talents.

The Duke was hated by the people; not that any one complained of injustice or severity in his lenient government, but the people could not forgive the pride with which he had received the King at his own house! The favourite was cried down, calumniated, retired with disgrace, and even deprived of fortune, and his secretary lost his head. It was pretended that he had sacrificed the national glory to this system of tranquilising the world. His fall was so rapid as to appear sudden:—all the Lermates disappeared in a few days.

At the fall of the Duke of Lerma, which occasioned so many removals from office, our James the First, expressing his astonishment, inquired the cause of his facetious friend Gondomar. That Cervantic Spaniard replied, by applying an apologue with his usual poignancy. To illustrate the fall of the Duke and his creatures, he told, how once two rats, having entered a palace,

were delighted at the spacious apartments, and the frequent banquets. They whisked about unmolested, every day seemed a festival, and they at last concluded that the palace was built for them. Their presence was not even suspected. But, grown bolder by custom, they called in shoals of rats and ratlings, and each filled his appointment. Some were at the larder, some in the dining-room, some here, and some there. The little rapacious creatures were a race of lascivious livers; they dipped their whiskers in every dish, and nibbled at the choicest morsels. Not a department but had its rat. The people in the palace began now to cry out, that there were rats without number; and having once made up their minds as to the fact, THEY LAID TRAPS FOR THEM, HERE AND THERE, AND CAST RATSBANE UP AND DOWN THE PALACE.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHARLES THE FIRST AFTER THE DEATH OF BUCKINGHAM.—
DISSOLUTION OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT, 1629.

THE extraordinary manner in which Charles the First received the intelligence of the assassination of the favourite, has occasioned very opposite strictures from party-writers.

Charles was at his morning service, when Sir Thomas Hippsley abruptly entering with an agitated countenance, whispered in the King's ear the portentous and overwhelming event. The King remained unmoved, and when the chaplain paused as the rumour spread through the presence-chamber, the King bidding him proceed, continued without interruption his devotions.

The perfect composure of the King on this trying and sudden occasion, induced those courtiers, who study looks, and presume they read countenances, to imagine that the death of the favourite was felt as a relief by the monarch—and some have even considered it as a striking evidence of his natural insensibility.

It is, certainly, a very observable incident in the history of Charles the First, but connecting it with what followed, it is

the most certain indication of this monarch's strength of character. The imperturbable majesty of the mind of Charles the First never deserted him. But, as the character of no man has been viewed in such strong but opposite lights as that of this monarch, we find it sometimes difficult to discriminate his motives in his conduct. Perseverance and obstinacy, fortitude and insensibility, are terms which the predilections of parties apply to the same actions.

The exterior fortitude of Charles on one of the most surprising and awful events which had hitherto happened to him, was doubtless influenced by the sacredness of the moment in which it met him. Whether Charles were a martyr or not, certain it is, that in his religious soul he had the perfect devotion of one. But who can doubt that he felt the loss which an ordinary mind would have conceived irreparable? Divine service closed, the King hurried to his chamber, and throwing himself on the bed, he passionately moaned, shedding abundant tears. The memory of the delightful intimate to whom he had entrusted all his thoughts, and the spirited servant on whom the hope of his glory rested, now a miserable corpse, disturbed his mind, and cast it into a deep melancholy, which lasted for many days. Had Clarendon not furnished this fact, the insensibility of the King might only have been known to us.

The surprise of this most unexpected termination of the life of his minister, furnishes another evidence of the strength of character which I have frequently traced in Charles the First. Even his inconsolable grief was not suffered to delay the expedition,—there was no indecision, no feebleness in Charles's conduct. The King's personal industry astonished all in office; now, more was effected in six weeks, than in the Duke's time in six months. The death of Buckingham caused no changes, the King left every man to his own charge, but took the general direction into his own hands.* In private, Charles deeply mourned the loss of Buckingham; he gave no encouragement to his enemies, the King called him "his martyr," and declared, that "the world was greatly mistaken in him, for it was thought that the favourite had ruled his Majesty; but it was far other-

* From MS. letters—Lord Dorset to the Earl of Carlisle. Sloane MSS. 4178. Letter 519.

wise, for that the Duke had been to him a faithful and obedient servant." Such were the feelings and ideas of this unfortunate monarch, with which it is necessary to become acquainted before we judge of him as a man.

All the foreign expeditions of Charles the First were alike disastrous. The vast genius of Richelieu ascending to its meridian, had paled our ineffectual star. The dreadful surrender of La Rochelle had sent back our army and navy baffled and disgraced. Buckingham had timely perished to be saved from the reproach of one more political crime.

Such failures could not improve the temper of the times, but the most brilliant success would not probably have changed the fate of Charles the First, nor allayed the fiery spirits in the Commons.

Parliament met. The King's speech was conciliatory. He acknowledged that the exaction of the duties of the Customs was not a right of his prerogative, but the gift of the people. He declared that he had as great an aversion to arbitrary power as themselves, and closed with a fervent ejaculation that the session begun with confidence, might end with a mutual good understanding. The King's speech, or, as Oldmixon calls it, "the King's fine speaking," was even received with a murmur of applause; a circumstance so unusual, that it is alluded to in subsequent royal messages. The King, to urge the conclusion of his right to levy the Customs, observes, that if not granted, he should think that "his speech, which was with good applause accepted, had not that good effect which he expected."

The shade of Buckingham was no longer cast between Charles the First and the Commons; and yet we find that "their dread and dear sovereign" was not allowed any repose on the throne.

A new demon of national discord, religion in a metaphysical garb, reared its distracted head. This evil spirit had been raised by the conduct of the Court divines, whose political sermons, with their attempts to return to the more solemn ceremonies of the Roman Church, alarmed some tender consciences; and in a panic of "Jesuits and Arminians" it served as a masked battery for the patriotic party to change their grounds at will, without slackening their fire. When the King urged for the duties of his Customs, he found that he was addressing a committee

sitting for religion! Sir John Eliot threw out a singular expression. Alluding to the bishops, whom he called "Masters of Ceremonies," he confessed that some ceremonies were commendable, such as standing up together at the repetition of the creed, to testify our resolution to defend the religion we profess; and, he added, "in some churches they did not only stand upright, but with *their swords drawn*." His speech was a spark that fell into a well-laid train; it is difficult to conceive the wild enthusiasm of the House of Commons at that moment. They now entered into a *vow* to preserve the articles of religion established by Parliament in the thirteenth year of our late Queen Elizabeth! And they rejected the sense of any doctrines not only of "the Jesuits and the Arminians," but of "*all others wherein they differ from us*." And this *vow* was immediately followed up by a petition to the King for a *fast* for the increasing miseries of the reformed Churches abroad. Parliaments are liable to have their passions!

On the state of the Reformed abroad, the King answered, "that fighting would do them more good than fasting;" he did not disapprove of the latter, but as he appears to have been always anxious to explain his intention, he added a note that these fasts were not to be so frequent. During their fast they probably conned over their declaration that Tonnage and Poundage must yield precedency to religion! Still the King was patient; he confessed that "he did not think religion was in so much danger as they affirmed;" but as the levying the Customs was occasioning great violence between his officers and those who, referring to the Parliamentary debates, disputed the King's right to levy them, Charles wished for its conclusion, "not so much out of the greediness of the thing, as out of a desire to put an end to those questions which had arisen between me and some of my subjects."

Never had the King urged less arbitrary claims, never had he used a more subdued style, but never had the Commons raged with a fiercer spirit, since they had sat in their theological synod. In the orgasm of that conventicle spirit which, many years after, was to disgrace our annals, the House of Commons resolved, that "the business of the King of this Earth should give place to the business of the King of Heaven!" What

new style was this? Whose tones pierced the roof of the Commons? Whose voice is speaking? A young man, as yet unknown to Fame—Oliver Cromwell! He sat in a saintly committee denouncing those divines, who, as he expressed it, “preached flat Popery.” “It is amusing,” writes the philosophical historian, “to observe the first words of this fanatical hypocrite correspond so exactly to his character.” Francis Rous, afterwards a creature of Cromwell’s, and Speaker of Barebone’s Parliament, whose writings were collected and “dedicated to the Saints, and to the Excellent throughout the three nations,” was frequently a leading spirit in this new feud; he excelled in adapting his fanatical eloquence to earthly objects. On the Custom-house duties he observed, “it is an old trick of the Devil’s when he meant to take away Job’s religion, to begin at his goods; ‘lay thy hand on what he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.’” On religion, he said, “when lower natures are backed by higher, they increase in courage and strength; if man be backed with Omnipotency, he is a kind of omnipotent creature; all things are possible to him that believeth, and where all things are possible, there is a kind of omnipotency.” Thus long before the nation was maddened, the madmen existed who were to make them so. One Lewis, out of the House, having exclaimed, “the Devil take the Parliament,” was summoned before the Saints, and the Devil’s good-wisher had to answer for his seditious language.

So far from any anxiety to terminate the troubles of the Sovereign and the People, the Commons now insisted that Charles should give up the receivers of the Customs as capital enemies to the King and the kingdom, and that those persons who submitted to pay their duties, should be denounced guilty as accessaries.

Often have Kings been tyrannical, and sometimes have Parliaments; a body corporate, with the infection of passion, may perform acts of injustice equally with the individual who abuses the power with which he is invested.

In separating the King from his officers, the Commons pretended to hold the King blameless; but Charles evinced, at least, his sincerity, or, as was expressed in his message, “his justice and honour,” when he would not consent to sacrifice his

own servants. The same principle was at work with the Opposition members, which had instigated them against the late minister; the officers of the Customs were now the representatives of Buckingham, these were the ostensible objects of attack, the concealed one was the Sovereign. The Custom-house and the Church alternately served their purpose.

The sole object of the Government was to settle the legal levy of the duties, which required but a formal confirmation; but the Commons, sensible that this once granted, might terminate their sittings, were willing to agitate any subject, terrestrial or celestial, but tonnage and poundage.

Sir John Eliot, one part of whose eloquence certainly consisted in the most stinging personalities, was pouring forth invectives against some courtiers—Neile, the Bishop of Winchester, and the Lord Treasurer, Weston. "Buckingham is dead, but he revives in the two chiefs, Neile and Weston, who are animated with the same spirit, and tread in the same steps, and who, he declared, for fear would break Parliaments, lest Parliaments should break them." He was sometimes interrupted, and sometimes cheered. The timid Speaker refusing to put the question, declaring that "he was otherwise commanded from the King," suffered a severe reprimand from Selden. "If you will not put it we must sit still, thus we shall never be able to do any thing." The House adjourned in great heat. This was the dark prognostic of their next meeting, on Monday the second of March, 1629, which Sir Symonds d'Ewes has marked in his diary, as "the most gloomy, sad, and dismal day for England that happened for five hundred years.

On this fatal day, the Speaker still refusing to put the question, and announcing the King's command for an adjournment (an intermediate one had already occurred), Sir John Eliot stood up. The Speaker attempted to leave the chair, but two members placed themselves on each side, and forcibly kept him down. Eliot, who had prepared certain resolutions, flung down a paper on the floor, crying out that it might be read! His party vociferated for the reading; others that it should not. A sudden tumult broke out. Coriton, an ardent patriot, struck another member, and many laid their hands on their swords. It was imagined, out of doors, that swords had actually been

drawn, for a Welsh page, running in great haste when he heard the noise, cried to the door-keeper, "I pray you let hur in! let hur in! to give hur master his sword."—"Shall we," said one, "be sent home as we were last sessions, turned off like scattered sheep?" The weeping, trembling Speaker still persisting, was dragged to and fro by opposite parties; the Clerk of the Commons was not less inflexible in not reading the paper of Sir John Eliot. Sir John Finch, the unfortunate Speaker, with a poverty of spirit, filled a situation as critical as it was elevated. He heard himself bitterly reproached by his kinsman, Sir Peter Hayman, whose name the reader may recollect, "as the disgrace of his country, the blot of a noble family, and whom posterity will remember with scorn and disdain." Hard fate of weak men, who on some emergency are called out to act a part above their natures, and want even the dignity which might save them from contempt!

Eliot, finding the House so strongly divided, undauntedly snatching up the paper, said, "I shall then express that by my tongue which this paper should have done." Denzil Holles assumed the character of Speaker, putting the question, which was returned by the acclamations of the party. The doors were locked, and the keys laid on the table. The King sent the Serjeant to bring away the mace, but the royal messenger could obtain no admission: the Usher of the Black Rod met no more regard. The King then ordered the Captain of his Guard to force an entrance; that incident, however, was not to happen till several years after. The resolutions concerning Papistry and Poundage had passed before the guard appeared;—the door was flung open, the rush of the members was a torrent, and many were struck with horror at the conflicting scene they had witnessed. It was a sad image of the future.

The King, on dissolving this Parliament, gives us at least his idea of it. "It is far from me to judge all the House alike guilty, for there are there as dutiful subjects as any in the world; it being but *some few vipers* among them that did cast this mist of undutifulness over most of their eyes." At the time, many undoubtedly considered that a mere faction was formed among the Commons. Sir Symonds d'Ewes was no politician, but unquestionably his ideas were not peculiar to

himself. He discriminates this last third Parliament, "the greater part of the House were morally honest men, who were the least guilty of the fatal breach, being only misled by some other *Machiavelian politics, who seemed zealous for the liberty of the Commonwealth*, and by that means, at the moving of their outward freedom, drew the votes of those good men on their side."

In the sudden dissolution of this Parliament, the Lord-Keeper in the accustomed form, addressed the House of Commons, though they had not been summoned, nor was the Speaker present. It is said, that the King, in disrobing himself, declared, that "he would never put on those robes again."

The conduct of Charles the First through this last Parliament is now before us. Conceding the great constitutional points, and even professing an abhorrence of arbitrary measures, his latter speech extorted a murmur of applause; his conduct had varied in its progress; a strange monster of discord grappled with the Sovereign in the even path, and in the mind of Charles he recognised the spawn of faction. Now Laud was to be substituted for Buckingham—religion for government. Patient, till patience ceased to be a virtue, after many struggles with himself, we see the King more and more irritated. Anger and despair closed the Parliament—perhaps for ever!

To Charles the First, the menacing language and the tumultuous acts of the great leaders, appeared seditious. He declared, that "they designed his ruin."

Ten of the most eminent members were summoned to the council-table, among whom were Denzil Holles, Sir John Eliot, and Selden—illustrious names! They were now placed in the cruel predicament of contending for their Parliamentary rights against the wounded feelings of the Sovereign, and the judicial decisions of the legislature. It raised up one of the greatest and the longest legal controversies which had been started for many years.

Charles the First was strongly affected when he heard that Holles had been so deeply implicated in seconding the resolutions which Eliot had prepared. The Monarch exclaimed, "Et tu Brute! I wonder at it! for we two were fellow-revellers in a masque together."* We see by this pathetic exclamation, how

* Hamon l'Estrange, 82 fo.

Charles the First could not avoid blending his personal feelings with the Parliamentary opposition; the King, indeed, appears to have had a personal knowledge of most of the great leaders of the present party; a circumstance of some importance which has not been noticed by historians.

At the council-table Holles declared that he came to the House with zeal for his Majesty's service, but finding his Majesty was offended with him, he humbly desired that he might rather be the subject of his mercy than of his *power*. On this the Lord-Treasurer observed, "You mean, rather of his Majesty's mercy than of his *justice*." Holles repeated, "I say of his Majesty's power, my Lord." Sir John Eliot questioned for words spoken in the House, and for producing the last offensive resolutions, with his accustomed keenness of language declared, "that whatsoever was performed by him in that place and at that time, as a member of that House, he would ever be ready to give an account of his sayings and doings in that place whenever he should be called to it by the House. But now, as a private man, he could not trouble himself to remember what he said or did in that place as a public man."

Charles the First, to vindicate his outraged sovereignty, would have limited his utmost severity to "a petition expressing their sorrow that he was offended with them;" but these were not men, like children, to be frightened or to be soothed by a weak parent. They courted the persecution, which with the people only served the more to maintain the principles for which they suffered. The patriots, obstinately contumacious, were committed to different prisons.

Charles the First, in his own mind, could only perceive their contumacy—it is only ourselves who now can admire their patriotism. The King sought to punish sedition; but in a conference he himself held with his judges, they decided that the offences were not capital, the prisoners might be bailed, giving security for their good behaviour. The acknowledgment of Charles, though this decision was not to his mind, enters into his character. "I shall never be offended with my judges if they deal plainly with me, and do not answer by oracles and riddles." Such a sentiment evinces no resolute tyranny in this monarch.

The parties were ready with their bail, but they would give no security for their good behaviour. Selden raised his acute legal objections, and one of the members observed, that "the good behaviour was a ticklish point." What was "good behaviour?" Was it passive obedience? He preferred to return to prison than to accept a condition of which he did not know the nature. All were alike resolute in the refusal of any act of submission, and in the denial of the jurisdiction of any inferior court over Parliament. The judges, who had hitherto acted rightly, it was thought wrested the law now to the monarch's side, by decreeing heavy fines and imprisonment during the King's pleasure.

Arbitrary imprisonments, even in state affairs, are so abhorrent to Englishmen, that this act of severity on the side of Charles the First, has been alleged as a striking evidence of his disposition to tyranny. When we calmly look into the motives of the King—the state of the times—the as yet undefined rights of the liberty of the subject—the prevalent custom in European governments of imprisoning supposed state delinquents, and the extraordinary scenes which were passing in France, where the sacrifice of a few political victims, the heads of factions, had saved the feeble monarch on a throne surrounded by conspiracies, when all these are considered, the severity of Charles the First will not appear with that dark and peculiar complexion, which a modern pencil might deeply colour. Charles had first intended to inflict the lenient penalty of a slight act of submission; but it was as impossible for the patriots to commit an act of submission, as for the monarch to be passive under his contemned sovereignty.

To allay the prevalent terror that the nation was now to be deprived of its Parliaments, Charles the First published "a declaration of the causes which moved him to dissolve this last Parliament." His tone is not arrogant—he gives an historical account of all their proceedings—their scanty subsidies—their persecutions on tonnage and poundage—their exorbitant encroachments—he reproaches those perturbators of the public peace, who have all along disturbed the harmony between him and the people—"like empirics, who choose to have some diseases on foot to keep themselves in request, and to be employed

in the cure." And lastly, the King appeals to the subject, whether, "in respect of the free passage of the gospel, in equal administration of justice, freedom from oppression, and the peace and quietness every one enjoys under his own vine and fig-tree, the happiness of this nation can be paralleled by any neighbouring countries?" Had there been no truth in this appeal to the people, it would have been the most unskilful one possible.

So destitute was the Sovereign now of means to pursue any foreign expedition, that after the fall of La Rochelle, when the Duke of Rohan implored his farther aid, Charles the First declared, that compelled to dissolve the Parliament, from whom he had expected farther supplies, he was no longer in a condition to assist the necessities of the foreign Protestants. The Parliament, in the result of their proceedings, had, doubtless contrary to their intentions, ably served the cause of France and Spain, with whom the King had to accede to an inglorious peace, after having waged a disastrous war. An English sovereign was now to reign deprived of his Parliament!

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FIRST PATRIOTS.

SWIFT, in the spirit of his cynical philosophy, once drew up a catalogue of the *great* and *little* actions of some singular and renowned persons; and among the manuscripts of Bishop Kennett, I found a curious list of the infirmities of the best men in sacred writ. Moses was passionate, Abraham lied, Aaron was idolatrous, Samson was a woman's slave, and the incredulity of Thomas, the persecutions of Paul, and the denial of Peter, enforced this extraordinary result of the infirmities of men, who, we might suppose, would have been exempt from ordinary weaknesses.

May we not therefore be forgiven, if we sometimes start at the tales of those romantic patriots, who, pure and exalted above the sphere of human passions, and often performing incredible or incomprehensible actions, so prodigally adorn the histories

of the poetical Greeks, and the declamatory Romans! * Our own age, among the annals of patriotism, can only boast of a single patriotic character, the grandeur of whose mind was circumscribed by his civic duties: the ambition of Washington terminated in the emancipation of his country. It would be delightful to trace patriotism in all its integrity, pursuing the noblest ends by the most irreproachable means—but too rare indeed are those great characters, who having opened the first scenes of political revolutions, have escaped the imputation of indulging their personal vanity, their private interest, or their boundless ambition.

We, who are feeling about for truth in the darkness of time, too often discover that secret history forms a contrast with the ideal greatness of our general views; and it is only the philosophical writer who can detect those indiscriminate opinions of men, and the affairs of men, which crowd the history of human nature with phantoms and delusions. Imperfect humanity claims our indulgence; and while we are often educing good from evil, we may surmise that it may require the leaven of personal motives to ferment *some minds* into patriotism. And if we be often compelled to explore into an origin more obscure and far less pure, than such elevated motives seem to promise, shall we not remain satisfied, if, after tracing the stream back to its head, we behold it purifying itself as it flows, and enlarging its boundaries till even Self seems forgotten in the public cause? We gladly accept the popular virtue, while we forget the private passion.

Cardinal de Retz is accused of indulging an unbounded ambition, yet in his own memoirs, though he frankly condemns many of his actions, he solemnly asserts, that in whatever regarded his political conduct, he was actuated by the noblest principles; nor is this impulse incompatible even with the indulgence of his ambition.

* The learned Niebuhr has elaborately explored into the fabulous history of the Romans; he has been preceded by M. Beaufort, an ingenious writer, in his "Incertitude des cinq premiers Siècles de l'histoire Romaine;" but the Abbate Lancellotti, in his "Farfalloni degli Antichi Historici," would have had the merit of having first hostilely entered into this sacred land of imposture, had the dignity of genius sustained the erudition of the writer of "The Flim-Flams of Antiquity."

There are still persons, it seems, who will deny that the infirmities of our nature are discoverable in some of the early Reformers both at home and abroad;* and some, assuredly there are, who will not pardon us on any terms, when we assert that the popular leaders in the House of Commons, those great names in our history which posterity has invested with the purest of all national titles, that of Patriot, may lie open to the same accusation. The good, indeed, has survived the evil, and that is sufficient to carry on the great ends of society; the heat and fury of the Reformation emancipated the human mind, and the factions of our early patriots, in many respects, laid the foundations of our popular Constitution. The only dangerous error, is the supposition that some men are more immaculate than our infirm passions can possibly permit, and that others were as criminal as they are made to be, for the purposes of party.

If even the great and good qualities of Pisistratus disguised his love of arbitrary power; if the secret motive of the French princes espousing the cause of the Huguenots have been traced to their own quarrel at Court; if Gibbon have thrown a shade of suspicion even over Brutus's "Godlike stroke;" if the assassin of Buckingham were a penitent and not a patriot; if even the patriotism of that great prince, Maurice of Orange, whom the people venerated as the hero who had rescued them from the Spanish tyranny, were stigmatised by the republican Barnevelt, as a cloak to his ambition; if the immortal Bacon, and the illustrious Clarendon, cannot escape from the taint of the meaner passions; and if that oracle of law, the great Coke, were of one mind as a judge, when in favour at Whitehall, and of another when discontented, he was a patriot at Westminster; we may, perhaps, feel more assured that it may serve both as matter of curiosity and instruction to open the more secret and complicate motives of the great actors in our history.

Nothing is more wanting in the history of this period, than

* Mr. Wilberforce has condemned the historian Robertson for his phlegmatic philosophy in composing the history of the Reformation, with an indifference incredible in a divine, &c. &c. Surely it is not necessary at this day to write with all the heat of the times, caught from passions transient as the events which kindled them. These can no longer be suffered to associate with the dignity of truth.

the personal memoirs of some of the leaders in the Opposition.* Such were Sir John Eliot, Dr. Turner, Sir Dudley Digges, Sir Arthur Haslerigg, Lord Say and Sele, St. John, Hampden, and Pym. Of these remarkable men, we know little but their Parliamentary history; something, however, we may glean from closer researches, and, perhaps, sufficient to serve us in these speculations on human nature.*

On the patriotic party rising in the House of Commons, Charles the First acutely observed, that "it seemed to him that their aim was not so much against the abuses of power, as against power itself." To the King, the Oppositionists in the Commons seemed at times meditating insurrection; and the first race of our Patriots appeared to Charles the First, as the leaders of a faction conspiring to sacrifice the Sovereign, by casting him on an indigent throne. When long after the monarch finally assembled the memorable "Long Parliament," and the second race of our Patriots arose, the same opinion probably with him lost nothing of its conviction.

Among the most eminent and the earliest of our patriots, and one who was, perhaps, the victim of his exertions, was Sir John Eliot, a Cornish gentleman, Vice-Admiral of Devon. His extraordinary and unrelenting conduct in his prosecution of the minister whom he fastened on, as his solitary prey, with a terrible enmity which nothing could satiate short of life; his vehement eloquence, his gorgeous declamation, touched by such a hardiness of personal invective, and flowing with such embittered feelings, often induced me to suspect that the patriotism of this Junius of another age, was unhappily connected with an antipathy to the individual. There was too large a proportion of personal rancour in Sir John Eliot's warm temper; to say the least of it, it did not yield to the abundance of the patriotic spirit.

A genius so commanding and so turbulent, was fitted to be the leader of a party, or the creator of one. Sir John Eliot, we find, had early in life been the intimate companion of

* Hobbes has not hesitated to say, that they "were persons as had a great opinion of their own sufficiency in politics, which they thought was not sufficiently taken notice of by the King."—*Behemoth*, p. 482, Masere's Ed. The ideas of a great contemporary have always something to be attended to.

Buckingham; they had been fellow-travellers, and on the Duke's rise Eliot appears to have shared his favours. His appointment as Vice-Admiral of Devonshire connects itself with the patronage of the Lord High-Admiral of England, as does his knighthood, in 1618, with Buckingham's rapidly rising fortune.

Eliot appears to have been at all times of a temper hot and irascible. He had a quarrel with his neighbour, Mr. Moyle, and in the hour of a friendly visit, with wine before them, Eliot "treacherously" stabbed him. On this barbarous irruption of passion, Eliot hastened to London to secure the protection of Buckingham. A heavy fine commuted the criminal offence. When news arrived of the recovery of Moyle, Eliot applied to the Duke for the remission of his fine, but in the impoverished Exchequer of that day, a fine once paid was never recoverable from the gulph; besides, the crime, though ineffectual, had been committed. The only favour Eliot could obtain was a knighthood.*

In a letter of Sir John Eliot's to the Duke, so late as towards the close of 1623, there runs a strain of humble intercession, which strangely contrasts with that lofty spirit, and that personal indignation, with which Eliot shortly afterwards assailed

* Such is the tale recorded by Echard, as related by Dean Prideaux, who was a grandson of Mr. Moyle. Another statement has been recently produced from a Cornish gentleman, who, in a letter written in 1767, relates his recollections of the story as it had been told him by a daughter of Mr. Moyle. In the stabbing, and the subsequent flight, both accounts agree; but the letter would seem to fix the event at a period when Buckingham was not in a situation to afford Eliot protection. It is not impossible, however, that the two accounts may be compatible; for, at a later period, when Buckingham had attained power, Eliot might have sought, through his favour, the remittance of the inflicted fine, and was gratified by the knighthood. A letter written one hundred and sixty years after the transaction, the uncertain recollections of two octogenarians, cannot be weighed against a narrative thrice published in the lifetime of Dean Prideaux. Whether this ebullition of the irascible Eliot be aggravated by Echard, or softened down to the impetuosity of youth, signifies little in the development of the constitutional temper of the individual. Of the penitence of Eliot, and of the renewal of the ancient friendship of the two families, the evidence exists among the Eliot Papers; but it is equally evident, that the Moyles did not forget what they had forgiven; the tale still went on from the sufferer to his relatives; for the grandson told it to Echard, as the daughter did, in her old age, to her Cornish neighbour.—*Miss Aikin's Memoirs of the Court of Charles the First*, i, 265. *Forster's Life of Sir John Eliot*.—(See Appendix for Eliot's penitential confession.)

his late friend and patron. This letter is important; it is evidence that Sir John Eliot had then "suffered a long imprisonment and great charge." Sir John declares that "he had served his Grace with all affection," and had "preserved the rights and liberties of the Duke, though with the loss of his own."* All this obviously alludes to his official character as Vice-Admiral, and as Chairman of the Committee of Stannaries, of which he has left a manuscript report. Sir John, therefore, "humbly craves his Grace's favour," which he appears to have forfeited; for he complains that some former letters addressed to the minister had remained unnoticed. The cause of his inveterate quarrel with Buckingham, though yet not distinctly known, would seem by this letter to have originated in the performance, or the transgression of some of his official duties.† Eliot unquestionably was of a fiery temperament—it had cast him into a most disgraceful predicament with the Moyles, and now we discover him in prison in 1623. The circumstance of being imprisoned, and of his letters remaining unanswered by him whose "rights" he had protected, display the most callous ingratitude, or the most absolute disavowal of Eliot's proceedings, whatever they might have been.‡

I discovered among the Eliot papers that there was a suit pending, and accompts unsettled on the death of Buckingham, between "my Lord Admiral" and Sir John. There I found also a letter of Selden from the Temple, dated November, 1628, relating to "a patent of Sir John's, delivered to him in a box," for the purpose of Selden's examination, whether the death of the grantor made it void. Evidently this grantor was Buckingham, who had fallen two months before.

The patriotic ardour which marks the character of Eliot, visited him like a sudden inspiration; and when he discovered that "that man," as he persisted in contemptuously designating the Minister, was "the Sejanus of England," and closely paral-

* Cabala, p. 412.

† I am not acquainted with the exact nature of this office of Vice-Admiral; however, by a passage in a letter of Denzil Holles to Sir Thomas Wentworth, it is clear that he levied some fees for himself, as well as the Lord High Admiral. "By that time my Lord Admiral and his Vice-Admirals be satisfied, and all other rights and wrongs be discharged, a slender gleaning is left for the taker." Holles alludes to the wrecks on the coast.—*Strafford's Letters*, i. 40.

‡ Rushworth, i. 213.

leled him with one of the most profligate of royal favourites, in comparing him with the Bishop of Ely, in Richard the First's time—when he impeached the Minister as “the canker of the King's treasure,” and “the moth of all goodness in the State”—all this was a political revolution, which did not happen till two years after he had been a suppliant to this very Minister. The commencement of Sir John Eliot's purer patriotism is obscure; that ambiguous point where personal malignity ceased, as public spirit broke out; but till we are satisfied on this head, we must still believe that the revolutionary genius has frequently disguised its private passions by its public conduct.*

Sir John Eliot was a patriot who stood foremost in the ranks of Opposition. Wentworth, afterwards the famous Earl of Strafford, opened his political life under the banner of that party; but whether either of these great leaders were too haughty to follow the other, or whether Wentworth disdained the violence and turbulence of Eliot, their opinions frequently clashed, and they aimed at each other such keen retorts, that their emulation, if it ever were emulation, terminated in personal antipathy. In the House, these leaders of party were both first-rates, and it is curious to observe how minds of such calibre can exercise themselves with equal force in mutual depreciation, till, in the illusion of their jealousy, they persuade themselves that they really feel that contempt for each other which their style infers. Wentworth, alluding to his old rival, then no more, degrades him into “a phantastic apparition;” had Eliot lived, Strafford would have found the “apparition” as substantial a foe as the one he afterwards witnessed in that political Elisha, PYM, who had caught up the inspiring mantle of the departed. When Wentworth of the North betrayed symptoms of wavering indecision, and when at length “the northern cock was picked out to be the King's creature,” by the Lord Treasurer Weston, Hacket tells us, that “it was the

* Mr. Forster, in his *Life of Sir John Eliot*, written with considerable care, has noticed the silence of Eliot respecting the Duke of Buckingham in the Parliament of February, 1623, “when the lauded name of the Duke was frequently on the lips of other popular members,” as evidence that Eliot was not a subserver to the Duke; I regard it as evidence that the mind of Eliot was then rankling on the supposed injury which he complains of in the November before.

general opinion of the times," that Eliot, irascible at the choice of his rival, avenged himself on the King in the bill of Tonnage and Poundage; falling on the Treasurer, and declaring with his accustomed petulance, since Buckingham was no more, that the Lord Treasurer was "the author of all the evils which oppressed the kingdom." Weston, however, had not been six months in office, but he appears to have dreaded his redoubtable adversary. Bishop Williams, who had then his spies abroad, in order to still the quaking statesman, and make his own court, proffered, in many private conferences, "to bring Sir John Eliot to be reconciled to him and rest his servant." Hacket, to whom Williams imparted this manœuvring, adds, that Wentworth never forgave our intriguing Bishop for having offered to bring over his rival.* Mr. Hallam catches fire at the degrading insinuation. "The magnanimous fortitude of Eliot forbids us to give credit to any surmise unfavourable to his glory upon such indifferent authority; but several passages in Wentworth's letters to Laud show his malice towards one who had perished in the great cause which he had sobasely forsaken."† This remark requires some animadversion. At this time there was much tampering with the patriotic party, and several of the great leaders were gained over by the court. Williams might have offered to do that, in respect to Eliot, which he could not have effected. Eliot had gone too far ever to return; and the King could never have endured the presence of one who had become personally offensive to him. The statement of Bishop Williams is after his own manner; unquestionably he was long and secretly connected with the patriotic party, and what he tells of a rival's anger in Wentworth, is a strong confirmation of this political project, for we are now perfectly acquainted with Wentworth's personal dislike to Eliot.

Mr. Hallam has justly ascribed to Eliot "magnanimity of fortitude." The story of the last sad hours of his imprisonment and his life have not yet been disclosed to the world. His ardent spirit remained unbroken—though it waxed "faint and feeble," as he himself pathetically expressed it.

The last imprisonment of Eliot for his conduct in Parliament

* *Scrinia Reserata*, part ii. 82.

† Hallam's *Constitutional History*, i. 498.

was in 1629, when he was condemned to be imprisoned during the King's pleasure, and fined in two thousand pounds. On this occasion, he sent an upholsterer to the Tower, "to trim up convenient lodgings," convinced that his visit would be no short one. Concerning his fine, he said, that "He had two cloaks, two suits, two pair of boots, and gallashees, and a few books, and that was all his personal substance, and if they could pick up two thousand pounds out of that, much good might it do them." He added, that "when he had first been a close prisoner in the Tower, a commission was directed to the High Sheriff of Cornwall, and five other commissioners, his capital enemies, to inquire into his lands and goods, and to seize upon them for the King, but they returned a nihil."* It appears that he had conveyed his estates to trustees for the use of his sons.

In January 1631-2, I find Sir John Eliot removed into a new lodging (in the Tower), and that his lawyer assured Pory the letter-writer, that he had found Sir John "the same cheerful healthful undaunted man than ever." Sir John's lawyer appears to have had too much at heart the glory of the patriotic champion in the person of his client, to have perceived what Eliot's physicians reported in the October of that year, that "he could never recover of his consumption, unless he might breathe purer air." Lord Chief Justice Richardson, in reply, observed, that "Though Sir John was brought low in body, yet was he as high and lofty in mind as ever; for he would neither submit to the King, nor the justice of that Court." The Bench recommended Sir John to petition his Majesty.

The mode of Sir John Eliot's proceedings were told by Lord Cottington to a friend of the present letter-writer. Sir John first presented a petition to the King by the hand of the Lieutenant of the Tower, to this effect:—"Sir, your judges have committed me to prison in the Tower of London, where by reason of the quality of the air, I am fallen into a dangerous disease. I humbly beseech your Majesty will command your judges to set me at liberty, that for recovery of my health I may take some fresh air." His Majesty's answer was—"It was not

* Harleian MSS. 7000.

humble enough." Sir John then prepared another petition to be presented by his son—"Sir, I am certainly sorry to have displeased your Majesty, and having so said, do humbly beseech you once again to command your judges to set me at liberty, that when I have recovered my health, I may return back to my prison, there to undergo such punishment as God hath allotted unto me." On this the Lieutenant came and expostulated with Sir John, insisting that it belonged to his office, and was common to no man else, to deliver petitions for his prisoners; and if Sir John, in a third petition, would humble himself to his Majesty in acknowledging his fault, and craving pardon, he would willingly deliver it, and made no doubt that he should obtain his liberty.

To this Eliot answered, "I thank you, sir, for your friendly advice, but my spirits are grown feeble and faint, which, when it please God to restore to their former vigour, I will take it farther into my consideration."

In the next month Eliot was no more. He died in the Tower on the 27th of November, 1632.* His son petitioned the King that he would permit the body of his ill-fated father to be conveyed to Cornwall, but the King's answer, written at the foot of the petition was, "Let Sir John Eliot's body be buried in the church of that parish where he died." He was buried in the chapel of the Tower. Thus it appears that this uncompromising spirit perished in a prison from a haughty delicacy on his side at the punctilious interference of the official man, who probably felt little sympathy for his illustrious prisoner, and who appears to have aimed at humiliating the elevated mind of the Patriot by reiterated humble petitions. The severity which the King exercised against Eliot, is very particular. Charles the First, often hasty and austere, from his temperament, has been accused of deficient tenderness in his nature by certain party-writers; their object is to represent Charles the First as a heartless tyrant; but the facts which they have attempted to allege, are so trivial and nugatory, that they are become rather the testimonies of their own cruelty, than of his. The harshness of Charles the First towards Eliot, to me indicates a cause of offence,

* Anthony Wood erroneously conjectured that he died about 1629.

either of a deeper dye, or of a more personal nature, than, perhaps, we have yet discovered.*

The implication of the King's connivance with Buckingham, in the affair of the plaister and potion given to James the First, as, I think, was so understood at the time, when Eliot abruptly broke off with an invidious quotation from Cicero, in a like case, "which he feared to speak and feared to think," was not likely ever to be forgotten by the King. Charles asserted, that in comparing Buckingham to Sejanus, Eliot, by implication, must mean that he was Tiberius.

The idea which Charles the First entertained of Eliot, we may perhaps learn from another circumstance. On the dissolution of the third Parliament,† which broke up in a tumult, and which cast the public mind into a violent ferment, a proclamation was issued against "the spreaders of false rumours," in which we find this remarkable passage: "As if the scandalous and seditious proposition in the House of Commons, *made by an outlawed man, desperate in mind and fortune*, had been the vote of the whole House." Who can this man be, so forcibly designated, but Sir John Eliot, whom we have seen at that eventful moment prepared with those propositions which were carried in a tumult? Rushworth, who in giving this proclamation, has cautiously omitted this personal stroke, no doubt well knew its object; and it is one instance of many, where the Clerk of the House of Commons has been too tender of the feelings of his contemporaries and his masters, who had then passed a considerable vote to honour the memory of Sir John Eliot, and to remunerate the losses of his family.‡

* These particulars of the death of Sir John Eliot I have drawn from manuscript letters in the Harleian collection, 7000. At Port Eliot there is an interesting portrait of Sir John Eliot, bearing the melancholy inscription that it was *painted a few days before his death in the Tower*: it betrays the last stage of atrophy or consumption. He is painted in a very elegant morning-dress, ornamented with lace, holding in his hand a comb; the picture, though somewhat hard, has a great appearance of truth, and sadly contrasts with another portrait also at Port Eliot, taken at a very different period of life. The contraction of the pallid face, placed by the side of the broad and florid countenance of his early manhood, offers a very striking and pathetic image of mortality. I owe the sight of these two portraits, and of the correspondence of Sir John Eliot, which I give in an Appendix, to the liberal kindness of Lord Eliot (now Earl of St. Germans), who takes a deep interest in the history of his illustrious ancestor.

† 1629.

‡ Rushworth gives the passage, ii. 3. "As if the scandalous and seditious propo-

As the judges on that occasion particularised Eliot as the "greatest offender and the ringleader," and sentenced him to a far heavier fine than Holles and Valentine, with unlimited imprisonment, "this man, desperate in mind and fortune," could only have been himself! Such, then, was the King's conception of him.

During his long imprisonment in the Tower, Sir John Eliot found, as other impetuous spirits have, that wisdom and philosophy have hidden themselves behind the bars of a prison window; there, his passions weaker, and his contemplation more profound, he nobly employed himself on an elaborate treatise on "The Monarchy of Man."*

The active supporter of Eliot was the perturbed Dr. TURNER, member for Shrewsbury, whom Wotton calls "a travelled doctor of physick, of bold spirit and of able elocution, returned one of the burghesses, which was not ordinary in any of his coat." He appears to have been elected for his hardy activity. I discovered that he was one, as he himself declared, of an association who had agreed to disperse themselves through the country, to exert all their influence to thwart the measures of Government; announcing, by inflammatory letters, that "The day was fast approaching when such work was to be wrought in England, as never was the like, which will be for our good." So presciently some of this party viewed the scenes which, fifteen years afterwards, opened on the nation. If we incline to admire this perambulating patriotism, and pass by, without ridicule, these politicians on posthorses, we must own that the motive dwindles considerably in our esteem, when we learn that the said Dr. Turner had long haunted the Court, but had been contemptuously treated by the King, for his deficient veracity. We confess that we little value the patriot made out of a discarded

sition in the House of Commons had been the vote of the whole House." It is in Rymer's *Fœdera*, xix. 62, that we recover the suppressed passage. Sir John Eliot was harassed by many years of frequent imprisonments and fines, and not always, as we see, for political objects. The House of Commons voted 5000*l.* for a compensation to the family for his "sufferings;" they also voted another 2000*l.*, part of four, which his son had been fined by the Court of Wards, by reason of his marriage with Sir Daniel Norton's daughter. As it appears that none of the estates were forfeited, nor probably any of the ameracements paid, the vote of 5000*l.* was a remuneration for a loss which had never been experienced.

* See note at the end of this chapter.

place-hunter; a man who hates the Court because the Court does not love him.

Among the race of our patriots appear HAMPDEN and PYM; consecrated names! We know at present too little of the secret history of these remarkable men, to venture to develop the motives of their conduct. The intentions of men may, however, be purer than their practices, for between our intentions and our practices, our little and our great passions may intervene.

Hampden passed his early years in the lighter dissipations of society. He had taken no degree at the University, but he studied the municipal law at the Inns of Court. He appears "to have retired to a more reserved and melancholy society;" thus Lord Clarendon describes a more select and more studious class of minds, without, however, losing his natural vivacity and "flowing courtesy to all men." Hampden at length settled into an independent country gentleman—and in his retirement, but this we can only conjecture, must have meditated on some theory of politics. It is only on this principle that we can account for the extraordinary design which he aimed at, of overturning the whole government of England. Anthony Wood asserts that Hampden was "a person of anti-monarchical principles." I would not depend on honest Anthony's account of any man's principles, but in this instance I am of Anthony's opinion. I do not decide so much on the general conduct of Hampden, as from the remarkable intimacy which existed between him and his cousin, Oliver Cromwell; remarkable, because it enabled the penetrating sagacity of the student of Davila to predict to Lord Digby, pointing to Cromwell, that "that sloven, if we ever should come to a breach with the King—which God forbid!—in such a case, I say, that that sloven will be the greatest man in England." Cromwell, in his famous canting answer, full of what he calls, "a way of foolish simplicity," at the conference about his "kingship," particularly alludes to Hampden, his former great friend, as having been a "hid instrument to help him on this work." The deep and reciprocal sympathy of these bosom friends most evidently indicates the same counsels, the same conduct, and the same great, but concealed, design.

Hampden lives in the unfading colours of the most forcible of

portrait-painters, the majestic Clarendon. Who will deny that he possessed that greatness of mind and character, and which suffered no diminution from an early death, capable of inspiring the most elevated patriotism? The feelings of two ages attest the greatness of Hampden's name. Charles the First acknowledged his eminent character, when the King, on hearing of the fatal accident which terminated his career (the bursting of his own overcharged pistol in the field of battle), offered his own surgeon to preserve the life of his hostile subject; and such was Hampden's enduring fame, that when one of his descendants was deficient in his public accounts, that public peculator found the name of Hampden was a talisman of patriotism; and in the fervour of that day, he was not prosecuted, and his family obtained some provision in reverence of the name which he had so unworthily inherited.*

It must be confessed, that though England has had no Plutarch to interest us by the charm of his details, our country does not want for subjects, particularly in the revolutionary age which now engages our attention. But the literary genius of these times had not yet reached to the philosophy of biography; heroes were not wanting, but the immortalising pen. The great character before us found no friend in that day to send down to us the slightest memorial of the man, and curious collectors in physiognomy or in politics cannot even show us his portrait.

The only anecdote we find to record of Hampden is the peculiar manner which he observed in speaking in Parliament. He considered that to speak last in an able debater, was an advantage almost equal to a victory. Hampden invited his opponents to exhaust their arguments in the first opening of the debate; and if he found those of his own side worsted, his dexterous sagacity brought down less controvertible ones. The single

* Richard Hampden, Treasurer of the Navy. In 1726 his brother, John Hampden, petitioned for some relief. Arthur Onslow and others, carried the vote that some provision should be made for the family, in consideration of the signal services of their great-grandfather's noble and courageous stand against arbitrary power in opposing *Ship-Money*.—On this occasion Shippen, wittily alluding to the defalcation of Richard Hampden, observed that "He would not enter upon the merits of the great-grandfather; but this he was sure of, that his grandson, the Treasurer of the Navy, had wasted more *Ship-Money* than ever he had saved to the nation, or than Charles the First ever intended to raise."—*Hist. Reg.* xi. 114.

opinion of Hampden had that weight in Parliament, that however the majority inclined, they suspected, if he were not in their number, the force of their own reasonings, and would not trust to their own conviction; they either adopted his opinions, or adjourned the debate. And at the next meeting, the artful orator, or the active partisan, had mustered new forces, and thus "by perplexing the weaker, and tiring out the acuter judgments, Hampden rarely failed to attain his ends."* He excelled in the most subtle arts of debate. An admirable scholar, skilful not only in the choice and weight of his own significant expressions, but dexterous when a question was about to be put contrary to his purpose, in neutralising its object, by slipping in some qualifying term or equivocal word.

How often has the inquiry been agitated, whether a terrible ambition was not concealed under the public virtues and powerful faculties of the patriot Hampden? "It belongs not to an historian of this age, scarcely even to an intimate friend, positively to determine," said our inimitable and philosophic Hume; but Hume has himself determined it, by his acute penetration in the note to his text.

Hampden has been described by our last authority, Dr. Lingard, as by preceding writers, to have been "quiet, courteous, and submissive." At first he was one of the party who had prepared themselves for voluntary banishment; but whether this great man bore his faculties so meekly, may be a subject of future inquiry. I must own, too, that it is with difficulty we can form a notion of Dr. Lingard's "quiet, courteous, and submissive" gentleman, in him, who, in the breaking out of the civil wars in England, made Davila's history of the civil wars in France his manual. Hampden, at least, meditated on what he had resolved should happen. And never was there a man of the "quiet" temper and "submissive" disposition of Hampden, who was a more intrepid hero, when he drew his sword to shed the blood of half the nation! Clarendon has declared, that

* This *trait* in the Parliamentary character of HAMPDEN may be found in Francis Osborne's works on "Government," sect. 31. It is curious to observe, that Lord Clarendon has not omitted some notice of it in his character of this patriot. Either his Lordship borrowed it from Osborne, or this peculiarity of Hampden's must have been notorious in his day. The other is furnished by Sir Philip Warwick.

“no one was less the man he seemed to be, which shortly afterwards appeared, when he cared less to keep on the mask.” The truth is, as we ourselves have witnessed in Revolutionary France, and as may be observed in the same characters which have appeared in the same scenes in the yet unwritten history of the terrible revolution in South America, that men naturally of calm tempers, and even of polished manners, change their character as if by magic, in the madness of their political passions. And this striking fact in the history of man, was noticed even by Lord Clarendon himself, who, though he was severe on the individual Hampden, was perfectly just in his deep knowledge of human nature. Alluding to the first meeting of the Long Parliament, which elated many of the members, he tells us, that “the same men who, six months before, were observed to be of very moderate tempers, and to wish that gentle remedies might be applied, talked now in another dialect of things and persons. They must now not only sweep the house clean below, but must pull down all the cobwebs which hung in the top and corners, that they might not breed dust, and so make a foul house hereafter, and to remove all grievances, were for pulling up the excesses of them by the roots.”* And we must add “the branches”—they naturally began to lop “the branches;” for such was the radical spirit of Hampden, that he joined a party who were distinguished by the popular political designation of “Root-and-branch-Men.”

The integrity of Hampden’s principles, and his self-devotion to the public cause, to say the least, lost something of their purity in their progress. Whatever might have been the integrity of the Patriot, it was involved in dark intrigues, and degraded by an ambition which often betrayed the partisan and the demagogue. When we view Hampden at the head of his Buckinghamshire men, inciting several thousands to present petitions, we may doubt whether this instigation were Patriotism or Insurrection. His repeated journeys to Scotland, his secret conferences at home, indicated the active plotter. Once, when it was observed to him, that men had grown weary of such perpetual renewals of alarm, concerning the state of religion, while

* Clarendon, i. 298.

the civil grievances appeared much less to occupy their attention, the subtle intriguer replied, that "if it were not for this reiterated cry about religion, they could never be certain of keeping the people on their side." Was this a lesson which he had learnt in Davila? It was not unworthy of "the Prince" whom Machiavel has painted.

In that projected coalition of the patriots with the King's friends, which was frustrated by the sudden death of the Earl of Bedford, we can view only a scheme of political ambition. "The men of the people" hastened to take possession of their seats in the cabinet, driving away the ministry of Charles, some by flight, some by intimidation, some by compromise. Hampden here acted a remarkable part. The patriot demanded to be instituted governor of the Prince. I would not infer, notwithstanding this egotistical complacency, that the great mind of Hampden would not have sown the seeds of patriotism in a patriotic King. He might have taught "the Prince" the business of life as well as its pleasures; even Lord Bolingbroke would have promised this; but as in one case the tutor might have brought in a Stuart, so in the other he might have educated a root-and-branch Reformer.

This attempt at the governorship of the Prince is said to have been intended as a means to keep the son as a hostage for the father. Thus the monarch was to be the only person in the kingdom bound up hand and foot on a throneless throne. He was to be a phantom of state, whose title was to hold the people in subjection to the sole will and absolute power of the great and ambitious mind, which frames a new government,—or to use Hampden's own express words, the monarch was "to commit himself and all that is his" to the care of Hampden and his friends. The future monarch was to become a royal Hampden: the English nation was to have been Hampdenised; and the British Constitution was to terminate in some political empiricism. Is it possible that Hampden resembled the Abbé Sieyès in his facility of drawing up constitutions? Were the English people to be the victims of forms of government mutable as the passions of party would dictate, or puppets of the Commonwealth of Utopia?

Pym, formerly a clerk in the Exchequer, but who, in the

projected flight into the cabinet, was to have been appointed its Chancellor, stood at the head of the patriotic, or, if we are to settle the style from the conduct of himself and party, we should rather say, the revolutionary party. One would have wished that the man whose character has incurred the taint of a suspicion of having taken a heavy bribe from the French ambassador, as Clarendon has twice noticed, as well as "selling his protection" to some whom the Parliament had condemned as delinquents, had been graced with purer hands, and had less merited the *sobriquet* of "King Pym," a title with which he was hailed from his retentive grasp of power. Nor can we consider that our patriot stands before us in all the dignity of the character, when we find him addressing with such political gallantry a mob of women, huddled together in those petitioning times when "apprentices" and "porters," and even "beggars," complained that they had been long great sufferers by the bishops and the lords!—and which, with other prepared mobs, so forcibly remind us of the French Jacobins, and the Poissardes and Sans-culottes of Paris. Nor does King Pym rise in dignity when we find him condescending to give out the artful rumour, and the lying scandal; nor when we view him with the barbarism of brute despotism locking up the doors of the House of Commons, and flying with indecent haste to the Lords, to bring up the impeachment of Strafford, before Strafford should impeach him; nor when, with the inhuman cry of faction, he screamed on Charles's consent to the Earl's death—"Has he given up Strafford? then he can deny us nothing;" nor afterwards, when on the King's consent to make him Chancellor of the Exchequer, immediately lowering his tone, and changing his style in the House, he made some overtures to provide for the glory and the splendour of the Crown.*

Pym, it is supposed, hastened his death, a prey to the unremitting exertions and constant anxieties of the last three years of his life; he had considerably injured his reputation with his

* Clarendon, vi. 439. It must have been then that Pym declared in the House that they would make the King the richest King in all Christendom; and that they had no other intention but that he should continue their King to govern them, and pressed that he might have Tonnage and Poundage granted him by act of Parliament.—*Nelson*, i. 569.

own party, by his vacillating conduct when he had the Exchequer in view, and now, with a melancholy spirit, he was to suffer himself to be carried by those who would not follow him, as Clarendon describes his irksome and dubious way. Of such ambitious patriotism, which keeps not "the even tenor," but often trembles lest a single morning should sweep away its usurped government of intrigue, and to such a patriot, the tormented creature of his own designs, who has to confide to the perfidious, to work on the worst men, and to seduce the weakest, and to flatter all; since no man is too mean to be courted, no arts too base to be practised by those who condescend to degrade their patriotism by adopting the deceptions, and setting in motion the manœuvres of a faction—of such a sort of patriotism, and to such a sort of patriot, may we not say, "of making many *plots* there is no end, and much *revolution* is a weariness of the flesh?"

Whether Pym be too deeply calumniated, I will not decide, but he was game at all seasons for the royal wits, and stands more frequently the hero of their political libels or songs than any other character. In the year he died (1643), he conceived it absolutely necessary to publish "a vindication of his own conduct," to clear himself from "the fame-wounding aspersions of his reputation." In this curious document he denied the charge of being "the man who had begot and fostered all the lamented distractions now rife in the kingdom." It appears, what Clarendon indeed confirms, that he was not hostile to the Ecclesiastical Government; he had only resisted perverse bishops, "who had wrested religion, like a waxen nose, to the furtherance of their ambitious purposes, till they despaired of holding any longer their usurped authority." In respect to the conduct he observed towards the King, I give his own words: "But this is but a mole-hill to that mountain of scandalous reports that have been inflicted on my integrity to his sacred Majesty; some boldly averring me for the author of the present distractions between his Majesty and his Parliament, when I take God, and all who know my proceedings, to be my vouchers that I neither directly nor indirectly ever had a thought tending to the least disobedience or disloyalty to his Majesty, whom I acknowledge my lawful King and Sovereign, and would expend

my blood as soon in his service as any subject he hath. I never harboured a thought which tended to any disservice to his Majesty, nor ever had an intention prejudicial to the State. I will endure these scandals with patience, and when God in his great mercy shall at last reconcile his Majesty to his High Court of Parliament, I doubt not to give his royal self (though he be much incensed against me) a sufficient account of my integrity."*

What man but would exult in the self-conviction of such irreproachable integrity? Who could imagine that such a patriot would not be respected even by his enemies? But some of his contemporaries, who were the witnesses of his actions, could not judge so well of his intentions. They knew of those daily artifices of faction practised by "King Pym;" the mobs he assembled, or dispersed, by his agents; the petitions that were begged or forged; the rumours of conspiracies; the prodigality of promises to all, for all they desired; never was the multitude so wheedled or so frightened! Pym acknowledges "his lawful King and Sovereign" in his Vindication: had he forgotten that two years before, he had told, as a friend, to the Earl of Dover, that "If he looked for preferment, he must comply with the Parliament in their ways, and not hope to have it by serving the King?" Pym declares "that he would expend his blood as soon in serving his Sovereign as any subject he hath." This was after he had chased that Sovereign from his palace!

When we have read the vindication of Pym, and consider that there were others, as well as himself, who could as reasonably accommodate their conscience to their actions, and look on their intentions rather than their intrigues, we must conclude that Fate, inexorable Fate, had intervened between the King and his people. Unhappy Charles! No sovereign, it seems, possessed more loyal subjects, as the Parliamentary addresses always insist on, subjects more prompt to shed their blood for their King, as Pym declares, at the very moment they had drawn their swords against him! Unhappy people! who possessed a King who had their prosperity at heart, and their glory ever before him,

* Rushworth, v. 376

while he was blasting the one, and obscuring the other, and was treated as an arbitrary tyrant! I do not know that the whole history of mankind can parallel such an involved and cruel predicament as this, in which a sovereign stood with his subjects.

The Earl of Manchester, the famous Lord Mandeville, and Kimbolton, who was so intimately acquainted with the secrets of his party, has told one, in those fragments of his memoirs which have been fortunately preserved by Nalson. Our patriots had so terrified Lord Cottington, that to save himself he had recourse to that prudent, if not subtle way, of stripping himself of his skin to save his life. He knew that the Mastership of the Wards was a place of that value and power as might stop the mouths of his voracious enemies. He cast it to the sullen Lord Say and Sele, the haughty head of the revolutionary party; who as intent to repair his own shattered fortunes, as those of the commonweal, found his patriotism melt away in this honeyed morsel of the Mastership of the Wards. The policy of Cottington, it appears, was successful, for while many were baiting him in hopes of his place, the instant it was disposed of to one of the party, all criminal aspersions were laid aside, and the displaced Cottington was suffered to retire in quiet.*

Sir Arthur Haslerigg, the fierce exterminator of the Bishops, gorged on the fatness of three great manors, and the fruitfulness of deaneries and chapel-lands. When these patriots were in possession of their plenary power, we find them voting large pensions to themselves. We are now well acquainted with their incessant meetings and cabals at home, and with the journeys of Hampden and Pym and others, to concert those measures in Scotland in which they so successfully laboured. Had the Earl of Strafford been suffered to have lived, the evidence would not have been wanting to the public; it had already been furnished to the unhappy monarch whom it drove into despair and error. But I am anticipating events which will fall naturally into the progress of our history.

* It is much to be regretted that these Memoirs of the Earl of Manchester are only known to us by some excerpts of Nalson. The manuscript was lent him by Dudley, Lord North. Nothing can be more interesting in the history of these times than the memoirs of an able man, who had acted so important a part in them.

We shall hardly need the lantern of the cynic to discover whether we have at length found the perfect patriot, who from our school-days so many are taught to recognise in these illustrious personages. Had they no other designs, at times, than the redress of their "grievances?" A by-stander may reasonably suspect that with some, patriotism may either be produced by ambition, or may generate it.

If it be our lot to detect low artifices and dark machinations in the actions of Patriots, shall we suppress the truths which the world has concealed? It is a zealous labour to lift the veil from past time; it would be an useless one, if we fail in the courage, to assert the truths which are our proud possession. We are mortified that these men, however great, compromised the dignity of the hallowed character with which the world has invested them; the elevation of their style, and the purity of their professed honour, sometimes strangely contrast with their deeds and secret thoughts; and sometimes too, their ambiguous conduct may induce the cynic to sneer and the sceptic to doubt, when these cold and narrow spirits should be taught only to blush.

That all the Patriots were as guilty as the heads of their party, I am far from believing. There were honest men among them who were earnest for the redress of grievances, but whose names, were they inscribed on a muster-roll, would remain unknown to us. Baxter,* who was no doubt well informed in the secret history of the times, when he mentions the preferments accepted by the patriots we have noticed, adds that there were others who "would accept of no preferment, lest they should be thought to seek themselves, or set their fidelity to sale."

Of these two classes of Patriots, it must be confessed, that vast is the interval which separates them; but it is with political business as with military affairs, the officers, and not the men, create revolutions.

* Baxter's Narrative of his Life and Times, p. 25, fo.

NOTE ON SIR JOHN ELIOT'S MANUSCRIPT TREATIS .

This manuscript has been preserved among the Harleian MSS. 2228, with this title, "The Monarchie of Man. A Treatise philosophicale and morale, wherein some questions of the Politicks are obviously discust. By Sir John Eliot, Knt. prisoner in the Tower." With this motto from Virgil:

"Deus nobis hæc otia fecit."

It was in the leisure of a prison, as Eliot nobly adopts the *otia* of Virgil to his situation, that he composed this learned treatise, consisting of 240 folio pages. It has been considered by Mrs. Macaulay as a political work; but it is rather an ethical one. It yields no indication of republican principles, the writer maintaining, that monarchy, formed, as it were, on the prototype of the Creator himself, is the perfection of government; any allusion to his own times is made with equal moderation and caution. "How far laws should influence Princes," he says, "is a question involved in difficulties—the prerogative of Kings is a point so tender as it will hardly bear a mention. We may not therefore handle it with any roughness, lest it reflect some new beam of terror on ourselves. To show that Kings are subject to laws, were not, he says, a task of hardness, if the danger did not exceed the trouble."

The treatise discovers all the tedious scholastic learning of that period, perpetual references to Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Plutarch, and Bodin. The freest thinkers had not yet emancipated themselves from plodding in the tracks of authority, and Eliot, who was so bold a speaker in the English senate, when warmed by English feelings, with his classical pen, dares not write a page without what he calls—"the strength and assistance of authority." Did he imagine that the English Constitution was to originate among the dreamers of the ancient philosophers?

"The Monarchy of Man" is an ethical, much more than a political work. Wearied by wrestling with "the mystery of the King's prerogative," the contemplative prisoner and philosopher looked into the monarchy of the Stoics—the self-government of Man. He closes his work by a passage of singular eloquence, an elaborate eulogy on the Independence of the Mind. It reminds one of the magnificence of Bolingbroke, when he also occasionally elevated his imagination to the superior wisdom and the superior virtue of a disciple of the Porch.

Eliot having shown, that man is excelled by other animals, in many of his best faculties, proceeds:

“Man only was left naked, without strength or agility to preserve him from the danger of his enemies, multitudes exceeding him in either, many in both, to whom he stood obnoxious and exposed, having no resistance, no avoidance for their furies, but in this case and necessity, to relieve him upon this oversight of Nature’s, Prometheus, that wise statesman, whom Pandora could not cousen, having the present apprehension of the danger, by his quick judgment and intelligence, secretly passed into Heaven, steals out a fire from thence, infuses it into Man, by that inflames his mind with a divine spirit and wisdom, and therein gives him a full supply for all ; for all the excellence of the creatures he had a far more excellence in this ; this one was for them all, no strength nor agility could match it ; all motions and abilities came short of this perfection ; the most choice arms of Nature have their superlative in its acts ; all the arts of Vulcan and Minerva have their comparative herein, in this divine fire and spirit, this supernatural influence of the mind, all excellence organical is surpassed ; it is the transcendent of them all ; nothing can come to match it, nothing can impeach it, but man therein is an absolute master of himself, his own safety and tranquillity by God (for so we must remember the Ethies did express it) are made dependant on himself, and in that self-dependence, in the neglect of others, in the entire rule and dominion of himself, the affections being composed, the actions so directed, is the perfection of our government, that *summum bonum* in philosophy, the *bonum publicum* in our policy, the true end and object of this *Monarchy of Man*.”

CHAPTER XXV.

ORIGIN OF THE ANTI-MONARCHICAL PRINCIPLE IN MODERN EUROPE.

It has been recently considered by an eminent writer, that the passion for “republican politics,” was so unknown to us, that “at the meeting of the Long Parliament, we have not the slightest cause to suppose that any party, or any number of persons, among its members, had formed what must then have appeared so extravagant a conception.” Our ardent writer, therefore, conceives that “the year 1645, is that to which we must refer the appearance of a republican party in considerable numbers, though *not yet among the House of Commons*.”*

It must be observed, that it harmonises with the preconceived

* Hallam’s Constitutional History of England.

system of Mr. Hallam, to assign so late a period for the appearance of the Republicans in this country, in order to enforce his principle, that in the King's own conduct, we are to look for the true origin of Republicanism, or rather the anti-monarchical spirit. Still, however, in the wide circuit of his reading on this subject, Mr. Hallam must have received some indistinct notions, that the genius of Republicanism was abroad, and no stranger in this country,—and with that candour which his ample knowledge often exerts, we may here observe how the historian admits Truth unadorned as he finds her, up the back-stairs, although he sometimes dresses her to his own taste, for the more public audience. Hence it is that the text and the notes of the Constitutional History so often differ; in the text, the author's particular feeling is prevalent, and in the notes all his knowledge to complete the subject, however often the annotation may stand in opposition to the text. He thus acknowledges “that a very few speculative men, by the study of antiquity, or by observations on the prosperity of Venice and Holland, might be led to an abstract preference of republican politics.” And what is more extraordinary, Mr. Hallam has himself discovered in the House of Commons, at the moment he tells us, that the spirit of “Republicanism had not yet appeared there,” several leading members, whose republican sentiments are unquestionable; and many are to be added to that number.

To me it seems that the genius of Democracy had long before been busied in this country, and that the period which Mr. Hallam has assigned for its sudden birth, is about that of its growth and stature, as well in the place in which he says it did not yet appear, as in others where it had also shown itself.

The ill-disguised republic of ducal Venice, under a haughty and merciless aristocracy, however prominent at this time in the intrigues of European cabinets, offered no model of a popular government to our fierce democratic spirits. The dark mysteries of that artificial government could only be maintained by the intricacy of its movements, silence, secrecy, and assassination! The dispatches of their ambassadors differed from others; these men were the busy-bodies of the diplomatic corps—political panders to the restless passions of their Lords, whose government seemed to exist more by cunning and watchfulness, than

by real force or true greatness. Astute spies in all foreign Courts, though feeble and timid, by their unceasing communications among themselves, they were masters of the secrets of the Cabinets of Europe, could foresee approaching wars, or detect exhausted enmities, so that they were at all times ready to afford the ally they courted their private intelligence, or their timely mediation—but the word “Liberty” was not whispered by a Venetian even at a distance from the lion’s mouth.

With the Flemings, indeed, our country had from the earliest times formed an uninterrupted intercourse, and when the Netherlanders aspired to throw off the yoke of the Spaniard and the Inquisition, never did two nations so fraternally sympathise in the same unity of interests. So closely connected were the two countries, that the burgher of Antwerp, or Amsterdam, was often resident in London.

The Flemish factor Meteren, who stole many an hour from his meals and his sleep to build up the mighty tome of his nation’s history, often passing and repassing from Antwerp, long sojourned and finally died in England. A witness of the Marian persecution, and of the extended reign of Elizabeth, and even of a part of that of James the First, he has chronicled many curious details of our own domestic history not elsewhere to be found. So strict was the union of the commonalty of the two people, that it seemed as if one country had two languages. If in this great national intercourse we sometimes adopted their idioms, we also caught their less refined manners, which has been observed by the antiquary Camden, the satirist Nash, and other contemporary writers. Our nation had combated for the Hollanders, and they had struck medals to commemorate the destruction of that fleet, so proudly called the Armada, which had threatened the English shores.

We must, however, observe, that the republic of the United Provinces had not been founded on republican principles. In their extreme necessity, they had first offered themselves to a French Prince, and at length humbly proffered the sovereignty of their country to the British Queen, and their deputies had declared to Elizabeth that “they were a people as faithful and as great lovers of their sovereign, as any other in Christendom.”*

* Meteren, fol. 254.

Towards the close of Elizabeth's reign, the Republic had finally emancipated itself from the tyranny of Spain. The age of heroism, in which the founders of empire flourish, was now settling into the age of polity, when the strength of dominion lies in the conservative wisdom of statesmen. Already the fleets of Holland had distant colonies to guard and to conquer, and the genius of commerce was fast supplanting that nobler spirit which had made them a nation. To renovate their diminished population, to restore their cities which betrayed the ruins of many sieges, and to fertilise the long persecuted land of their fathers, they made their country the asylum of the world. There the fugitive became a dweller by his own hearth, and there the persecuted met his brothers gathered together to participate in the strange and general freedom. There the English Brownist retired to his conventicle; there the Portuguese Hebrew sat in his synagogue; and had the Mussulman chosen, doubtless some tall mosque had cast its shadow in the streets of Amsterdam or Middleburgh.

The nation which invites the unhappy to become citizens, will secure patriots, and in a country where industry is the first virtue, and the sole means of existence, the excessive multiplication of a people need not raise the terrors of the political economist.

The erection of this powerful republic, or of the New States, for thus the United Provinces were at first distinguished in our country, appears to have affected England, who had reared up this infant commonwealth against its Spanish oppressors, in some respects, as the American revolution is considered to have influenced France. The common intercourse of their mutual subjects increased, but at the same time this novel government became a refuge for all the English malcontents, equally under Elizabeth as under Charles.

There they contemplated on that toleration which was denied at home, and there they inflated their egotism with the bewitching spell of their "parity" or political equality. They viewed trade and magistracy united in the same burgomaster; nothing was regal in "the New States," but every thing plebeian, and this was more congenial to the comprehension of those fiery spirits, haughty, at least, as Venetian nobles, than even an inscription in the golden book of the Adriatic.

Elizabeth, who had already been threatened by a spiritual Republic from the Puritans, was now equally uneasy with respect to a temporal one. At the latter end of this Queen's reign, it was an usual phrase to speak and even to pray for "the Queen and State." This word *State*, we are told by a very powerful writer, was learned by our neighbourhood to, and commenced with the Low Countries, as if we were, or affected to be, governed by *States*. This the Queen saw, and hated; and such was the political dread in our Cabinet, that at her death the Earl of Oxford, in his propositions to James the First, warned the new monarch to prevent "this humour," i. e. the passion for democracy, among that class of malcontents, whom the writer expressively styles "Innovators, Plebicolæ, and King-haters."*

James, we shall find, hardly required this friendly hint, and long after, he himself styled the Commons the five hundred Kings! The conduct of James was, indeed, long dubious, with respect to the reception in England of these rising † "States;" he had been more civil to them in Scotland, where they had displayed a princely munificence at the baptism of Prince Henry, but now that they aspired to rank among Sovereigns, the royal etiquette was lamentably deranged.

The public affronts offered by the Spanish ambassador at our Court to the first Dutch ambassador, Noel Caron, whom he called "the Representative of his Master's Rebels," and the reluctant civilities so grudgingly accorded by the monarch, are pathetically narrated by the courtly Sir John Finet, in his Diary, as Master of the Ceremonies. This historian of levees and harmoniser of what, in the technical style of Court etiquette, he calls "clashes," was puzzled in what seats to place "the New States." Sometimes, he would altogether hide the Deputies, or place them apart at a public ceremony, where the Spaniard took great caution to measure out the greatest length of distance;

* An extraordinary letter *ab Ignoto*, unquestionably by a profound politician.—*Cabala*, p. 378.

† When James was King of Scotland, he invited "the New States" to send some envoy to be present at the baptism of Prince Henry. The presents of the higher powers were rich, but the Dutch ambassadors modestly presented two cups of fine gold, accompanied by a golden casket, which, on opening, enclosed a sealed letter—it was a grant of five thousand florins to be paid annually during the Prince's life by the States.

even little Florence was mawkish, and Savoy sternly stood on precedence. The first time James saluted "the New States" as "*Messieurs les Etats*," occasioned an instant revolution in the English Cabinet; our Ministers were startled by a change of measures. This political courtesy had indeed been suggested to James in that memorable and secret conversation with Sully, when that able statesman opened that grand scheme for preserving the peace of Europe which the assassination of Henry the Fourth frustrated.

James the First, when he published his *Basilicon Doron*, painted with vivid touches the Anti-monarchists or Revolutionists of that day. He describes "their imagined democracie, where they fed themselves with the hope to become *tribuni plebi*; and so in a popular government, by leading the people by the nose to bear the sway of all the rule. I was oftentimes calumniated because I was a King."

After many researches to discover the first appearance of the anti-monarchical spirit in modern Europe, I must trace English Republicanism not to any elevated design to emulate the splendid though unhappy democracies of Greece, or the might and vastness of the Roman Commonwealth, but to a more obscure and ignoble source. In my opinion, we are to seek for the origin of our republican principles in that petty "discipline" of Geneva, which was substituted by Calvin for its abolished Episcopacy. This discipline, truly, was the code of that apostolical community which was suited to the infant feebleness of primitive Christianity; but this parity of Presbyters was more adapted to the polity of a parish vestry than for the government of a great empire. This, indeed, was but a religious institution, and hardly a political state, and rather threatened gorgeous hierarchies than potent monarchies.

Those, however, who had rejected their spiritual, required but a single step to resist their temporal lords. And when once the cause of civil freedom had been grafted on that of the new religion, the Corahs, the Dathans, and the Abirams soon mingled with the prophets of insurgency. The Hollanders in vain seeking for a sovereign, at length found a ruler in their Religion. Applying to civil affairs the same principles of conduct and regulation which they had adopted in their spiritual

concerns, the Dutch, deprived of Valois, and rejected by Elizabeth, became Republicans.

The anti-monarchical, or republican principles of modern times, were doubtless influenced by two awful catastrophes, which sovereigns hurried on, in their blind rage, against their Protestant subjects—the Marian persecution in England, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew in France.

The ban of Mary had driven our fugitive religionists to Calvin's Geneva, and in that democracy their keen and wounded spirits perfected the entire theory of Anti-monarchy, the holy duty of insurrection, the power of deposing kings, and the possible justice of assassinating tyrants. It assumed, that all legitimate government was solely derived from the people themselves; or, in the words of Buchanan, "*Populus rege est prestantior et melior*,"—"the people are better than the King, and of greater authority." These republican doctrines, the Scotchman John Knox, and the Englishman, Christopher Goodman, as if the bearers of a new mission from Heaven, for their style was scriptural, promulgated in their native countries, as a new revelation, which was to abrogate that to which the world had hitherto assented. But I must not here anticipate a subject which may enter into our future inquiries.

The reader, however, must now learn, that there existed a communion of principles among the foreign Calvinists and our own. The same principles produced that unity of conduct which we observe in both countries. Knox frequently appeals to his foreign connexions as a sanction for his acts and his axioms; and we know how these were applauded by the great founder of this novel system—the atrabilarious and apostolical Calvin.

Those revolutions in public opinion, which are silently operating, without yet manifesting any overt acts, can only be detected in those histories of mankind which are furnished by themselves—Books! These are the precursors, or the recorders, of whatever is passing in Europe. There is a philosophy in the aridity of bibliography which few bibliographers have discovered; there is a chronology of ideas as well as facts; and the date of an opinion is far more interesting than any on the Colophons.

The massacre of Paris occurred in 1572; nine years before,

appeared an anonymous work, by a Protestant, which inculcated the doctrines which Knox had so warmly espoused. Many passages in the Scriptures were applied against the authority of kings, and of magistrates established by kings.* The Protestants, who had not all entered so deeply into these theological politics, were shocked at the avowal of principles which tended to subvert the government; and to give a public testimony that Protestants were not rebels, the book was solemnly consigned to the flames by a Protestant assembly.

The massacre which struck all Europe with horror, except the heartless bigots who have framed apologies for sanguinary politics, was the occasion of producing a multiplicity of what the French historians denominate "seditious writings." One put forth a dialogue on the power, the authority, and the duty of princes, and the liberty of the people. Another inquires into the nature of the obedience due to the magistrate, according to the word of God, and infers that the oppressed subject may arm against the sovereign. Another on "Voluntary Slavery" would shame the timorous into revolt. One of the most ingenious inventions of the anti-monarchical party in France, at this period, was "an advice on the means of establishing the perfect despotism of Turkey," said to have been presented to the King, Catherine de Medicis, and the Duke of Anjou, by a traveller, one Chevalier Poncet. This Chevalier, after having detailed every mode of arbitrary power, being interrogated how such a government could be established in France, furnishes some nefarious propositions which exceed the inventions of Machiavel. The Chevalier, who was a real personage, indignantly asserted that the whole was a calumny. It is more certain that it forms one of the severest satires of the abuses of royalty which was ever penned. In a rejoinder to Poncet, he is reproached for having been the occasion of hastening the Parisian massacre.

These, however, were but rude beginnings; there were better workmen, intent on more elaborate works, and who, having adopted the great revolution in the public mind, gave coherence to looser principles, and converted into a terrible system these novel doctrines.

* Thuanus, lib. lvii.

The "Franco-Gallia" of the learned Hotman, lays down for its first principle, that the crown of France was not hereditary as the estates of individuals; that men formerly ascended the throne by the votes of the nobles and the people; and that females, in all times, were incapacitated to perform any acts of royalty. It is a rather curious fact, that in this fervour against monarchical power, at this moment, one of the objects of attack was the domination of women! Mary of England; the two Mariés of Scotland; Elizabeth of England; Margaret Duchess of Parma, the governess of Flanders; Catherine de Medici, were the rulers of Europe, and all Romanists, except our Elizabeth. Knox, indeed, had already preceded Hotman by his famous "first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment (government) of women." Hotman and Knox, in the course of events, were placed in a similar dilemma. On the accession of Henry the Fourth in France, the principles of Hotman were alleged by the opposite party against the right of his royal patron, and Hotman had to confute his own arguments, in which it is said he was not unsuccessful.

When the Protestant Elizabeth succeeded her Roman sister, Knox, who had anathematised female dominion, contrived an artful salvo; he offered to maintain the Queen's authority if her Majesty would consider her right of sovereignty as a miraculous exception, and as an extraordinary dispensation of Providence.

Among the great works which have survived these anti-monarchical books, is the famous "*Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos*," which bears on its title the portentous pseudonym of Junius Brutus. The theme is of a loftier nature, concerning the legitimate power of the Prince over the people, and the people over the Prince. It is the work of an ardent republican who leans entirely on the side of democracy. Hubert Languet, the credited writer, had composed the celebrated apology of the Prince of Orange, when he was put under the ban and edict of the Spanish monarch. The doctrines of Buchanan, in his famous work, *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*, assert the most positive and comprehensive anti-monarchical principles. All these books appeared before 1580, and betray a perfect unity of anti-monarchical principles.

But we must now look for acts as well as writings. When

these novel politicians of Geneva had assumed as their grand postulatam, that all legitimate government originates with the people—that religion, politics, sovereign power, and, we may add, sovereign wisdom, all came from the multitude, they were sure by this flattery of the people everywhere to find willing auditors. “We are a hundred thousand strong,” exclaimed one of the ecstatic seers of revolt. But Knox, and men like himself, well knew that “the commonalty” were hands, and not heads. The oracle was therefore delivered as Knox has it, that “God has appointed the Nobility to bridle the inordinate appetites of Princes.”

From that moment, a new brotherhood was formed, which bound together the discontented grandee with the meanest of the people. “The commonalty” could not establish themselves in power but by the nobles, nor could the turbulent noble support his ambition by a more formidable instrument than the people. It was long before the people discovered that they were only engaging in the quarrels of the few, in which they had no concern whatever, and that the interests of their chiefs were often distinct from the cause which they had openly adopted.

It might have been supposed that this principle would have produced a similar mode of action as speedily in England as in France. Yet it so happened, from the nature of circumstances, that it was in France that first appeared the design of establishing republics. The Geneva politicians did not frame ordinances in Parliament till long after!

During the weak minority of Louis the Thirteenth, the French Protestants had become so formidable, that they held in equilibrium the power of the sovereign after three civil wars. They had followed up the oracular decree of Knox:—any fiery Prince of the blood—any Duke who aimed at an independent sovereignty—any nobleman who had a quarrel with his family—passed over to the Protestants. It was well known that many of the French dukes, who were at the head of the Protestants, were none of their well-wishers, and that many of their leaders held all their Protestantism at the point of their sword. Yet Princes, Dukes, and Counts, perpetually adopting the cause of the Reformed, conferred on them that power and consideration which a sect of itself never could have acquired.

As late as in 1621, the Huguenots, in their assembly at La Rochelle, had formally declared the erection of federative Republics in France; they had divided France into circles, and had even assigned to each department its respective "commandant." This new Republic, which was avowedly formed on the model of the Republic of Holland, we are assured by a very judicious historian,* would have been finally established, had the leaders united in their views. It was chiefly by their divisions that Richelieu succeeded, in course of time, in annihilating this powerful faction. There were among the Protestants a considerable party who were not republicans,—a circumstance which often occasioned the most contrary or ambiguous conduct; the republicans being anxious to manifest to the world what their monarchical companions were as anxious to conceal. This strange discordance appeared when the assembly of La Rochelle resolved on having a new seal engraved to stamp their commissions and ordinances. The Genevan system, politics grafted on religion, discovered itself in an extraordinary manner, by the design on the seal of La Rochelle. An angel leaning on a cross, was holding a book high in the air, bearing the Latin inscription—*Pro Christo et Rege* (for Christ and the King); but by the ambi-dextrous contrivance of the state-engraver, who had to obey two very different masters, the true reading was—*Pro Christo et Grege* (for Christ and the flock). This was effected by faintly engraving the G, which the sharper eyes of the Republicans exultingly traced, and appealed to as an evidence that they had thrown off the yoke of monarchy, and were only obeying the Republic, which they sanctified as "the flock of Jesus Christ."

Had Charles the First been as well acquainted as ourselves with the secret history of his brother, Louis the Thirteenth, and the factions at his Court, how often might this monarch have contemplated on an image of events, which afterwards were connected with his own fortunes, and he might have taken even a perspective view of a new Republic in Europe, the precursor of that wonderful one, whose first public act was the most astonishing deed ever done in civilised Governments—the execution of their Sovereign!

* Père Griffet, xvi. 284.

It can hardly be doubted, for it is in the natural course of human events, that the republicanism of the Rochellers must have been wafted over the seas to our shores; and that the Genevan system of politics and religion, already not new to our country, received a considerable impulse by the heroes who had combated, and the sages who had counselled in that memorable siege, and who were now fugitives and emigrants in England.

The rigid monarchists of our country do not appear to have been insensible of the tendency of these new doctrines, and could hardly discern the nice point which separated rebellion from reformation. As early as in 1628, Republicanism in the House of Commons was more than suspected by Charles the First, which appears by the very denial of the House itself—for they declare, that “Nothing so endangers us with his Majesty as that opinion that *we are anti-monarchically affected* ;” and they proceed to declare that, “had they to choose a government, it would be this monarchy of England above all governments in the world.” But it is not the minority which draw up public addresses. That there was a *Republican party in the House of Commons* before 1645, the period at which Mr. Hallam declares it had not yet entered the House, is unquestionably proved by those curious conversations which Clarendon has given in his “Life,” between himself, Nathaniel Fiennes, and Henry Marten, which occurred in 1641.

They had partaken of a political dinner at Pym’s lodgings, where Hampden, Sir Arthur Haslerigg, and others of the party, clubbed together. Fiennes, in riding out with him, communicated to Hyde, whom they were solicitous to gain over, their firm determination to extirpate the hierarchy; but a day or two afterwards, Henry Marten opened himself with more freedom; that witty and unprincipled man declaring, that, as for some particular men who governed the House, he thought they were knaves; but when they had done as much as they intended to do, they should be used as they had others. Hyde pressing to know what they intended, Harry Marten, after a little pause, summoned resolution, however, to let Hyde into the grand secret, by roundly answering, “I do not think one man wise enough to govern us all.”

Clarendon, it is true, declares that this was the first word he

had ever heard spoken to that purpose. But we cannot infer from this, that it would have been new to many others—it fell from the lips of a great Republican in Parliament in 1641. We may be quite certain, that the establishment of a Commonwealth, even at that time, would not have had only the single vote of Harry Marten. I would answer for Haslerigg, and have no doubt of Nathaniel. It was, indeed, too early to have carried the motion through the House. Such mighty evolutions are hewn and laboured out of the mass only by degrees, and the frankness of Harry Marten would not have been imitated by those, who, though equally intent on the same design, would not, however, dare to be equally open. The fact is that the republican party existed long before; a very intelligent political observer, the French Secretary of State, De Brienne, writing to Sabran, the French Resident at London, 1644, does not hesitate to express his conviction of the anti-monarchical designs of the Parliament, "*J'ai toujours connu leur visée à l'extinction même de la Royauté.*"* He had, doubtless, detected the anti-monarchical party when in England several years before.

The awful controversies between the Monarch and the Parliament; the arbitrary measures to which the royal distresses had driven Charles; the popular terror of papistry; the principles of passive obedience to "the divine right" of Church and State; the pseudo-Brutus Felton, who, in his self-devotion, seemed to the kingdom to rise in glory from the refulgent stroke of a patriot's poignard; all these were the elements of the Spirit of Republicanism. Men were yet to speak, in those times; we had yet no Sidneys and Lockes; opinions and feelings are long silently propagated before they can assume the lasting form of published works. In the history of mankind, there is one moral principle as certain in its effects, as we find in the physical world is that of gravitation; it is the re-action of our natures. In the indissoluble chain of human events, things make themselves without being made, for the last seem only consequences of those which precede them. Passive obedience inculcated in a monarchy engenders the opposite principle of the popular freedom of republicanism. Man, in

* From the MS. Memoirs of Sabran, vol. ii. fo. 203 ; 5460 Additional MSS. British Museum.

changing his posture, imagines he finds relief, by placing himself in quite a contrary attitude.

Already the lower classes of society were formed for democratic notions; but with them it was long limited to the Hierarchy. Armed with the sacred Scriptures, they applied the revolutionary events, and quoted the democratic style in which the historical parts abound; but as, in the spirit of the "parity" of the presbytery of Geneva, they only deemed Bishops as "the tail of the Beast," these pious fanatics need not at present enter into our consideration.

But a new race was rising, who were now carrying their theoretical ideas of government into anti-monarchical views; men who, twenty years afterwards, became the founders of the English Commonwealth. It would be a preposterous notion to imagine that the Monarchy of England could be suddenly changed into a Republic, unless men's minds had been long in training to hazard such a political empiricism.

I have often considered that the stern republicanism and the personal hatred of Charles the First, which so strongly characterised our immortal Milton, was early imbibed; not only from his first tutor, the "puritan in Essex who cut his hair short,"—as Aubrey, in his colloquial meanness of style, describes a learned man, who abandoned his country, but returning under the Protectorate, had the Mastership of Jesus College, Cambridge, assigned to him—there was another of his associates calculated to form his anti-monarchical feelings; a man more remarkable than famous.

Milton's second tutor, and beloved friend, was Alexander Gill, the son of Dr. Gill, master of St. Paul's School, and usher under his father. We know of this intimacy by three Latin epistles addressed to Gill by Milton, and to the honour of Gill be it told, he entertained a just conception of his immortal pupil. Gill, who appears to have led an unsettled and turbulent life, was not scrupulous in concealing his sentiments; and they were expressed in the vulgar tone of the lowest democracy. He conducted himself so indecently when a reading clerk in the chapel service, that the scholars of Trinity tossed him in a blanket. Wood notices, that he was frequently imprisoned; and when he succeeded his father in the Mastership of St.

Paul's school, he was compelled to retire from that honourable office in 1635, on complaints of his extreme severity, if not cruelty, to the scholars, a circumstance to which Jonson alludes:—

“To be the Denis of thy father's school.”

Of such a man, not ill-adapted to become even a founder of the English Commonwealth, which he did not, however, live to witness, we shall not be surprised to find, that speaking and acting throughout life without restraint, naturally produced one,—for he was at length put into the Star-Chamber. It was at Trinity College cellar, that Gill drank a health to honest Jack (Felton), with a gentle comment, that he was sorry he had deprived him of the honour of doing that brave act; that the Duke had gone down to hell to see King James—and of bad to give the worse, that the King (Charles) was fitter to stand in a Cheapside shop, with an apron before him, and say “*what lack ye?*” than to govern a kingdom. In the manuscript letter which gives this account, I find that the offensive words concerning his Majesty were not read in open court. But Gill had long indulged his democratic spirit, for he had kept up a political correspondence with the great Chillingworth for some years, in which, as Aubrey confesses, “they used to nibble at State matters.” Chillingworth is censured for having betrayed this confidential intercourse to Laud, when in one of his letters Gill distinguishes James and Charles, as “the old fool and the young onc.” We shall not be surprised to find, at this period, that this fiery Revolutionist was brought into the Star-Chamber, sentenced to lose one ear at London, and the other at Oxford, and, as usual, heavily fined two thousand pounds. The tears of the old doctor, supplicating on his knees before the King, prevailed, his petition being backed by Laud; the penalty was mitigated, and the ears were spared. As Laud was not usually merciful on these occasions, I am inclined to think that Chillingworth, who has been blackened by his treachery, had not given his information without a promise of Laud's intercession—perhaps he meant only to check our radical Gill, whose republican feelings appear by a silly satire of the day—

“Thy alehouse barking 'gainst the King
And all his brave and noble Peers.”

It is clear that Gill had anticipated the Republic about to be; in such affairs there is always a forlorn hope, who must be first sacrificed. That Gill's illustrious pupil was influenced by his democratic turn of mind, and that he appears to have caught some portion of his friend's severity to his pupils, and that they were both staunch republicans before even Charles came to the throne, cannot be doubtful. Milton and Gill can only be considered as the representatives of a large class of that new race, who, in theory or in practice, were prepared to advocate anti-monarchical principles.

On this subject of "republican politics," there is a remarkable circumstance connected with an extraordinary character, whose name appears in our history, but the story of whose life, could it now be obtained, would probably throw new lights on the secret history of that party, which for a short but fatal period was predominant.

The circumstance which I am about to disclose requires a preliminary anecdote concerning two eminent persons,—a baffled historian, and a minister of state.

Fulke Greville, the first Lord Brooke, who, among his greatest honours, was most desirous to be remembered by posterity as "the friend of Sir Philip Sidney," was also the patron of Camden and Speed, a votary of poetry and history.

He had once designed a life of his late mistress, Queen Elizabeth, from which he had only been deterred by the political trepidations of the famous Secretary Cecil. In an amusing anecdote of the historical inquirer and the minister, we may detect the insurmountable objections of a statesman to the inconvenience of contemporary history.

On the first request of the future historian, his friend the minister warmly embraced his proposal, and promised to furnish his warrant for researches among the State papers. At a second interview, the minister strangely shifted his ground, and turning short on the inquirer after truth, wondered how Sir Fulke could dream out his time in writing a story, when no one was a more rising man than himself—(a whisper of preferment!);—then he expostulated on the danger of delivering many things of the former reign, which might be prejudicial to the present. A writer of history, replied the half-disappointed historian,

though bound to tell nothing but the truth, was not, he presumed, equally bound to tell all the truth; he was to spare the tenderness of individuals or families, nor was he to injure the existing interests of governments. This seemed a compromise, and came so unexpectedly on the minister, that he had nothing to add; but as he had settled his resolution before the visit of the historian, he closed the conversation, by informing him, that "the council-chest must not lie open without his Majesty's approbation." The baffled writer of history, who had already degraded his office by offering to be the discloser of half-truths, now gave up his projected history in despair; aware, as he expresses it, that "sheet after sheet was to be reviewed" by other eyes than his own, and that so many alterations would be required, that his history would turn out to be "a story of other men's writing, with my name only put to it."

The passion for history had not, however, diminished in the breast of its votary; and about 1628, Sir Fulke Greville, now become Lord Brooke, founded an Historical Lecture at Cambridge, endowing it with no penurious salary for that day—one hundred pounds per annum. Why an Englishman was not found worthy of the professorship has not been told. The founder invited the learned Vossius of Leyden to fill this chair; but the States of Holland having at that moment augmented his pension, Vossius recommended to his lordship, Dr. Dorislaus, an excellent scholar and a doctor in civil law.

The learned Hollander, so early as in 1628, was sent down to Cambridge by Lord Brooke, with the King's letters to the Vice-Chancellor, and the heads of colleges, who immediately complied with the design of the noble institutor of this new professorship.

Dr. Dorislaus delivered two or three lectures on Tacitus, but he had not yet gone beyond the first words *Urbem Romanam primo Reges habuere*, when he discovered that he was addressing critical ears. He disserted on the change of government in Rome from kings to consuls, by the suggestion of Junius Brutus; he dwelt on the power of the people; and touching on the excesses of Tarquin, who had violated the popular freedom which the people had enjoyed under his predecessors, he launched out in vindication of his own country in wresting their liberties from the tyranny of the Spanish monarchs.

There was a tone of democracy in the lectures of the Dutchman, a spirit of republican fierceness to which the heads of houses had not yet been accustomed ; and though the Doctor had particularly excepted such monarchies as those of England, where he said "the people had surrendered their rights to the King, so that in truth there could be no just exception against the sovereign," yet the Master of Peter-house, quick at analogies, and critical at deductions, communicating with the Master of Christ Church and the Vice-Chancellor, a murmur rose which reached London, and at length the King's ear, of the tendency of these republican doctrines.* Dr. Dorislaus at first offered to clear himself before the heads of houses ; he proposed to dispatch letters to his patron, and other eminent personages, to explain his opinions, but at length resolving to address himself personally to Lord Brooke, he suddenly suppressed these letters, observing, that "he would see an accuser, before he replied to an accusation."

What occurred at Court is obscure. The Bishop of Winchester, in his Majesty's name, suspended our history-lecturer ; but shortly after, the suspension was annulled, and the Doctor allowed to return to his chair. Fuller, who alludes to this transaction, tells us that "Dorislaus was accused to the King, troubled at Court, and after his submission hardly restored to his place." His first patron, however, who differed in his political sentiments from his successor, the republican Lord Brooke, in a letter to the Doctor, requested that he would retire to his own country, assuring him, however, of his stipend during life. Lord Brooke, shortly after this generous offer, was assassinated by his servant.

The Doctor, it is certain, never contemplated returning to his republic, and it is suspected that he had his reasons. This scholar and adventurer was "a fair conditioned man," as indeed appears by his portrait. He married an Englishwoman, was established a Professor at Gresham College—and this foreigner, whom Fuller describes as "a Dutchman very anglicised in language and behaviour," became a very important personage in the great Revolution of the land of his adoption.

* The idea of these lectures I found in Archbishop Usher's *Life*, by Parr. Letter 393, from one who says "we fear we shall lose the lectures."

A history of this Dutch Doctor of Civil Laws, and Republican, would furnish a subject of considerable interest in our own political history. Although we have not hitherto been enabled to trace the private life of this remarkable character, for the long interval of twenty years, in which he was settled in this country, yet it is quite evident, that during this period he cultivated an intimate intercourse with the English Republicans of that day; for he became their chief counsellor, a participator in their usurpations, and acted in a high station in the Commonwealth. His death was not less political than his life.

The first patron of Dr. Dorislaus, Fulke Greville, afterwards Lord Brooke, was succeeded in his title by his cousin, Robert Greville, whom he had adopted as his son. The young Lord was scarcely of age, and the republican sentiments of the second Lord Brooke, imbibed by the generous temper of youth, were so opposite to the monarchical character of the first Lord, that we have no difficulty in discovering his tutor in his own historical lecturer of Cambridge. In the dreams of his soul, lofty views of human nature broke forth, and in a romantic passion of patriotism and misanthropy, he had planned, with another discontented noble, Lord Say and Sele, to fly to the forests of New England, to enjoy that delusive freedom which he conceived that he had lost in the Old.

Whether Dr. Dorislaus would have accompanied his pupil, and have forsaken the Academy of Gresham for an American savannah, may be doubted. The Doctor had abandoned his own republic for a more comforting abode in a monarchy. The founders of sects are often very different in their views and temperaments to their proselytes. A cool head has often inflamed hot ones, as water feeds fire. Lord Brooke's motives were the purest which human nature can experience, yet such a secession from our fatherland may be condemned as betraying more sullenness than patriotism.

It was this Lord Brooke who afterwards sided with the Parliament, and whose extraordinary prayer, on the day of his death, at the storming of the church-close at Lichfield, has been adduced by those who presume to explore into the secret ways of Providence, as a demonstration of what they are pleased to

term particular providences, or judgments, while the opposite party, who do not object to these divine catastrophes whenever they happen to their enemies, never recognise one in the fate of their friend; thus it happens that the man whom one party considers as the object of divine vengeance, is exalted by the other into the beatitude of a saint. It would have been more reasonable to have remarked, that this very prayer, from the pure and noble mind of Lord Brooke, perhaps argued some painful doubts about the cause which he had espoused, and for which he was to die.

When the Rebellion or the Revolution broke out, our speculative philosopher, Doctor Dorislaus, became a practical politician. The notions of government which he maintained well suited that base minority, who in those unhappy days triumphed over the monarchy and the aristocracy of England, and an indissoluble bond of political connection was formed between Dorislaus and the popular chiefs. The Dutch Doctor of Civil Law became their learned Counsellor, and their resolute agent, and the political adventurer received the gratitude of the co-partners and the profits of the co-partnership. We discover Doctor Dorislaus as the Judge-Advocate in Essex's army; we find Doctor Dorislaus presiding as one of the Judges of the Admiralty;* we behold the republican foreigner standing between the Attorney and the Solicitor-Generals at the trial of the King of England; and when his ability had served the English Commonwealth so zealously at home, we see him commissioned by his friends in power, to return to his native land, as their representative—the ambassador of England!

There, when scarcely arrived, and in a manner the most unexpected, the Doctor terminated his career. His character was too flagrant not to attract the notice and indignation of the English emigrants. Some Cavaliers, maddened by loyalty and passion, who knew how actively Dorislaus had occupied himself in forwarding the unparalleled catastrophe which the world had witnessed, avenged the murder of their sovereign by an unpardonable crime—the crime of assassination. A party rushed

* 13th April, 1648. An Ordinance was passed for appointing William Clark, John Exton, and *Isaac Dorislaus*, Doctors at Law, Judges of the High Court of Admiralty.—*Journal of the Commons*. V. 528.

into his apartment while he was at supper, and dispatched the ambassador of the new Commonwealth.

This foreigner must have obtained an ascendancy in the Government not yet entirely discovered, and had been most intimately consulted on the events of the times, and more particularly in the conduct of the most criminal of the acts of the men in power.

This appeared by the predominant party decreeing him a public funeral, attended by the Council of State, the Judges, and the whole Parliament. Evelyn has chronicled this public funeral for "the villain who managed the trial against the King."

It has been urged in favour of Dorislaus, that he did not speak at the trial of the King. It is probable that this foreigner might not have acquired all the fluency of forensic elocution necessary to address those who were called the English people, on an occasion so tremendously solemn. Those, moreover, who had been forced up into supreme power, might also have still retained some slight remains of decorum, and scarcely have desired that a stranger, with a foreign accent, should plead for the English people against their sovereign. But was Dorislaus less active because he was mute? Sir Henry Vane, of whom Mildmay and his brother, a great enemy to the King, and at whose house in Essex, Dorislaus, we are told, "played at cards on Sundays," was the person who promoted Dorislaus to the drawing up of the charge.* As a civilian, he was most competent to draw up the indictment, such as it was; and he acted so important a part in the trial itself, that in the print we may observe this Dutch Doctor standing between the Commonwealth's Counsel, Cooke and Aske.

Such is the story of Doctor Dorislaus, a foreigner, who was more busied in our history than appears by the pages of our historians. The concealed design of his historical lectures, when the professorship was first founded at Cambridge, seemed doubtful to many, but less so to discerning judgments. The whole tenor of the professor's life must now remove all doubts. Dr. Dorislaus was a political adventurer, a Republican by birth and principle, the native of a land where, in the youthhood of the Republic, a nation's independence had broke forth; there

* Heath's Chronicle, fo. 1676, p. 236.

was no small town, scarcely an obscure spot, which did not commemorate some stratagem of war, some night assault, some voluntary immolation, or which bore not the vestige of some glorious deed. There the siege had famished the city; there the dyke, broken by the patriot's hand, had inundated his own province. The whole face of the country was covered with associations of unconquered patriotism.

Dorislau had willingly deserted this popular freedom and poverty to endure the servitude of monarchy in ease and competence. The Dutch republican consented to join the English people, to adopt his own expressions, in "surrendering their rights to their sovereign." Perhaps he afterwards deemed that "the majesty of the people" retained the power of revoking their grant. His Roman intrepidity, if our lecturer on the seven Kings of Rome ever possessed it, was lurking among intriguers, and his republican pride at length was sharing in the common spoil.

Such is the picture of a Republican whose name appears in our history, and who acted a remarkable part in it, but who has not hitherto received the notice which he claims.

From all which we have observed, we would infer that the republican party must have long prevailed before it could enter into the House of Commons, where we find these anti-monarchists several years before the period assigned by the constitutional historian.

I have thus endeavoured to throw some light upon the origin in modern Europe, and particularly in England, of that mighty principle which produced such tremendous effects in the era which is the subject of our investigation. We have detected it in its secret birth, we have observed it passive in theory, we have witnessed it repressed by the strong arm of authority. We are now approaching the epoch of its open, its active, and its triumphant career. A monarchy subverted, an aristocracy abolished, a hierarchy abrogated, are results which never could have taken place without the exertion by all parties of a power of thought, and an energy of action—without the occurrence of a variety of events; and the appearance of a diversity of characters, the study of which should teach us, in some degree, how to think and how to act, how to contemplate events, and how to

judge men. It is when considering the age of which we treat, in this political and moral point of view, that I have often been inclined to conclude, that in a right understanding of the life and reign of Charles the First, are involved most of those subjects, the knowledge of which is valuable and necessary to all men, at all times, but above all, to Englishmen!

CHAPTER XXVI.

CHARLES THE FIRST CORRECTS TWO GREAT ERRORS IN HIS CONDUCT.

THE three first Parliaments of Charles the First had been alike disturbed and interrupted, and the last of them was violently dissolved. Each separation had only inflamed a more feverish jealousy on the Court side, and a more embittered and contumacious spirit on that of the Patriots. All these Parliaments had been suddenly terminated, to screen two prime ministers from impending charges, or a threatened impeachment.*

Clarendon has deeply entered into the subject of these "unseasonable, unskilful, and precipitated dissolutions of Parliament." His editors purposely, or by a false reading of the manuscript, have altered the word "unseasonable," to "unreasonable." Whichever reading we adopt, may lead to the same inquiry.

When the sovereign interposes to screen an accused minister, it seems an obstruction of justice. The person thus insidiously protected, finds the imputations of his accusers still adhere to him; he cannot elude the infamy he incurs, or remove the prejudices which are raised against him; the calumny, if it be a calumny, thus left alive, will outlast the calumniated. "Such a minister," says Clarendon, "is generally concluded guilty of whatever he is charged with, which is commonly more than the worst man ever deserved."

* The Duke of Buckingham and the Lord Treasurer Weston, Earl of Portland.

But what are the common qualities of these popular denunciations? The noble writer, with that deep knowledge of human nature which has stored his volumes with theoretical wisdom, has analysed the constituent portions of these public accusations. They are a mixture to which "this man contributes his malice, another his wit, all men what they please, and most upon hearsay, with a kind of uncharitable delight of making the charge as heavy as may be." It is, therefore, a consequence that "these accusations are commonly stuffed with many odious generalities that the proofs seldom make good; and when a man is found less guilty than he is expected, he is concluded more innocent than he was, it is thought but a just reparation for the reproach that he deserved not, to free him from the censure he deserved."

All this is admirable, and displays an intimate acquaintance with human nature. But when Clarendon comes to apply his generalising views to the particular case, the result becomes dubious. He infers, that had these two ministers submitted to the proceedings designed against them, it had been more for the advantage of the King, and Parliaments had then learned to know their own bounds, by which the extent of their power would have been ascertained. In exempting ministers from prosecution, by forcible dissolutions of Parliament, the power of the Parliament only became the more formidable. In frequent meetings of Parliaments, "medicines and cures, as well as diseases, had been discerned, and they would easily have been applied to the uses for which Parliaments were first instituted." Clarendon argues in the spirit of a great lawyer jealous of constitutional rights, which at that time were unsettled, contested, and obscure. In respect to the two accused ministers themselves, when Lord Clarendon, in his retirement, contemplated on the fate of Strafford and Laud, it might have occurred to him, that Buckingham and Weston had only occupied the same perilous position, and had they lived, would have had to encounter the same inevitable fate. The noble historian, indeed, makes the successful result, which had pleased his fancy, to depend on a contingency, namely—"that Parliaments at that moment were as they had hitherto been; that the Commons had never pretended to the least part of judicature; and that

the Peers, to whom every act was referred, deliberated with law and equity, the King retaining the sole power of pardoning." But this was no longer the character of the House of Commons; a new era had opened, and a revolution in the minds of men had shown itself, even before Charles the First ascended the throne. James the First had good-humouredly called the Commons "the five hundred kings;" and latterly, the popular party were called "the lower-house lords." The Commons were assuming the whole judicature in their own hands. "Parliaments are as the times are," was the observation of the intrepid Judge Jenkins. The leaders who are advocating the public cause, may degenerate into factionists; and there is great danger that "the will of the people" may thus become as arbitrary as the worst despotism. As popular men advance in power, they are liable to abuse it. The *états généraux* of France, after the battle of Poitiers, when they got all the power into their hands, terribly abused it; a similar conduct of the deputies of the people may sometimes have occurred in our own Revolution under Charles the First, as it undoubtedly did in the late French Revolution. Adopting the public cause with the intense interest of a private one, the noble patriotism which perpetuates the names familiar in the recollections of every Englishman, was unhappily too often crossed by personal infirmities; too often their designs seem contrary to their principles, and too often the impulse which sprang from a public source, took the direction of a private end. In the ambiguous conduct of their public spirit, the reckless management, and the practised artifices, stamped on it the characteristics of a faction.

Of Lord Clarendon, Mr. Hallam has observed, that "notwithstanding the fine remarks occasionally scattered through his history, he was no practical statesman, nor had any just conception at the time of the course of affairs." Who, indeed, had? It may even be doubtful whether at first the great movers themselves of the vast and future scene, had any certain notions of the subsequent events. Even as late as 1639, England lay in deep tranquillity. Clarendon, in noticing Scotland, saw only that "a small, scarce discernible cloud rose in the North." A cloud! He never imagined an earthquake! A

revolution of the most extraordinary character, and which was to serve, as it certainly did, for the model of that which was to convulse England for many years, was scarce perceivable in 1639, and the Scots were our "dear brethren," and invaded England in the following year. So difficult it is, to penetrating minds, even in ages more philosophical than that of Charles the First, to form any just conceptions of their own contemporaries, and to decide on events which, while they are passing under their eyes, yield no indication of their extraordinary termination. On the opening of the French Revolution, there surely was no want of great and sagacious minds, yet, perhaps, not a single one could foresee the gulph that lay before them; the gulph which was not distant from the spot on which they stood. The Count de Segur affords an unexceptionable testimony of this fact. "The year 1789, which was to close with such a vast Revolution in France, and suddenly separate our cabinet from the cabinets of Europe, opened without any of them foreseeing the approaching concussion. Some flashes of lightning, indeed, during some months, had been the precursors of the storm, but no one surmised it; it was considered that some salutary reforms would terminate the embarrassments of our Government. It was an epoch of illusions!"* The patriots who opened the National Assembly, did not view in their perspective the Convention, nor did the demagogues of the Convention imagine that their reign of terror was to subside into the feeble oligarchy of the Directory. Human affairs create themselves as much as they are made by men; and accidents produce events, as much as events give rise to accidents.

The course of affairs was as little detected by other great men as by Clarendon. Strafford could only view in the daring, unyielding spirit of Eliot, "a fantastic apparition;" and, at a much later period, classes the meditative Hampden, and the active Pym, with the Prynnes, the Burtons, and the Bastwickes; and degrades his own sagacity as much as his taste, when alluding to Hampden, he hints that a certain famous pedagogue might "be well employed to whip this angry boy." Strafford could only be jocular on the curt names of "the Pym, the Prins, and the Bens;" and, with ludicrous contempt, affects

* Segur, iii. 443.

“to fence himself as strongly as he could against the mouse-traps, and other small engines of Mr. Prynne and his associates.” So short-sighted are politicians in power, too deeply occupied by their own projects to contemplate on those of others, as greatly ambitious as themselves.

Charles undoubtedly did not discern with more clearness than Clarendon and Strafford, those awful scenes in which one day he was to be both spectator and actor. He had dissolved his Parliaments with indignant anger; and an English monarch now decided to reign without a Parliament. “A brisk resolution,” as Clarendon terms it, but which his wary editors, at a distant and more temperate day, have interpolated by “improvident.” Did the King imagine, by thus straining his prerogative, that when factions were silenced, they ceased to exist? It is probable, however, that by this irregular conduct in the monarch, the nation enjoyed ten years of prosperity before their troubles opened on them. This fact, and it is a very striking one, will seem paradoxical to those who are fully impressed with the popular opinions of the tyranny of this unfortunate monarch. Much, indeed, will seem paradoxical in the conduct of the King and the Commons in this irregular reign. Truth changed sides continually between the parties.

Relieved from these continued struggles with his Parliaments, Charles the First doubtless flattered himself that he should govern a willing and an obedient people. This monarch had now entered on the thirtieth year of his age, a period of life when the maturity of the mind begins to influence thoughtful dispositions: and four years of a disturbed reign had taught the sovereign some lessons which no monarch had yet received; nor, as we shall find, had some of them passed away unheeded. If the genius of the man, in unison with the genius of the age, were too contracted for the comprehension of the agitated and strange spirit of the new era, which had hardly appeared during the reign of his great predecessor, and had been kept at bay by his good-humoured father, still had Charles the First discovered two errors in his political conduct; and, somewhat chastened by the severity of Fortune, the monarch had tasted of the bitter fruits of favouritism and of military ambition,—and Charles at once relinquished both.

These Continental wars, or rather those maritime expeditions, by which Buckingham had aspired to invest the monarchy of England with a splendour it seemed to want in the vast theatre of Europe, had been but the illusions of a youthful prince, and a minister as young. These wars with Spain and France, seem to have originated in the popular reproach which his father had endured, for having preserved the nation in a peace of twenty years, and in that restless desire of a change of measures which so often torments and delights the English people. Charles had cast the uncertain chances of the die of war; a game which princes are unwilling to quit while losers, but he had the merit to sacrifice his wounded pride. France and Spain gladly conceded a courteous peace.* For them, an English war, without an object, became only an obstacle in the vast opposing systems of these potent rivals; and, though they were alike the political enemies of England, in state-policy all enmity ceases when it requires a friend. Charles now concentrated his entire energies in his own realms, and only looked on the affairs of the Continent with the curiosity of an observer, rarely with the interests of a partner in the balance of dominion.

The King had no longer any favourite, nor would he suffer that envied place to be occupied. From the untimely death of Buckingham, with that strength of character which I have ascribed to him, he had resolved to act as his own minister, and

* Why does Dr. Lingard depreciate the character of Charles the First? That is certainly taking the safe side: but would it be difficult to assign the reason of this systematic conduct in this historian, usual with the members of the Church of Rome, who, whatever the Puritans of the day thought, always censure Charles for his compromising and indecisive measures? Our historian observes on this peace, that "Philip, whether it were through generosity or *contempt*, sent back, without ransom, the prisoners made at Cadiz; Louis those taken in Rhè," ix. p. 413. *Contempt!* Charles was never regarded with *contempt* by the rival powers. Both, in 1635, courted this English monarch, whom Dr. Lingard has thus aspersed. The sensible Jesuit, Père Griffet, states this clearly: "L'Angleterre fut vivement sollicitée d'entrer dans la querelle; la France lui fit les offres les plus avantageuses; l'Espagne n'oublia rien pour la gagner; mais le Roi Charles demeura dans l'inaction." This is much for a Prince who was contemned!—Griffet, *Hist. de Louis XIII.* ii. 560. In a manuscript letter of the day, it is particularly mentioned, that, "the French King sent back the English prisoners as a present to the Queen, without ransom. He told Lord Mountjoy, when his Lordship offered a round sum for his ransom, that he should pay no money, but should only send him out of England two couple of hounds."—*Mas. Mem.* ii. 59.

he ceased to rest his entire confidence in the labours and the genius of a single person. His habits of application seemed not to unfit him for the official duties of sovereignty. Never was there a monarch who employed his pen so laboriously—few letters or papers passed his revision without being returned with marginal notes, queries for inquiry, and alterations, which attest the zealous diligence with which he applied to business. Burnet has said, that “He minded little things too much, and was more concerned in the drawing of a paper than in fighting a battle.” The silly antithesis carried away the writer’s careless pen. It is quite untrue; for the King’s marginal notes are not verbal refinements, but substantial inquiries, or decided opinions; and “the concern” he showed in “his battles” at least equalled the courage with which he fought them.

Charles might now have regretted his less fortunate fate, when compared with that of his rival brothers of France and Spain, whose illustrious favourites, Richelieu and Olivarez, were maintaining the splendour of their monarchies.

At this moment, our youthful monarch had fallen into a great and unavoidable fault in his abandonment of Parliaments, which he knew not the art of governing, even by concessions; but he had the merit of correcting two errors, and freed himself, at the same time, from war and from favouritism.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE CHARACTER OF THE KING.

ALTHOUGH Charles would no longer listen to single counsels, nor would allow any public papers to pass, but through his own hands, yet the monarch, still young, and apt to be precipitate in his conduct, felt his incompetency in the arts of government. This is evident, by a circumstance observed by Clarendon, and confirmed by others—that the King often adopted the suggestions, and yielded to the opinions of others, of inferior judgment to himself. Of this feature in his character we are quite certain; for long after the death of this unfortunate prince,

St. John, who had been his treacherous solicitor, and now, under the new government of Cromwell, was Lord Chief Justice, in conversation with Dr. Sampson, an eminent physician among the Presbyterians, made this avowal; "The truth is, the King had an unhappiness in adhering, and unweariedly pursuing, the advices of others, and mistrusting his own; though oftentimes more safe and better than those of other persons. If Strafford may go for a noble Minister of State, yet the Queen, Laud, Buckingham, &c. who had his ear so much to his utter undoing, were fitter for other provinces than that of a Cabinet or Council."* St. John, now, since the curtain had dropped, and the tragedy was over, free from passion himself, delivered his opinions with the temper and truth of an historian.

But at a later period of his life, on many severe occasions, the King discovered such a clear comprehension, and such a promptness of decision, that whenever affairs depended on mere arguments, the King never found his superior. This was confessed by many, and some reflecting men acknowledged, that before their interviews with Charles, they had formed a very erroneous conception of the capacity of the King.

Certain it is, however, that Charles the First was singularly deficient in his experience of human nature, for he seems never to have discriminated the talents, or the dispositions, of those about him. Hence, he so often confided to the faithless, or the adventurous, and too often employed the inefficient; and while he even courted some, who could return no sympathy, he as strangely neglected others, who had both the power and the inclination to serve him.

As this is one of the more remarkable defects in the character of this monarch, it deserves a more critical investigation.

In the history of the character of Charles the First, two moral facts interest an observer of human nature. One is, that the faculties of Charles developed themselves as his troubles multiplied on him; and the other is, that the strong personal attachments which Charles inspired, occurred only in the latter years of his adversity. It was when he stood alone in the world, without a throne, that he seemed to have deserved one.

* Dr. Sampson's Day-book, folio 69, Sloane MSS. 4460.

When we compare the correspondence of his earlier days, which still exists, with that of his later age, we perceive in the letters addressed to his father, and afterwards, when King, to Buckingham, that he appears to have surrendered up his mind to them, and that even on the throne, he was still the pupil of that first companion, on whom he had placed his hopes and his affections. A long interval, and mutable fortunes, intervene from the death of Buckingham to the time of the King's imprisonments, during which a vast number of letters were written by his own hand, often in haste, often in flight. Energy and action, resolution and passion, kindle in those effusions; Charles then had to command—to exhort—to rebuke.

It is not improbable that Charles, from various motives, was averse to the business of politics—there was an ingenuity in his mind fitted to more peaceful pursuits. He disliked, too, the parade of Majesty, which, on more occasions than one, he studiously avoided, and this reserve injured him in the minds of the populace, whose eyes are loyal when Kings are gracious. Charles had no popular qualities for council or for ceremony. He was a man of few words, somewhat abrupt—there was a cold reserve in his speech, and a stateliness in his habits. The one may partly be ascribed to his painful enunciation, a defect which long accompanied him; and the other seems probably to have been assumed, to avoid that loose familiarity, whose inconvenience he must have frequently observed in James the First. Although character and habits are often hereditary, yet it is not unusual for the son to contract the opposite quality of the father: a reflecting son has had so many opportunities to detect its infirmity. Thence we see the patient and thoughtful son of a hasty and impetuous father, while the slow-minded and phlegmatic sire contemplates in his heir, the fire and daring which he admires and fears.

It is evident that the individual who, when Prince of Wales, had been entirely resigned to the political government of the King, and who, when he ascended the throne, rested as entirely on Buckingham, would, at a subsequent period, lean on the judgments of others to guide, or to lighten the cares of State. Charles seems willingly to have adopted the opinions of those with whom he consulted, though his own was oftener the eligible

one, with the hope that it would terminate difficulties which were repugnant to his temper, his impatience, and his retired habits. Hence, in Strafford, and in Laud, in Hamilton, and in Digby, he looked for the substitutes of those whom he had lost, and yielded without reserve to their fatal aid. Formed for peace, and the embellishments of life, but placed amid the raging contests of factions; when he saw the elements of his government in dissolution, without a favourite, an adviser, or a partner in the troubles of royalty, in his last years he stood alone, and never less vacillated in his conduct.

But he was not this being in his early years. It seemed then that he imagined, when he had fixed on an appointment, that the person of his choice was necessarily the very person the place required. He had not a single minister about him, except Strafford, capable of balancing any one of the leading members of the Opposition. The horizon of a Court is but a contracted sphere. There precedence and etiquette disguise the man; there genius is levelled to the mediocrity around; and Kings oftener decide by habitude than by judgment.

The character of Charles changed. It was when the sorrows of many years had opened his reserved nature; when long exercised in those hardier virtues which could not have revealed themselves under the canopy of a throne, that on so many emergencies the monarch displayed that prompt sagacity, and that deep thoughtfulness of the passing scenes, which won the admiration of those who held with him but an occasional intercourse. Even the courtesy of his manners, and his fluency in discourse, visibly improved. But they who shared in the tenderness of companionship, who witnessed his fugitive and precarious existence, and the heroic conduct of his small army; who heard him treat as a statesman with the most intricate diplomacy of the times, and beheld his undeviating fortitude in lonely captivity, magnanimous though subdued—with these, all other emotions melted away in the tenderness of their personal affections, and it was his latter days that were distinguished by the devotion of his friends.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.

At the breaking-up of the last Parliament, it was a current opinion that "there was really an intention to alter the form of Government both in Church and State." A hint of this nature had formerly menaced the Commons from Sir Dudley Carleton, who had talked of the necessity of "new Councils." Sir Dudley had returned to his native country after long embassies, with foreign notions of the regal authority, such as he had imbibed in the courts in which he had lived too long for the patriotism of an English minister. The King, by an angry Proclamation, had told his people that "the late abuse of Parliaments had driven his Majesty unwillingly out of that course, and he, therefore, would account it presumption for any to prescribe any time to his Majesty for the calling of a Parliament." It closed by a vague promise, that "when his Majesty should be more inclinable to meet in Parliament again, and the people should see more clearly into his own intents and actions—those who had been misled, might come to a better understanding of his Majesty and themselves."*

What were these "new Councils?" The science of politics, perhaps, resembles that of medicine, and is too often empirical. A new system of government, like a change of prescriptions, is nothing more than an experiment; and as physicians usually adopt a contrary curative method from the one hitherto found unsuccessful, Charles probably meditated to infuse a renovating vigour into his languid administration.

On this subject, I discovered among the pocket memorandum-books of R. Symonds, a chaplain in the King's army, a remarkable anecdote. The writer, in journalising the daily movements of the army, in this useful itinerary of marches, has preserved many historical particulars; has sketched, with his pen, many remains of our antiquities; and often inserted anecdotes, on the days he heard them, authenticated by the names of the

* Rushworth, ii. 3.

communicators. The present extraordinary account seems to consist of the heads of a story set down for future recollection.

“The King had written a book with his own hand, wherein were many things concerning Government. And in it a model of government for the nation according to that of France, and to effect it. The bringing in the German horse truly to settle it. Old Earl of Bedford had seen, or heard of the book, and being familiar with Oliver St. John, Secretary of Justice,* told him of it, who by all means wrought with the Earl of Bedford that he might see this book, which he accomplished, and made use of it against the King, which the King perceived, and found it to be Bedford, whereupon he was very angry. Mr. Crisp.”†

Such is the tale, never heard before, of a book, written by the King's own hand, never seen. Why was this extraordinary manuscript shown to the Earl of Bedford? Had it disclosed such a system of arbitrary power as the communicator imagined; is it possible that the Earl of Bedford, St. John, Pym, and that party, could ever, on any terms, have acceded to such a project? Or would the King have even dared to avow it? Excepting this, there is nothing improbable in the story. Charles, as I shall have occasion to show, was an admirer of the great statesman Richelieu, though the monarch, when the national honour was at stake, had the courage to incur his enmity. Was Charles the First, at a moment of despair, driven to contemplate on a system of government which, like that of Richelieu, might have silenced the Parliament, and have awed the people? If such were the fact, then the real liberty of the English nation was put in more jeopardy than at any other period in the whole history of this reign. The German horse, however, never arrived, nor has this book yet been discovered. After all, I suspect that this very paper-book may turn out to be that famous manuscript, entitled “A Proposition for his Majesty's service, to bridle in the impertinency of Parliament.”‡ The history of this manuscript is curious. The original had been traced to the great library of Sir Robert Cotton, among his other rare literary curiosities. By the treachery of the librarian,

* An unusual phrase—if it mean Solicitor-General; or was this title given to him in the Commonwealth?

† Harleian MSS. 991.

‡ It is printed Rushworth's Collections, i.—Appendix 12.

a few copies were clandestinely sold, till, being brought into the Star-Chamber, it occasioned the suspension of Sir Robert from the use of his library; his spirits sank, and it occasioned, by his own confession, the death of our great Collector. The original was the coinage of Sir Robert Dudley, who lived in exile at Florence, and had projected a plan, "how a Prince may make himself an absolute tyrant." He addressed the scheme to James the First, with a view of ingratiating himself. A copy came into the hands of Strafford—and it was also maliciously ascribed to him, in a pamphlet, entitled "Strafford's Plot discovered, and the Parliament vindicated." It is likewise reprinted in the appendix to Ludlow's Memoirs, to render the Earl more hateful.

Some time after this was written, I discovered that I had not erred in my last conjecture; but I have not altered what I have said, for it may amuse some of my readers to trace the gradual progress of research. The circumstance is noticed by Sir Symonds d'Ewes, in his MS. life, who knew the fact from his connection with Sir Robert Cotton himself. The particulars differ from the anecdote as recorded by the Chaplain.—"St. John, then 'a young studious gentleman,' paid for the loan of this 'pestilent' tract, and showed it to the Earl of Bedford, who was the head of the Opposition party, and also related to, and the patron of, St. John. This was in 1629, the year in which the third Parliament was dissolved. Strafford had obtained a copy, and one or two other persons."* Such was the real origin of the tale set afloat against the King, whose name does not, however, appear in the narrative of D'Ewes, though this is no reason why Charles might not also have procured a copy. The artifice of the Parliamentarians is more evident, in ascribing it to Strafford as "a plot" of his own. Had not the correct story been preserved by the Antiquary in his own memoirs, the circumstance recorded positively in the diary of the Chaplain, some of our historians would have accepted as an authentic fact; one, too, which could not have been disproved by any positive evidence. The whole offers a curious example of the foundation and of the invention of many popular tales, which

* The passage from Sir Symonds d'Ewes' life, which is an Harleian Manuscript, has been preserved in Kippis's Biog. Brit. iv. 301.

are not improbable, though they may be untrue ; and it is such ambiguous facts which exercise the sagacity, and often baffle the researches, of the historian.

But whether Charles ever transcribed this " pestilent " tract, or at all studied it, it seems certain that he meditated on the means of strengthening his feeble and insulted sovereignty. Conscious as we may believe this monarch felt within himself of the integrity of his own purpose, he concluded, that by royally maintaining the public honour in its exterior relations, and by diffusing the prosperity of the people in their domestic interests, he might still accomplish the great ends of government. It cannot be denied that he fully accomplished these two important objects.

The Parliament had thrown him amidst insurmountable difficulties. They had denied him even the revenues reserved for every English monarch : these, indeed, the King insisted on retaining ; but to raise supplies for the State, he was compelled, without any fault of his own, to resort to expedients which were necessarily illegal. These unpopular modes of taxation came forth in the repulsive shape of arbitrary impositions : the very names which disguised them became so odious, that one of them, though in itself an innocent tax, and most honourably used, has become proverbial for its tyranny ; " Ship-money " raised up the first of our Patriots, and proved to be one of the most active causes in the Revolution. Yet Charles cannot be reproached for exacting monies from his people from any wantonness of prodigality, for he was parsimonious.* From the

* We read Oldmixon with indignation, when he exults at the mean prudence of the Parliament in withholding the necessary supplies for carrying on the government. " When money is wanted to support profusion and luxury, and enrich favourites," p. 147. Whatever be the error of the father in this respect, his son certainly did not inherit this disposition. It is candidly observed by Whitelocke, that the ship-money was not oppressive, nor objectionable, excepting that it was not levied by Parliament, p. 22. It was most inviolably used by Charles, who called these monies his " Sea-Contributions," and was often compelled to furnish additional supplies from his own impoverished exchequer. This obnoxious tax, after all the declamation against it, even of moderate men, as were Lord Falkland, Waller, and Clarendon himself, hardly ever exceeded the sum of two hundred and thirty thousand pounds, by which the sovereignty of the sea was to be maintained ! It is an important fact, that the ships which were built with this execrated Ship-money, must have served in our naval victories under Cromwell. The odium of the tax fell on the King, but, having been faithfully used, the nation received its benefit.

death of the Duke of Buckingham he became reserved in his bounty, and frugal in his own expenses, and, by retrenchments every year, paid a portion of his debts.* I have myself seen the King's Household Book: all the monthly accounts are signed by his own hand. So honest was the King in his expenditure, and so anxious to husband his limited resources, although the clamour of his bitter enemies has charged him with raising supplies for his own personal conveniences. It was not discovered till the times of the Commonwealth that the demands of the monarchy had been very moderate.

It is probable that Charles the First contemplated never again to call a Parliament. We are acquainted with his forcible style concerning them. In his hatred, or his contempt, Parliaments were "like cats that grow cross with age," and in his fear, or his horror, they were "a hydra, which he had found cunning as well as malicious." Charles had retained too indelible a recollection of the past, and felt that the Commons had ungenerously used him. Even at a later period, when in the rough draft of a circular letter for a voluntary contribution in aid of the Queen of Bohemia, an object of popular regard, the ministers had contrived to sweeten it by an allusion to a future Parliament, the King struck out the whole passage, and as he was accustomed, assigned his reason in the margin—"I have scored out these eight lines as not judging them fit to pass." †

Were Charles the First at heart the mere tyrant, which the cries of a party have described him, he would have reigned like other despots: a tyrant ever takes the shortest course. But the King, at least, professed his submission to the laws in consulting the judges, and he now sought for counsel and conduct in the wisdom and energy of others.

The new administration of Charles the First, this "altered form of Government, both in Church and State," lasted during the ten years which intervened between the dissolution of the third Parliament and the assembling of the famous Long Parliament. And what would seem extraordinary, this very period may be designated ten years of national prosperity!

While Europe was convulsed by wars and revolts, our island,

* Life of Clarendon, vol. i. p. 19.

† It was in 1633. Clarendon's State-papers, i. 57.

to the eye and the imagination of the foreigner, might have seemed the fabled Halcyon, brooding a calm amidst the turbulent waves. A more material and truer image may describe the country as a soil covered with prodigal luxuriance, but drawing the fatal heat from hidden fires; so mighty was the growing activity of the people, so gentle the equable administration of the government.

Clarendon hardly exceeded the truth in his description of the state of the kingdom during this singular period, as "enjoying the greatest calm and the fullest measure of felicity that any people, in any age, for so long time together have been blessed with." In confirmation of Clarendon's view, we find in the *Mercure François* more than one allusion to the undisturbed and envied happiness of the English nation. A letter from Rome in 1633, notices the high opinion that Court entertained of "the virtues and discreet government of Charles the First, with the general and quiet peace his people enjoy, all Europe being in war,—which makes England enjoy what the rest of the world envies at, they being the only spectators of the rest of the world's miseries."* The description of England in 1633, by a resident foreigner, confirms all these accounts. "It is pleasant to reside in England, where every one lives joyously, without other cares than those of his profession, finding that prosperity in repose which others are compelled to look for in action, and divided as they are from the rest of the world, they take the least concern possible in its distractions."† This sort of evidence from foreign quarters frequently occurs. The King himself has a pathetic passage, where he complains of the famous remonstrance of the Commons,—“Saying before us, and publishing to all the world, all the mistakes and all the misfortunes which had happened from our first coming to the crown, forgetting the blessed condition (notwithstanding the unhappy mixture) all our subjects had enjoyed in the benefit of peace and plenty under us, to the envy of Christendom.”‡

These statements seem indisputable; but those who have imagined that the cause of the Parliament would suffer, should this national felicity be acknowledged to have really existed

* Clarendon's State-papers, i. 152 and 182.

† *Mercure François*, 1633, art. Angleterre.

‡ Husband's Collections, 528.

under "the tyrant Charles," have raised objections with the design of depreciating the character of the monarch, and explaining away, without positively denying the fact of the general prosperity of the people. It is curious and instructive to detect the difficulties, and to ascertain the success of these historians.

May, the Parliamentary historian, without contradicting the statement of Clarendon,—of which, indeed, he could have had no knowledge—would limit "this greatest calm and this fullest measure of felicity," to those classes by whom "the pressures of the Government were not much felt, and who enjoyed their own plentiful fortunes, with little, or insensible detriment, in the undisturbed peace of the nation." But the Parliamentarian insinuates some prevalent unhappiness, for "while the kingdom abounded with wealth, plenty, and all kinds of elegancies, more than ever, that part of the nation who were sensible of their birthrights, and the true interests of the kingdom, would argue for their own rights, and those oppressions that were laid upon them." "Arguers for their own rights" are wanting in a government at no period; as for "the oppressions," were they general, or were they particular? The vague style of the candid Parliamentary historian was seasoned to the relish of his masters, though no one more than this elegant poet could sympathise with the perished elegancies of the vanished Court, and the peaceful tranquillity of a reign of ten years. We cannot forget, however temperate be "the history of the Parliament," that the historian himself had enjoyed the smiles and favours of Charles the First, who loved poets; but it seems that May had experienced a disappointment at Court, by a preference the Queen had bestowed on Sir William Davenant, in the choice of her Laureat. Angried at the loss of a pension which he had counted on, and the success of a rival, whom he would not value—he buried the gratitude of the past in the Secretaryship of the Parliament.

The passage from May, Mr. Hallam has quoted as a reply to Clarendon, by "a sort of prophetic inspiration." But we shall discover by Mr. Hallam himself the partial view which May has taken, and by Mr. Hallam himself we shall confirm even the florid description of the noble writer. Mr. Hallam

affords us a splendid picture of "the remarkable prosperity and affluence into which the kingdom had grown during this period." The people, however, Mr. Hallam tells us, did not owe their happiness to the King's administration; but to something in which Charles the First could have no concern whatever. It was "to their own spirit and industry, to the laws, which, as between man and man, were still fairly administered; to the opening of fresh channels of trade, and above all, to the long tranquillity of the kingdom." And he closes his own grand picture, which emulates in the richness of its colouring, and the greatness of its incidents, the picture which Clarendon himself had painted; and for which the noble historian stands rebuked, by the unjust corrective of a party feeling—that "it would have been an excess of loyal stupidity in the nation, to have attributed their riches to the wisdom or virtue of the Government which had injured the freedom of trade by monopolies, &c."—"As if freedom of trade and monopolies" were the merits or faults of the sovereign in the age of Charles the First, who practised what his predecessors had been accustomed to practise, what every nation in Europe was practising, and what some to this day retain. It were more just to infer, that were Charles the First "a tyrant," a nation's gratitude was due to the tyrant who had left them, independent of his tyranny, such a prodigality of national prosperity, and equal laws between man and man.

Some of our historical writers have attempted to cast a shade over ten years of national felicity. This period only wanted a friendly Parliament to have been the most glorious in our annals—by the cultivation of those arts of peace which Charles loved.

The case of this unparliamentary administration, we must confess, was sufficiently perplexing for these writers to determine on, for it was during this period of national prosperity, that many extraordinary severities were inflicted on certain individuals,* but we shall find that these were not for political crimes. They sprang out of the age, the sovereign himself had no concern in them, nor was the King implicated in these prosecutions even by the sufferers themselves.

* Leighton, Prynne, Bastwicke, and Burton.

So paradoxical was the position into which the sovereign had now placed himself, that while the English people were in this flourishing state, the monarch appeared to be swayed by the most arbitrary councils. But the solution of this political enigma is not difficult, if we cast aside the vulgar prejudices of the innate tyranny of Charles the First. The King, in truth, was equitable and zealous, anxiously devoting his hours to his numerous official duties; he was desirous of the prosperity of his people, for his own could not be separated from theirs; on their strength, and in their independence, he looked to take his station among the monarchs of Europe, resolved to maintain the nation's eminence with the foreigner.

It is when we consider the character and the results of these ten years of his reign, that we find the political enigma solved. Charles the First exercised strong measures and a weak government, which must necessarily subvert each other.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE FIRST POLITICAL APOSTATES.—SIR T. WENTWORTH.—
NOY, THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

ONE of the infelicities of this monarch was the mediocrity of the men about him; there was no master-genius among the ministers of Charles the First. No Burleigh ruled the councils, no Bacon illumined the law, no Drake commanded our fleets. The Privy Council was composed of persons who themselves were less able than their master to hold the helm of a troubled state; and what still reduced this weakness, the Cabinet was divided by two opposite interests, that of the French and the Spanish; if sometimes from patriotic motives, more frequently from the personal views of pensioners of Spain.

The Secretaries of State, even under his father, were remarkable for their incapacity, and, what is less pardonable, for their negligence.* The inept Lord Conway had been a military man, and

* The Earl of Northumberland, writing to the Earl of Leicester, observes, it is a shame that the secretaries are so negligent in advertising you of all that passeth; but till, among many other reformations, the King be served by abler men in those

could rarely write a letter which did not leave his correspondent in utter perplexity. We have on one occasion his after-apologies, by way of explanation, when he seemed to be more surprised at his own confusion of ideas, than at the misconception of his correspondent. Secretary John Cooke lingered in office till he verged on his eightieth year, and gave no indications of his retirement, till the King, with kindness, hinted at a relief to his old age; he was an honest man, but the harness of routine had rusted on his back. Having to lead on the King's side in the Commons, this mere man of office was often sadly put to it for a reply on an emergency. When Mr. Brodie criticises Lord Strafford for his coarse familiarity of style in alluding to "Old Ned Coke,"* whom, indeed, he had often trusted and employed, he did not recollect that the Earl of Northumberland, in giving an account of Cooke's resignation, designates the superannuated secretary as "the Old Noddy;" and even the grave Clarendon, alluding to the political sacrifice of Cooke, adds, "for whom nobody cared:" so fatal is it to be an octogenarian Secretary of State! The successor of Cooke, Sir Henry Vane, who, whether from treachery or carelessness, acted a conspicuous part to the great injury of his master's affairs, was so conscious of his own unfitness to discharge the duties of his office, that he used to say "he verily believed the Marquis of Hamilton, who was no friend of his, had recommended him to be Secretary of State, to expose him to censure and ridicule." Sir Francis Windebank, a creature of Laud, was suddenly raised to the Secretaryship, without passing through those gradations of office which form the school of diplomacy. Servilely submissive to his master, this pensioner of Spain was at the same time, with Lord Cottington, betraying the royal councils to the Roman Catholic parties. When the civil wars broke out, and Windebank offered to return from France, where he had flown from the Parliament, Charles could never be persuaded to receive again the faithless Secretary.

places, I know not how the fault will be remedied, only you should take notice of it, and then it would for ever make them your enemies."—*Sidney Papers*.

* In fact there is no coarseness in these familiar appellatives according to the style practised at that day. The King himself called his companions Dick, Will, &c., and so did the most elegant personages; the practice was continued through the reign of Charles the Second.

The other courtiers consisted of the silken creatures who flourish in the splendour, or fade in the decay of courts. Solely engaged in the petty interests of their own coteries, they are discriminated by Clarendon as "occupied in accommodating their fortunes in which they abounded not, or in their ease and pleasure which they most passionately affected, having no other consideration of the public than that no disturbance might interrupt their quiet in their own day." Among these courtiers there were indeed a few, continues the noble writer, "who had larger hearts, and more public spirits." These, however, would rest satisfied "to secure the empire at home by all peaceable arts and advancement of trade, which might gratify the people, and fill the empty coffers of the impoverished crown."

One of the earliest measures which the King adopted when he had decided to reign without a Parliament,—unhappily for the sovereign and the people he could not reign with one,—had not been heretofore practised by his royal predecessors,—it was to win over the popular leaders of the Parliament by admitting them into his councils. On this apparent concession on the monarch's side, our philosophical historian has acutely observed, that "it was a sure proof that a secret revolution had happened in the constitution, and had necessitated the prince to adopt new maxims of government." *

No intricate intrigues on one side, no repulsive embarrassments on the other, appear to have arisen, in inducing the opposition party to step out of their ranks, and to fix themselves in place and power. And we may farther observe, that at a later and more critical period, when the King contemplated repeating the same measure, the resistance was as feeble by even a more sturdy race of Patriots. Lord Say and Sele, who, with Lord Brooke and others, had decided to emigrate to America, when he had terrified the courtier Cottington to resign the Mastership of the Wards in his favour, became the servant of the King; and this Lord, who was not the most compliant of men, when in office appears to have so far courted the King's attention, that Charles implicitly trusted to his counsels. St. John, the dark-browed and sullen St. John, Commonwealth's-

* Hume, vi. 286.

man as he was, deigned to accept the Solicitorship, and all that can be urged in his favour is, that he was a traitor to his sovereign; for in violation of his official oath, this Solicitor-General, when in office, assisted the Commons to their utmost desire, with remonstrances, and petitions, and propositions against his master. The complete formation of this administration was interrupted by the death of the Earl of Bedford; but Holles was to have been Secretary of State; Pym had consented to be appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, which we may discover in a speech poured out in the hour of expectation, prodigal of promises to render the King more powerful and glorious than ever monarch had been; and Hampden was to have illuminated with his genius this new order of government, in the anomalous character of Preceptor of the Prince of Wales. But this new system of taking off the popular leaders by preferment had its inconvenience; the King lost his confidential servants in acquiring these new ones—and favours thus conceded multiplied claimants. Many were gaping for preferments which they could not obtain, and though some of these loud-tongued Patriots at first, we are told, were but hypocritical Republicans, their disappointments would not ill-fit them to become staunch Anti-monarchists.* After these great names had strengthened the ministry of Charles, a host of vociferous Patriots of the secondary class would not have abated their rage, and probably had improved their talents. Such would have been the Haselriggs, the Strodes, the Coritons.

In the earliest attempt of Charles to abstract some of the great leaders from the popular party, the King, except in the single instance of Wentworth, acquired no additional strength to his Government. The current of the Opposition had too great a depth to be diverted from its course by the sliding off of a few place-hunters, who, with cautious reserve, had only made a show of resistance in their courtly hostility. Such, among others, was Sir Dudley Digges; the rhetorical gentleman, who apologising for the country plainness of his style, had ransacked heaven and earth to paint the mystical elements of the English constitution,† but all the while he had been only flourishing a

* Sir Edmund Walker's Observations on Hamon L'Estrange, p. 328.

† I have previously noticed the speech of Sir Dudley.

foil, careful to hit with its guarded point. After these plunges in air Sir Dudley sate down a quiet Master of the Rolls. Saville of Yorkshire, the rival of Wentworth, who was acting with the Court, till provoked by the ascendancy of Wentworth, he passed over to the Opposition, by his double-dealing with the King and the Scots, proved himself a political traitor, yet he was admitted into the Privy Council, was attached to the royal household by the office of Comptroller, and finally created Lord Saville. The Earl of Northumberland, of whom we shall hereafter give a fuller history, was ever averse to the friendship which Charles proffered him, and even censured the Earl of Bedford for his noble attempt to conciliate parties, as one "gained over by the King," at the very moment Northumberland was himself in office. As Lord High-Admiral, the fleets of England under him were inactive; and when the Earl was appointed to the command of the army, he was more than once absent from sudden indisposition. When at length he surrendered the fleet to the Parliament, and thus abandoned his royal master, though he would not act against him, Charles with tender regret observed, "I have courted him as a mistress, I have conversed with him as a friend." The Earl of Leicester had been created Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, as a person agreeable to the Parliament, and he was so honourable a man, that it rendered him equally indecisive and indifferent; concurring with the Parliament, yet never disloyal to the sovereign.

These sudden defections, at two different periods, have always proved a sore point with those who will allow of nothing short of immaculate patriotism among the Parliamentary leaders. Oldmixon has the impudence, not unusual with him, to doubt the whole history of the designed administration of the Earl of Bedford with others, who had given as a pledge to save Strafford. This intemperate partisan exclaims—"Such unnatural changes may happen with your Wentworths, your Noys, Savilles, and Digbys, but not with gentlemen of solid principles and virtues." Oldmixon could not deny that the first race of Patriots had gone over to the Court, since they were actually in office; but as the proposed administration of the Earl of Bedford had not taken place, he contrived to insinuate that it was doubtful whether the party had ever consented to be the ministers of

Charles : but this is as certain as that they had made promises to the King, which went far beyond the limits of that severe patriotism which their names inspire. To these practices of the Opposition the King himself evidently alludes—his reproaches are precise. “Themselves know what overtures have been made by them, and with what importunity, for offices and preferments, what great services should have been done for us, and what other undertakings were (even to have saved the life of the Earl of Strafford) if we would confer such offices on them.”* Will any future Oldmixon venture to suggest that the King could have given to the people this particular declaration without the most certain evidence? Clarendon has even furnished the details of the whole design, and pointed out the places the respective parties were to occupy.

Mrs. Macaulay has given a more ingenious turn to this painful topic of compromising patriotism. As we are quite ignorant of the cause which made the King desist from his original intention, the female historian is at no loss to discover this piece of unrevealed history,—and we have it thus. “The incorruptible virtue which was found in these men, put a stop to most of the intended promotions ; Charles, finding that instead of acquiring partisans, he should be surrounded by troublesome monitors, if the intended change took place, let the design drop. It is thought that the leaders became more personally exasperated against him ; but there are no grounds for this supposition :” nor certainly any for this entire statement, which includes two pieces of secret history. Mrs. Macaulay informs us of the motive of Charles in not carrying on the projected administration ; and also assures us, that those who had accepted places, and might now consider themselves as dismissed ministers, were not at all offended. So placable were these enraged Patriots ! In this manner is party-history composed : the warped suggestions of the writer are perpetually supplying the absence of all real knowledge. She tells us farther, as an excuse for place-hunting, that the Patriots, in entering into office, had decided to oppose the Court with the same vigour and firmness as before ; which, she says, was the case with St. John, who, to do him but

* Husband’s Collections, 534.

justice, did all man could do to betray and ruin his royal master. We must, therefore, infer, that these Patriots in place, expected to render opposition to the King more agreeable to him in their characters of confidential servants, than those of his open adversaries. We think we form a juster notion of the sagacity of these able men, in not supposing that they could hope to retain power by a systematic hostility to him from whom they received it. If they meditated an incessant opposition to the King, their seats in Parliament had been a fitter place than the Privy Council. The higher motive which influenced these Patriots to accept of the highest places, the principal offices of State, we know not; the more ordinary one we do know.

Mr. Brodie, alluding to this remarkable defection of the patriotic party, satisfies himself with reasons to show, that it could never have succeeded according to the royal expectation, which, Mr. Brodie says, was intended for a coalition with Strafford. Incredible assertion! Charles, to have saved the life of Strafford, was ready to comply with any terms, even with banishment: and, however he hurt the dignity of the Earl, the King solemnly proposed that "The Earl should be incapacitated by Parliament to serve even as a constable."* Mr. Brodie then moralises on the little use of employing popular men, when they turn apostates, as they at that very instant lose their characters. The morality is good, the reasoning is sound, but they have only served to turn aside our attention from the subject itself. Were these Patriots apostates, or were they not? Did they not accept conditions and compromises? If some of them have escaped from incurring Mr. Brodie's denunciation against apostates, it must be confessed, that it was owing to their good fortune, in the King's declining their services.

The great man who first forsook the Opposition, was Sir Thomas Wentworth. Wentworth appeared an independent country gentleman: but he had always kept up a close intercourse with the Court at the close of James's reign; nor did he

* Mr. Hallam, with his usual candour, when he touches on the King's character, agrees with this. "It was a main object with the King to save the life of Strafford; entirely, as I am inclined to believe, from motives of conscience and honour, without any views of ever again restoring him to power," i. 560.

neglect his friends in office in the early part of Charles's. His letters touch playfully on political topics when dated from "Wentworth Wood-house," where, as he says, "his objects and thoughts are limited in looking upon a tulip, hearing a bird sing, a rivulet murmuring, or some such petty and innocent pastime." Innocent truly, when writing to his friend Sir George Calvert, principal Secretary of State, he laughs at "his cousin Wandesford," as being a Statist.* "Here I have matters of other guess stuff to relate: that our harvest is all in; a most fine season to make fish-ponds; our plums all gone and past; quinces and grapes almost fully ripe, which will, I trow, hold better relish with a Thistleworth palate (alluding to Calvert's residence), and approve me to have the skill to serve every man in his right cue. These only we countrymen muse of, hoping in such harmless retirements for a just defence from the higher powers, and, possessing ourselves in contentment, pray with Dryope in the poet:—

‘Et siqua est pietas, ab acutæ vulnere falcis
Et pecoris morsu frondes defendite nostras.’

But our rural statesman (for at bottom we shall find him one), was not so intently busied in healing the sharp wound of the shears, and in defending his hedges from the bite of the sheep, as not to threaten his courtly friend the Secretary of State, with saving subsidies from the grasp of their royal master, when "such unruly fellows meet in Parliament." "You think we see nothing; but believe it; you shall find us legislators no fools, albeit you of the Court think to blear our eyes with your sweet balls, and leave us in the suds when you have done. Thus much for the Commonweal!" So airy a politician, between jest and earnest, was hardly to be dreaded as the most stubborn of patriots: and when "the swain Wentworth" acknowledged that "he had leisure to pry saucily out of his own calling into mysteries of State," he assigns a sufficient reason—being "the true effects of want of employment."

In the early part of Charles's reign, Wentworth had not enjoyed the royal favour; for he had been imprisoned as a Loan-Recusant, had joined the political phalanx, and had been

* A politician; a person who concerns himself with State affairs.

pricked for Sheriff to prevent him taking his seat in Parliament. He had even been removed from an honourable appointment in his county; and, in his speech at a Yorkshire meeting, he insinuates that "the world may well think I knew the way which would have kept my place. I confess, indeed, it had been too dear a purchase." At the very moment he was raising this tone of independence, he addressed a confidential letter to Weston, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as querulous and supplicatory as the High Sheriff had just been bold and public-spirited in presence of the Yorkshire meeting. Here we find no allusions to his "innocent pastimes," and "the sheep which bite his hedges" seem to be loss of place and unrequited services. Wentworth apprehends the weight of his Majesty's indignation, being put out of all commissions wherein formerly he had served: he is sensible of his misfortunes, resting "infinitely ambitious, much rather to live under the smile than the frown of his Sovereign." He beseeches the Chancellor to take some good opportunity to represent to his Majesty his humble suit, reminding him "of the esteem his late Majesty held him in." In another letter, he declares his readiness to serve the Duke as "an honest man and a gentleman," reminding the Chancellor of an interview with the Duke, to which he had been privy, where his Grace contracted friendship for him, "all former mistakes laid asleep, forgotten." Yet, "for all this," he observes, "I was made Sheriff, and again have been discharged from the poor place of the Custos Rotulorum;—this is the reward of my painful and loyal service." We are curious to know more precisely what Wentworth meant by "all former mistakes laid asleep." Were these "mistakes" the jealousies he felt towards Buckingham, and the votes which he had given in the Commons? It is evident that there was a good deal of political coquetry in the patriotic independence of Sir Thomas Wentworth: and, as it is said, that in the acorn may be discerned the mighty ramifications of the oak, a political naturalist might have detected in the country baronet the rudiments of the future branches,—the Lord President of the Council of the North, the Viceroy of Ireland, and the renowned Earl of Strafford. We owe to Mr. Brodie a valuable detection in the history of Strafford: the fierce, patriotic speeches which have

been often ascribed to Sir Thomas Wentworth, were, in fact, delivered by a Mr. Thomas Wentworth, member for Oxford, who appears to have been hunted out of that city by the influence of the University, against whom he had raised the townsmen. The dereliction of Sir Thomas Wentworth is not, therefore, so glaring as when the vehement speeches of his relative were ascribed to him. His own speeches in the House were usually moderate. Although he had divided with the Opposition members, he was hardly one of them: he affected to treat contemptuously Sir John Eliot,—for he would suffer no rival,—nor could he find any difficulty in assigning reasons for the desertion of his party. Whenever higher and new interests cross the views of a politician, the faults of his old friends become every day more prominent; and while his delicacy on that side becomes more and more fastidious, it is remarkable that it grows less and less nice on the side of his new friends. Honours and power, we see, could bend the sternest pride in Strafford; and the flattery of a Court could dissolve even the ruggedest and the most uncourtly nature in the Attorney-General Noy.

This famous Attorney-General of Charles the First, the inventor of Ship-money, had distinguished himself among the zealous friends of civil freedom, and had often wrestled with the royal prerogative. An unwearying lawyer, entrenched among statutes and records, a reveller in parliamentary rolls, whose searching curiosity was insatiable, and whose subtile distinctions were perpetually altering the case. When anagrams were in fashion descriptive of the persons, *William Noy* verified his own—

“ I moyl in Law.”

He had searched with incessant delight for precedents favouring the liberty of the subject; but in this pursuit it seems he had also ferreted out precedents which suited the prerogative. These dark researches among our ancient records had cast a veil of mystery over this oracle of Law—Good or Evil hung on his lips—and it has been alleged, that in the pride of his recondite erudition, were precedents wanting, Noy would value himself in “making that law which all other men believed not to be so.”

The singularity of his manners had attracted as much notice as his eminence at the bar. Noy was a rough humourist ; but the blunt cynical spirit which unfitted him to flatter others, had, it seems, the weakness of listening to flattery ; he, who disdained to court, had not the greatness of mind which disdains to be courted. The Government party extolled him to his face, and to cajole him the more securely, praised him behind his back : the bear licked the honey which he found trickling from rocks. " He was bewitched to become the King's," cried his old associates—" He suffered himself to be made the King's Attorney-general," observes Clarendon.

When the King sent for Noy to confer on him the office of his Attorney-General, there were " many merry tales," says a contemporary letter-writer. Noy, with his habitual churlishness, returned no thanks for the proffered honour, but struck his bargain with his royal client. Declaring that he was now well-cliented when he should be his Majesty's sworn servant in that place, he held it very unfitting to dishonour his Majesty, or the place, so much as to be called for, and run from bar to bar to gain fees from other clients, and therefore he would know what wages should be allowed ? When a messenger, as was usual, was ordered to attend on the new Attorney-General, Noy could not endure the trusty follower at his heels. This appearance of serving him seemed an espionage ; often angrily scowling on the messenger, Noy at length ordered him home, " lest the people," cried the cynic, " who have always seen me walk free and alone, should fancy me a state-prisoner."

Noy, the most profound of lawyers, is an instance that mere knowledge is not true wisdom. If we are struck by the comprehension of his understanding, we may equally be so at the narrowness of his views ; ready at cases, most erudite in precedents, and skilful in arguments for his own side, he would observe nothing but law—and passed unobserved the temper of the times. A great lawyer may be but a petty statesman and a smaller patriot.

Noy, in fact, sanctioned, and even originated, the most unpopular measures, devices contrived to cover the odium of taxation. Frequent proclamations harassed the people by new arbitrary regulations on trivial and domestic concerns ; Noy

legalised the absurd soap-project, and contrived the odious tax of ship-money. In times of danger from an invading enemy, our kings had required ships to be furnished by the several ports; but it now appeared to the people, that money was to be levied instead of ships, and inland men, secure in their counties, were to furnish invisible fleets, which only passed through the Exchequer. This expedient was considered by Noy as an unfailing source of revenue, and, as Clarendon has forcibly described it, as "a spring that should have no bottom, and for an everlasting supply." The late advocate for guarding the property of the subject could now only discover whatever referred to the property of the Crown. The affairs of the nation were now to be regulated by two paper books, or slips of notes, which the great lawyer had extracted from the dusty parchments of the Tower; and being a humourist, it is said, they were deposited in an ample pie-crust which his mother had sent him for a Christmas gift. The Apostate of Freedom, in the violent style of the times, was now saluted as "a Papist and an Atheist;" and in the witty libels of that day, on his death, which happened within three years of his appointment (for he lived not to witness the calamity he had occasioned, nor to defend his favourite project), papers stuck on posts announced that "the Attorney-General's body having been opened, there was found in his head a bundle of proclamations; in his maw, moth-eaten records; and in his belly, a barrel of soap."

Noy was probably himself not insensible to that fluctuation of the moral principle, which too often occurred, when political expedience was strained by him into what he might have deemed political justice; and a rule of government was too often made by him into a rule of law. With at least the honesty of a lawyer, he was as zealous a guardian of the King's cause, as he had ever been to any of his former clients. When he knew his Sovereign personally, and witnessed the royal distresses, we cannot now decide in what degree his place might have warped his patriotism, or his patriotism have melted into sympathy. Fuller, however, has recorded an anecdote of this Attorney-General, which happened in his presence, and which indicates a latent feeling. Noy was at the annual ceremony of weighing the Pix by the Goldsmiths' Company; a solemn custom

instituted for trying the standard-weight of gold, as a check on the master of the mint. The Master of the Company observed that the scales were so perfectly true, that they would turn with the two-hundredth part of a grain. "I would not that my actions should be weighed in these scales," exclaimed the tender-hearted cynic with his blunt honesty. The morose sagacity of this legal humourist appeared in his curt will, which he left in Latin. Having bequeathed his second son a small annual stipend, and a sum in money sufficient, as he said, to bring him up in his father's profession, the residue of his great wealth was left to his eldest son—"to waste, for nothing better have I ever hoped." This son was so rapidly verifying his father's prediction, that he is called in a contemporary letter "the dissipanding Noy;" but he was prevented completing the prophecy by falling in a mad duel.

Noy, with this perfect conviction of the fate of his idle accumulations of fortune, might have afforded more wisely to have remained a patriot. But Noy was only a lawyer, proud of his legal studies. Equally dexterous on either side, it was not the cause he advocated which he cared for, but the authorities and precedents, the Rolls and the Records, which maintained it, and in which he gloried. His rough humour only concealed the strong personal vanity of the man, and when the subtile courtiers submitted to cajole the pride of the uncourtly man, could the cynic be sensible of his own inferiority?

CHAPTER XXX.

OF THE NEW MINISTERS—LAUD.

AMONG the members of the new Cabinet, there were three Ministers, who seemed to Charles to possess the rare talent of government. In their individual counsels he sought for that practical wisdom, which under his own eye, was to strengthen his feeble and irregular conduct. To Strafford he consigned the difficult government of Ireland; to Laud the administration and maintenance of the Church; and to the Marquis of

Hamilton the secret conduct of the affairs of his turbulent countrymen. It is remarkable of the monarch and his three Ministers, that they all perished on the scaffold.

In the choice of these Ministers, an unity in the design of the monarch is obvious. His policy was to reign by the emulative zeal of men elevated into power only secondary to his own, and who had each a distinct object to accomplish in their scheme of government. The Archbishop and the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, were not ordinary courtiers; they were both earnest and laboriously active. Laud had for his principle conformity to the ecclesiastical discipline; Strafford, an undisputed obedience to the civil power. Laud, in prosecuting "Schismatics," and listening to the accommodators of Romanism with Protestantism, contemplated establishing unity by uniformity. Strafford seems to have flattered himself that he could gradually bring Ireland to a conformity of religion with England;* and he felt the consciousness of genius in the ability of his own administration. These Ministers of State attempted, as other statesmen have done, to restrain or abolish a rival minority in the State; neither seemed to be aware that the same spirit which had raised up the Reformation, so closely connected with civil freedom, would act against those who ceased to be reformers when they assumed the character of persecutors, making the separation still more wide, and driving desperate men to the martyrdom of infamous punishments, or cruel exiles. But we must not so hastily condemn Laud, who was not a genius above his age, since the philosophical Lord Bacon considered that uniformity in religion was absolutely necessary; and though we may smile at Laud's attempt at reconciling the two great churches, yet a man of far more elevated genius, the illustrious Grotius, meditated the same result, and for the first step towards reconciling this ancient family quarrel, zealously laboured to prove that the Pope was not the Anti-Christ, at which Bishop Hurd, and other good Protestants, express their astonishment, and persist in so expounding the Apocalypse.

* The passage is remarkable: in a letter of Strafford to the King, i. 367, he calls it "far the greatest service that can be done unto your crown on this side—to make us an happy and secure people within ourselves;"—but there was some mystery in

As early as the dissolution of the last Parliament, Leighton, who afterwards so severely suffered, indicated the purposes of the two great Ministers, who, studious of each other, accorded in their councils, and moved together in their acts. Of these Ministers, the Puritan Leighton observed that "They were on the way of a dangerous conjunction; the ill effects these three kingdoms had felt, like the sun and the moon to govern day and night, religion and state."

This then was to be "the new councils," and "the intended alteration both in church and state," which had spread an alarm among the numerous parties which were now forming against the government. Much depended on the characters of the Ministers. The system itself seemed wise and laudable; but whether the result was to produce that universal conformity which will always be the secret desire of every Statesman, or whether "this sun and moon in their dangerous conjunction" were to cover the land with the darkness of despotic power, could only be read in the Book of Fate. On one side the Star Chamber, ever open to uphold the Royal prerogative, was invested with a vigour beyond the laws; on the other, the High Commission Court, to quell the hydra of schism, with a power beyond human nature. Awful expedient of a barbarous government to rule a barbarous people; but Charles found them, he did not raise them. We might here ask, had Charles the First, when he formed this design of strengthening the Church and the State, decided to render himself absolute? Did he consider that his prerogative consisted in arbitrary power? If he were the tyrant he is artfully represented to have been, he certainly did. He himself, however, professed to govern by the laws, and consulted their oracles. Unhappily for this Monarch, he reigned at a period when the nicest points of prerogative and privilege came into collision; when much which was established, was about to be subverted; and he who could have ruled his people in peace, had to encounter them in insurrection.

Early in his reign, the King had contemplated on the elevation of the mode. "Many things will fall continually in debate at the Board, with which it will be very unfit any of the contrary religion (the Catholics) be acquainted." Did Strafford foresee invincible difficulties, while he boldly attempted to face them? Catholic emancipation has been our sole drastic measure; but in Charles's day it would have occasioned the death of the prescriber rather than the patient.

tion of the temporal power of the National Church. The hierarchy was an arm of the regal power, and the curt axiom of his father, against the anti-prelatists, of "no Bishop, no King!" was an authority too often referred to by Doctors of Divinity, in the last pressure of argument. So early in the present period was found that strict "alliance between Church and State," which Hooker, the favourite author of Charles, had assumed to be but different denominations of the same society. A theory which Warburton denied by striking out one of those paradoxes which are even weaker than the theory they confute.

Charles had scarcely ascended the throne, when one day he suddenly summoned the Bishops, and, as Laud has told us, chid them for their silence in the cause of the Church, during the sitting of Parliament, leaving him at a loss to know what would be useful or prejudicial to them. Such a reprimand was sufficient to excite some activity even among the listless, and a more stirring spirit among the ambitious.

Churchmen were now appointed to Lay-offices. Laud himself sate among the Commissioners of the Exchequer on the demise of the Lord Treasurer Weston, the Earl of Portland, in a committee of Trade and Revenue. The closet studies of the Bishop were ill-fitted to the Customs; he kept cautiously and pertinaciously to the laws, but there are occasions which require new laws, and which render the old ones obsolete. There were merchants on one side, and wharfingers on the other, divided by opposite interests: the only satisfaction Laud appears to have found, was the many complaints they furnished him with of the late Lord Treasurer Weston, whom he disliked.

At length, when it became necessary to dispose of the office of Lord High Treasurer, to which the highest of the nobility looked as their meed of honour and power, and by which, through the last and the present reign, they had usually improved their own estates, more than the Royal treasury; all men were amazed that the staff was consigned to another churchman, Bishop Juxon, a private chaplain of the King, and a name hitherto unknown to the public. This arrangement entered into the system of Laud, it was a splendid evidence of his zeal for the Church, and a confirmation of his own power. The entry in his diary records the triumph. "William Juxon,

Lord Bishop of London, made Lord High Treasurer of England. No churchman had it since Henry the Seventh's time. I pray God bless him to carry it so that the Church may have honour, and the King and the State, service and contentment by it. And now, if the Church will not hold up themselves under God, I can do no more."

In all this, the integrity of Laud need not be suspected, for Bishop Juxon justified his sanguine hopes. So irreproachable was the life of Juxon, that after having attended on the last moments of his unhappy Sovereign, who then so emphatically distinguished him as "the honest man," he lived unmolested through all the changes of the governments of England. When the Church was unbishoped, one Bishop was left whom the anti-prelatists could not bring themselves to hate: Juxon had held the crosier and the white staff with the same equanimity; and the honours which he had never sought, he had yielded up with the same content of mind and gentleness of manners, with which he had worn them. Whitelocke, noticing his favourite recreation, tells us "his pack of hounds exceeded all others in England for their orderly and pleasant going in couples, by his own skill and direction," and characterises the Bishop's temper with happy pleasantry, for having "as much command of himself as of his hounds." *

But the policy of promoting Churchmen to the most eminent places of public trust and honour was fatal. Were we to become "a Kingdom of Priests?" It inflated the temporal pride of the Prelacy, and fed their grosser appetite of political ambition. An ill-natured rumour of the day made Wren, Bishop of Norwich, a Secretary of State; and Bancroft, Bishop of Oxford, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Even "the young fry of the Clergy," the frivolous and the mean, grew haughty to

* It is amusing to detect party writers disingenuously eluding any point which they conceive may injure their purpose. Dr. Z. Grey, in his notes on Neal, probably from some vulgar prejudice, thought that *hunting* was no favourable characteristic of the Episcopal character; and, having to refer to Whitelocke's impartial statement for the Bishop's excellent temper, he contrived an expedient, thus quoting the words of Whitelocke, "Juxon was a person of great parts and temper, and had much command of himself, &c." This &c. includes the whole pack of hounds! Dr. Grey might have left to some Puritan his fanatical conceit. The healthful exercise which the Bishop practised, is one of those indifferent actions which stand unconnected with morality, and should no more be deprecated than a Bishop's morning ride.

their neighbours, when generally chosen as Justices of the Peace. Bishop Wren once let fall an unguarded declaration, which was so frequently repeated, that having been noticed in the House of Commons, it has entered into history. This ecclesiastic "hoped to see the day when a clergyman should be as good a man as any upstart Jack-gentleman in the kingdom." Bishop Wren lived long enough to witness "the upstart Jacks," those commoners whose wealth had spread their influence, and whose puritanic principles were opposed to episcopacy, tread down that hierarchy, while he himself, condemned to an imprisonment of eighteen years by the "Jack-gentlemen," lived long enough not to be humbled, but to repent of a hasty and undisguised expression.

This advancement of the ecclesiastics was never forgiven by the affronted nobility, nor even by the jealous lawyers: the lawyer Whitelocke is sore, and the courtier Clarendon murmurs. The Parliamentary historian has preserved the prevalent feeling in the report of that day, that it was intended "to fix the greatest temporal preferments upon others of that coat; insomuch as the people merrily, when they saw the Treasurer with the other Bishops riding to Westminster, called it the Church triumphant. Doctors and parsons of parishes were made everywhere Justices of Peace." May candidly observes, that "the Archbishop, by the same means which he used to preserve his clergy from contempt, exposed them to envy, and, as the wisest could then prophesy, to a more than probability of losing all."*

The leviathan of the church was to be Laud. Laud had no gifted mind: his capacity was not extensive, but his confined intellect was quickened by subtilty, and restless in its irritable activity. If unequal to take far and comprehensive views, his perception of the objects near to him had a vividness which looked like genius; but in truth, he only saw distinctly by parts. This faculty, however, enabled him to rebut the minute and harassing charges brought against him, on that day which may emphatically be called his trial. These vexatious charges, Laud generally answered with astonishing promptitude, so retentive was his memory of obscure transactions and petty personalities, years after they had occurred. A loftier genius,

* May's History of the Parliament of England, p. 33.

embracing more enlarged designs, could hardly have treasured up such incidents, or remembered such persons ; but to Laud, the minute seemed great. An obscure person who had controverted a point of Church discipline—a Sectarian minister who had been suspended—or the occasion of a person's dislike of him, which was often shown by their ill-natured evidence, were never forgotten. Even the names of some country residents were recollected who had been censured for quarrels with churchwardens, or for contemptuous language, as when a Puritan had said that “the rails,” which were ordered to inclose the communion-table, “were fitter to be set up in his garden.” When very obscure persons were giving evidence concerning certain houses which had been pulled down to repair and enlarge St. Paul's, which, though compensation was allowed, was alleged as one of the grievances of his administration, who could have imagined that the Archbishop was perfectly familiar with their domestic history ? Of these complainants Laud showed how one was sore because it had disturbed his brewery ; and the other, because he rented the parsonage-house, and made a good pennyworth by letting it to his under-tenant.—“It was,” said Laud, “the going down of that house which troubled him, and not the church.” Even notes taken from an inflammatory sermon were all remembered by him in the seventy-second year of his age, after a three years' imprisonment, as the business of yesterday. If the intellect of Laud were neither expansive nor elevated, it was earnest, ready, and practical.

A mind thus deeply busied in the minuter affairs of life was necessarily subjected to its peculiar infirmities. Laud was petulant, passionate, and impatient of contradiction on whatever thwarted his purposes ; as restless to establish his own innovations as to put down those of others. The political prudence of James the First had early discovered his character, and what he said of Laud, which has fortunately been preserved for us, is only one of the many splendid instances of the sagacity of that monarch, whose ability has been so grossly depreciated.

Laud, in his domestic manners, had the bluntness and hastiness of a monastic character. Abrupt in his reception of per-

sons, and remarkably sharp in his tones, he was often considered to speak in anger, when nothing was so intended: he owned this often troubled him; it was the imperfection of a thin voice, and a want of courtesy, which he was often reminded of by those who complained of their reception, and resented it. The austere monastic character was prevalent. He was one who had little sympathy with his fellow-men when he quitted his cell, and although he congratulated himself in the sad years of his protracted sufferings, that he had lived a life of celibacy, and left neither wife nor child to inherit his griefs, yet wanting these, or their substitute in some ardent friendship, to keep alive the social affections, with Laud all personal felicity terminated in barren glory and abstract feelings, to raise the grandeur of the hierarchy, or to endow a college; passions which may gratify the imagination without touching the heart.

Mr. Hallam has severely said of Laud, that "he could not have been a good man in private life." This cannot well be said of a man whose sole passion was his ambition, and whose personal character was unstained by any vice. To be an amiable man was denied him, both by his habits and his constitutional temper; his petulance was sure to offend, and his impatience of contradiction unfitted him either for the council-table or the chambers of domestic life. It is evident, even by the favourable portrait which Clarendon has drawn of the Archbishop, that men of another cast of mind, the witty and politic, such as the wily Bishop Williams, and the cool dissimulative Cottington, too often played on the simplicity of Laud. His gravity could endure no *persiflage*. Laud cruelly persecuted Williams for a contemptuous jest, and turned out Archy, the King's fool, for a pun. Lord Cottington delighted to prick his warm temper into "some indecent passion;" when Laud, equally honest and weak, would apologise with an afflicting sincerity, while he who had so artfully offended laughed in his sleeve. Cottington, we are told, often made "an unkind use" of these occasions. He knew how to lead Laud into some blunder, then drive him into choler, and then slyly expose the artless and hasty man—often before the King; and on the next day he would dine with Laud, whose honest simplicity admired the friendship which would not be offended by some hasty words. Laud appears

never to have detected the insidious malice which, instead of receiving an apology, should have offered one.*

A worldly ambition was the ruling passion of this man of God, more than ought to have entered into the sanctuary of the soul, where piety should shine as the Shechinah. The passion of court preferment for many years had haunted his very dreams, and had plunged him into all its mean servilities; but the pride of rank was attended by one of its peculiar infirmities. Laud was often violently discomposed at being reminded of his plebeian origin. This forcibly indicates his contracted spirit. The Puritans, with whom the humble origin of the Primate who "was not born a gentleman," should have been no objection, would sometimes put this weakness to the torture, more sure to mortify the Prelate, by asserting that he was born *E fæce plebis*, than by all their other libels. He seems to have sought to throw over the obscurity of his family a veil of tissue, by the state and distance which he rigidly kept with all persons. When Mr. Hyde, then a young man, in confidential conversation, touched on this delicate point, Laud frankly replied that he considered this reserve and dignity suitable to the place and degree he held in the Church and the State. Doubtless it was some satisfaction for him to allege, that Abbot, the puritanic Archbishop, was not better born than himself; and Abbot's behaviour to the highest nobility in the kingdom, was such as to border on insolence.† Laud stood the colossus of his own cast; and the Court Divines, as mundane as their great model, deceived their patron by the usual practice of all limited circles, communicating what was pleasant to learn, and suppressing what would have been very disagreeable. Such a personage as Laud is doomed to have dependents, and not friends. Mr. Hyde has made a remarkable observation on the Archbishop. "Persons of that condition, [he alludes to the higher order of the clerical,] how worthy soever, have rarely friendships with men above their own condition. They receive, for the most part, their information from clergymen, who understand the

* At the close of Lord Clarendon's first book is a remarkable instance of this malicious *persiflage*, or what we now call quizzing, played upon Laud by Cottington. The occasion was as honourable to Laud's integrity as it proved unfavourable to his discernment.

† The Life of Lord Clarendon, i. 15.

least, and take the worst measure of human affairs, of all mankind that can write and read." There is a severity of truth in this reflection, but it is not peculiar to the ecclesiastical character. All men of the learned professions, who live in one restricted circle, are liable to suffer from this same scanty source of human feelings and human knowledge. Their own views and their own habits form their contracted horizon. Had Laud been a great Sergeant, would Lord Chancellor Hyde have applied the same reflection? Probably not: yet there are few great lawyers whose minds are not wholly warped by their habits of thinking, and who do not judge of human nature more by cases and precedents, than by any intimate conversancy with the human heart and with society at large. And thus it is, on the reverse principle, that physicians have, in all ages, formed the most enlightened class in society, because they mingle with their fellow men.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PRIVATE LIFE OF CHARLES THE FIRST. LOVE OF THE ARTS.

THERE was an interval, a short interval, between the dissolution of the third Parliament in 1628, and the rising troubles in Scotland in 1638, when we may describe the King as at peace with himself, as no longer daily harassed by a discontented Parliament, and as yet a stranger to adversities unparalleled in the history of princes. During these ten years, Charles indulged more uninterruptedly a passion for the arts of imagination. Picture, sculpture, architecture, and music, and not less literature, charmed these few happier years. Nor were these tastes a late acquirement with Charles the First: they were no feeble pursuit, taken up as the resource of the idler;—no cold reflected taste, caught up from others. They were the virgin fancies of his studious days; and when banished from them, in his wanderings, and in the camp or in the prison, they still occupied his musings.

Many evidences of such recollections still exist. I have seen a written order by Charles the First, when in confinement in

the Isle of Wight, addressed to the learned Patrick Young, his librarian, about the books of St. James's, and to the great antiquary, Sir Symonds D'Ewes, the keeper of his medals, concerning their respective objects; so intent was his elegant mind on those treasures of literature and art, of which being deprived, he accounted these deprivations not among the least of the many he then endured. Mr. Upcott had also a note of Charles to Secretary Nicholas, at the time the King was with the Scots, in which he orders certain volumes to be sent to him, and points out their particular situation in one of his apartments at Whitehall.

The domestic habits of this Sovereign seem ennobled by their intellectual refinement. Ingenious himself in all the arts of ingenuity, his sensibility to art was that of an artist, his critical discernment that of the connoisseur. With some monarchs, pride or pomp have shed a golden patronage over Art, as over one of their lesser glories: with Charles the First, the passion was the devotion of a votary, loving Art only for itself. Though avowedly neither a painter nor a poet, he could handle the pencil and compose a verse. He suggested subjects to the two great painters of his age, to his great architect, and to dramatic poets. Secret history only, reveals this softening feature in the grave and king-like character of Charles the First. A prince without art and literature is only one of the people on the throne.

Charles the First unquestionably was the first English monarch who opened galleries of paintings and statues; domiciliated the genius of Italian architecture; and in the ardour of his capacious designs, meditated at no distant day, to call around his Throne, what lay scattered in Europe—a world of glory as yet unconquered by his people. To have overcome the difficulties which the efforts of this Prince had to contend with, is not less admirable than the grand object which he did realise, and the still grander ones which he has left to our imagination. Had Whitehall Palace been completed as it was contemplated by Charles the First, and conceived by Inigo Jones, the Louvre and the Escorial would have found in our calumniated island, among “the clouds of the North,” a more magnificent rival. The ceiling of the Banqueting-room, at Whitehall, was painted by Rubens; and it was the intention of Charles that Vandyke

should have covered the walls with the history of the order of the Garter, in a friendly emulation with his master. This hall of audience for ambassadors, is stated to be only the fifty-fifth part of this gorgeous palace. But the paintings of Vandyke for the edifice of Inigo Jones exist only in a sketch in *chiaroscuro*; by the civil wars the nation lost the glory of the paintings and the palace.

The first collector of the productions of the fine arts in our country, was that Earl of Arundel, whose memorable marbles perpetuate his name. Before his day we cannot discover in England any single gallery of pictures and statues, nor cabinets of medals and engraved gems. A collection of Queen Elizabeth's rarities, exhibited the lowest tastes of elaborate toys and frivolous curiosities. This travelled Earl, who had repeatedly visited the Continent, and more particularly the land of his admiration and his love, Italy, exhausted his wealth and his magnificence in the prodigality of his fine tastes. Of this father of our arts, Walpole tells, that "He was the first who discovered the genius of Inigo Jones; and in his embassy to Vienna, he found Hollar at Prague"—and did not leave him there! To this Earl, as Peacham has felicitously expressed it, "This angle of the world oweth the first sight of Grecian and Roman statues;" and Lily notices, that "this Earl brought the new way of building with brick in the city." The tastes of the noble collector were caught by the aspiring genius of Prince Henry, who left a considerable collection of medals. Thus the germs of a cultivated taste for the arts were first scattered in the gardens and the galleries of Arundel-house. Charles succeeded to his brother with a more decided propensity, and with a royal decision, that all the arts of invention, or of imagination, should no longer be foreign to England.

We discover Charles when Prince of Wales deeply busied with the arts; and at that early period, he designed inviting great artists to England. Offers of this nature he never ceased to make to those great foreigners, whose immortal names still attest that there was no mediocrity in the royal taste. The history of a manufacture of fine gold and silver tapestry shows this early ardour. This manufacture, introduced into this country by Sir Francis Crane, and established at Mortlake, in

Surrey, the young Prince not only patronised, but conceived the idea of improving the splendid material by finer designs. Sir Henry Wotton, our ambassador at Venice, by order of the Prince, procured Cleyne, the painter, to reside in England, for the purpose of inventing the designs. Charles built a residence for the artist, whose subjects, both in history and grotesque, were a great improvement on the rude gothic figures which they had hitherto worked on. Fine and rich tapestries were the most valued of domestic ornaments, and to raise to the utmost perfection the Mortlake tapestry was so favourite an object with the young Prince, that when at Madrid, amidst love and revels, the Mortlake tapestry was still in his thoughts, for he wrote to his council to pay 700*l.* for some Italian drawings for tapestry. The taste of the youthful patron was rising faster than the genius of Cleyne could advance; for Charles now sought for subjects which were of a higher character of art than the grotesque fancy of Cleyne invented. Rubens was afterwards employed, when Charles was King, in painting sketches of the history of Achilles, to be copied in tapestry at Mortlake, and Charles purchased the seven Cartoons of Raphael for the purpose of supplying more elevated subjects for this tapestry. It was no fault of Charles the First that we did not anticipate the gobelins of Louis XIV.

It was on the accession to his throne that Charles made the greatest effort for the acquisition of pictures and statues. The sum may seem to us trivial for a royal purchase, yet it was an effort which the King could never repeat. Charles purchased the entire cabinet of the Duke of Mantua for a sum supposed to be under twenty thousand pounds; which, Mr. Dallaway observes, the King found no very easy business to pay. It should, however, be observed, that such noble productions of art had not then reached the large prices which afterwards the possessors—never the artists—obtained. It was the taste of Charles the First, and the splendour of Philip the Fourth of Spain, which first raised their value in the estimation of Europe. At the dispersion of the collection of paintings of Charles the First, their number amounted to about five hundred pictures, besides many which had been embezzled. When we consider the straitened means of the King, and the short space of fifteen

years in which that collection had been formed, we have evidence how earnestly it occupied the royal attention, and the whole may be considered as his own creation. The foundation of this royal collection of pictures was a few Italian and Flemish paintings, which, in the days of Henry the Eighth, had been scattered among our palaces, lying unregarded as old furniture, and which, we are told, had received scarcely a single accession in the succeeding reigns. At all times Charles had in his mind his collection, and called the attention of his friends, or his agents, to his aid.* When the Marquis of Hamilton was acting under the King of Sweden, in a campaign in Germany, the King adds this postscript to one of his letters, "I hope shortly you will be in a possibility to perform your promise concerning pictures and statues of Muncken; therefore now in earnest do not forget it."† Nor was the monarch less careful in their preservation; for when the Queen's great Masque was to be performed at Whitehall, Charles ordered a temporary building to be erected for this spectacle at a considerable charge, lest his pictures in the Banqueting-house should be damaged by the lights.‡

Charles the First acknowledged that he had learned much by conversation. It is certain that he encouraged a familiar intercourse with travellers, artists, mechanics, and men of science. With such persons he threw off the habitual reserve of his character. The good sense of his inquiries inspired the confidence of communication, and this monarch rarely left ingenious men, without himself contributing some information on the objects of their own pursuits. Charles could suggest a touch, even a hint, to the unfinished canvas of Rubens and Vandyke. The King himself pursued with delight the arts of design, and it has been recorded that Rubens corrected some of his drawings, and that the King handled, not without skill, the pencil of that great master. The libellous author of "the None-such Charles," notices his general inclination to all arts and sciences; "his excelling so far in them as that he might have got a livelihood by them." Lily contents himself with telling us that Charles was not unskilful in music—the truth is,

* The King was always highly gratified by the present of a painting from his ambassadors.

† Burnet's Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton, 22.

‡ Strafford's Letters, ii. 140.

that his ear and his hand were musical. The King had been taught the Viol di Gamba, and was a pupil of Coperario, or John Cooper, a celebrated English musician, who, on his return from Italy, assumed this fantastic appellation. Playford, who had frequent opportunities to observe the delight of Charles the First in music, tells us, that the King would often appoint the service and anthems himself, and accompany them, "especially those incomparable fancies of Mr. Coperario, to the organ."

Charles could plan a palace with Inigo Jones, and decide on the age of a medal with Selden. Such, indeed, had been his early studies, that a learned man has described him "as that great antiquary Charles the First." The illustrious Harvey, in one of his writings, recounts with singular gratification the delight Charles received from observations made by that great anatomist while dissecting before the King the deer in Hampton-court.* The numerous works which the King suggested to authors, and the critical judgment with which he decided on works of literature, place Charles the First among the most literary monarchs. His critical conceptions were quick; for when Sir Edward Walker was reading his manuscript Memoirs to the King, in recording an incident of the soldiers stripping some of the Parliamentary troopers of their clothes, he had expressed himself with levity—"Our soldiers freed them of the burthen of their clothes,"—the King instantly interrupted the reader, observing, "Fie! that is ill said, and it was worse done!" We know that the King read the manuscript plays, and once corrected a rant which Massinger had put in the mouth of a tyrant against the freedom of his subjects.† The folio Shakespeare of Charles, with the motto he frequently wrote in his books, has at length become the possession of his present Majesty [William IV.]; the King altered some of the titles of the plays; and the motto, *Dum Spiro Spero*, was prompted at moments, perhaps, when the monarch, in trouble, or in prison, indulged some bright vision.‡ He was fond of leaving these

* Gen. Anim. exere. 64, p. 422.

† Malone, ii. 387.

‡ See Bindley's Catalogue, part 2 (1431). Sir Richard Fanshaw gave a copy of his Greverini to the King as late as in 1647, then, imprisoned, he wrote in it "*Dum Spiro, Spero*. c. R."

testimonies of his elevated feelings among his books, for another has been noticed—

“ *Rebus in adversis facile est contemnere vitam ;
Fortiter ille facit qui miser esse potest.*”

“ In adversity it is easy to despise life ; true courage can suffer misery.”

Charles suggested to the poet Shirley the plot of “*The Gamesters.*” May’s version of Lucan was received with all the favour of royalty, a circumstance alluded to by Ben Jonson, by comparing the fate of the English bard with Lucan’s—

“ *Thy fame is equal, happier is thy fate,
Thou hast got Charles’s love, he, Nero’s hate.*”

There are some delightful literary anecdotes of Charles. The King had been harassed by the zealot Obadiah Sedgwick repeatedly pressing him for his opinion on his fanatical “*Leaves of the Tree of Life ;*” a mystical explanation of the second verse of the twenty-second chapter of the Revelations. The King, having read part of the manuscript, returned it, with his opinion, that, “*After such a work, he believed the composer stood in need of some sleep.*” The happy ambiguity of this playful criticism, accepted in the better sense, gratified this Parliamentary preacher. There was some Cervantic humour in Charles’s gravity. When pressed by a Parliamentary Commissioner to conclude the treaty, the King ingeniously replied, “*Mr. Buckley, if you call this a treaty, consider if it be not like the fray in the comedy, where the man comes out, and says, ‘There has been a fray, and no fray ;’ and being asked how that could be, ‘Why,’ says he, ‘there hath been three blows given, and I had them all !’ Look, therefore, if this be not a parallel case.*” The conversation of Charles on many occasions, shows that he possessed intellectual powers to which his historians have rarely alluded. The famous Oceana Harrington, when commissioned by Parliament to attend on the King, attracted the monarch’s notice by his ingenuousness and his literature. Harrington was a republican in principle, and the King and he often warmly disputed on the principles of a good government. One day Charles recited to him some well-known lines of Claudian, descriptive of the happiness of the people under a just king.

Harrington was struck by the King's abilities, and from that moment never ceased to admire the man. Charles displayed the same ability at the Treaty of the Isle of Wight, where he conducted the negotiation alone, his lords and gentlemen standing behind his chair in silence. That occasion called forth all his capacity; and it was said, that the Earl of Salisbury, on the Parliament's side, observed, that "The King was wonderfully improved:" to which Sir Philip Warwick replied, "No, my Lord! the King was always the same, but your Lordship has too late discovered it."

In a conversation on writing plays in rhyme, one party affirming that the bondage of rhyme would confine the fancy, and Lord Orrery being of a contrary opinion, as arbiter, Charles commanded his Lordship to employ some of his leisure in a dramatic composition, in rhyme, which produced "The Black Prince." But it was not only in the lighter graces of poesy that the fine taste of Charles delighted: more serious and elevated objects equally engaged his attention. Charles was desirous that the national history should be composed by a man of genius. He had been pleased with the historical Essay of Lord Bacon's Henry the Seventh. With great judgment he fixed on Sir Henry Wotton for a complete history; and to stimulate that very elegant writer, granted him a munificent pension of five hundred pounds. Charles unquestionably was himself a writer of the history of his own times; and however we may determine on the authenticity of the much disputed *Icon Basilike*, there will be found some portions, and some peculiar expressions, which it is not probable, perhaps possible, that any one could have written but himself.*

* Mr. Brodie, who studies at every point to depreciate the better qualities of Charles the First, has been particularly anxious to assert the spuriousness of some writings assigned to the King. Of the controversy between Charles the First and Alexander Henderson, the head of the Presbyters, respecting Church Government, Mr. Brodie, though he acknowledges that this "so far-famed production is never read," (for certainly there is no occasion for it;) yet, grudging even the slender merit of Charles, for having produced "a far-famed work never read," he winds up with an insinuation, "whether Charles was really the author of the controversial writings that pass under his name, may well be questioned." iv. 66. That this may never hereafter be questioned, I refer Mr. Brodie to the Lambeth Library, 679, where he will find the MSS. and the first entirely in the hand-writing of the

Certain it is, that the manuscripts of the King were numerous. No monarch has had his pen so constantly in his hand. During his long confinement at Carisbrooke Castle, his life offers a beautiful picture of the imprisonment of a literary character. The King had his constant hours for writing, and he read much. We have an interesting catalogue of the books he called for during this period. Yet there exist no autographs of Charles, except some letters. This seems to indicate some purposed destruction. We know that the King revised the folio *Memoirs* of Sir Edward Walker, and that he supplied Clarendon, from his own memorials and journals, with two manuscripts, fairly written, on the transactions of the years 1645 and 1646.* What became of these originals, with others, which were seized in the royal cabinet taken at Naseby? If it be true, as it appears, that Charles instigated Clarendon to compose his history, posterity may admire the King's exquisite discernment. There was not another man of genius in the royal circle, who could have been more happily selected.

Charles appears to have designed that his Court should resemble the literary Court of the Medici. He assembled about him the great masters of their various arts; and while they acquired the good fortune of the royal patronage, and were dignified by his honours, they more largely participated in that sort of affection which the real lovers of art experience for the persons of great artists. We may rate Charles's taste at the supreme degree, by observing, that this monarch never patronised mediocrity: the artist who was honoured by his regard was ever a master-spirit. Father of art in our country, Charles seemed ambitious of making English denizens of every man of genius in Europe; and of no monarch have been recorded such frequent instances of the deep personal interest entertained for individuals. Charles, with his own hand, wrote to Albano, to invite that joyous painter of childhood to reside at the Court of

King. Charles was early exercised in these studies. We learn from one of his biographers, that "there was extant in the hands of a worthy person, his extracts, written with his own hand," of arguments from Laud's book against the Jesuit Fisher, and that he was accustomed to epitomise Hooker, and others, on the present subject.

* Clarendon's *Life*, i. 103, folio. See also the opening of the ninth book of Clarendon's *History*.

England.* When another artist, Torrentius, was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, Charles, in the excess of his admiration for his works, interceded for the wretched man; pleading only for the artist, the rarity and excellence of his works were alone dwelt on by the King. Rubens and Vandyke, with other illustrious names, Charles had made his own; and we cannot read a history of foreign art without meeting with the name of Charles the First,—so closely had his patronage or his kindness connected this monarch with his contemporary artists in every country.

No royal history opens domestic scenes of equal fascination with those which occurred in the constant intercourse of the grave and stately Charles with his favourite companions, the artists themselves. His conversations with them were familiar and unreserved. In the breakfast-room of Charles the First were hung, by his special order, the portraits of his three favourites, Rubens, Mytens, and Vandyke. Vandyke, by the desire of Charles, married an English lady, and resided in England. The King would frequently go by water to the painter's house in Blackfriars to his studio, and often sitting to Vandyke himself, would commission the Queen, his family, and his courtiers, to allow no rest to his facile and unwearied pencil; they delighted to view themselves in the unshadowy splendour of his portraits. A traditional story was floating in the last century, the probability of which seems to authenticate the fact. Vandyke was painting the portrait of Charles the First, while the monarch was complaining in a low voice to the Duke of Norfolk of the state of his finances. The King perceiving that Vandyke was listening, said to him laughingly, "And you, Sir! do you know what it is to want five or six thousand pounds?" "Yes, Sir," Vandyke replied; "an artist who keeps open house for his friends, and whose purse is always at the command of his mistresses, feels too often the emptiness of his strong-box." In this unreserved manner Charles indulged himself with the artists. Beck, whose facility in composition was extraordinary, was aptly complimented by Charles familiarly observing to him, "Faith, Beck! I believe that you could paint riding post!" It is not wonderful that a monarch, who so well knew how to maintain

* *Academica Picturæ*, p. 282.

his personal dignity, and was even coldly formal in the court circle, should have been tenderly remembered by every man of genius, who had enjoyed the flattering equality of this language of the heart, and this sympathy of companionship. A celebrated performer on the flute, who afterwards became so eminent during the Protectorate, as to be appointed music professor at the University of Oxford, Dr. Thomas Wilson, with equal pride and affection, remembered, that he was often in attendance on Charles, who, in the intensity of his delight, used to lean over his shoulder while he played. Old Nicholas Lanieri, who subscribed one of his plates as being "done in my youthful age of 74," was one of those artists, as Lord Orford designates them, "whose various talents were so happy as to suit the taste of Charles the First, musician, painter, and engraver!" Lanieri was one of the King's active agents for the selection of works of art, while he himself could add to them. He outlived the persecution of that political period, and shed tears many years after in the funereal hymn on his royal master, set by himself.

But if it be delightful to view Charles the First indulging the most kindly feelings to artists, it is more so to find that he knew and entered into their wounded feelings, and could even forgive their caprices. The King's earliest "Picturer," as he is styled in the royal warrant, was Daniel Mytens, a Flemish artist, who has left us one of the finest heads of Charles the First in his happier days, ere care and thought had stamped their traces on his majestic countenance. On the arrival of Vandyke, great as was Mytens' reputation and the favour he enjoyed, the artist fancied that his sun had set—his "Occupation had gone!" In a sullen humour, Mytens requested his Majesty's permission to retire to his native home. Charles having learned the cause of this sudden attack of spleen, used the wayward genius with all a brother's tenderness. The King healed the infirmity of genius, assuring the jealous artist, that "He could find sufficient employment both for him and Vandyke." It was no doubt after this, that Charles hung the portrait of his old artist between the two greatest masters of art; and it is pleasing to record, that the brothers in art, with the monarch as their common friend, became brothers in their

affections; for Vandyke painted the portrait of Mytens. The King's constant attendance on Rubens when that great painter was in England, the honours he bestowed on him, and the noble offers he made him, are not sufficiently known. This great painter found, and felt in Charles the First, a congenial spirit. Having painted the history of St. George, representing Charles, "wherein, if it be possible, he hath exceeded himself," as a contemporary writes; Rubens would not part with the original, till he had finished a copy for himself, that, as he said, the picture might remain in his house at Antwerp, "as a perpetual monument of his affection for the English King." This interesting anecdote seems authenticated by the circumstance that such a picture appears in the mortuary catalogue of the collection of Rubens.

This deep sympathy for art and artists flowed from the truest source, that of consummate knowledge. Charles the First possessed that refined discernment which is the faculty of "the Few," in detecting the manner, and the habitual work of any individual master. Painters call this "a knowledge of hands." Lord Orford gives a remarkable story of Charles the First inspecting a collection of portraits at which were present several "picture-drawers." The King inquired by whose hand was a particular picture? Some attempted to guess, none were positive. The King declared it to be the work of such a man's hand. "I know it," said Charles, "as well as if I had seen him draw it; but is there but one man's hand in this picture?" They did not discover this, while the King persisted in asserting that "there were two hands in it; for I know the hand which drew the heads, but the hand which drew the rest I never saw before." It appears afterwards that a gentleman, who had been at Rome, mentioned that he had seen this very picture with the heads, but the rest unfinished, for the painter dying, the widow procured another to complete the work for sale, the best way he could. This is but a blind story, and the gentleman was, no doubt, a good courtier, observes our polished cynic, though not unwilling to allow that Charles, at least, was an excellent judge of the style of the great masters. Another incident will confirm the probability of this story. In one of his unhappy flights, when passing a night at the singular monastic institution of the

family of the Ferrars at Gidding, an illustrated Bible containing a vast collection of prints,* was placed before the King and the Palsgrave. The latter had more curiosity than knowledge. Even at a moment when the mind of Charles could have little ease, and when the business of the early morning was an early flight, Charles largely descanted on the invention of the masters, and the characters of the engravers. Their works had long been lost to him; but these departed enjoyments of his cultivated tastes lingered in his fond recollections, and could steal an hour from five years of sorrows.

This fervid devotion to art in Charles the First was acknowledged abroad, as well as at home. Cardinal Barberini, in his character of the protector of the English at Rome, conceived a project of obtaining, by the novel and silent bribery of works of art, those concessions in favour of the English Catholics from Charles the First, which the King in his political capacity had denied. It was on this occasion that Panzani, the secret agent of the Court of Rome, was introduced to the King, as an agent for procuring him pictures, statues, and curiosities; and the earnest inquiries, and orders given by Charles the First, evince his perfect knowledge of the most beautiful existing remains of ancient arts. Once Charles expressed a wish to purchase a particular statue of Adonis in the villa Ludovisia. As the statue could not be obtained for money, every exertion was made to procure it for the Protestant monarch. But the possessor, the Duchess of Fiano, was as inexorable as might have been Venus herself to preserve her Adonis, and even the chance-conversion of a whole nation of heretics was considered by her as not tantamount to the deprivation of her enamouring statue.

Had the reign of Charles the First proved as peaceful as that of his father, this monarch, in 1640, would have anticipated those tastes, and inspired that enthusiasm for the world of art, which were so long foreign to the nation, and which have not yet reached to those ranks of society, where they ought to be familiar, however Institutions have been nobly opened for the public. The mind of Charles the First was moulded by the graces. His favourite Buckingham was probably a greater

* This identical Bible, with its numerous illustrations, still exists, and may be inspected at the British Museum.

favourite from cherishing those congenial tastes. He courted his monarch and his friend, by the frequent exhibitions of those splendid masques and entertainments, which delighted by all the rivalries of the most beautiful arts; combining the picture of ballet-dances with the voice of music, the most graceful poetry of Jonson, the scenic machinery of Inigo Jones, or the fanciful devices of Gerbier, the Duke's architect, the pupil and friend of Rubens, and the confidential agent of Charles the First. The costly magnificence of the fêtes at York-house, the Duke's residence, eclipsed the splendour of the French court, for Bassompierre confesses that he had never witnessed a similar magnificence. The King himself delighted in them, but this monarch was too poor to furnish those splendid entertainments. They were not unusual with the great nobility. The literary Duchess of Newcastle mentions one, which the Duke gave to Charles the First, which cost five thousand pounds. The ascetic Puritan in those peevish times, as in our own, would indeed abhor these scenes, but the emulous encouragement they offered to some of the great artists could not fail to have infused into the national character more cultivated feelings, and more elegant tastes. They charmed even those fiercer Republican spirits themselves in their ingenuous youth. Milton owed his *Arcades* and his *Comus* to a masque at Ludlow Castle, and Whitelocke, who had been himself an actor and a manager in "a splendid royal masque of the four Inns of Court joining together" to go to court, at a later day when drawing up his "Memorials of the English affairs," and occupied by far graver concerns, dwelt with all the fondness of reminiscence on these stately shows and masques; and in a chronicle which contracts many an important event into a single paragraph, has poured forth six folio columns of a minute description of "these dreams passed, and these vanished pomps."

After reading these anecdotes of the private life of Charles the First, and recollecting the great national design which he had already commenced, we must recollect the limited means which contracted these noble efforts. The King, from the earliest period of his reign, was denied the personal enjoyments of a nobleman: and the truth is, that it was only by economical contrivances, with the aid of occasional presents, that Charles

the First obtained that fine collection, which was so barbarously inventoried at his death, suffered to be pillaged by the meanest hands, and dispersed at most blundering estimates, to furnish the cabinets of France and Spain.* Such often was the exhausted state of his exchequer, that it is a curious fact, that when Inigo Jones was appointed Master of the Board of Works, the funds were so low, that the great architect nobly remitted his own pay; nor is it less curious, that Charles, amidst his distress for money, condescended to enter into partnership for the small purchase of some pictures. This singular document is an evidence not only of his prudential expedients, but of his love of the arts. The monarch who entered into this humble contract, and adopted such equality of conditions, must have had some notion of that justice which has been too often denied him. Charles the First was here, at least, a lion who abstained from portioning out a lion's share.†

But it was not for this unfortunate Prince, with all these finer tastes, to mitigate the growing barbarism of the times by one short age of taste. We had not yet emerged from our rude

* The Harl. MS. 4718, is entitled "An Inventory of the Goods, Jewels, Plate, &c. belonging to King Charles the First, sold by order of the Council of State, from the year 1649 to 1652." A year was allowed to draw up the inventory, and the sale proceeded during three years. It is a magnificent folio of near a thousand pages, of an extraordinary dimension, bound in crimson velvet, and richly gilt, written in a fair large hand, but with little knowledge of the subjects which the inventory-writer describes. Every article was appraised. The medals were not valued at much more than a shilling a piece. The highest value of the masterpieces of art varied from 50*l.* to 100*l.*; many are whimsically low. By what standard they were valued it would be difficult to conjecture. I have given an account of this manuscript in the third volume of "Curiosities of Literature," first series.

† Charles R. "Whereas wee understand that an excellent collection of paintings are to be sold in Venice, which are known by the name of Bartolomeo della Nave his collection. Wee are desirous that our beloved servant, Mr. William Pettye, should goe thither to make the bargaine for them. Wee ourselves beinge resolved to go a fourth share (soe it exceed not the sum of eight hundred pounds sterlinge) but that our name be concealed in it. And if it shall please God that the same collection be bought and come safely hither, then wee doe promise in the word of a KINGE, that they shall be divyded with all equalitye in this manner, vidt. That they shall be equallie divyded into fower parts by some men skilfull in paintinge, and then desire one interested in the shares, or some for them, shall *throw the dice severally*. And whosoever throwes most shall take his share first, and soe in order everye one shall choose after first, as he castes most, and shall take their shares freelye, to their own uses, as they shall fall unto them. In Witness whereof, wee have sett our hands this eight daye of July, in the tenth year of our reigne, 1634."

and neglected state of the elegant arts. Among the list of the grievances of the Commons in 1625, we find one complains of "the building of all houses in London in one uniform way, with a face of brick towards the streets." To this grievance Charles replied, that a reformation in buildings was a good reformation, and he was resolved to proceed with that work. No doubt the good citizens of London were then destitute of any architectural taste; since even the decent appearance of bricking their fronts, and improving the salubrity of the city, where wooden houses were huddled together in all inconvenient forms, nests for their scourge the plague, which was so often breathing in their faces, was considered as a national grievance. The penurious and grave citizen, the ascetic Puritan, felt no ambition to leave their city of brick, which they had found a city of timber. Palladian streets never entered into their imagination.

An affection for the fine arts was yet entirely confined to Charles's own court. Scotland, by her vulgar notions of "superstition" and idolatry, seemed to have exiled the arts from her bleak clime. The elegant poet Drummond, in his history of Scotland (Bishop Hacket insinuates), had in view Charles the First when he drew the character of James the Third. The passage will attest that even the imagination of a Scotch poet, formed too on the most fanciful models of Italian poesy, could not conceive any thing higher of art or its curiosities, than an idling amusement. "It is allowable in men that have not much to do, to be taken with admiration of watches, clocks, dials, automates, pictures, statues; but the art of princes is to give laws, and govern their people with wisdom in peace, and glory in war; to spare the humble, and prostrate the proud." The public mind was vulgar, and even the genius of the poet, which confounds the knicknacks of a virtuoso with pictures and statues, had not advanced much beyond it. Drummond might have learnt in better times, that the arts would not incapacitate a great military character, or a great legislator, from excelling in their talent; since some of the most illustrious have been among the earliest collectors of the works of art. But it was now still worse at London than at Edinburgh. Among the barbarians, who, like a second irruption of the Goths and Vandals, became the avowed enemies of art and artists; the

Puritans on one side, and the Levellers on the other, excite our indignation as much for their brutalising ignorance, as their calumnies. In that remarkable, yet curious libel on Charles the First, entitled "the None-such Charles," the writer accuses his late sovereign, among other enormities, of "squandering away millions of pounds on braveries and vanities, on old rotten pictures and broken-nosed marbles."* Millions of pounds! Charles was never master of a quarter of one! Such was the style and grossness of the times, and of that people who were now to be the rulers of England! Even in the King's lifetime, a Puritan expressed his uneasiness that Con, a Scotchman, called the Pope's Legate, was enticing Charles with many various baits, and whom he sought to delude with "gifts of pictures, antique idols, and such like trumperies brought from Rome." Alas! how painful will it ever be in noticing vulgar spirits as these, to add the great name of Milton! In "evil times" only, indeed, would that illustrious man have seemed to reproach the King of England, for having for his "closet-companion" the great bard of the nation.

Milton, in his *Iconoclastes*, insolently wrote: "I shall not instance an abstruse author, wherein the King might be less conversant, but one whom we well know was the closet companion of these his solitudes, William Shakespeare." Little did Milton imagine that what at the time seemed to cast contempt on the character of the King, would be cited, at a more enlightened period, as a certain evidence of the elegance of the mind of Charles the First.

It has been said that Charles the First was adapted to be

* "The None-such Charles, his character, extracted out of divers original Transactions, Dispatches, and the Notes of several public ministers, as well at home as abroad, 1651," is an extraordinary little volume. It is composed in the style of Sir A. Weldon's well-known libel of "The Court and Character of James 1st,"—but it is to be valued, for though the libel is not less a libel than the other, it is evident that the writer had obtained access to the State-Paper Office, and has rummaged out many state secrets, which he turns to his own purpose. It is said to be "published by authority," which indicates the parliamentary sanction. Lord Hardwicke committed a strange blunder when he ascribed it to Sir Balthazar Gerbier; he could never have read it, and was deceived by the ironical title. In my copy I find a MS. note, which says that it was written by Sir A. Weldon, and of this I have no doubt. I have heard that Milton had his eye on this book, when he wrote with such personal hatred of Charles; that great anti-monarchist, however, required no whetstone.

greater as a private gentleman than a sovereign. There may be some truth in the observation; yet it is not so evident that the domestic virtues of the man, are insufficient to constitute an excellent monarch. Unquestionably, had not peculiar difficulties arisen in his reign, Charles the First would have been that monarch. Nor can we justly conclude that he was destitute of kingly qualities, who so long and so ably contended for what he deemed his kingly rights; and voluntarily perished to vindicate his sovereignty. Charles, indeed, loved the privacy of domestic life, and the quiet occupations of study and art. When his troubles began, in 1637, Garrard, the correspondent of the Earl of Strafford, kissed hands on his election to the Mastership of the Charter-house. The King bade him be a good Governor, and impressively assured him that he considered him the happiest man in England. Charles appears to have alluded to his own situation, deeming the Government of the Charter-house, in its dominion of obedient subjects, and in its business of literature, offered a more enviable life, than the days which were clouding over his throne.

———— the pangs that rend the royal breast,
Those wounds that lurk beneath the tissued vest : *

or, as Sir Philip Sidney first expressed it :—"Tragedy openeth the greatest wounds, and showeth forth the ulcers that are covered with tissue."

The observation of Addison, that a reader is delighted to learn whether the person whose story is engaging his attention, be either a brown or a fair man, with other personal peculiarities, was new in its day, and since the philosophy of biography has been carried to a perfection unknown to that pleasing writer, its truth has often been confirmed. Nothing is trivial in the narrative of history which assists the reality of its scene, and places its personage by our side. By these natural touches something of the charm of fiction is thrown into the historical composition.

There is a fine and large portrait of Charles the First, by his first favourite Mytens, splendidly engraved by Delphius, the King's engraver. In that portrait, as well as in a miniature

* Thomas Warton.

which I had copied from a large picture by Vandyke, now in the Pitti Palace at Florence, the expression is quite of another character from the portraits taken at a later period. No secret sorrows, no deepened melancholy, had yet left the traces of painful thoughts over the countenance whose peculiar expression afterwards was so faithfully, perhaps so religiously, transmitted to us. Contrast this portrait of Mytens on Charles's accession to the throne, with the one so care-worn, so haggard and lean, when the ill-fated Sovereign appeared at his trial,* and you touch both the extremities of his life,—the whole history of Charles seems told!

The intermediate period in this monarch's life is equally remarkable. Vandyke painted in one picture, the head of Charles in three positions. This was sent by the Queen to Bernini, in order to model his celebrated bust. The well-known anecdote of the sculptor is authentic.† Bernini was a great physiognomist, and after contemplating the portraits, for a while, he exclaimed that he had never seen a portrait, whose countenance showed so much greatness and such marks of sadness: the man who was so strongly charactered, and whose dejection was so visible, was doomed to be unfortunate! Had the physiognomical predictor examined the two portraits of the happier days of Charles, he might have augured a happier fate. It is therefore evident that what was peculiar in the countenance of Charles was not discoverable till after his thirtieth year.

Charles the First was of a middle stature, his complexion brown, "inclining to a paleness," his forehead not wide, his brows large, his eyes grey, they were quick and penetrating, and their vivacious glances were remarked on the opening of

* This portrait, little known, as well as the costume, inscribed "Gaywood fecit," has every appearance of having been taken from the life. It is prefixed to Lambert Wood's *Life of Charles*, 1659, which of itself is a worthless volume. The reason which induces me to consider this portrait as an original, is the meagreness of the countenance, which is noticed by contemporaries in the latter years of Charles.

† I find the recorded anecdote of Bernini in Evelyn's work on Medals, and in Sir Richard Bulstrode's *Memoirs*, 66. Henrietta Maria designed to have her own bust, as the companion of Charles's, and portraits on the same plan were painted by Vandyke, but whether the bust was ever executed is not known. At that moment the troubles began. The painting of Henrietta was at Carlton House.

his trial, for Charles, considering himself to be a skilful physiognomist, was a keen observer of persons: his nose was somewhat large and rather round at the tip. The visage on the whole was long, and the lips seem to have been thick. His stammering was a defect which he could never entirely get rid of, though at his trial, the intensity of his feelings carried on his voice without faltering. His hair was of a chesnut colour, falling on his shoulders in large curls, and when young he nourished one luxuriant lock on his left side which floated there; this natural ornament was a fashion abhorred by the puritanic Roundheads; who, having read in the Testament, "If a man have long hair it is a shame,"* "cut their hair short." This unlucky tress of royalty, excited Prynne's invective against "love-locks." His beard curtailed of ancient dimensions, he wore peaked, with moustachios, in his happier days, but in his troubles, negligent of exterior ornament, his beard covered much of his face. His pace in walking was quick and hurried, somewhat indicative of the usual condition of his mind. In going from St. James's through the Park to the scaffold at Whitehall, one of the papers of the day notices that the King "pleasantly" called to the guard "March apace!" It is said he was not graceful in his motions: a coarse libeller tells us, that "He did not ride like a Prince, but like a post-boy." There was a good deal of earnest impetuosity in his temper, and he seems to have preserved his personal dignity, by a rigid decency in the gravity of his manners and the measured style of his speech, sparing of words.

There was a family likeness in the Stuarts, even to their long fingers, but there was no Stuart whose countenance resembled that of Charles the First. Whence then the effect which is still produced by contemplating the pensive and melancholy physiognomy of this monarch? It seems an ideal head.

Parallels have been more than once drawn between the tragical afflictions of the martyred monarch and the tribulations of "the Saviour" when on earth. In human records, no princely names could be found but which seemed too low to rival his magnanimous sufferings. Stricken by sympathies, stronger and more elevated than they had ever experienced,

* 1 Cor. xi. 14.

some divines dared to compare Charles to Christ. Tickell has happily alluded to their disturbed piety. They found

“ All parallels were wrong, or blasphemy.”

The difficulty of combining the ideas of a human with a diviner nature, has formed the despair of the greatest artists. The pencil has never yet portrayed the celestial head of “ the Saviour ” in the form of humanity. It is, however, singular that artists of genius have considered that the head of this Monarch is the only portrait which they could venture to place before them as a model for the head of Christ, so peculiar is its mixture of majesty and sadness. Thus it happens that in looking on the portrait of Charles, with all its numerous associations, whether some behold “ the King in chains, and the Prince bound in fetters,” or others “ a man of sorrows acquainted with grief,” there is no portrait of any other sovereign, which awakens such powerful emotions as does the head of Charles the First.*

* It is mortifying to disclose the levity of feeling of men of genius, whose political tempers seem to close up every avenue to their heart, or their imagination. “ It is,” says an able Edinburgh Reviewer, “ to such considerations as these,” (alluding to some instances of Charles’s good qualities, as a father and a husband, which are given by one who probably is too young to be either,) “ together with his Vandyke dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.”—*Ed. Rev.* vol. xlii. p. 330.

But, there are other “ handsomer faces in a Vandyke dress ” which do not affect us as the portrait of Charles the First. All this seems innocent, however superficial may be the popular prejudices of the critic, compared with the frightful barbarism of the heartless Horace Walpole. Even the last parting moments of the King with Bishop Juxon, afford him a most indecent parody,—(Lord Orford’s Works, v. 472,) and in a letter, he writes “ I was diverted with two relics of Charles the Martyr, one the pearl you see in his picture, taken out of his ear after his foolish head was off; the other, the cup out of which he took the sacrament.” One could hardly have expected, as Mr. Croker has observed, in alluding to Walpole’s unfeeling observation on Charles in his last moments, “ to find him playing the Jack-pudding on a bloody scaffold ! ”

I am tempted here to anticipate a passage from that popular criticism, which is so much to the taste of the times; a passage which should rather be noticed at the close of this work. The Edinburgh Reviewer thus describes the fate of Charles the First. “ The enemy of English liberty was not murdered by men whom he had pardoned and loaded with benefits. He was not stabbed in the back by those who misled and cringed before his face. He was vanquished on fields of stricken battle; he was arraigned, sentenced, and executed in the face of heaven and earth. Our liberty is neither Greek nor Roman, but essentially English.”* The eloquence of

* *Ed. Rev.* vol. xlvii. 346.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE QUEEN ON THE KING'S CONDUCT.

THE influence of Henrietta Maria over Charles the First is an important subject for inquiry, not only in the private, but in the public life of the monarch. It claims to be treated with some delicacy, and with more truth. On no subject of these Commentaries ought I to require more of the reader's confidence that my researches are wholly prompted by the curiosity, or the zeal, which we feel in unravelling the perplexities in which human nature sometimes seems enveloped. Let the reader, for the few minutes which will be allotted to this chapter, be patient under the popular prejudices and the old impressions he carries in his mind, and let him accompany me, feeling our way now in twilight, and now in darkness, in these cautious gropings after truth.

Charles the First is accused by all parties of a spiritless uxoriousness and subserviency to his Queen, which had a fatal influence over his political conduct. This opinion was prevalent

the writer will be but a poor apology for this misrepresentation of the real state of the affairs to which he alludes. We shall not here stop to correct them, but we may admire the juvenile audacity of an ardent party-writer, who seems to conclude that we are entirely ignorant of the mode by which the murderers of Charles the First effected their nefarious purpose.

When a Member in the House of Commons, with that vulgar levity we often witness from men who seem ignorant of their national history, alluded to the immolated Monarch, Canning rose, and poured out his indignant spirit. "He trusted that he should never arrive at that cool contemplation, which enabled the honourable Member to talk of the murder of Charles the First as of a lawful act. He hoped no degree of liberality, no respect for freedom, would ever induce him to look back on such a transaction with any other feelings than those of the horror and indignation which it was calculated to excite. Could he ever bring himself to entertain such an opinion, even in his closet, he would never utter it in that House, and still less proclaim it to a nation struggling for independence. In God's name, let not this country stand foremost in pointing out such a course as this, as the highroad to freedom. Whatever might be the policy of giving or withholding our aid, the suggestion of crime was at least one of those aids which we might best withhold."

I am indebted to my very ingenious friend Mr. J. H. Markland, for this passage in a speech of Canning's. It was a note taken at the time, probably in March, 1821.

in his own day. But we have to encounter a more formidable host than contemporaries, whose opinions may happen to originate in passion and prejudice, in the writers of our history, who all have echoed to each other the same conviction of "the absolute power" of Henrietta Maria.

Clarendon, that grave minister, and others who were acting with him, disliked the Queen, her papists, and her nation. Mr. Hyde often appears as irritably jealous of female influence, as afterwards was Lord Clarendon, an influence which that Statesman aptly describes as "powerful and near." His Lordship has touched on "the Queen's absolute power" over the King, and one of the effects of this power, he tells us, appeared in "the removal of great ministers," but the noble historian is also our authority to show that "neither the Archbishop nor the Earl of Strafford were in any degree acceptable to the Queen."—How then happened it that Charles the First, so entirely passive to "the absolute power" of his wife, as Charles called the Queen, never removed these "great ministers?" If Henrietta's absolute will were to govern the State, had she no favourites to supply their places, and she too, who, as so many assure us, was such a mistress of political intrigue?

Hume sometimes sympathising with the unfortunate Charles, and often taking his impressions from Clarendon, tells us that Charles the First was by the Queen "precipitated into hasty and impetuous councils." Hume supposes, we must imagine, that Charles himself was never "hasty and impetuous." Bishop Kennett describes the light, volatile, inconsiderate temper of the hapless daughter of Henry the Fourth, as "the influence of a stately Queen over an affectionate husband." "That wicked woman!" exclaims Warburton, in the heat of Protestant passion. "That pernicious woman at his side!" echoes the philosophical Hallam, who has here considered perhaps the number of the witnesses in court, rather than the weight of their evidence. Gibbon, who probably had never brought his penetrating inquiries to the critical investigation of the history of this period, notices how "Charles was governed by a Catholic Queen." Authority, it might seem, was not wanting to establish the position, but his philosophical genius might have been mortified, could any one have succeeded in proving

to him that this opinion was at least merely vulgar, and that had Charles not been united to a Roman Catholic Princess, the Romanists would have shared the same royal protection, for the same reasons of state, which had been adopted by his father; for though the nation sometimes seemed unreasonably jealous, the Romanists, when their day of conspiracy was over, were an ancient, a numerous, and even a noble body of useful subjects, whose loyalty, as was afterwards proved, entered even into their religion.

Our history has often been composed by those whose panics were more warranted, than we at this day are perhaps competent to decide on. These writers, and the nation at large, seemed to have desired nothing short of an extermination of the Romanists. The Puritans of England would willingly have applauded an edict against the English Catholics, like that of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which ejected the French Huguenots from their father-land. The policy of the Cabinet may happen to be in opposition to the passions of a people, but it is not necessarily wrong. Charles temporized; and it has been his fate to be the favourite of neither party. Had he dared, which was out of his nature to do, a great *coup d'état*, by banishing every Romanist from England, Charles would have become popular at the cost of his better feelings.

We may judge how our history on this point of the Queen's influence has been written, by turning to the historian of the Puritans. "The Queen was a very great bigot to her religion; her conscience was directed by her confessor, assisted by the Pope's Nuncio, and a secret cabal of priests and Jesuits. These controlled the Queen, and she the King, so that in effect the nation was governed by popish councils till the Long Parliament."* The closest researcher in our history has yet to discover this "secret cabal of priests and Jesuits," acting circuitously on the Queen, and she on the King, and the nation governed by "their popish councils." The confessor of the Queen, Father Philip, stole about Somerset House with the Capuchins in dread of their lives; and as for the Capuchins themselves, I, who possess their memoirs, can testify, that except half-a-dozen sly conversions, "their popish councils" did

* Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, i. 507.

not prosper out of their neighbourhood. The Pope's nuncio did not even venture to assume his character. In this plausible manner are party-histories composed, and the innocent appeal to them for their authorities !

We are reminded, that every great political error of the King was the dictation of the Queen ; and though her name rarely appears among the incidents of our history, except when the panic of papistry breaks out, it would seem that on the side of Charles the greater part originated with this profound and political Queen.

Even the more subtle reasoners unreason themselves on this popular prejudice of the Queen's influence over Charles the First. Mr. Godwin writes, "The Queen applied all the vast influence she had hitherto exercised over her husband to prevail on him to agree to the establishment of the presbyterian form of church government."* Doubtless to her, between two heretics, the choice was indifferent. But what was the result of this "vast influence?" Charles never would concede the point, for not many pages after, Mr. Godwin tell us, "The whole project of the Presbyterians was defeated by the unexpected pertinacity of the King."† Such was the Queen's vast influence !

There is a principle in historical inquiries, which we may frequently apply. In all intricate passages of history, whenever we detect an incongruity in the character,—a discrepancy in the incidents,—a cause assigned not commensurate with the prodigious effect deduced from it,—our suspicion may be allowed to awaken our scepticism ; and according to the degree of our knowledge, we may discriminate the proportion in which falsehood has been mixed with truth. In the political influence of Henrietta over Charles, which so many historical writers have ascribed to her, we may be struck by all these monstrous conjunctures.

From all these authorities, we learn that Charles the First, in the possession of his active faculties, with his argumentative habits, and his unchangeable dispositions, sunk into a passive being, an imbecile monarch ! Yet how will this agree with the indisputable fact, that Charles afterwards lived and acted several years separated from his Queen, and on all emergent occasions,

* Godwin's Hist. of the Commonwealth, ii. 137.

† Ibid. 176.

displayed the most prompt capacity? Did the Queen suggest a single sentence in that series of private correspondence with the Marquis of Hamilton on the complicated concerns of the Scottish affairs? But to sanction the received opinion of the predominance of Henrietta Maria in so many intricate difficulties, it is not sufficient to assert the weakness of Charles; it is absolutely necessary that this Queen should be endowed, like another Catherine of Medicis, with a plotting head, and a governing hand. The Editor of Madame du Deffand's letters, in her "Views of the Social Life in England and France," at once declares that Henrietta "had been brought up amidst all the political intrigues of her mother, Mary of Medicis." It probably never occurred to this female philosopher of the school of Horace Walpole, that the Queen was only sixteen years of age when she came over here. I am unacquainted with the due term of a political apprenticeship, but a young lady of sixteen, who had passed most of her time in pastorals and dances, could hardly be yet a Machiavel.

It is remarkable that a Queen, who is imagined to have performed so complicate a part in our history, scarcely ever appears in it, but to receive some courtly compliment, or to betray the terrors in which she often lived. On one occasion, to save the life of Strafford, we see Henrietta appointing a midnight interview with two or three heads of the Opposition, and holding a flambeau, pass by the back-stairs into an apartment, alone and in secrecy, to offer any terms! This, which looks like a political intrigue, was really none; the whole transaction was as simple as it proved to be inefficient. There are three or four instances in which recourse was had to the Queen in order to influence the King by her tears, or her prayers, to comply with certain measures. Mr. Hallam quotes a letter of the Queen from Paris to Charles, containing political advice, but the letter was written at the suggestion of Colepepper and Ashburnham: it was none of her own. In every one of these cases, the parties were working on the terrors of an affrighted woman, and the Queen was but a passive instrument in their hands, and the simple organ of their ideas. These incidents, so far from conferring on Henrietta a political character, are evidence of the reverse, for they show that whenever she was brought forward,

nothing political ever originated with herself; she had no other opinions than what she listened to, no other system than the personal safety of herself and the King. No secret history pretends to give any account of her influence in the Council of State, nor do we hear of any consultations held with her Majesty. But we know that all her confidants were of the household or of the court-circle; the gay courtiers and younger branches of the nobility, with two or three poets, who had no other politics than their loyalty, their chat, and their pleasures. We hear of no political cabinet of Henrietta. If she regulated the affairs of a nation of whose very manners she was ignorant, her genius must have lain concealed in the depth of her own thoughts, and in the secrecy of her own chamber. We cannot judge of this concealed genius by many specimens we have of her correspondence, which are always on ordinary topics, expressed in as ordinary a style. In her private memoirs, such as her conversations with Clarendon during his exile, and her confidential intercourse with Madame de Motteville on her final return to France, and in other sources, we discover that Henrietta was nothing more than a volatile woman, who had never studied, never reflected, and whom Nature had formed to be charming and haughty, but whose vivacity could not retain even a state-secret for an hour, and whose talents, so well adapted to invent, with her poets at her side, a fanciful pastoral, cast the figure of a dance, or dress out the enchantment of a rich masque, could never have pretended to conduct an involved political intrigue. She viewed even the characters of great men with the sensations of a woman. Observing that the Earl of Strafford was a great man, she dwelt with more interest on his person; "though not handsome," she said, "he was agreeable enough, and he had the finest hands of any man in the world." She betrayed the same levity of feeling on a most serious occasion. The Parliament's admiral was barbarously pointing his cannon at the house she lodged in; several shots reaching it, her favourite Jermyn requested her to fly; she escaped into a cavern in the fields, but recollecting that she had left her lap-dog asleep on her bed, she flew back, and amidst the cannon-shots returned with this other favourite. The Queen related this anecdote to Madame de Motteville, and these ladies considered it as a complete woman's victory. It is

in these memoirs we find, that when Charles went down to the House to seize the five leading Members of the Opposition, the Queen could not retain her lively restlessness, and impatiently babbled the secret to Lady Carlisle. It has been recently discovered by Monsieur Mazure, that this lady transmitted the hasty intelligence to the French ambassador, who pretends in his dispatches that he warned "his friends," as he calls the five members. How far this was the exact truth we know not; but I have also discovered from the manuscripts of another French agent, that Lady Carlisle always kept up a close communication with French ambassadors. In the present instance, as her Ladyship had more than one confidential friend, and particularly Pym, of whom it is said that Lady Carlisle was the "*Dame des ses pensées*," her Ladyship might have dispatched a duplicate *billet-doux*. The well-known anecdote is recorded on this eventful occasion. When the Queen perceived the King wavered at the moment, she exclaimed, "Go, poltroon! pull these rogues out by the ears, or never see my face more." "The submissive husband obeyed," adds Mrs. Macaulay. This anecdote has been held as positive proof of the ascendancy of the Queen in political affairs. As far as I have been able to trace this anecdote, it rests on the authority of a single person; but that she delivered such words, or words like these I believe, because about twenty years afterwards Sir Arthur Haslerigg in the Commons alluded to the fact,* but then he tells it differently, and applies the reproof of "Poltroon" to the King on his return. This version must be a false one, because the Queen could not have reproached the King with cowardice, for having missed the five members. The words Henrietta is said to have used are in the familiar style of a French woman, who would back her wavering husband to do what had been already resolved. But what does this famous proof of the Queen's ascendancy amount to? This apparent menace depends on the tone and the gesture in which it was delivered. Suppose she threatened with a smile, and menaced as awfully? At all events the anecdote affords no proof of her Majesty's inventive politics, and, as on other occasions of this nature, she acted on the suggestions of others. This false step of Charles did not originate with the Queen.

* Burton's Diary, iii. 93.

But if incidents like these, which we have just noticed, betray the feminine dispositions of this Queen, we perceive that on every trying occasion, Henrietta never forgot that she was the daughter of Henry the Fourth; that glorious affinity was inherited by her with all the sexual pride, and hence at times that energy in her actions which was so far above her intellectual capacity. Mr. Hallam observes that "Henrietta was by no means the high-spirited woman that some have fancied." I always differ with deference from Mr. Hallam, whose knowledge is very extensive on this subject, but by this expression he probably alluded to some part of her political conduct. She latterly lived terrified in her palace,* and often entered into her chapel in trepidation. Can we deny her an heroic spirit when we discover her passing over to Holland, to procure aid for the King, and on her return in the midst of a small army partaking of the common fare of the soldier in the open field as she was hastening to join the King? nor less can we admire the determined courage when at sea, in danger of being taken by a Parliamentarian, the Queen commanded the Captain never to strike, but to prepare at the extremity to blow up the ship, resisting the shrieks of her females and her domestics. Henrietta might have been conscious that a scaffold, with which, indeed, she had been already threatened, awaited her coming to Whitehall—but it proved that she knew how to choose and to face death.

Henrietta's talents were not of that order which could influence the intrigues of a Cabinet and the revolutions of a nation. The French vivacity of her manners and conversation, with her natural gaiety, might have allowed her to become a politician of the toilette, and she might have practised those slighter artifices which may be considered as so many political coquetries. Her favours, or her caprice, might have some influence in the Court-circle—in an appointment in the Royal Household, in the dismissal of an unwelcome courtier †—but she had such little

* Her carriage was once drawn up to take her flight from England—when she was betrayed to the Parliament by Goring. See Mazure, iii. 426.

† When the Parliament, with a shameless disregard of all decency and honour, published the Letters of Charles to the Queen, there was one in which they pretended to show to the people that "the eminent places in the kingdom were disposed

discrimination in her favourite attendants that they were always betraying or deserting her. A little anecdote has been recorded of this Queen, which will convey a different idea of those high notions of female predominance. At Newark, having treated the garrison with some attentions, a certain Sempronia, one of the Stateswomen of that day, who we are told governed her husband, who in time of peace governed the county—drew up a petition, which she presented the Queen accompanied by her coterie of secondary politicians—it was to pray her Majesty would not remove from Newark, till Nottingham should be taken. The affair had been kept secret from the husbands of these lady-politicians, of which the Queen appears to have been aware. After receiving the petition, the Queen replied, “Ladies, affairs of this nature are not in our sphere; I am commanded by the King to make all the haste I can; you will receive this advantage at least by my answer, that although I cannot grant your petition, you may learn by my example to obey your husbands.*

Machiavelian principles, systematic plots, and involved intrigues, of which she has been so freely accused, could never have entered into the character of a female, whose quick and light passions were transient as the occasion.

Ere the Civil Wars broke out, she had lived in anxiety, and even in terror. She well knew that she and her “Papists” were odious to the people, and it is certain that the Parliamentary leaders most barbarously practised on the panics of a female and a foreigner—a wretched Queen who had already felt she sate on a deserted throne! She lost the bloom of her complexion so early that to console herself for this mortifying

of by her advice.” To this the King replied, that “the places there named, in which her Majesty’s advice may seem to be desired, are not places, as they call it, of the kingdom, but *private menial places, a Treasurer of the Household, a Captain of the Pensioners, and a Gentleman of the Bedchamber.* Concerning the other more public places, His Majesty absolutely declares himself, without leaving room for her advice, which seems to prove the contrary to that, which by this they intend to prove.”—*His Majesty’s Declaration*—27—*Oxford, 1643.*

This representation seems to be the exact truth, but the reverse is the popular belief.

* This anecdote of Henrietta may be found in those curious “Memoirs of the Family of Cavendish,” appended to a Sermon at the funeral of William Duke of Devonshire by Bishop Kennett, p. 91.

disappointment she would maintain that women lose their beauty soon after twenty. When she suffered the heaviest of human calamities, her frame was macerated by her secret sorrows. The dark and dazzling lustre of her eyes frequently shone in tears, she assumed the mourning habit for ever, and frequently retired to a religious establishment which she endowed. Yet even then at a sally of wit, or some poignant satire, Henrietta has been known to chase away the tears trickling on her own cheek, for a moment to return to her natural disposition. Often she found her understanding failing her—and was terrified lest it was approaching to madness—an evil which the old Court physician, Mayerne, somewhat plainly told her Majesty not to fear—for that she was already mad! She had outlived the Revolution without comprehending it. Such was the unfortunate Henrietta of France!

As probably I shall find no other opportunity to record the extraordinary manner in which Henrietta was affected on learning the unexpected fate of her unfortunate consort, I shall here preserve it. It is given by an eye-witness, with great simplicity of detail, the Père Gamache, one of the Capuchins who had waited on the Queen in England, and from whose manuscript I have already drawn some interesting matters.

“The city of Paris was then blockaded by the insurgents, and in the King's minority it was with difficulty we obtained either entrance or egress. The Queen of England, residing at the Louvre, had dispatched a gentleman to St. Germain-en-laye to the French Court, to procure news from England. During her dinner, where I assisted at the grace, I had notice to remain there after the benediction, and not to quit her Majesty, who might need consolation at the sad account she was to receive of the terrible death of the King her husband. At this grievous intelligence, I felt my whole frame shudder, and withdrew aside from the circle, where during an hour the various conversations on indifferent subjects seemed not to remove the uneasiness of the Queen, who knew that the gentleman she had dispatched to St. Germain ought to have returned. She was complaining of his delay in bringing his answer, on which the Count of St. Alban's (Jermyn) took this opportunity to suggest that the gentleman was so faithful and so expeditious in obeying her Majesty's com-

mands on these occasions, that he would not have failed to have come, had he had any favourable intelligence. 'What then is the news? I see it is known to you,' said the Queen. The Count replied, that in fact he did know something of it, and when pressed, after many evasions to explain himself, and many ambiguous words to prepare her little by little to receive the fatal intelligence, at length he declared it to the Queen, who seemed not to have expected any thing of the kind. She was so deeply struck, that instantly, entirely speechless, she remained motionless, to all appearance a statue. A great philosopher has said that ordinary griefs allow the heart to sigh and the lips to murmur, but that extraordinary afflictions, terrible and fatal, cast the soul into stupor, make the tongue mute, and take away the senses. '*Cura leves loquuntur, graves stupent.*' To this pitiable state was the Queen reduced, and to all our exhortations and arguments she was deaf and insensible. We were obliged to cease talking, and we remained by her in unbroken silence, some weeping, some sighing, and all with sympathising countenances, mourning over her extreme grief. This sad scene lasted till nightfall, when the Duchess of Vendôme, whom she greatly loved, came to see her. Weeping she took the hand of the Queen, tenderly kissing it—and afterwards spoke so successfully, that she seemed to have recovered this desolated Princess from that loss of all her senses, or rather that great and sudden stupor, produced by the surprising and lamentable intelligence of the strange death of the King."*

Let us now endeavour to ascertain the sort of influence which this vivacious princess could have exercised over Charles in his political character—and we shall not find wanting more satisfactory evidence than preceding historians have been aware of, or general readers could imagine—existing on a subject of such delicacy and privacy as the secret influence of a wife over her husband.

It is unquestionable that the personal affections of Charles the First, once settled, were unchangeable. With his thoughtful and retired nature, friend, relative, and wife equally shared in the devotion of the heart. Not that the sensibility of his temper was quick; but with men whose feelings seemed locked up in ice, slow and hard to move, the stream flows deepest.

* Mémoires de la Mission des Capucins près la Reine de l'Angleterre. MS.

In characters such as that of Charles, there is an obstinacy in their very affections. The causes of some of the heaviest misfortunes of this ill-fated monarch may be traced to his concentrated domestic feelings; they were strong—even to weakness! We see them in his passion for his Queen; in his unalterable, though injudicious friendship for his first companion Buckingham; in his entire confidence in the Marquis of Hamilton, even to his last moments, and after very suspicious conduct; in his partiality for the sons of his sister, the Princes Rupert and Maurice, who as Generals ruined his affairs. It is not perhaps difficult to account for the absence of all judgment indicated by these infirm partialities. Is it not delightful to fancy that those who stand most closely connected with us, and are acting with us in the business of life, possess the talents which we require, as they do the confidence which they deserve—in a word, that their intelligence is commensurate with their integrity? This, which would have been a generous error in a private man, was a fatal one in a sovereign.

Charles was deeply enamoured of the Queen: “the temperance of his youth by which he had lived so free from personal vice,” as May, the Parliamentary historian records—writing from a personal knowledge of the King—had given to his first love—and his last, as the King avowed in his solemn farewell at the parting hour of life—all the influence which that Queen was privileged by nature to possess over a husband. Charles knew not, as those persons imply, who wrote such mean notes on his affectionate letters, that a husband could love too well; or that he could refuse his confidence to one so intimate with his thoughts, and so constant a witness of his actions, as a beloved wife. We may believe, too, that in desperate exigencies, and there were several—such was his tenderness for the person of a hapless princess, a foreigner and a Catholic, her health often yielding to her anxieties, that as Sir Philip Warwick says—“He was always more chary of her person, than his business.” It may indeed be said of Charles the First, that many years after his marriage, he did not cease to be a lover; and his letters to his exiled Queen, written amidst his own deep afflictions and personal deprivations, in haste or flight, breathe a spirit of tenderness and passion which was not exceeded in his romantic youth.

So late as in 1645 the King writes—" Since I love thee above all earthly things, and that my contentment is inseparably conjoined with thine, must not all my actions tend to serve and please thee? If thou knew what a life I lead (I speak not in respect of the common distractions), even in point of conversation, which in my mind is the chief joy or vexation of one's life, I dare say thou would pity me; for some are too wise, others too foolish, some too busy, others too reserved, many fantastic. In a word, when I know none better (I speak not now in relation to business) than (here he gives a list of persons in cypher) thou may easily judge how my conversation pleaseth me. I confess thy company hath perhaps made me in this hard to be pleased, but not less to be pitied by thee, who art the only cure for this disease. Comfort me with thy letters, and dost not thou think that to know particulars of thy health and how thou spendest thy time are pleasing subjects to me, though thou hast no other business to write of? Believe me, sweetheart, thy kindness is as necessary to comfort my heart, as thy assistance is for my affairs."

Such were the tender effusions of Charles the First, beautiful in feeling and expression, nor were they answered with inferior devotion by the Queen, whose words were sanctioned by her deeds.—" Assure yourself I shall be wanting in nothing you shall desire, and that I will hazard my life that is, to die by famine, rather than not send to you." But however active might be her zealous offices, she does not venture to act without the permission of Charles. On some new engagement she says, " I thought this to be a matter of so great engagement, that I dare not do it without your command; therefore if it please you that I should do so, send me what you would have me write, that I may not do more than what you appoint, and also be confident." So that this imperious Queen, would not act without obeying the command of her enslaved husband!

There is a tender passage in one of the Queen's letters, and equally pathetic. Deep and genuine emotions give even to the simplicity of mind all the force of eloquence—Henrietta writes from Paris, " There is one other thing in your letter which troubles me much, where you would have me keep to myself your dispatches, as if you believe that I should be capable to show them to any, only to Lord Jer. to uncipher them; my

head not suffering me to do it myself; but if it please you, I will do it, and none in the world shall see them; be kind to me, or you kill me. I have already affliction enough to bear, which without you I could not do, but your service surmounts all; farewell, my dear heart! Behold the mark which you desire to have to know when I desire any thing in earnest X." Such was the wife of Charles Stuart, who if she never obtained any ascendancy at the council-table of the King, doubtless ruled over him by the potent charm of domestic tenderness.

The letters, which we have here quoted, were published by the Parliamentarians. And who having read such passages, does not reject with contempt the barbarous "Annotations" of those vulgar minds, who could debase even the cant of their patriotism by the greater cant of their religion? Yet we may smile at the depth of their politics, and the delicacy of their emotions, when we discover the note-writer's acuteness in observing that "The King professes to prefer her health before the exigence and importance of his own public affairs."

But in the passion of Charles for his Queen, the impulse of Nature was stronger than the sterile imagination of the sour presbyterian Harris, who furnishes a long quotation from Cicero to prove that "the most servile of all slaves, is the slave of a woman," and another from Milton, who appears to have felt a religious conviction, that

———— "God's universal law
Gave to the man despotic power
Over his female,
Smile she, or lour."

But on this subject we smile at the aphorisms of statesmen, and the chapter and verse of divines: those who write in their closets, should also live with us in human society: and even Harris with his accustomed profundity, adds to his learned authorities, that "These things are boldly said, but women in all ages have had great sway."

We will tell the Presbyter, and even Cicero and Milton, that Charles the First admired in Henrietta all those personal graces which he himself wanted; her vivacity and conversation enlivened his own seriousness, and her gay volubility, the impediment of his own speech, while the versatility of her manners

relieved his own formal habits. Bernardin de St. Pierre has raised up a fanciful theory of love created by contrasts, and however the French philosopher may have lost himself among the details, our reading and our experience may furnish arguments or facts, which would illustrate this concord of discords in "the harmonies of nature."

Of this kind was the influence of Henrietta over Charles. And how far that influence prevailed in his public affairs, remains to be developed; and if on unquestionable evidence we can show, that Charles could not have been, as we are told, a weak slave to the sole will of Henrietta, we shall furnish one more instance of that popular delusion which is raised in its day for party purposes, and is perpetuated by the echoes of writers, who consult for their ease, what is convenient, rather than what is just.

There is no doubt of the Catholic zeal of Henrietta, and that if the Queen really exercised this entire influence over Charles, she would have stretched it to the utmost in that cause which was dear to her as life itself. Yet we find on the undeniable evidence of Panzani, the Pope's secret agent in England, that when he applied to the Queen, respecting the election of a Roman Catholic Bishop for England, and for which she was extremely anxious, Henrietta would not deliver any opinion till she had consulted the King. At their next conference while she redoubled her assurance, that she had nothing more at heart, the King was against it, and therefore she must bear the mortification of his refusal, and be patient. This single fact sufficiently proves that whenever the views of the Queen militated against the higher interests of the Government, the sceptre of Charles was no distaff.*

Nor can there be a doubt that at all times Henrietta was disposed to favour the wishes of her own family, and yet we find that on every great national interest, Charles in his intercourse with the French Court was decisive and intrepid. He rose to the full conception of his character as an English

* This circumstance is not mentioned in Panzani's published Memoirs, but in the curious unpublished Report of his Mission to Urban the Eighth, cited by Mr. Butler in his "Historical Memoirs of the English Catholics," iii. 69, first edition. To Mr. Butler I am greatly indebted for the loan of his Manuscript.

sovereign, and on repeated occasions asserted his own honour and vindicated the national glory—yielding nothing to the importunities of his French wife. Charles expelled a French faction from his court, amidst the tears and the outcries of his impassioned Queen, while he accepted the menace of war, in the justification of what he assumed as his rights. On another occasion when D'Estrades hastened to this country to secure the neutrality of England, however willing the Queen must have felt to gratify her brother's request, we know she declared "that she would not concern herself with affairs of that nature, for she had already suffered a severe reprimand on that subject from the King himself."

There was once an attempt to baptise a prince by a Romish priest in the bed-chamber. Did Henrietta succeed? The King stepped in, dismissed the priest, and commanded one of his own chaplains to perform the office as a Protestant; so firm was Charles, and so unyielding even to the wishes of the Queen, when state-matters interfered.*

Clarendon has said that Charles often yielded a strange deference to minds inferior to his own. If ever he followed female councils, as we are told, it is probable that at least he approved of them, nor is it less probable that in the confidential intercourse of the parties, these very councils might have resulted from his own suggestions. It is no unusual case with such minds as that of Charles, to waver when they have formed their own opinions, but to adopt them too eagerly and imprudently, when re-echoed by another.

An anecdote in Madame de Motteville's Memoirs may show us in what manner Charles was governed by his Queen. Henrietta and Jermyn were consulting on the mysterious communication with the army respecting what is called the Army-plot, to be managed by Goring and Wilmot. The rival jealousies of the two commanders early appeared in this affair, and Charles had designed to send Jermyn to reconcile their mutual discontents. Henrietta in communicating the King's wish to Jermyn was equally agitated by the terror of the Parliament's discovery, and by the perilous predicament in which her favourite master of the horse would be placed; she there-

* Dodd's Church Hist. iii. 3.

fore, in disclosing the King's desire, forbade him to interfere. At this critical moment Charles entered her cabinet, and without knowing the object, smilingly repeating the last words of the Queen, playfully added, "Yes! yes! he shall do it!"—"No! no!" replied the Queen, "he shall not do it, and when I have told you what it is, I am sure you will be of my mind."—"Say then, Madam," rejoined the King, "what is it, that I may know what you forbid, and I command." Henrietta explained. The King sympathised with her fears, acknowledging the danger of Jermyn's interference—but it was a danger, he added, which could not be avoided, and they must run the risk. Charles commanded Jermyn to hasten his task—he obeyed, and in the performance of his office was fortunate enough to save himself by flight.

If ever the Queen on great emergencies had the power so generally ascribed to her, and Charles was the servile and spiritless husband he is perpetually represented to have been, we may be certain that Henrietta, fully aware of the imminent peril in which her favourite was cast, would have put her higher veto on the royal command.

But Charles seems never to have acted in his political character, as one accustomed to obey, and we now bring forward the evidence of an eminent person who in an intercourse with their Majesties was a close observer of their characters.

In a secret communication from the Earl of Northumberland to the Earl of Leicester, the King is concealed under the name of *Arviragus*, and the Queen under that of *Celia*.

"Celia, I find, is not hard enough to dispute with Arviragus in a case of this nature; for he hath too much sophistry for her."*

But his Lordship is more explicit when he really points out the objects where the Queen's influence might prevail with Charles. "Celia will be able to serve you in *things of favour* rather than in what must be *disputed and sifted for reason and justice*, because Arviragus is too subtle." And again—"Our Master loves not to hear other people give what is only fit for him."

We can have no more positive or higher testimony of the unchangeable character of Charles the First. It comes from

* *Sophistry* is here used in a good sense; the term for reasoning.

one who was no flatterer. We here discover all the nature of that "malignant influence" which Henrietta was allowed to exercise over the King—it was entirely confined within the Court and the Household, and the greatest political mischief she could fall into was her injudicious choice of faithless favourites—but Charles was too subtle, that is, he was too firm, when matters were "to be disputed or sifted for reason and justice."

Charles was sensible that his French Catholic Queen shared no friendly prepossessions; and that Henrietta might secure friends about her, the King allowed her to be the medium of "favours:" yet even of these, as we have just seen on several occasions, he appears to have looked on with a jealous eye. Charles, too, was indignant at the artifices of the Parliamentarians who had inflamed the passions of the vulgar against this terrified foreigner—and however unwise it was to obtrude the Queen's name on the people, it was an attempt to endear her to their recollections, being always on acts of grace. Hence at York he declared that the Queen had by her letter advised him to call the Parliament. Charles publicly gave her an importance on such a solemn act of Government, which he would probably not have allowed in private.

Henrietta, we may believe, possessed all those winning arts which a woman is born to practise. She had at least the ambition to please her husband after she had subdued her aversion to the English people and to the English language. Her desire to acquire the latter, which must have cost her many pains, is no slight evidence of her real affection for Charles. After that curtain-lecture with which the reader has before been made acquainted, Charles remonstrated with the French Court, and among other matters complained that the Queen would not conform to English customs, and learn the English language. A few years after we may trace her Majesty's zealous progress under her English tutor.*

The history of "the Queen's Pastoral," as it was called by way of distinction, offers an amusing illustration of her tastes and her proficiency in the English language.

* Mr. Wingate, who was a person of some name and condition, for he died one of the Seniors of Gray's Inn. He was a mathematical writer, and a lawyer, who abridged the statutes.

This splendid "Pastoral," during several months, had engaged in its preparation the deepest attention of her Majesty and all her maids of honour. Ben Jonson had been usually destined to compose the verses and the dialogue of the masques and pastorals, and Inigo Jones had combined his rich inventions in their machinery. A fierce quarrel had, however, now separated these brothers of genius in their united and emulative labours. This circumstance only appeared by two bitter lampoons in the works of Jonson; and as the occasion remained unknown, the poet had incurred the severe animadversions of several eminent modern critics, for the malignity of this personal attack on so fine a genius as that of the architect of Whitehall. I was enabled in the course of my researches to supply my critical friend, the late editor of Jonson, with the singular information. The great architect, whose growing favour at Court made him somewhat jealous of pre-eminence, had treated slightly the part which the great Poet had in these splendid miracles of art, and deeming his own work more important than the Bard's, he had insisted, against custom, that his name should appear in the title-page before that of Jonson. The point of etiquette could never be reconciled, but the predominant interest of Inigo Jones prevailed at Court, over the discarded poet, who was now not only an aged bard, but an old friend. Jonson, under the influence of personal aggression, hurled his indignant invectives; and strange to observe how far madness may prevail over genius, when that genius becomes inebriated by the flattery it receives, Inigo Jones responded to the irritated poet in vile rhymes, which I found too inept to publish. This quarrel had produced a revolution in these Court-amusements, and the poetry of Jonson was to be supplied by those who would venture on it.

In every respect this splendid Pastoral was to be as courtly, as the cost was to be princely. The genius who was to compose the poetry was to be a courtier, the actresses were ladies of the highest rank, and the prime actress was to be her Majesty herself. It was the endless talk of the Court circle, and my Lord Chamberlain seemed to be out of his wits in giving his orders, declaring that "No chambermaid shall enter unless she will sit cross-legged on the top of a bulk; no great lady shall be kept out, though she have but mean apparel and a worse face; and

no inferior lady or woman shall be let in, but such as have extreme brave apparel and better faces." Such was to be the enchanted audience of "Great Ladies."

The successor of old Jonson was a young courtier, whose adherence to loyalty afterwards often appears in our history—Mr. Walter Montagu, one of the sons of the Lord Privy-Seal. Their Majesties, while the young gentleman was indulging a most flowing vein, were amazed at the facility of writing verses; and one day meeting my Lord Privy-Seal, his Lordship was made happy to discover that his son was a favourite with Royalty, and in a fair way of making his fortune, for their Majesties both highly congratulated his Lordship "on the rare parts of Master Walter Montagu, his son, for poesy, and otherwise." As probably this was the first pastoral by Master Walter, the successor of Ben Jonson, unlike his great predecessor, did not know where to stop. Every part was so excessively long, no one knew how to shorten any, and the young poet had no heart to prune even a tendril of his luxuriant genius. The Queen, as she conned her part, complained of its length, and "my Lady Marquis's" single part was "as long as an ordinary play." We may form some notion of the labour of our courtier-poet, for the representation lasted seven or eight hours! The disasters which must have happened in the progress of "The Queen's Pastoral" have not been chronicled, nor of those whose memory faltered through their interminable speeches, nor of those who remembered them too well. Eight hours!—but at Court they are accustomed to be happy, and to be wearied.*

One of the most extraordinary parts in the Queen's Pastoral was that of her Majesty. The Pastoral itself, which was in English, was designed not only for her Majesty's recreation, but "for the exercise of her English." † A striking evidence of Henrietta's zealous studies to gratify her husband. She had not only learned to speak but to write English, as several letters in her own hand attest, where the orthoepy is curiously formed by her foreign ear. ‡ Some years after, we find that when the Parliament had frightened her away, and she intended departing,

* I have drawn all the particulars of "The Queen's Pastoral," from a variety of contemporary correspondence (1632) in the Harl. MSS. 7000.

† Ellis's Letters, Second Series, iii. 270.

‡ See some in Evelyn's Diary, to Secretary Nicholas, and Ellis's Letters, First Series.

they petitioned her to remain in England, to which she graciously replied in a speech pronounced in English. The style might have been retouched by her English master, Wingate, who probably assisted her Majesty's elocution, but it was thought worthy to be preserved in the Journals of the Lords, and noted to have been *in hæc verba*. Henrietta closed it by saying, "You will pardon the imperfectness of my English; I had rather have spoken in another language, but I thought this would be most acceptable." It is a curious fact that Henrietta, in her eager desire to accustom herself to the English language, as her Royal consort wished, lost considerably, as Madame Motteville notices, her French idiom.

This picture of Charles in his intercourse with his Queen must reverse those preconceived notions which every reader of our history has entertained. If I have rightly discriminated "the malignant influence" of Henrietta, we may now ascertain its amount of evil. The fixed and systematic principles of the character and government of her husband should no longer be imputed to the intrigues, or the influence, of a vivacious and volatile woman—they must be traced to a higher source, to his own inherited conceptions of his regal rights, contested, sometimes but not always, justly—if we seek for truth, and would read the history of human nature in the history of Charles the First.

We may account for this general charge coming from all quarters, and still re-echoed by our writers. To the gross eye of the public, who take their impressions of distant objects from their appearances, the uxoriousness of Charles was evident, but how they inferred that his passion for his Queen was necessarily connected with his political character can only be accounted for by the ease with which popular prejudices are fostered at unhappy moments. This odium was first industriously cast on the character of Charles by his enemies, in order to make him contemptible; and his apologists, with Clarendon for their leader, found it not inconvenient to perpetuate this accusation, for they imagined that they had discovered in a weakness which had something amiable in it, and which removed to another victim so many of his own faults, some palliation for the King's political errors.*

* I was gratified to find some time after this chapter was written that my notions of Henrietta's character are confirmed by Dr. Lingard in his History, x. 139. We

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE PERCY FAMILY.—ALGERNON, EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND,
AND THE COUNTESS OF CARLISLE.

It was the fate of Charles the First, and his Queen, to fix their most unreserved affections on the son and the daughter of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland; and two of the most fatal events of this reign originated in the disaffection of the son when he abandoned the fleet to the Parliament, and in the treachery of the daughter when she betrayed the royal confidence at a critical moment.

It is not always prejudice which induces us to conceive that a family character is inherited. There was a taint in the blood of Northumberland, whose ancestors on more than one occasion had suffered on the scaffold. The personal feelings of renowned ancestors are transmitted through a long race. Ancestral pride comes at length to maintain what had only originated in the first impressions of filial sympathy. Not many years had elapsed since the father of Algernon, the present Earl of Northumberland, had been released from a long imprisonment in the Tower, where he had been confined on suspicion of having had some knowledge of the Gun-powder Plot, and for harbouring one of the conspirators, his cousin, Thomas Percy. This haughty Earl valued himself on the regal antiquity of his ancestry, tracing the paternal line from Charlemagne; Josceline, the son of Godfrey, Duke of Brabant, having married the heiress of Percy. The old Earl never forgave his daughter, the celebrated Countess of Carlisle, for her marriage with Lord Hay, afterwards Earl of Carlisle, one of the favourites of James

are, I believe, the only writers who have developed this curious passage in the history of this period. May I flatter myself that Dr. Lingard has adopted my sentiments? Or has he only confirmed their truth? Several years before the volume of this historian appeared, I had given my ideas in *Curiosities of Literature*, first series, in the "Secret History of Charles the First and his Queen Henrietta." What the reader is now presented with, is a wider field of investigation, where what was before suggested, is further opened, and the result more completely deduced.

the First. Him, he deemed too recently noble, and otherwise unworthy of his alliance, notwithstanding the princely magnificence of the Earl of Carlisle's domestic life, and the generous nature of the man, who had taken his celebrated but undowered daughter for his bride. The Earl of Northumberland had accepted with difficulty the boon of his freedom, which had lost its sweetness in coming from the hand of his son-in-law. It was this Earl of Northumberland who, on learning that Buckingham drove six horses in his coach, immediately passed through the city in a coach and eight; this prouder novelty attracted the town's talk more towards the recent prisoner in the Tower, than the minister himself.

Algernon, Earl of Northumberland, who afterwards rose to the highest offices, both of honour and trust, was a young nobleman, who had been earnestly recommended by the Earl of Strafford to Charles. His dignified qualities were well adapted to win the tempered seriousness of his royal master. The descendant of a high-born race was no unfit companion for a King. Northumberland, in the haughtiness of early manhood, seemed to disdain the daily traffic of the compliant courtier. Solely connected with the King through the medium of his great friend Strafford, Northumberland stood, as it were, insulated among the ministers. The reserve of his character and the formality of his habits, threw a coldness over the generous temper which we look for in a noble youth. But these were not disagreeable to Charles, who adopted this child of his hopes, to initiate him under his own eye, through graduated honours, till the young Earl should be fitted for the highest offices, and worthy of his boundless confidence. Charles had indeed conceived for him the strongest personal affection, and this monarch was no niggard when he once showered the largess of his royal friendship.

There were, however, repulsive qualities latent in the breast of young Northumberland, which repeatedly developed themselves from his first entrance into active life to the day of his public defection. Although not a person of extensive capacity, he seems to have undervalued the abilities of the King, which were far superior to his own. When Lord High-Admiral he conducted the navy of England without glory; and though he would not command the fleet against the King, he was willing

to surrender it to the Parliamentarians. Twice when appointed Commander-in-chief, he was seized with "a dangerous indisposition." No sympathies could melt the coldness of his character; and his principles, perhaps inherited, led him to the popular party, some of whom were in his confidence. Northumberland, the most affluent of our nobility, was penurious in his loans to the King. He observes that "he had lent the King but five thousand pounds, because he could not expect more from him, whose house hath in these latter ages received little or no advantage from the crown."* We shall find on another occasion that this nobleman was a close calculator. It is evident that he had taken on himself the quarrel of the family with royalty, by his evident allusion "to his house in these latter ages;" he means the heavy Star-Chamber fine, which his father had incurred in the former reign. Yet at this moment the Earl had reached the highest distinctions in the state; and his numerous titles and honours would spread over this page.

Northumberland was serving a master for whose service he felt no zeal; for whose honour he felt little concern; and whose friendship he rendered disastrous only to him who bestowed it. Among the desertion of those on whom Charles had showered his favours, and admitted into the privacy of friendship, the King felt no wound more deep than the defection of Northumberland. Charles exclaimed with tender regret, "I have courted him as a mistress; I have conversed with him as a friend!"

The Earl of Leicester, brother-in-law to the Earl of Northumberland, seems to have shared, in some degree, the dispositions of his family affinity. He had been our ambassador in France, was made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and may be deemed as the philosophic friend of Charles; but his impartiality and his honour rendered him equally indecisive and indifferent; concurring with the Parliament, yet never disloyal to the Sovereign. In revolutionary times the steadiest friendships are often abruptly terminated; and the greatest minds, like more ordinary ones, submit to be the mere creatures of pressing events. The younger brother Henry Percy, who distinguished himself in the wild scheme called "The Army Plot," remained attached to his royal friends, and died an

* Sydney Papers.

emigrant at Paris before the Restoration. But there was one of this great family of the Percys who, perhaps, may have influenced the fate of Charles, even more than Northumberland or Leicester—it was their sister, the much celebrated Countess of Carlisle.

Lucy Percy, Countess of Carlisle, was at the head of a class of females who have not yet been noticed in the history of these times.

We have already shown that the passion of Charles for his lovely Queen, and the personal influence of Henrietta, were imagined by their contemporaries to have been such, that this Queen wholly regulated his conduct; that the uxorious King had recourse to her counsels, and that she ruled the Cabinet by governing the King; in a word, that Henrietta Maria was a great political character.

It is a curious fact, that so prevalent was this popular opinion, that it actually gave rise to a new race of ladies in this country, who may be described as Stateswomen. The throne is the modeller of manners, and since the Queen was imagined to be so profound a politician, politics became the fashionable pursuit of aspiring ladies. As fashions travel from the court to the country, it seems that even our rural ladies were deeply involved in political interests and in the government of their husbands, whenever those occupied some official station. An anecdote of a certain Sempronia we have given in our preceding chapter on the influence of the Queen over the King.

These lady-politicians were not the least active messengers nor the least adroit negotiators of both parties in these troubled times of political intrigue. Many of the favoured few presided at their cabinet councils, where if they did not always deliver their sentiments, they had the pleasure of being let into those of the leaders of parties. We know that Lady Aubigny was safely delivered of a box of conspiracy called "Waller's plot," which proved fatal to some, and would have to herself, had she not as dexterously conveyed herself away. Her ladyship was an adept in cipher, and in deciphering; an admirable letter-carrier, for with a woman's fancy, she curled up a secret correspondence within her own curls; curls often admired for their luxuriance, but more particularly for their size. She contrived conferences between persons who, by the remoteness of

their locality, or their want of personal acquaintance, had never imagined that they should ever have been brought into collision. As her ladyship happened to be an acquaintance of Lord Clarendon, we gather more particulars than we find about other political ladies, who appear not to have been less active or less ingenious. These stateswomen were living in a continued fever of state secrets. An ingenuous anecdote told by Lady Fanshaw, with her extreme simplicity, describes their peculiar situation. Her husband being then Secretary of State at Oxford, Lady Rivers, a friend of Lady Fanshaw, one day touched on the knowledge of state affairs, observing how some women were very happy in acquiring it; such as Lady Aubigny, Lady Isabel Thynne, and divers others, "but none, Lady Rivers thought, could be more capable than the wife of the Secretary of State. And," added the fair communicator, "this very night came a post from Paris from the Queen; and her ladyship would be extremely glad to learn what the Queen commanded the King. If Lady Fanshaw would ask her husband privately he would tell what he found in the packet, and then Lady Fanshaw might tell her." All this was very easy to do, and Lady Fanshaw was very innocent. Imagining that "to inquire into public affairs being a fashionable thing, might make her more beloved by her husband," she watched Sir Richard on his return from council with his papers. Her peering startled him; her earnest inquiry raised a smile; her pouting he kissed away; her sulkiness at supper, and the renewed entreaty on retiring to rest, her reproach the next morning that "he loved her not;" all he had borne, till at the close, the good sense of Sir Richard spoke out, perfectly satisfying Lady Fanshaw that "he had no other secrets to conceal from her, but his Prince's."

Had Lucy Countess of Carlisle, in some light memoirs which only a stateswoman could freely sketch, told us, in the felicitous style of saying the best things in the fewest words, which it is said she excelled in, all the thoughts of the extraordinary personages whom she so intimately knew; had she narrated those changeful events, in which she herself had taken so active a part, we should have now possessed the most interesting secret history of the reign of Charles the First—with its appendix, the early years of the Protectorate.

But so far from recording the acts of others, she has not left us a word about herself. Her nonchalance seems to have exceeded her egotism; and she who was the disturber of a nation appears only to have viewed the mischievous efforts as they influenced her own circle. It is rather by good fortune, than by successful research that I am enabled to create a real personage out of the mysterious and shadowy apparition which sometimes glides into our history, and whom Warburton has expressly designated as "The Erinnyes of her Times."

Lady Carlisle, in whose veins flowed the blood of princely races, and the blood which had been tainted by treason, was at once the equal companion of sovereigns, and the most dangerous of subjects. She too was very beautiful—but she would not have become an important personage in our history had she not aimed at something beyond rank and beauty. Lady Carlisle seems to have conceived a fancy of surrounding herself by a higher order of society than she could find in the mediocrity of the court-circle; and busying herself in political life, with the advantage of being placed so close to the Queen, at once her confidant and her spy, she moved in a world of political intrigues, and from Whitehall to the two Houses, held the invisible chain of human events. By what dexterity, or fortune, she escaped from the ruin of all the parties with whom she was concerned, we probably shall never learn. It is perhaps a woman's privilege to convince the most opposite parties that she is alike earnestly concerned for them; she can practise on the weak and the unsuspecting; and she has in reserve for the more penetrating minds, the eye that melts into persuasion, and the voice which confirms their hopes.

The Countess of Carlisle was a beautiful dowager in 1636. This time is the commencement of the busiest period of the present reign. Her ladyship was now mistress of herself, and adoring that self; it was now that she opened her remarkable career. Waller, one of her admirers, has painted the Countess in mourning,

"A Venus rising from a sea of jet."

The Queen of Charles the First was fascinated by the Countess; for I think it appears that the Queen was aware that the Countess had betrayed her famous state-secret in the very heat

of its confidence. One would imagine that this might have interrupted their friendship ; and yet, by the manuscripts of the French Resident here in 1644, which I have examined, I find the Countess in secret communication with the Queen's party at Paris, requesting the French Resident to convey letters from her brother Percy to the Queen in France ; and still later in 1648 the Countess was in Henrietta's full confidence.* The treachery of the Countess to the Queen had not, however, shown itself on a single occasion. When Lord Holland became a malcontent, from the King's refusal of granting him the disposal of a Barony, which he might have sold to some worthless aspirant for ten thousand pounds, it was the Countess of Carlisle who furnished Lord Holland with all the words and actions of her thoughtless royal friend ; applying every malicious construction, and drawing the widest inferences, that Lord Holland might make terms with the Parliament, by the services they best liked ; criminating the unguarded remissness of an inconsiderate Queen, who would say more than she thought, and do more than she was aware she had done. Henrietta never forgave these domestic treacheries of Lord Holland, who had been one of her favourites. She declared that "she would never live in the Court if he kept his places there." Holland was discarded from his office of First Gentleman of the Bedchamber. He seems to have betrayed the King when a General of the Horse in the Scottish war. Yet this unhappy man, repeatedly changing sides, suffered for his loyalty, yet offering to serve again the Parliament would they have accepted him ! His terror was to live in poverty.

The Countess had been so confidential a person, that she was admitted to be present at all the consultations held to save the life of Strafford. That Earl, in the selected circle of the Countess, was then her favourite. Her strenuous exertions, at times, seemed to have been successful, but she never forgave the King,

* The intercourse of the French Resident with Lady Carlisle was frequent. Conversing with her Ladyship on her brother, the Earl of Northumberland, being appointed Governor to the little Duke and the Princess, with an allowance of 16,000*l.* per annum, (he should have said 3000*l.* according to Whitelocke, 137,) the Countess observed that she did not know that her brother had any reason to be pleased, considering the nature of that perilous office. The fate of their great-grandfather, the Protector, was then the town-talk.—*MSS. of Sabran.*

or the Queen, for their irresolution and their terror. She hardly concealed her deep resentment, it is said, even her contempt. From this moment of her violent indignation, I would date the commencement of that series of treacheries which subsequently proved so fatal to her royal friends. I would not ascribe too great a proportion of gratuitous maliciousness to our "Erinnys."

Extremes were her passions. She who had thus, in her mind, for ever quarrelled with a King and a Queen, for her favourite Strafford, not long afterwards became an equal admirer of his remorseless enemy. She had usually been inattentive to "the public exercises of religion." As what then was considered to be "the true religion," entered into the gossip of the day, and even into the private correspondence of letter-writers, and combined, as it was, with the politics of the times, whether a person entered the parochial church, or the Scotch conventicle, was not an affair of indifference. Suddenly the Countess became Puritanic, and took notes at long sermons; and the Scandalous Chronicle has announced that Master Pym was placed in the situation of the Earl of Strafford.* The intercourse between the parties was intimate; and the interior of Whitehall was always better known to Pym, than that of the Commons was to Charles the First.

The select circle of the Countess of Carlisle was a prominent object in that day. It was a particular sort of a coterie, though its character seems to have been chiefly of a political cast, yet the men of wit, and genius, and gallantry, were stars in this galaxy. There were literary men, if the few of that day may be so distinguished; but the great number consisted of leading members in both Houses, and of the heads of the Scotch party, of eminent foreigners, and particularly of ambassadors, and other foreign residents; and with this latter class the Countess appears to have held an extraordinary intercourse. Persons who had a name to make, ambitioned the *entrées* to this envied circle, sure to find in the *société* of the Countess of Carlisle, those men in the country on whom they had placed their hopes, or who had attracted their admiration. It is to be regretted that such a circle has left no trace of its existence; and that

* Sir Philip Warwick, 204.

the celebrated female who presided in it, was not her own perpetual secretary. Some idea of the Countess's "chamber" may be formed by the picture which one of its haunters has transmitted to us in his pleasing verses—

“ The high in titles, and the shepherd here,
 Forgets his greatness and forgets his fear.
 The gay, the wise, the gallant, and the grave,
 Subdued alike, all but one passion have.
 No worthy mind but finds in her's there is
 Something proportioned to the rule of his :
 While she with cheerful but impartial grace
 (Born for no one, but to delight the race
 Of men) like Phœbus so divides her light,
 And warms us, that she stoops not from her height.”*

Something more we may learn of what was passing in the circle of the Countess from a letter of the Earl of Exeter, which I found among the Conway papers. Though the noble writer, in the affected style of the complimentary effusions of that day, strained his fancy and his gallantry, we are enabled to form some idea of the entertainment to which his Lordship was accustomed, in "the Lodgings at Court" of the Countess. The manners of her Ladyship seem sketched after life—

“ MADAM,

“ The night is the mother of dreams and fancies, the winter is the mother of the night, all this mingled with my infirmities, have protracted this homage so due and so vowed to your Ladyship, lest the fume and vapours so arising should contaminate my so sacred and pure an intention. But much more pleasure it were to me to perform this duty in your Lodging at Court, when you see your perfections in the glass, adding perfection to perfection, approving the *bon-mots* there spoken in your presence, moderating the excess of compliments; passing over a dull jest without a sweet smile; giving a wise answer to an extravagant question. But why do I regret these absent pleasures and find defects in my condition, since it pleased God so to determine; were I young again I should be a most humble suitor that you would be pleased to vouchsafe that your

* Waller.

lodging might be my academie, quitting to the rest both Italy and France. I expect now within few days the approach of the violets, from whence I begin to entertain better thoughts, with hope to enjoy the first and latter presents of the year. But when all is said that can be said, and all is writ that can be writ, your perfections put in the weight of true judgment, weigh down all other delights. In the mean time afford your servant the honour of your *bonne grace*, and so I rest according to custom

“Your Ladyship’s

“most humble and

“passionate servant,

“EXETER.”*

Could we turn over the visiting-book of the Countess, we should discover a numberless catalogue of men of genius and gallantry. The fanciful poet, and the ancient gallant, who have borne their testimony to the charms of the *société* of the Countess, belong to a large class. Sir Toby Matthews, a refined gentleman of the day, has offered a portrait which, however fantastical, may still bear some remarkable resemblances; and Donne has addressed the Countess with the celestial flattery of a poetical divine. But such persons who sought fame or pleasure, by admission into the favourite circle, must not be imagined to have been initiated into the higher mysteries; for mysteries there were in the Esoteric doctrines for the adepts. The phases of “the Chamber” were mutable. In the Countess’s interviews with Lord Holland and the Earl of Essex, with Holles, with Pym, and some of the Commonwealth-men of Cromwell, other matters were agitated than subjects fitted for the *vers de société* of the poet, of the elaborate fancies of a gouty reminiscient; other matters than “dull jests at which she could not cast a sweet smile; extravagant questions wisely answered, and an approval of *bon-mots*.” The “Academie,” as the travelled Earl of Exeter distinguishes her “Chamber,” was open to the select, but the “Cabinet councils,” where her ladyship presided, were solely opened for the elect.

* I have printed the letter according to modern orthography, for the convenience of the reader. The Earl writes in the last line, *boun grasse*; formerly they regulated their orthography by their orthoepy.

In the manuscript negotiations of Sabran, the French resident in England in 1644 and 1645, I found frequent mention of this active agent's intercourse with Lady Carlisle. The following passage, which I translate literally, is from a dispatch of Sabran's to the Count de Brienne, the Secretary of State. Sabran was at that moment distant from London, following Charles with his army in 1644. It tells a great deal about the Countess—

“The Countess of Carlisle has sent to me to say how much she rejoices at my coming; that the Chancellor of Scotland had visited her, and had solemnly declared to her, that he has come to assist in settling a peace, and not for the purpose of ruining the King of Great Britain, nor royalty. She assures me that she had penetrated into his real designs, and she had dined with four lords of the Upper House, who on this subject had avowed their desire of peace, and the re-establishment of the person and the affairs of the King.” Here we discover that Lady Carlisle was the centre point of communication with the Chancellor of Scotland, the French Resident, and some of our peers. We see that even in the times of Charles the First they gave diplomatic dinners, though it is still rare to find a lady at the head of the table, not, however, that our modern secret history has not furnished some instances. Shortly after this dispatch, I discovered the French Resident at Lady Carlisle's house, where he found Lord Holland, and by appointment met Holles, and the Lieutenant-General of the cavalry, the Earl of Essex. Both these eminent men were well-disposed, and greater in reputation than ever with the Commons. The Resident details the important communications which passed between the parties on subjects deeply interesting in our history. All this confidential intercourse on the most secret and delicate investigations, passed before the Countess, and her house was always the place of appointment. Her ladyship's politics at this moment had a tendency towards the King's restoration; but what we are more concerned to learn is, that Lady Carlisle must have been deep in the councils of that day, when we perceive that the great political actors assembled at her call, and communicated with by her means. As late as 1660, her ladyship was still the busied intriguer, for one of the agents

of Charles the Second complains that Lady Carlisle continues "to tell many lies of him every day." This was the critical moment of the Restoration, and the perplexed agent, who "finds his game hard to play," observes, "Whatever my Lady Carlisle hears, she immediately tells her nephews Lisle and Algernon, and is still Sempronia. All her intelligence comes from France."*

In the history of a female, that of her person forms a part. Granger has said of Lady Carlisle, that "she appears in the poems of Waller to much greater advantage than she does in the portrait of Vandyck. It was not so much the beauty of the lady, as the sprightliness of her wit, and the charms of her behaviour, that rendered her an object of general admiration." Either Granger was not very sensible to beauty, or the portrait he had seen had faded and lost its likeness; for a very good judge, as we shall shortly see, thought more highly of her beauty, than of her wit or her talents. We would not decide on female beauty by the black and white of the graver, since a woman's loveliness lives in the motion of far different colours. But even in Lombart's hard engraving, we are struck by the majesty of the figure. We may imagine voluptuousness in those eyes, with something like pensiveness; and a physiognomist would not find it difficult to detect a marked sense of self-sufficiency in the decided features of her noble countenance.

But what was the real genius of this celebrated woman? What the extent of her capacity, which had such an influence over the greatest characters of the age?

Let us take the unbiassed opinion of a very intelligent foreigner, the French Secretary of State, the Count de Brienne. Her ladyship had been personally known to the Count some years past, when De Brienne had been in more than one embassy to England; we have referred to his own published memoirs in our preceding pages. De Brienne was a person of very lively discernment, and as Secretary of State, he was now holding the correspondence with Sabran. Replying to the dispatch of the Resident, the Secretary of State thus notices Lady Carlisle: "The lady, at whose house you assembled, formerly piqued herself on her great beauty and her great talents; years

* Clarendon's State Paper, iii. 631.

must have carried off the one, but I doubt if they have acquired for her the latter of these qualities. Let us know however what you can penetrate, and the means you judge which we are to adopt." It is evident that a very able judge of persons had formed no very favourable notion of Lady Carlisle's superiority of talents; but he had seen her, and he remembered that she was beautiful.

We have a literary portrait of Lady Carlisle, finished with care, but in a very bad taste. It was composed by one intimate with his original; and through the affectation of his style, many a delicate trait may be recovered. The character of the Countess of Carlisle by Sir Toby Matthews is hyperbolic and fantastic, but she herself bore some resemblance to her limner. A caricature may be reduced into a natural resemblance, by softening down its protrusions. I shall endeavour to translate Sir Toby Matthews's ideas into plainer language, adopting his own present tense:—

"The Countess of Carlisle, with a high mind and dignity, neither seeking, nor desirous of any friendship, is pleased to surround herself with persons of eminent condition, both of power and employments; because she chooses to know only the fortunate, for with her, fortune is virtue and fame. Even her domestic affections are restricted. Those who are removed from her presence must not hope to live in her recollections; they are currents running too distant to participate in any warmth from her kindness.

"She prefers the conversation of men to that of women; not but that she can talk on the fashions with her female friends, but she is too soon sensible that she can set them as she wills; that pre-eminence shortens all equality.

"She converses with those who are most distinguished for their conversational powers. Her civility seems universal; she likes to show what she can do, but cares not to indulge her nature too long among those who have nothing very extraordinary or new in themselves. She is apt, though in good-humour, to keep at a distance; and suddenly to discover scorn, when you are fancying love.

"Yet of love freely will she discourse; listen to all its fancies, and mark all its power; but she ceases to comprehend them

when boldly addressed to herself. She cannot love in earnest, but she will play with love, while love remains a child; she dismisses him as a master.

“She has too great a heart to suffer any inclination for another; she has therefore no passions; but as she is not unwilling to find some entertainment to while away the hours, she will seem to take a deep interest for persons of condition and celebrity; yet this being but a compulsion on her nature, withdrawing herself too much from herself, she usually returns ill satisfied with others.

“She has not within herself those little tendernesses which she will not allow to others; surely she mistakes her own heart by not exercising it more frequently. She holds as her surest defence, the insensibility of her nature; this is like giving denials before solicitations; or like proclamations which forbid what may happen, and then if they be disobeyed it is to be upon peril.

“You may fear to be less valued by her, for obliging her; for should she think that your courtesy be merely the habit of your mind, and not a spontaneous emotion excited by herself, in this case, she is so unjust that she would bestow favours and services on strangers who cast themselves on her generosity, in preference to those who might urge stronger claims, but who have not equally flattered her self-love.

“She delivers her opinions of persons freely, rather with an intention to show her understanding than from any disdain of the persons themselves; but as in most of us, there is more to be reformed than commended, her judgment is too apt to detect the imperfections which we flatter ourselves we can conceal.

“This lady, whom both Fortune and Nature have richly adorned, is not without a sense or a contentment of both; but as Fortune can never give her so much as Nature has bestowed on her, she joys most in the perfection of her person. She is more esteemed than beloved by her own sex; her beauty putting their faces out of countenance, as her wit their minds.

“She is so great a lover of variety, that when she cannot find it among those about her, she will remove into her own thoughts; or change her opinions even of those persons most

considered by her, till after this entertainment she will settle them again into their former places.

“She has elevated thoughts, carrying her mind above any thing within her knowledge; she deems nothing more worthy of her consideration than her own imaginations; and when she is alone, she will make something worthy of her liking, since she finds nothing in the world worthy of her loving.

“The felicity of her language is in her expressions, and in few words, adding little to the substance, but infinitely to the manner.

“She affects extremes, because she cannot endure any mediocrity of plenty and glory. Were she not in possession of this certainty, she would fly to the other extreme of retirement. She could submit to be obscure, but she must be magnificent. Her physicians told her that she was inclined to melancholy; their opinion was its remedy by the mirth it affords her; she thinks herself cheerful, but her noble heart is ambitious—to what end? for she is so far from the want of any thing that it would be a hard study, and therefore painful for her, to imagine a desire!”

Such is the portrait of the Countess of Carlisle, which Granger has grossly depreciated as “Sir Toby Matthews’s fantastic character.” Many refined strokes show that the limner had studied his original by her side; and it seems to have admitted as much of nature as her Ladyship allowed to enter into her dispositions.

Another exquisite judge of the female character, who must have been familiar with the secret history of this Countess, was St. Evremond; and he has alluded to her on a particular occasion. His patroness, the beautiful Duchess of Mazarine, came to England to regulate by her charms the state policy of our voluptuous monarch. Suddenly she betrayed the weakness of the sex, in a violent passion for the youthful Prince of Monaco, then at the English court. Charles the Second, impatient at this odious rivalry, was mean enough to suspend her pension. As St. Evremond was in the secret of her mission, he perceived that all was thrown into disorder by this little prince. The Adonis, in perfect devotion, was incessantly practising his enthralling gallantries—*les petits soins*—watching an open

window, or shutting a door, presenting a basket of ribbons, or drawing on a glove, bearing, in triumph, an Indian fan, or adjusting the flow of her tresses: thus, at every hour, riveting the passion of the lovely and lost Mazarine. On this occasion, St. Evremond in despair, more certain of being read than listened to, addressed to the Duchess an Essay on Friendship. There he displayed his own personal sacrifices, and his grief for the famous Fouquet, thus insinuating himself into her confidence; he confessed, however, that no friendship is comparable with that of a female gifted with beauty, with talents, and with sense, could one be certain that it would last! Adroitly passing to the political character this lady had to perform, he observed, that "it had often surprised him why women were excluded from the conduct of affairs, for he had known many enlightened and able as any men. But this exclusion has neither originated in our jealousy nor our interests, nor in any indifferent opinion of their genius; it is merely because we find their hearts are too weak, too inconstant, too subject to the frailty of their nature. Monsieur le Cardinal (Mazarine) once said, 'A woman who governs a kingdom prudently to-day, will take a master to-morrow not fit to govern a poultry-yard.' What might not Madame de Chevreuse, and the Countess of Carlisle, have accomplished, had they not spoiled, by the infirmities of the heart, all that they had obtained by their mind? Ninon de l'Enclos said to me once, that she returned God thanks every night for her judgment, and prayed every morning to be preserved from the follies of her heart." It is superfluous to add that the amusing ethics of our Epicurean philosopher were greatly admired, and the little Prince of Monaco was every day more and more caressed.

For our purpose we learn, by the confession of this contemporary, that it is evident the Countess of Carlisle amidst her busy political intrigues had fallen short of his views as a great stateswoman, and had failed from becoming the dupe of her heart, lost amid irresistible passions. The reported mistress of Strafford and Pym must have betrayed an extraordinary susceptibility, which, probably, often sought for its own security in an insensibility to ordinary aspirants.

We perceive in Lady Carlisle a mind ambitious of higher

results than she ever attained to: St. Evremond hints at this, and De Brienne considered her beauty more remarkable than her talents. The perfect self-complacency of this beautiful idol of rank and fashion, amid her splendid circle of the first men of the age, was no doubt kept alive by the verses of poets who gazed on her personal attractions, and by the admiration of men on whom her rank reflected honour, while they knew how to profit by her peculiar station at Court. Placed in the centre of this circle of excellence and greatness, her own genius remained in its mediocrity; for among such men, and such events, as she had witnessed, her mind seems to have wanted the vigour, and never once to have felt the impulse, to perpetuate even the work of her own hand, which doubtless, she sometimes flattered herself she was contemplating. Often, with a cold heart, she sought the devotion, and sported with the fancies of love; little sensible to real merit, she only admitted the fortunate into her presence; those whom she most admired, were most liable to fall in her opinion, for in one of those moody reveries that she often indulged, she would compare them—with herself! Her conceit, her self-idolatry, were too abstract for sympathy; in their elevation they remained even undisturbed by the insolence of a libeller!

But all we have said still leaves us uninformed how this beautiful stateswoman obtained so powerful an influence in the political state of the times. She has kept her own secret. I have tracked her in some of her active movements—Warburton has boldly designated her—yet her history remains unwritten!

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE CORONATION IN SCOTLAND.

CHARLES, from his accession, had annually renewed his promise of a visit to his native Scotland and a Coronation in his ancient capital. The unsettled state of home affairs, and possibly that of his exchequer, had retarded this royal inauguration; but the delay of the long-promised appearance of the Sovereign was felt as neglect, and even reviled as mockery, by his remote subjects. The ancient jealousy of the two nations

had been rekindled rather than allayed by their common union ; and the people who had lost their own court, and had never seen their own Sovereign, when they resorted to their happier partner, shared only in those national unkindnesses which lowered "the blue bonnets" into obtruders or dependants ; and tales and songs, proverbs and jibes, flew about of "the bonny Scot made a gentleman." * The confidential domestics of the royal father and the son were, however, Scots, and Charles to the last retained his affection for his countrymen ; yet it was from them that the bewitching model of insurgency was held out to England. The patronage, however, which healed the wounded pride of the Caledonian irritated the feverish interests of the Englishman. To assert the national dignity of Scotland, Charles once proposed that its Crown should be transferred to England, and here, in a second coronation, be solemnly placed on his head ; but the Scottish Lord, the keeper of this Regalia, declared that he durst not be false to his trust ; yet would his Majesty be pleased to accept of it in the land of his fathers, he would find his people ready to yield him the highest honours ; "but if the Crown was not worth a progress, there might be some other way of disposing of it." The Scottish Council were not less strenuous in their style. When a toleration, in some degree, for the Catholics was in agitation, and the old Marquis of Huntley, who was an hereditary sheriff, in concert with some other nobles, neglected to attend to the letter of the Council, to suppress the Papists, they incurred the expatriating punishment of what the Scotch termed "a horning." The herald at arms thrice winded his horn, each time summoning these noblemen, who not appearing, were proclaimed rebels ; and to escape from the Council the old Marquis

* Ritson among his collections of "The North Country Chorister." Some curious anecdotes were current in that day of the subtily of the Scots, indicative of the temper of the times. Sir Toby Matthews had one of a Scotchman without a cloak, travelling with an Englishman in the rain, who sitting by the side of the Scotchman in the boot of a coach, gave him a flap of his coat ; at the end of the journey the Scotchman had, little by little, got all the Englishman's cloak on his own shoulders. They had a saying in France of the Scotch Halberdiers, "Si vous lui permettez de mettre son Hallebarde dans votre porte, en peu de jours il se rendra maitre de votre Maison."—These anecdotes are found in the papers of Robert, the second Earl of Leicester, in 1636 ; so careful was the Earl to treasure up his jealousy of the envied favourites of Charles the First.

and his colleagues took their instant flight to the English Court. The Council of Scotland had decided that, "when the King comes to be crowned amongst us, he will, we doubt not, be sworn to our laws; meanwhile, as we are entrusted with them, we will look they be observed."*

Such lofty remonstrances had often reminded Charles that his appearance in his ancient and native kingdom became daily more urgent; and there were other deeper motives which hastened the journey.

In Scotland an usurping aristocracy equally oppressed the Sovereign and the people. The heaviest grievance of the Scottish people was, then, the tyranny of their feudal nobility. Weak or unprincipled Regents, preceding and during the minority of James the First, had not only seized upon or shared among their adherents the patrimony of the Church, but had wrested from the Crown some of its inalienable rights in the regalities and tithes which had been annexed to the Crown by Parliament. An Act of Revocation of these illegal grants had been proposed by Charles, and the Earl of Nithisdale had been sent to open the Royal commission, but had he proceeded, the Lords, to use Burnet's style, had resolved, "to fall upon him and all his party in the old Scottish manner, and knock them on the head." An anecdote of the times reveals a striking instance of this feudal rancour and barbarous greatness. Belhaven, an old blind lord, prayed to be seated by the Earl of Dumfries, one of the Nithisdale party, that he might make sure of him, which he seemed to do by grasping him hard with one hand; on Dumfries remonstrating with his troublesome neighbour, the old Lord excused himself, observing that since his blindness he was ever in fear of falling; meanwhile his other hand clutched a dagger ready to plunge into his companion's breast on the first commotion.† The insatiable rapacity of the fathers was now to be maintained by the insolent tenacity of the sons. Such was the volcanic soil which Charles was about to tread, and the subterranean fires were ready to burst out.

These were the cares of State brooding in the Royal breast, not yet opened to the world. At this time Clarendon describes Charles the First "as finding himself possessed of that tran-

* Hamon L'Estrange, p. 129, second edition.

† Burnet's Memoirs, i. 34.

quillity, by which he had no reason to apprehend any enemies from abroad and less any insurrections at home; and he resolved to make a progress to the North and be solemnly crowned in his kingdom of Scotland."* In the year 1633, England appeared to be a happy land—faction seemed to sleep—and peace guarded our coasts.

The King's intended progress to Scotland had furnished a topic for conversation, and the public mind had been prepared to meet the Royal wishes, that this great national visit should be graced by all the splendour and pomp of England; but it was not less known that his Exchequer was ill provided for the charge. The King invited the chief of his nobility to attend his Court, but required them to join him at their own charge. At that moment the fervour of loyalty vied with the pride of magnificence. In May the gorgeous train set forward, and we owe to the resident correspondent of the *Mercure François*, the names of the English nobility who accompanied the King, each of whom brought from forty to sixty gentlemen and as many led horses richly caparisoned; he adds, what seems excessive in number, that more than five thousand volunteers joined the Royal cavalcade.

The splendour of the present progress had not hitherto been equalled in our annals. The northern road presented one continued scene of sumptuous festivals in the ruinous hospitality of those whose seats were opened to this travelling Court. Houses were enlarged, and state was assumed by some never before seen in their generations, and the feasting or banquetting, particularly at Welbeck by the Earl of Newcastle, at Raby Castle the seat of the Vanes, and at Durham by Bishop Morton, were carried to such an excess, that Lord Clarendon according to his notion traces the seeds of the commotions of a subsequent period to the heavy debts which the nobility and the gentry incurred by their unlimited expenditure. Nor is this opinion of Clarendon, as it would seem, at all preposterous; for Lord Newcastle acknowledged to the Earl of Strafford that, as well as my Lord of Carlisle, he had hurt his estate much with waiting on the King in his Scottish journey. "Not to be sick in mind, body, and purse, with this weight of debt upon me, I

* Clarendon, ii. 162.

know no diet better than a strict diet in the country which in time may recover me of the prodigal diseases.*

A royal progress had always been considered as a great annoyance to the individuals who had the costly honour of entertaining the Sovereign. It seemed to be a test as well as a tax of loyalty. It was sometimes contrived not to be at home on these occasions; a contemporary of one of the progresses of James the First writes "The progress holds on towards Northamptonshire, as unwelcome in those parts as rain in harvest, so as the great ones begin to *remuer mesnage* and to dislodge; the Lord Spenser to his daughter Vane in Kent, and divers other gentlemen devise other errands other ways."† Bishop Andrews spent three thousand pounds in three days in entertaining James the First. Some however, in office, were jealous to obtain the distinction of a royal visit, though they grudged the cost. Sir Julius Cæsar, in some short memorials of himself, while he proudly chronicles a progress of Queen Elizabeth and laments over "five former disappointments" mortifies his pride by calculating the result. Some of my readers may be amused by the recital. "The Queen visited me at my house at Mitcham and supped lodged and dined there the next day. I presented her with a gown of cloth of silver richly embroidered, a black net-work mantle with pure gold, a white taffeta hat with several flowers, and a jewel of gold set therein with rubies and diamonds. Her Majesty removed from my house after dinner to Nonsuch with exceeding good countenance—which entertainment of her Majesty with the charges of five former disappointments, amounted to seven hundred pounds sterling, besides mine own provisions and whatever was sent unto me by my friends." Sir Julius must have acted prudently notwithstanding, for some of these royal visits cost many thousand pounds to some of the nobility. This prodigality of the nobility was perhaps one great source of the prosperity of those inferior classes of the nation, who were advancing in influence, and wealth, and at no distant day, mingled with the burgesses of Parliament. In proportion as the nobility exhausted their revenues, they promoted the future independence of the class of citizens.

On their entrance into Scotland the magnificence was

* Strafford's Letters, i. 101.

† Sloane, MSS. 4173. Chamberlain's Letters.

redoubled, the prodigality was exhaustless ; the emulation of two nations, like opposing flames which mingle into one, now blazed in union. The Scottish nobility vied in the richness of their equipages, and the grandeur of their state. The poorer nation were not unwilling to ruin themselves, provided the scoffers of their poverty were confuted by a single and fatal triumph. A whole nation is subject to an aberration of mind, when a sudden contagion prevails.

On the King's entrance into Scotland the English resigned their places to those of the Scots, who by their titles or offices were entitled to hold them ; the tables were kept up with renewed profusion, the splendour of the state was augmented, and the new guests were received in a struggle of general courtesies. "The King appeared with no less lustre at Edinburgh than at Whitehall."

When Charles made his public entry into Edinburgh, at the western-gate, he was attended by the Lord Provost and all the dignified citizens and about three hundred of the flower of Scotland in white satin, with rich doublets, with their partisans and other arms. As the King passed, many a well-devised pageant arrested the acclamations of the people, by their elegant harangues or poetical invocations. In the magnificent spectacle, whatever charm the music, the poetry, and the painting of the times could awaken, were accompanied by the congratulatory or the pathetic sentiments, and the expressive gestures of the actors. The most extraordinary pageant detained them at the Tolbooth, where, personified, the long line of one hundred and eight Scottish monarchs was ranged, from Fergus the First, who in a prophetic oration announced that the future line from Charles would not be less numerous. The courtly flattery and the populous shout died away together, but the speeches from the planets, the song of the muses and the lay of Caledonia—still live for those who will seek them in the poems of Drummond of Hawthornden.*

* The speech of Caledonia representing the kingdom, has these nervous lines. She

" Yet in this corner of the world doth dwell
With her pure sisters, Truth, Simplicity ;
A Mars' adoring brood is here, their wealth
Sound minds and bodies of as sound a health ;
Walls here are Men "—

This is in a collection of Greek, Latin, and English verses. Some of the poems are

The romantic city, favoured by nature for the refulgent parade, and lengthened procession, is described at this time as consisting but of a single street, spacious as it seemed to them; and seated on the declivity of the side of a hill, stretching out a mile in length, from the Castle to Holyrood-house. The King, going in state to his coronation, issued from the Castle followed by all his nobility, riding through the city to the Palace, where he was to be crowned. The eye of the spectator could pursue the glorious pomp at once from the first to the last, through one vast moving line. The glory of the monarch now seemed the pride of his rejoicing subjects; a burst of loyalty broke forth from the many whose eyes dwelt with affection on the person of their Sovereign, then held sacred—and the Scottish coronation for a moment might have effaced from the recollections of Charles, the almost private, and less honoured coronation of his England.

We however must pause amidst the shouts, the festivals and the triumphs of this day. Could the inaugurated Sovereign surmise, even in his most thoughtful moments, that this very population at no distant day, were to turn from him with the same impetuosity they now followed his courser? When the King counted these waves of the multitude rolling on, and beheld the regal state which seemed to fortify his power, could he yet feel that the reality of this passing grandeur was but a phantom of glory? Assuredly there was not yet in Scotland a solitary Judas who was calculating the blood-money of his monarch; an enormous treason could not yet seduce their hopes; yet among the servile million, we are told, there were countenances which but ill-concealed their secret designs; and murmurs and sedition were amidst the pomp and the triumph.

Kings, indeed, by drawing their notions from their own circle, acquire but a very restricted knowledge of men and of affairs. James and Charles, in the love of their father-land, had scattered their bounties on Scotchmen resident at their court, but the Scottish nation only considered these as private obligations conferred on persons who had the least influence in

highly poetical. The volume is entitled “ΕΙΣΟΙΑ Musarum Edinensium in Caroli Regis Musarum Tutani ingressu in Scotiam. Edinburgi, 1633.”

their own country. On the contrary, those who affected popularity on the King's arrival, and were most suspected by Charles, whenever the King attended in public would attend near his person, obtruded themselves on his notice, amused him by their conversation, or attracted his attention to objects new to him. By their confidence and officiousness, they impressed a notion on the populace that they enjoyed the royal favour.

Charles, whose manners were stately and formal at all times, could not, however, repulse these new companions. Lord Falkland quaintly observed on such intruders, that "keeping of State was like committing adultery, there must go two to it;" on which Lord Clarendon, a stern advocate for court-etiquette, makes a curious reflection; "A bold and confident man instantly demolishes the whole machine of State by getting within it, however the most formal man may resolve to keep his distance."

Thus the King discovered that of all his personal friends, not one was recognised by the people but the Marquis of Hamilton, whose ambidextrous and ambiguous conduct was even then suspected; the novel friendships of his enemies were more suspicious and more to be feared.

The Coronation was followed by a Parliament. The irritated spirits of the aristocracy, who not long afterwards triumphed, were not then inactive. On the very day that the King made his entry into Edinburgh, the Earl of Rothes, afterwards one of the leaders of the Covenant, undertook timely in the morning to hasten to Dalkeith, to inform his Majesty that a petition to his Majesty and the Parliament had been drawn up for redress of all their grievances, but before it was given to the Clerk Register of the Parliament, it was deemed decent first to show it privately to the King. Charles having read this extraordinary petition, returned it to Rothes, sternly saying, "No more of this, my lord! I command you!"* The petition in consequence at that moment was suppressed,—but it was not destroyed. Charles probably did not foresee that this very petition was the seed of that future rebellion, which not many years after was to carry insurrection through his kingdoms. This early mode of his reception in Scotland must, however,

* Bishop Guthry's Memoirs, 9.

have reminded Charles of his former unhappy meetings with his English Parliaments.

The same Earl of Rothes even ventured to accuse the clerk-registers of making a false return of the votes.* The resistance and difficulty with which matters passed could only have been overcome by the personal interference of the King, who on that day had a list of the names of the lords as they were called up; observing, "I shall know to-day who shall do me service." In this manner a forced and momentary success was obtained, while the seeds of future commotion were deeply sown in the soil.†

Hume, in following Clarendon, was not well-informed of the Scottish affairs. "No one," says he, "could have suspected from exterior appearances that such dreadful scenes were approaching." Yet some contemporary historians were not insensible to the strength of the rising party.

In the bold scheme Charles meditated to break down the arbitrary power of the nobility, the measure could not be disagreeable to the people, but the design of restoring prelacy itself in this land of Presbyters, was raising up all those evil spirits which were soon to marshal themselves in array. It was often the fate of Charles to be prompted by a right motive, but to be swayed by a false suggestion. By the side of Charles stood his evil genius—the Kirk-party scowled, as the Bishop of London in his rochet preached on the benefits of conformity and the sacredness of ceremonies, from that pulpit whence Knox had thundered out their eternal abolition. Was Scotland to become a dependent province of England? Were the Presbyters to sink at the feet of the Episcopalians? It had been well if Laud, as he notices in his Diary, had only startled the Highlanders by the portentous meteor of his coach crossing some part of their land, a wonder they had never seen before; but his improvident zeal for conformity, unmitigated by policy or address, only left behind him hatreds and rebellion; terrible evils which the sagacity of James had predicted.

Charles in returning from Scotland, notwithstanding the flourishing accounts of our English writers, could have been as little pleased with his Scots, as the Scots were with their

* Brodie, ii. 419.

† L'Estrange, 131.—Kennett.

sovereign. The English themselves had been feasted and complimented, and they might have been deceived by the popular illusions of an inspiring coronation. Laud in his Diary declares, that "he never saw more expressions of joy than were after it;" but Laud was too poor a politician, in the impetuosity of his temper, on this very occasion pushing aside one of the Scottish bishops who would not be clad in the sacred vestment—to detect the serpent which was sleeping under the flowers.

Charles could not but be sensible that he had only carried his point by his own personal interference, a mode of which the legality was very questionable. Cares and displeasures were clouding over the royal breast—the conduct of the monarch betrayed his secret vexation. Those who openly dissented from the acts which the King had carried through the Parliament were not a few. In one of his progresses in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh Charles refused a Provost the usual honour of kissing hands, because he was one of the Dissenters. A curious fact is related by one who must have been well informed; the Earl of Rothes conceived the King had intentionally disgraced him, when in a progress which his Majesty made to Fife, the Earl being hereditary Sheriff of that county, assembled all his friends and vassals in their best equipage to receive the King; but his Majesty, either by accident or on purpose, went another way, and missed him; this the Earl never forgot, and became one of the first and most active instruments in the future Rebellion. This we are told by Sir Edward Walker, the devoted servant of his sovereign, merely as an evidence of one of those slight motives which are sufficient to operate so seriously on certain characters; did Sir Edward Walker really think that his Majesty missed him by accident?

We may be certain with Rushworth that the open affront was designed by the King; the Earl of Rothes had shown himself pre-eminently at the head of the Dissenters, and if Charles could resent Non-conformity in a poor Provost of a town, how much more in an Earl at the head of his county, and the first bearer of a petition about grievances!

The King hastened home, where perhaps he hoped for more tranquil hours. He arrived suddenly, privately crossing the

water at Blackwall, without making his public entrance into London; this was designed to give the Queen, then at Greenwich, an agreeable surprise.

Kings are doomed to have their most private and indifferent actions maliciously commented; and on this occasion there were those who animadverted on the difference between King Charles and Queen Elizabeth. Such indeed on frequent occasions was the popular comparison during this reign. Elizabeth never ended her summer progresses without wheeling about some end of London, and never went to Whitehall without crossing the City, requiring the Lord Mayor and Aldermen in their scarlet robes and chains of gold to meet her, with all the Companies. This was one of the arts she practised to maintain majesty, and to excite popularity. James brooked not the formalities of state, and however lofty his style whenever majesty was his theme, no man was more careless of its paraphernalia. The retired character of Charles retained his father's love of privacy, and avoided these public occasions of engaging the affections of his people. Both the royal persons of the father and the son became in time strange and neglected, and their government lost that sympathy among the people, whose support, at some critical moments, they found was wanting.

But when the ill-natured spirits, on this occasion, could mortify Charles for flying, in the playfulness of his domestic feelings, to his Queen, by an odious comparison with Elizabeth, they might have recollected that Elizabeth had no partner of her life to delight by a surprise. The only enjoyment that political Queen was capable of receiving on her return home, was to be found in the streets, and not in the lonely palace; in the shouts of the people, and not in the voice and embraces of one beloved.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE PURITANS.—OF THEIR ORIGIN.

No subject in modern history seems more obscure by the views of the writers, than the history of that considerable portion of the nation so well known under the designation of Puritans. It is a nick-name branding with derision or abhorrence, or it is a proud title exalting them, to use the description of a Scottish biographer of the Covenanters, into "men a little too low for Heaven, and much too high for earth."

These active enemies to the established forms of the Government of England have been condemned as a captious, a moody, and a mischievous race, pertinacious on indifferent matters, and inflexible in their own absolute power, which is subversive of every other. Their sullen and intolerant natures paused not till their dissent had spread a general non-conformity in the monarchy and the hierarchy of England. By the advocates of popular freedom, these Puritans have been elevated into the very beatitude of their designation, as "the Salt of the Earth," the promulgators of civil liberty, and its martyrs. By the wits, these Puritans have been exhibited in the grotesque shapes of ridicule, with very changeable masks on their faces; and by the more philosophical, these separatists, not only in dogmas and doctrines, exhibit a more curious singularity in their manners, their language, and their sympathies with their fellow citizens.

What I shall say on the Puritans will be, first, on their origin; secondly, on their attempts in England; thirdly, on the political character of their founder; and lastly, I shall account for the perplexing contradictions in their political character, and explain why they appear at the same time the creators of civil and religious liberty, and its most violent and obnoxious adversaries.

The Protestants of England who fled from the Marian persecution found a hospitable reception in several towns of Switzerland and Germany. At Frankfort, under the eye of the magistrate, a church of the French Reformed was allowed to be

alternately occupied by the exiles of England. Attentive to the prevention of future controversies and civic troubles, the policy of the burgher senator required that the new comers should not dissent from the French Reformed in doctrine or ceremonies; and for their first public act he desired them to subscribe to the confession of faith which the French Reformed had not quite finished, but were about printing; yet so perfectly tolerant was the chief magistrate of Frankfort, that he allowed the English to practise any ceremonies peculiar to themselves, provided their French brothers did not object to them. Never was a magistrate more tolerant, or more authoritative. Every thing at this period marks the feeble infancy of the Reformation.

The miserable are compliant, and the fugitive have no home. The English emigrants raised no objection to accommodate themselves to the practices of the French Reformed, who were of the Presbytery of their countryman Calvin. The Lutherans, who still retained many of the ancient dogmas and ceremonies, appear to have been so bigoted, as to refuse receiving the English.

The emigrants, that they might not startle their new friends with objects strange to view or with matters as yet unheard, stripped their minister of his surplice, and threw aside the new Liturgy or Service-book of their late Sovereign Edward. In the ministration of the Sacraments many things were omitted as "superstitious." In the Reformation under Edward the Sixth some difference of opinion had arisen from a single Bishop, Hooper, respecting wearing the rochet, and other ecclesiastical robes. Hooper had resided in Germany, and had imbibed the new discipline; but subsequently he had conformed to the regulations laid down in the Service-book of the English sovereign.

These first compliant emigrants invited their dispersed brothers at Strasburgh, Zurich, and other cities to join them; but when several of these found that they were not allowed the entire use of what was called "the English Book," they were on the point of leaving their Frankfort friends.

The famous Knox now arrived from Geneva, by invitation, as their minister. The party who required the use of "the Book of England" for the sake of peace, objected not to omit certain

parts of the ceremonial prescribed in the Anglican service which "the country could not bear," but they required at least to have "the substance and the effect." Knox and Whittingham asked what they meant by the substance of the book? They replied that they had not come to dispute; but while some of their brothers were laying down their lives for the maintenance of King Edward's Reformation, their adversaries might well charge them with inconstancy, and might well triumph over the Protestants of England who had tacitly rejected their own Service-book. They prayed for conformity, "lest by such altering, they should appear to condemn its chief authors who were now shedding their blood for it, as if there were imperfection in the doctrine, and mutability in the men, which might make even the godly doubt of the truth of which before they were persuaded."

Knox retorted that what they could prove of that book to stand with the word of God, and "the country would permit," should be granted. But Knox and Whittingham now professed that the Book of England was "A Mass-Book;" and drawing up a Latin version submitted it to their friend and master, Calvin, as arbitrator. They were certain of his opinion before they asked for it. The Father of Dissent replied, that in the English Liturgy "I see many *tolerabiles ineptias*; I mean, that it has not the PURITY which is to be desired." *Tolerabiles ineptias* plainly translated was "tolerable fooleries," but it was more tenderly turned into "tolerable unfitnesses." Bishop Williams observed that Master Calvin had his *tolerabiles morositates*.

The decree of the Oracle of Reformation at the little town of Geneva, detached some wavering minds from the English doctrine, who in the humility of their weakness probably imagined that they had a distinct notion of Calvin's *purity*, and these enabled Knox and his party to carry all matters in their own way, shutting up King Edward's Service-book.*

* We may form some idea of the convulsive emotions of men's minds at this moment, when in one of the papers which passed between the parties about this time, the following paragraph is set down as a matter of ordinary news:—"The Bishop of Gloucester, Mr. Hooper, a man worthy of perpetual memory, *whom we hear to be burnt of late.*"

At this time, among these emigrants arrived from England Dr. Cox, who had been the tutor of Edward the Sixth, and was afterwards, under Elizabeth, the Bishop of Ely. The uncompromising Knox had now to encounter a spirit dauntless as his own. Knox had voted Cox and his friends into the church, and it was considered very ungracious that the last comers should thrust out those who had received them. Dr. Cox not only had the Liturgy of his royal pupil observed in defiance of Knox's orders, but enforced its practice, by that single argument which resists all other arguments, *Ego volo habere!* All now was trouble and contest. Both parties appealed to the little Senate of the burghers of Frankfort. A magistrate came down to remind these disturbers of the town's peace, of their first agreement—to accord with the French church, otherwise the church-door which had been opened might be shut. All parties instantly consented to obey the magistrate. But Dr. Cox was a politician!

The democratic style of Knox often laid him open to the arm of "the powers that be." In his "Admonition to Christians," where he had called Mary of England a Jezebel, and Philip by another nickname; he had also called the Emperor "an idolater, and no less an enemy to Christ than Nero." This passage placed before the eyes of the honest burghers of Frankfort, in five minutes, was pronounced to be *Læsæ Majestatis Imperatoriæ*. The only writer of the history of these troubles at Frankfort, insinuates that the party of Cox cruelly aimed by this *ruse* at the life of Knox.* The magistracy hinted to Knox's friends that he had best depart quickly and quietly—Heylin describes Knox as stealing away by moonlight; Neal, the historian of the Puritans, records, "the magistrates, in a respectful manner," desired his departure. Probably neither of these accounts is true; both are warped by the opposite feelings of the writers. "The stealing away by moonlight" was a malicious picturesque invention of Heylin, for Knox was accompanied part of his way by some twenty friends; and we may doubt "the respectful manner" of the half-terrified burghers lest the Emperor's council at that moment sitting at Augsburg should have the same information of high treason laid on their council-table, and the

* This writer evidently inclines to the Knoxians, but this history is not written without candour, and Strype refers to it as an authentic narrative.

free city cease to be free, for harbouring a Shimei. But what signify such minute accidents in the lives of the great movers of their age? They weigh not, as the dust on the balance. The banishment from Frankfort might form an epoch in the history of mediocrity, the life of some solitary Non-conformist—it is scarcely noticeable in the career of Knox. He who was now hurried out of the town of Frankfort, baffled and outvoted, at no distant day, was to be the most terrible man whom Scotland ever beheld; whose arm uplifted in prayer was to be as a sword of fire, and the thunder of whose voice was to convulse a kingdom.

The Non-conformists formed an inconsiderable minority; and it is evident that the dignity of the tutor of Edward the Sixth had greatly influenced the grave magistracy. After the flight of Knox, two distinguished Puritans, we may begin now to give them their names, Whittingham, afterwards the Dean of Durham, who turned the stone coffins of the abbots into horse-troughs, and Christopher Goodman, whose book on "Obedience" might more aptly be termed on "Insurrection," rigidly held to "the French order, which is according to the order of Geneva; the purest reformed church in Christendom."

These fathers of English dissent offered to dispute against the Coxites, "*Coxe et gregalibus suis*," as Calvin distinguishes them. They would have proved that the order which these sought to establish ought not to take place in any reformed church. Each party looked to the civil magistrate to protect them from the other. Dr. Adolphus Glauburge, a doctor of law, and nephew to Mr. John Glauburge the senator, made a plain answer, that "Disputation there should be none, it being decided that other order than the book of England they should not have." The nephew referring to his noble uncle, the uncle to his learned nephew, in this see-saw of magistracy and theology, the peace of the city was not disturbed—for the disturbers now in despair of controversy, flew from "the great English book" to Geneva; and it was from Geneva that Puritanism afterwards travelled into England.

Such was the origin of that dissent which sprang up in the infancy of the Church of England in exile. It was even increased by personal quarrels. We stay not to tell of "a certain controversy which fell out at supper;" but which, however, rent

the little Anglican church at Frankfort, by a violent schism, and as the *naïve* historian describes it through many a lengthened page, "so boiling hot that it ran over on both sides, and yet no fire quenched."

But what were the simple objects which had opened this eternal breach? To say the most we can for these our first Non-conformists, their jealousy of Romanism had inflicted on them strange horrors of "idolatries," and "superstitions," for some points of church discipline and certain accustomed ceremonies, which, abstracted from passion and prejudice, were of themselves perfectly indifferent. Such was the form of baptism; they insisted that the water should be taken from a basin, and not a fount. They protested against the churching of women as a Jewish custom, as if so many others which they affected were not equally so! And this fastidious delicacy of Judaic ceremonies was shown at the very time they were rejecting all Grecian and Roman and Saxon names, to adopt the scriptural names of Hebrew origin, which they translated with a ludicrous barbarism.* They would sit and not kneel at the sacrament, because it was a supper. The sign of the cross in baptism—the ring in marriage—the decent surplice of the minister—were not according "to the French order." Calvin and Bullinger, and the learned in this early era of the Reformation, were distressing themselves and their readers with scruples of conscience, which to this present day are carried on by vulgar minds with the same indecorous if not ludicrous protests.

As men do not leap up but climb on rocks, they were only *precise* before they were *pure*. Their earliest designation was a *Precisian*. A satirist of the times, when they advanced farther

* This early practice of the Puritans began under Elizabeth, since it is noticed by Bancroft in 1595. It was renewed with vigour under Charles the First. They not only adopted scriptural names to get rid of Popery and Paganism, but they translated the Hebrew names into English Christian names—such as Accepted—Ashes—Joyagain—Kill Sin. They pitched a note higher by adding whole sentences to their names. The reader has met with "Praise-God Barebones," but he may not be so well acquainted with his two brothers, who it is said assumed Christian names of a more formidable dimension. The one calling himself "Christ came into the world to save Barebones," and the other, "If Christ had not died thou hadst been damned Barebones;" which latter, for shortness, and to distinguish the brothers, was familiarly curtailed to "Damned Barebones!"

in their reformation, in rhythms against Martin Mar-prelate, melts their attributes into one verse—

“The sacred sect, and perfect pure-precise.”

They became *Puritans* under Elizabeth, whom in their familiar idiom they compared to an idle slut who swept the middle of the room, but left all the dust and filth behind the doors. “The untamed heifer,” as they called the Queen, long considered them only as “a troublesome sort of people.” The Queen said that she knew very well what would content the Catholics, but that she never could learn what would content the Puritans. At first, confining themselves to points of ecclesiastical discipline, they only raised disturbances at “the candlesticks on the Queen’s altar,” at “the Romish rags” and ministers “conjuring robes;” all the solemn forms, which viewed in

“The dim religious light”

touch the mind, not polluted by vulgar associations, in the self-collectedness of its gathered thoughts.

Who could have foreseen that some pious men quarrelling about the Service-book of Edward the Sixth and the square caps and rochets of bishops, should at length attack bishops themselves, and by an easy transition from bishops to kings, finally close in the most revolutionary democracy?

After the dissensions at Frankfort, Knox and Melville, and several eminent Englishmen, resorted to Calvin. Associating with a legislating enthusiast whose apostolical habits of life vouched his own doctrines, and whose solitary contemplation was the institution of a new order of things, men of their ardent temper were susceptible of the contagion of his genius. Knox on his return to Scotland preserved an uninterrupted correspondence with Calvin; and though he often acted before he consulted the supreme pastor of Reformation, still he never ceased with a proud submission to consult on what had already been done. Calvin at times had scruples and probably fears at the haste and heat of this great missionary of revolution, but his congratulations were more frequent than his fears. Knox indeed had only victories to recount, for he propagated the

Gospel by demolishing, as fast as he procured hands, every religious edifice; often leaving notice in the evening for the monks to quit in the morning.

Whittingham, who married Calvin's sister, discovered on his return to England all the force of his relationship. Christopher Goodman, an early associate of Calvin, was one of the heads of the Puritans, till Cartwright, who had himself sojourned more than once at Geneva, here became a little Calvin. These persons, with some others, were the originators of democratical Puritanism, and they soon opened an intestine war with episcopacy, till at length in the struggle for supremacy, they struck at the throne itself.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE PURITANS CONTINUED.— HISTORY OF THE MAR-PRELATES.

THE Ecclesiastical domination had early under Constantine assumed the form of a Monarchy, and even in that day the elevated seat of the Bishop was called a throne.* Every thing relating to Episcopacy is regal. The house of a Bishop is a palace, as his seat is a throne; the crosier is a sceptre; the mitre a crown; and in the inauguration of a Bishop, he is said to be enthroned. From the Spiritual court are issued writs in the Bishops, and not in the King's, name, and the Court of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction has its Chancellor. A Convocation of Bishops is an Ecclesiastical Parliament, consisting of an Upper and a Lower House, where the Archbishops and the Bishops form the Aristocracy, and the Commons of the Clergy are represented by their Deputies. In England their title of honour is only that of "Lord." Archbishop Grindal said that though he was thus saluted, he did not consider himself "lordly." The Non-conformist Dr. Sampson petulantly retorted, "If you whom policy hath made a great Lord be not lordly, you are a Phoenix."

The Ecclesiastical polity seemed always to conform itself to

* Cave's Primitive Christianity, c. vi. part i. 140.

the Civil. It was now attempted to change that Ecclesiastical polity, the growth of fifteen centuries. Cartwright in England maintained that the Church of Christ was to be regulated by the standard of the Holy Scriptures; as in the Apostolical state "gold and silver they had none." Archbishop Whitgift, in reply, denied that any particular government was laid down in the Gospel; it was therefore to be inferred that the Church discipline was to accord with the Civil Government. That Apostolical simplicity even to rudeness, which was adapted to its infancy, had gradually enlarged its authority and splendour as the Church grew to its maturity, under the protection of the Civil Magistrate. We perceive here that two able men arguing by two opposite standards of judgment, may open an interminable controversy; so that in spite of reason and philosophy, there must inevitably exist two opposite parties. The last argument indeed may remain with either, as accident shall determine. It is that distinguished argument called the *Ultima ratio Regum*, equally potent at Geneva or London; the Bishops under Elizabeth punished the Puritans, the Puritans under Knox and Calvin expelled the Bishops; and thus the sword cut the knot which their fingers could not untie.

When the Presbyters of Calvin reminded the Episcopalians of Apostolical times and of primitive Christianity, reproaching their gorgeous state and usurped jurisdiction, they were reproaching not bishops, who were but men, but the natural progression in human affairs, when men cease to be villagers, and become citizens. The primeval church was built up with unhewn trees, when Christians were peasants; * were we therefore to demolish the cathedral, the magnificent work of art and wealth, when the Christian empire embraced all Europe? Thus too the pilgrim pastor whose sole revenue was drawn from the alms-box, was changed into the lord of his diocese. Churches were endowed as well as consecrated, and ecclesiastical lands became as inalienable, in justice, as the lands of any citizen.

The penury and humiliations of a primitive bishop might have reduced the ecclesiastical order to the contempt of the people, who are no reverencers of a brotherhood unguarded by

* A very ancient church of this rude construction is still existing at Grinstead in the neighbourhood of Chipping-Ongar.

the ensigns of their authority, and dependent on the spare bounty of a parish. The Episcopal order may be considered as a community of the learned ; their independence is at once the stimulus of their ambition, and the guarantee of their literary repose and their literary exertions. On the contrary principle we see how the Apostolical Presbyters of Scotland, early dispersed in remote solitudes, exiled from the living sources of knowledge, are thrown out of their age.* The nineteenth century has often witnessed in the rude pastor of Knox, the fierce ungovernable spirit of his master combined with the traditional prejudices of his own rude parishioners.

Actuated however by a principle of retrogression, these new levellers would have converted a cathedral into a conventicle, and a bishop into a parish-priest, exacting the equality of Democracy in the Ecclesiastical Monarchy. The bishops in the reign of Elizabeth were startled at the novel and extraordinary inquiry whence they derived their power and their superiority? They were not only astonished but were equally unprepared to answer an inquiry, which they hardly knew how to treat.

When Henry the Eighth assumed the supremacy of the Church, in freeing the nation from the Papal yoke he not only invested himself with the inflexibility of the Papacy, but had adroitly fitted the novel yoke to the haughty neck of the prelacy of England. The sovereign now no longer dreaded a rebellious, or a rival power, in his own Hierarchy. No future Becket could stand at the foot of the throne, more a sovereign than he who sate on it. Priestly domination was under the control of the King, and the patronage, or the creation of bishops, being placed in the royal prerogative, Episcopacy was now but a graft on the strength of the Monarchy.

The English bishops derived their authority and dignity from the election of the sovereign. The royal supremacy remained unquestioned. On this subject it is curious to observe that

* In the speech of the honest Sir Benjamin Rudyard, he foresaw the consequences of this state of humiliation of the clergy. "If we pull down Bishopricks and pull down Cathedral churches, in a short time we must be forced to pull down Colleges too ; for scholars will live and die there as in cells, if there be no considerable preferment to invite them abroad. This is the next way to bring in barbarism ! to make the clergy an unlearned contemptible vocation, not to be desired but by the basest of the people."—*Five Speeches of Sir B. Rudyard*, p. 28.

Rome in its plenitude of power was equally jealous of this regal privilege. Inculcating that the Pope alone was the sole head of the Church appointed by Heaven, all the minor orders of the priesthood devolved from the pontifical institution. Against this doctrine as degrading to their sacred dignity, often had the bishops struggled. At the Council of Trent they disputed for their independence with the warmth of reformers; the Gallican church partly emancipated itself from their despotic pontiff. An Italian bishop having once inscribed on a missive that he was bishop by "the grace of God," this presumed "divine right" was treason in the Roman ecclesiastical polity; and the enraged Pope exclaiming that "the grace of God was never bestowed on fools," instantly, to show this reformer that he owed his bishoprick to quite a different source, unbishopped the bishop.

The memorable controversy now opened on the authority of the Bishops and Presbyters. It was denied that any superiority was known in the days of Apostolical equality; Bishop and Presbyter denoting the same office, were but different terms for the same identical character, and therefore there could be no ordination from a superior, and no subordination in the whole order. This mode of opinion went to establish the entire independence of the Presbyters, freed from the sovereignty of Episcopacy.

Hitherto the Anglican bishops had contented themselves by deriving their title and office from the royal grant. Bancroft, to put an end to this novel assumption of parity, took a higher flight, and vindicated episcopacy on the divine right.* He maintained the uninterrupted succession of bishops from the time of the apostles; the very ground on which pontifical Rome had settled her own divine authority, and holds the keys of St. Peter in a perpetual reversion.

From this doctrine it resulted, that if no man could be a priest without the ordination of the bishop's hands, all the

* Neal points to Bancroft's famous sermon at Paul's-cross in 1528 for this assumption. There neither Mr. Hallam, nor myself, have discovered it. The anecdote however told of Whitgift, which the reader will shortly find, confirms the notion that the doctrine, though novel, was well known. Lord Bacon has also observed that this notice was then newly broached, in his Tract on the Controversies of the Church of England.

unordained Presbyters were reduced to laymen, incapacitated for ministerial functions, or subordinate to the bishops.

This assumption of the divine right of episcopacy troubled legal heads, who looked on it suspiciously as an infringement of the royal prerogative. Was the crosier to divide dominion with the sceptre? The boldness of the claim even startled the Presbyters—and in their terror of the divine right of episcopacy, the Puritans at court attempted to bring the bishop himself into a premunire. But Bancroft had reserved his after-blow, maintaining that the divine right of episcopacy was by no means derogatory to the royal supremacy, since it was that very supremacy which confirmed it. The novelty of the doctrine, even Whitgift admitted, was what he wished rather than what he believed to be true.

In this history of human nature, it is worthy of observation, that those very Presbyters who at first had so stiffly opposed the *jus divinum* of episcopacy, which seemed fatal for them, at length assumed it themselves! Bancroft, the high-church Episcopalian, and Cartwright, the Presbyter from Geneva, alike agree in elevating the ecclesiastical jurisdiction above the temporal power; both aimed at the same predominance.

This, in regard to the Puritans, still more remarkably appeared when their distant day of triumph arrived, and the divine right of the Presbytery was transferred to themselves, while the rejected Bishops of England, such was the mighty change! were reduced to become themselves vagrants and Non-conformists! When Presbyters sat in Parliament the *jure divino* was debated, in their Assembly of Divines at Westminster, for thirty tedious days. Many protested against it, dreading the arbitrary government of these Evangelicals pretending to a divine right; it seemed a spurious Theocracy. The calm sense of Whitelocke by a subtle inference attempted to induce them to adjourn the interminable debate to some distant day. "If this Government," said this judicious statesman, "be not *jure divino*, no opinion of any council can make it so; and if it be *jure divino*, it continues so still, though you do not declare it to be so." The learned Selden, on his Erastian principles, insisted on the supreme authority of the civil magistrate which this divine right of Presbytery was supplanting. He

tired out this whole assembly of Presbyters, perpetually confuting them in their own learning, by appealing to the original text, instead of their "little gilt pocket-bibles" to which they were incessantly referring. This Presbyterian Assembly of Divines however obtained their "divine right" by a majority among themselves, but having to refer the decision to the Commons, they lost their divine right in the House. It is a curious fact that the priests of the Calvinian government, who should have been the oracles of their lay-members, having only obtained their present eminent situation at Westminster by intrigue, and for a state-purpose, that was to destroy Episcopacy, were only on tolerance; so that the true genius of the Presbyterial government was reversed; for now the Laymen held their ascendancy over the Priests. In all political constitutions there are unlucky changes which legislators hardly ever foresee. The Assembly of Divines were at this moment entirely under the thumb of their politicians in the Commons, their lay-lords and masters! A Parliamentary anecdote has been recorded of these times. The Presbyters attempted to carry their question by a very early attendance in a thin House. Glyn and Whitelocke, perceiving their drift, delayed the resolution, each speaking for a long hour, till the House filled.*

The times, however, in the following year became more ticklish—and the Scottish Presbyterian army in 1645 was near enough to create both fear and love among the parties. The Presbyterial government was allowed a probation, as a civil institution, to be reversed or amended; both Houses at the same time declaring that "they found it very difficult to make their new apostolical settlement agree with the laws and government of the kingdom."† The spiritual sword once placed in the hands of those who presumed they were acting by divine appointment, it was soon seen that the laws of the land were no laws to those who claimed "the keys of the kingdom of Heaven."‡

Knox and Cartwright, at the earliest period of the Calvinistical democracy, had attempted to raise the spiritual over the tem-

* Whitelocke's Memorials, 106. Both these members received the thanks of many "for preventing the surprisal of the House upon this great question."

† Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, iii. 249. 8vo.

‡ Ibid, iii. 242. 8vo.

poral power, for although it seemed that they were aiming only to dethrone bishops under Elizabeth, by a more circuitous way they were attempting the subjugation of the sovereign under "the holy discipline," as afterwards they sought to reduce Charles the First to a King of "the Covenant."

It is remarkable that in a government founded on the principles of democracy, the style that it gradually assumed became regal. It described its acts by perpetual allusions to the potency, and the ensigns of absolute monarchy. The first English Puritans abound with such expressions as "the advancement of Christ's sceptre"—"this divine government"—"the tribunal, or the throne of Jesus." This style became traditional among the latest of the race. In a modern volume of the Lives of the Covenanters, we find such expressions as "Christ then reigned gloriously in Scotland"—"The Crown-rights of our Redeemer"—"The throne of the Lamb"—and "Christ's regalia." In the army of the Covenanters in 1639, every captain had his colours flying at his tent, bearing this inscription in letters of gold, "Christ's Crown and Covenant."* Vicars, the Parliamentary chronicler, called the army of the Earl of Essex "Christ's army royal."

The great father of Puritanism in England appeared in the reign of Elizabeth. Thomas Cartwright was a person of some eminence, and doubtless of great ambition, which in early life had been hurt by the preference which the Queen had shown to his opponent at a philosophy act in the University of Cambridge. Elizabeth had more critically approved of those lighter elegancies in which the grave Cartwright was deficient. He had expatriated himself several years, and returned from Calvin endowed with a full portion of his revolutionary spirit. Again was Cartwright poised against Whitgift, the Queen's Professor of Divinity. As Cartwright advanced his novel doctrines, Whitgift regularly preached them down, but to little purpose, for whenever Cartwright preached they were compelled to take down the windows to make entrances for the confluence of his auditors. Once, in the absence of Whitgift, this master of novel doctrines so powerfully operated on the minds of the

* Lives of the Scots' Worthies, Preface.—Stevenson's Hist. of the Church and State of Scotland, ii. 729.

youths of the college in three sermons on one Sunday, that in the evening his triumph was declared by the students of Trinity rejecting their surplices as papistical badges. Cartwright was now to be confuted by other means. The University condemned him to silence, and at length performed that last feeble act of power—expulsion! In a heart already alienated from the established authorities, this could only envenom a bitter spirit; royalty he personally disliked, and the University had insulted him; the new forms of his religion accorded with his political feelings.

Cartwright does not scruple to declare his purpose. While the Puritans were affecting to annihilate the Church of England as a remains of the Roman supremacy, they proposed to establish one according to their own fancy, by which all sovereigns should consider themselves as “nourrisses or servants under the Church; so they must remember to subject themselves unto the Church; yea, as the prophet speaketh, to lick the dust of the feet of the Church.”* Explicit! Yet Cartwright, in a joint production with Travers, another very eminent person, the domestic Chaplain of Cecil, and the popular Lecturer at the Temple, warmed by the genius of his associate, is still bolder; they insist that “the monarchs of the world should give up their sceptres and crowns unto him (Jesus Christ), who is represented by the officers of the Church.”† Still more explicit, and more ingenious, we may listen for a minute to the whole art of political government. “The world is now deceived that thinketh that the Church must be framed according to the Commonwealth, and the Church government according to the civil government, which is as much as to say, as if a man should fashion his house according to his hangings, whereas, indeed, it is clear contrary. As the hangings are made fit for the house, so the Commonwealth must be made to agree with the Church, and the government thereof with her government; for as the house is before the hangings, therefore the hangings, which come after, must be framed to the house, which was before; so the Church being before there was any Commonwealth, and the Commonwealth coming after, must be fashioned and made suit-

* Cartwright's “Defence of the Admonition.”

† See a “Full and plain declaration of Ecclesiastical discipline,” 185.

able to the Church: otherwise God is made to give place to man, Heaven to earth."* About eighty years after, these saints ruled England, and in their ordinance, 1646, covered the land with their classes, synods, and general assemblies.

From the Church, it is scarcely a single step to the cabinet. The history of these Puritans exhibits the curious spectacle of a great religious body covering a political one: such as was discovered among the Jesuits, and such as may again distract the empire in some new and unexpected shape.

Cartwright employs the very style which a certain class of political reformers long after have used. He declares that "an establishment may be made without the magistrate," and he told the people that "if every hair of their head was a life, it ought to be offered for such a cause." It was not, therefore, strange, that such notions should create a faction among the people, which assumed the expressive designation of "The Marprelates." These new doctrines of Cartwright were echoed in their clamour. One of these revolutionists is for "registering the names of the fittest and hottest brethren, without lingering for Parliament." Another exults that "there are a hundred thousand hands ready." "What a stroke," he cries, "so many would strike together!" A third tells, that "we may overthrow the bishops and all the government in one day, but it will not be yet in a twelvemonth and a half!"†

This was the sanguine style of "the London Corresponding Society;" and to run the parallel still closer, the whole frame and constitution of the Genevan discipline might have served as the model of the modern conspiracy.

A stream of libels ran throughout the nation, under the por-

* Defence of the Admonition, 181. The same feeling is perpetuated among the Puritans; thus the Independent, Cotton Mather, observes that the description of the *whole world* by the first-born of all historians, (by which we must infer that the Egyptians had no historians before Moses,) is contained in one or two chapters, but the description of the *Tabernacle* occupies "seven times as many chapters." And the reason of this difference is he thinks, that the *Church* is far more precious than the *world*, which indeed was created for the use of the *Church*. Thus the great science of Politics is reduced to a Tabernacle Government; this was the true secret of "the fiery Puritans," as Fuller distinguished the class.—Cotton Mather's Introduction to *Magnalia Christi Americana*, 84.

† Madox, *Vindication*, 255.

tentious name of Martin Mar-prelate. This extraordinary personage in his collective form, for he is to be split into more than one, long terrified Church and State. He walked about the kingdom invisibly, dropping here a libel and there a proclamation; but wherever Martinism was found, there Martin was not. He prided himself in what he calls "pistling the bishops," a very ambiguous term, but according to his own vulgar orthoepy, he pretends it only meant "Epistling them." Sometimes he hints to his pursuers how he may be caught, for he dates "Within two furlongs of a bouncing Priest," or "In Europe," while he acquaints his friends who are so often uneasy for his safety, that "he has neither wife nor child," and prays "they may not be anxious for him, for he wishes that his head might not go to the grave in peace."—"I come with the rope about my neck, to save you, howsoever it goeth with me."

His press is interrupted, and Lambeth seems to breathe in peace. But he has "a son, nay five hundred sons," and Martin Junior starts up. "Why has my father been tongue-tied these four or five months? Good nuncles (the bishops) have you choked the gentleman with a fat prebend or two? I trow my father will swallow down no such pills, for he would thus soon purge away all the conscience he hath. Do you mean to have the keeping of him? What need that? A meaner house than the Tower, the Fleet, or Newgate, would serve him well enough. He is not of that ambitious vein that the bishops are, in seeking for more costly houses than ever his father built for him." Another of these "five hundred sons" declares himself to be "his reverend and elder brother, heir to the renowned Martin Mar-prelate the Great."

Such were the mysterious personages who for a long time haunted the palaces of the bishops and the vicarages of the clergy, disappearing at the moment they were suddenly perceived to be near. Their invectives were well farced for the gross taste of the multitude. The Mar-prelate productions were not the elevated effusions of genius; the authors were grave men who affected the dialect of the lowest of the populace to gain them over in their own way. They were best answered by the flowing vein of the satirical Tom Nash; and Martin becomes grave after having swallowed some of his own sauce, and

taken "his pap with a hatchet," administered to these sucklings of sedition.*

Never did sedition travel so fast, nor hide itself so closely; for the family of Martin employed a moveable press, and as soon as it was surmised that Martin was in Surrey, it was found he had removed to Northamptonshire, while the next account came that he was showing his head in Warwickshire. Long they invisibly conveyed themselves, till in Lancashire the snake was scotched by the Earl of Derby with all its little brood.

This outrageous strain of ribaldry and malice which Martin Mar-prelate indulged, obtained full possession of the minds of the populace. These revolutionary publications reached the Universities, for we have a grave admonition in Latin addressed to those who never read Latin.† Who could have imagined that the writers of these scurrilities were scholars,‡ and that their patrons were men of rank? Two knights were heavily fined for secreting these books in their cellars. The libels were translated, and have been often quoted by the Romanists abroad and at home, for their particular purpose, just as the revolutionary publications in this country have been concluded abroad to be the general sentiments of the people of England; and thus our factions always serve the interests of our enemies.

Cartwright approved of these libels, and well knew the concealed writers, who indeed frequently consulted him. Being asked his opinion of such books, he observed that "Since the

* The title of one of Nash's pamphlets against the Mar-prelates. These libels, which enter into our national history, are of the greatest rarity. Some of these works bear evident marks that "the pursuivants" were hunting the printers—a number of little Martins were disturbed in the hour of parturition, for we have the titles of imperfect works. The curious collector may like to learn that there once existed, and probably may yet be found, a Presbyterian edition of these Martinisms. I find mention of it in Bancroft's "Dangerous Positions." "For fear that any of these railing pamphlets should perish, they have printed them altogether in Scotland in two or three volumes, containing three and forty of the said libels."—Bancroft, p. 46.

† *Anti-Martinus sive monitio cujusdam Londinensis ad adolescentes utriusque academie contra personatum quendam rabulam qui se Anglice Martin Mar-prelate, &c. 1589,—4to.*

‡ John Penry, one of the most active of these writers, was hanged. The learned Udall perished in prison. Udall denied that he had any concern in these invectives, but in his library some manuscript notes were considered as materials for Martin Mar-prelate, which Udall confessed were written by "a friend."

Bishops and others there touched would not amend by grave books, it was therefore meet that they should be dealt withal to their further reproach, and that some books must be *earnest*, some more mild and *temperate*, whereby they may be both of the spirit of Elias and Eliseus," the one the great mocker, the other the more solemn reprovcr. It must be confessed that Cartwright here discovers a deep knowledge of human nature. He knew the force of ridicule and of invective. The art of libelling is no inefficient prelude to revolutionary measures; and it will be found often to have preceded them.

But it was not only by a moveable press, unceasing libels, and other invisible practices, that this faction menaced the quiet of the State: it is evident by proclamations, and by frequent letters, from the ministers of Elizabeth, that the Queen was more alarmed at the secret and mysterious correspondence of its members.

The secret meetings of this party, we are told, had at first begun in private houses: they afterwards assembled in woods and fields, till these assemblies became periodical, and were held at stated places. These meetings were kept up very secretly, their appointments being only made known to those who belonged to the quarter in which they were held. Some Scottish fugitives, at length, introduced their "discipline," and conspiracy now took a wider circuit, and moved in more intricate ways. The holy discipline, as it was termed, branched out into the forms of a dangerous confederacy against the Government; and though religion alone constituted their plea, yet the result was perfectly political; for some of their leaders had urged not to keep themselves in corners, but to show themselves publicly to defend the truth.

The whole kingdom was subdivided by these Puritans, and placed under a graduated surveillance. A national synod, or national assembly, was to be their Parliament, to consist of delegates from the provincial synods. The provincial synods were assemblies of delegates from the classes; every province consisted of twenty-four classes. And these classes were spread through all the shires of England. Provincial synods were busied in Warwickshire, in Northamptonshire, in Suffolk, in Essex; the line of communication was unbroken. This Nile

of Insurrection, in casting its waters over the land, seemed to have many a dark source—it was at Cambridge, or at Warwick, places where Cartwright often abode, or at London where Travers and others sate in a synod. Their places of meeting were changeable, and only known to their own party, and they were rather to be discovered by their removals, than by their meetings. Such secret societies, and such clandestine practices, warranted the alarms of the cabinet of Elizabeth.

Among other devices they made a survey of the number of churches, and of persons in every parish. What was concluded in the classical associations was sent upwards through the others, till the whole centered in their provincial assemblies, which finally were determined by synods or meetings in London. These were of the greatest authority, under the guidance of Cartwright, Travers, and others whose names have come down to us. The synods of London alone ratified the decrees of the subaltern governments, and from the synods of London alone emanated the orders which regulated the members through every county.

The Puritan faction, however, affirmed that their whole system was solely directed to the reformation of the Church, and the establishment of the Presbyterian discipline. But they were betrayed by the depositions of some faithless brothers; such as one Edwards, whom Bancroft thus designates, “then of that faction, but now a very honest man.” Possibly the ministers of Elizabeth had employed that usual prevention of treason in sending a wolf in sheep’s-clothing, or what the French revolutionary police termed a *mouton*, among this saintly flock; for unquestionably to the eye of the statesman, the political design of the synodical discipline assumed all the menacing appearances of an organised conspiracy. The civil magistrate was allowed to share in the common equality, but should he refuse “admonition” he was to be excommunicated; nor was the Sovereign less exempt than the ordinary magistrate, in this democracy of priests and elders. This Presbyterian government, with all the exterior of a popular assembly, proved to be the horriest tyranny which ever afflicted a community.

This monstrous government was not conducted without policy. The people at large were not as yet to be stirred up

until they were better instructed in "the discipline;" but the maturer and more daring spirits were to be privately encouraged. When they ambiguously mentioned in this Book of Discipline that "other means" besides petitioning the Sovereign and the Parliament were to be resorted to, for the advancement of their cause, they found this peculiar phrase more difficult to expound, than did the royal council. They not only insisted on the independence of the Church, but they declared that the chief magistrate was only a member of the Church, as any other citizen. Their true design, and they were sanguine of its success, appeared in some intercepted letters. When one of the more innocent class objected to their proceedings in reviling the Anglican Church, and the difficulty of beating into the heads of the common people their new reformation, an eminent Puritan replied, "Hold your peace! since we cannot compass these things by suit, nor by dispute, it is the multitude and people which must bring them to pass." As is usual in all similar conspiracies, the fiery spirits had assumed that their "reformation cannot come without blood;" and those who afterwards manifested to the world that they were willing to shed theirs, could not be expected to exact less from their adversaries.

Neal, the historian of the Puritans, as an apology for their proceedings, urges that "they had for several years peaceably waited for the consent of the magistrate; but if, after all, the consent of the magistrate must be expected before we follow the dictates of our conscience, there would have been no Reformation in the Protestant world." Neal does not deny the secret design of this great confederacy, and excuses it on the plea of conscience. The conscience of these saints then was to put the contemptible yoke of a Presbytery on the neck of a great people, and, while they were combating with the usurpations of the Court of Rome, were converting their father-land into the same "Kingdom of Priests." Milton in his anger denounced them—

"New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large."

"That is," says Warburton, "more domineering and tyrannical." It was indeed only a dethronement of the same class of

priests, to transfer the same plenitude of power to another race, under a different designation.

About sixty years afterwards these very Puritans triumphed, and exhibited to the astonishment of Europe their singular government. They were constructing the constitution of England by the Judaic model. The observance, or the non-observance, of the Code of Moses, occasioned perpetual confusions among these modern Israelites, till some of their politicians hesitated to adopt what was not found expedient; but they ever appealed to the laws of Moses when they thought proper to insist on their perpetuity. We therefore know what this party designed to have done, by what they did.

It seemed extravagant in the days of Elizabeth, when the writer of one of the intercepted letters advised "Let us take our pennyworths of them (the bishops), and not die in their debt!" Another more humanely apprehended that "The Commonwealth would be pestered with a new race of beggars—in the bishops and the deans and all the churchmen ejected from their offices." Such sanguine politicians only anticipated the event which occurred under Charles the First!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE PURITANS CONTINUED.—OF THE POLITICAL CHARACTER OF CALVIN.

THE father of Presbytery and Puritanism is held to be Calvin; his admirers look on this as his triumph; others reproach the novel system as incompatible with the existing state of human affairs; great kingdoms are to be governed, and not parochial republics to be superintended. Dangerous principles, subversive of established governments, were ascribed to the Puritans, as afterwards to the famous order of the Jesuits.

In what degree these charges attach to the Republican polity of Calvin has not, perhaps, been developed with all the impartiality that is requisite. We must contemplate the genius of this legislator, who founded this new state of human affairs, before we decide on the father by some of his sons.

The mighty Reformer of Geneva had modelled a new government. Purity of doctrine, holiness of discipline, and the equality of primitive Christianity were proclaimed. It may be useful to explain what Calvin meant by the peculiar phrase of "Purity of doctrine." It was religion entirely freed from all "superstitions," that is, the Romish ceremonies and the Roman creed. The term "superstition" is perpetually recurring in his great work of "The Institution of the Christian Religion." The Genevan model designed to rule the Christian world, in accordance with the mystical origin which some legislators have ascribed to their codes, was at first declared to be framed on "the Pattern in the Mount," that is, the polity which Moses, by his father-in-law's suggestion, appointed on Mount Sinai, to regulate the affairs of his tribes.* This the Jews imitated in their synagogue. Every parish now was to form a synagogue. The priest was revived in the pastor; the Levites in the doctors of divinity; the rulers of the synagogue in the lay-elders, and the Levitical officers in the deacons. Such was "the tabernacle of the congregation." †

This "Pattern in the Mount" found partisans in France, in Switzerland, and in Germany; it became established in Scotland, and had nearly decided the fate of England.

It is as a theoretical and a practical politician, and not merely as a theologian, that we are now to consider this great reformer, the founder of a new government, we had almost said a new theocracy.

Calvin, without question, was a Republican, and his whole polity was framed by that of a petty, we may say a parochial republic. It is alleged, however, that, though a Republican, he was not hostile to monarchical government, and we find in the closing chapter of his great work of the "Institution," which may be considered as the confession of his political faith, the most enlightened general views of human governments, allowing to different countries different forms, and rejecting with

* Bancroft's Sermons at Paul's Cross, 1533. 8vo.

† The counsel of Jethro, who considered it unwise in Moses to sit alone to judge the people while they flocked to him "from morning to evening," and for which, as Jethro observed, "Thou shalt surely wear away," is contained in Exodus xvii. 13 to 26. Lord Bacon thought that it was hence that Alfred took his idea of Sheriffs and hundredors and deciners, according to the Saxon Constitution.

disdain the futile inquiry, which form is absolutely and in itself the best?

As a divine, Calvin acknowledged that strict submission to monarchical government which is enjoined in holy writ. The very able apologist of Calvin indeed asserts, that Calvin could never support "the abominable doctrine that the misconduct of a king sets the subject free, without contradicting the principles he lays down in the last chapter of his 'Theological Institutions' of the duty of submission even to the worst of kings, in things not contrary to the express commands of God." And as Milton included the name of Calvin among the other early reformers, to sanction the practices of his commonwealth, Bishop Horsley has indignantly repelled the imputation.

The truth is, that the bishop seems not to have taken an enlarged view of the political principles of Calvin. His sentiments on governments are but vague generalities, cautiously qualified, and the whole system of his politics revolves on the theological question, "Whether the prince rises in rebellion against God?" This leaves a wide gate open for the party who will take on themselves the decision. We know how the Puritans of England and the Presbyters of Scotland resolved the matter.

The same sacred source whence Calvin had been taught submission, even to the government he loved not, would also supply examples of that holy insurrection against arbitrary princes or tyrants, which would fall into a Republican's notions. And, indeed, at the close of the very chapter to which Bishop Horsley refers, to show that Calvin was not that revolutionary genius which Milton proclaims, we find a remarkable passage, which tells more in favour of the political poet than of the political bishop. Calvin, indeed, does not allow the private man to take on himself the punishment of tyrannical monarchs; but the sceptres of evil kings may be broken—kings, those vicarious representatives of the Divinity, if their licentiousness pollute their authority, may be put down by the power of magistrates, who are constituted to defend the people; such as were the Ephori among the Lacedæmonians, and the Tribunes among the Romans, and this popular magistracy in modern times

Calvin assigns to the assembly of the three states in a kingdom.* Calvin, too, contemplates on a powerful empire as a powerful evil, and censures "the folly and madness of the people who desire to have kings of irresistible power, which is just the same as to desire a river of irresistible rapidity, as Isaiah describes this folly." He explicitly says, "Earthly princes divest themselves of their authority when they rise in rebellion against God; they are unworthy to be reputed among men, it were better to spit upon their persons than to obey them." These sentiments strangely contrast with those of that passive obedience which he inculcates in the same chapter. It must be confessed that a revolutionary writer might dexterously press the name of Calvin into his service, though it must remain but an ambiguous authority.

The truth seems, that the science of politics formed but a secondary object with Calvin, who was unceasingly occupied in founding a new religious dominion in which monarchists and republicans might equally co-operate, provided that the Church was made independent of, and even supreme over the civil magistrate. This new legislator was only at open war with those Sovereigns in the Church whom episcopacy had enthroned.

In the novel democracy of the consistory of Calvin, ministers and laics sate together. Calvin flattered the weakness of human nature by the appearance of a political equality.

But the whole system was a delusion, for the tyrannical genius of its inventor first deprived man of his free-will.

The apostle of Geneva, by the bewitching terror of his dogmatic theology, had enthralled his followers for ever, in a mysterious bondage of the mind, out of which no human argument could ever extricate them—an immutable necessity! The dark imagination of the subtilising divine had presumed to scan the decree of Omnipotence, as if the Divinity had revealed to his solitary ear the secret of the creation. He discovers in the holy scriptures, what he himself has called "a most horrible decree." Who has not shuddered at the fume of the distempered fancy of the atrabilarious Calvin?

The exterior parity of this new democracy, so seductive to the vulgar, was a no less cruel delusion. In Calvin's mingled

* See his Institutions, lib. iv. cap. xx. sect. 31.

republic of Presbyters and Elders, the Elders, annually chosen, trembled before their sacred Peers, who being permanent residents had the Elders at all times under their eye and their inquisitorial office. When the Presbyterian government was set up in England, Clarendon observed that the Archbishop of Canterbury had never so great an influence as Dr. Burgess and Mr. Marshall, nor did all the Bishops in Scotland together so much meddle in temporal affairs as Mr. Henderson. Even at a later period, almost within our own times, the moderate Non-conformist Calamy, being present at one of the general assemblies of Scotland, was astonished at their inquisitorial spirit, and observing their proceedings against a hapless individual, he said he did not know till then, that there was an Inquisition established in Scotland. His opinion being conveyed to the Præses, gave great dissatisfaction to the venerable Presbytery. Thus the people had only been enchanted by an imposture of power; for it seemed to them that they were participating in power which was really placed far out of their reach.

The same fertile genius which had made "our Father in Heaven" a human tyrant, and raised the mortal criminal into beatitude, now invested his own Levites and his own "Rulers of the Synagogue" with supremacy. In this new Papacy, as in the old, they inculcated passive obedience, armed as they were with the terrors of excommunication. The despotism of Rome was transferred to Geneva. All was reversed, but the nucleus of power had only removed its locality.

Vast and comprehensive as seemed the system of the Calvinian rule in its civil capacity, it was in truth moulded on the meanest and the most contracted principles; it was the smallest scale of dominion which ever legislator meditated; and Calvin, with all his ardent genius, had only adroitly adopted the polity of the petty republic where chance had cast the fugitive Frenchman. A genius inferior to his own could not have imagined that kingdoms of Protestants could be ruled like the eleven parishes of the town of Geneva, where every Thursday the ministers and the elders were to report all the faults of their neighbours. "The divine simplicity of the discipline" of the Church of Scotland is the theme of Calderwood's history, who, however, does not conceal that some grew weary of "the lowly, but

lovely, parity of the Presbyters." The eldership is watchful over their parish, but should the offender prove still contumacious, he is handed over to the Presbytery; and if still obstinate, the Presbytery consign him to the subtle heads of the synod, and should the synod fail to convert the rebel into an obedient son, he is finally resigned to the excommunication of the General Assembly, and one day "that soul shall be cut off from Israel." They strangled heresy, and they annihilated freedom, by this graduated scale of tyrannical bondage.

This new scheme of human affairs, formed of this burgher equality and this apostolical purity, at that revolutionary period was proclaimed by Calvin's incessant correspondence on doctrinal points throughout Europe. It was no mean ambition to rule over the churches of so many realms, and to dictate to monarchs how their people were to be governed. In England the Protector under Edward the Sixth was one of the royal correspondents of Calvin, and was himself a great courter of popularity. The Protector designed to abolish Episcopacy—and probably his first step was the sacrilegious seizure, without atonement or compensation, of those Church lands on which the Duke raised that stupendous palace, the work of an Italian architect, and of which the name has survived the edifice.* So easy is it to combine the pomps of this earth with even ascetic Puritanism! Calvin complained to the Duke of Somerset of the great impurities and vices of England—in swearing, drinking, and uncleanness.† It does not appear, historically, that England was more afflicted with these moral grievances than France or Germany; and whether the eleven parishes of his own Geneva, with all its "purity" and its espionage, and, to use a favourite expression of Calvin's, all "the nerves of its discipline," were, in proportion to the population, more exempt, may be reasonably doubted, since some of its members are stigmatised in the history of the Calvinian rule, which, however, made dancing a crime equal to adultery. Such minute matters, in the moral habits of a people, like the nails and the screws of a mighty engine, were to be scrutinised, as holding together the machinery of this novel government.

* Pennant's London, 128—Somerset House.

† Burnet's Hist. of the Reformation, ii. 83. fo.

The fervid diligence of this extraordinary man was commensurate with the vastness of his genius. His life was not protracted; he was a martyr to constant bodily pain, and the physical sufferings of the man are imagined to have shown themselves in the morose and vehement character of the legislator. The purity of doctrine, in some part at least, consisted in dethroning bishops, denuding ministers of the sacerdotal vestments, and banishing from the religious service all the accessories of devotion. Calvin seems to have imagined that man becomes more spiritualised in the degree he ceases to be the creature of sensation and of sympathy, as if the senses were not the real source of our feelings. But as he who is reckless of his own life is master of every other man's, so the great hermit of reformation, who disdained all personal interests, seemed to think and to act only for the world. Calvin might have founded his supremacy on the immortality of his own genius. His Commentaries, his Institutions, his never-ceasing discourses, had been sufficient to induce the Christian world to invest him with the authority which ruled it. Conscious of dispensing the fate of distant realms, the sick man often in his bed, nerved his infirm frame to the labours which consumed it. Besides more than nine folios of his works, and several inedited volumes, no day passed without composing many elaborate letters; and the public library at Geneva preserves two thousand five hundred sermons taken from his lips, by the disciples over whom he had breathed his inspiration.*

The commanding genius of Calvin was sagacious as well as vehement. Inflexible in his great design, he knew when to concede and when to temporise. At the early stage of his career, before the expulsion of the Bishop from Geneva, the great extirpator of episcopacy offered to become the subject of an episcopal government, provided the Bishop renounced his Sovereign-lord of Rome.† Ruthless and inexorable, when his

* *Histoire littéraire de Genève*, par Senebier, i. 259.

† Bancroft's *Dangerous Positions*, 8.—Calvin's principle then was to live under an Episcopacy, "if the Bishops refuse not to submit themselves to Christ, depend upon him as their only head; and in their brotherly society be knit together by no other knot than by the Truth." The Truth! was it at Rome or at Geneva? On these vague yet plausible pretexes one might have an annual insurrection at the least. The expelled Bishops would have used the same style in addressing the

theological empire was in peril, Calvin was more or less than man, when his friends halted in their march. He sent forth the amiable Castalio a fugitive and an exile, and he burnt Servetus while he deplored his fate.

Calvin's "Discipline" was a political legacy shared by many of his heirs in France and in Germany, in Scotland and in England. I would not ascribe to a cause too unimportant in itself, the great change which was now taking place in public opinion—by deducing it from so obscure an origin as the petty Presbytery of Geneva. But the genius of Calvin was universal, however confined to the city of his adoption. In France the Calvinists long balanced the power of the state with the monarchy; in Scotland they had triumphed; and in England the Presbyters dwelt with us. The style of democracy was remarkable at this period, and crowned heads were usually stigmatised by nick-names. Knox and his ruder school emptied their quiver of scriptural bye-names. Mary of England was Jezebel; Elizabeth was "the untamed heifer." Calvin and Beza retained a more classical taste in their anti-monarchical bitterness. Calvin called Mary of England, Prosperine and Beza; Mary of Scotland, Medea. The Emperor of Austria was a Pagan Nero. From calling names the democratic school advanced to higher doctrines. In the work of Christopher Goodman on "Obedience," to which Whittingham prefixed a preface, the sword is placed in the hands of the people, and consigned to any "Jonathan" who from some secret impulse would step forth to give the stroke of Brutus. These sons of Calvin confirm their doctrines from scriptural authorities, and they are all of that stamp which it is said were so much in favour with the political Jesuits, and afterwards with those who, with us, took the title of Independents. The heroes held out to the imitation of the world were Phineas who in his zeal killed the adulterers; or Ehud, who in his zeal had stabbed Eglon the fat King of Moab in his private chamber; or Jael, who in her zeal murdered Sisera; or Matthias who in his zeal massacred the King's commissioners who were sent to command the people to conformity.* Such was the style and such were the examples

Arch-Heresiarch. The truth only appeared when the Bernois and the Genevese beat the Bishop's troops.

* Bancroft, 142.

familiar with some of these novel advocates of popular freedom.

Calvin died in 1564. The great English Puritan Cartwright's "Admonitions," often composed in flight and exile, appeared in England in 1574; Hottoman's "Franco Gallia" in 1573; Languet's "Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos" in 1579, and in the same year Buchanan dedicated his fine and able political dialogue "*De Jure regni apud Scotos*" to James the First, where among other startling positions we find that *Populus Rege est prestantior et melior*; the people are better than the King and of higher authority; an assumption in the style of democracy which expresses so much, and means so little. All these works composed by elevated genius, first founded the authority of the sovereign on the consent of the people; or what has been more recently, with more inflated nonsense, called the "Sovereignty of the People." The axiom itself seems but a vague and abstract point of "the social contract;" that phantom of political logomachy! The celebrated Philip Mornay, called by the Romanists the Protestant Pope, was one of the most illustrious sons of Calvin, and as early as in 1566 had distinguished himself by a defence of public liberty against the arbitrary Catholicism of Spain. By these and other works of a revolutionary cast, fast following on each other, we may judge of the rising opinions of a new age. Surely these were "the prognostics of state-tempests; hollow blasts of wind seemingly at a distance, and secret workings of the sea preceding the storm."

The inevitable results of these republican politics appeared by a mighty event in the cause of civil freedom, for in the year 1579 occurred the famous union of Utrecht, which consolidated and established the Republic of Holland.

Who, in this slight sketch, does not perceive the secret connexion between the influence of human opinions and human events? The writers of the history of the United Provinces trace their foundation "to the prevalent opinions of Luther and Calvin." The long-protracted civil war of Spain with her Provinces, was declared against heresy and psalm-singing!

A great political revolution was now operating throughout Europe, in the establishment of the potent Republic, which her first leaders had never contemplated; and in the Reformation

in Germany, which had penetrated far into France. England was yet to be tried. When religion is converted into politics, and politics becomes inextricably connected with religion, and whenever a party struggles for predominance in the state, it necessarily becomes a political body. There remains one more investigation in the history of the English Puritans. They were the friends and the martyrs of civil liberty; but how happened it that they proved to be its greatest enemies? This historical enigma remains to be solved, and, as we shall see, it has perplexed our most critical historians.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE PURITANS CONCLUDED.—OF THE PERPLEXING CONTRADICTIONS IN THEIR POLITICAL CHARACTER, AND WHY THEY WERE AT ONCE THE ADVOCATES AND THE ADVERSARIES OF CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

RAPIN, although a foreigner, had been conversant with our language and our country. He had the sagacity to detect an obscure and indefinable line which seemed to separate these Puritans among themselves; and without taking the most comprehensive view of such important actors in our history, he drew this result, that there were, as he calls them, religious Puritans and State Puritans.

A recent French writer of our history, as a foreigner, is at a loss to adjust the contradictory statements, and the opposite results he found among our own writers, in regard to our Puritans. He is himself struck by men whose piety was so seriously occupied by the most frivolous objects, yet who maintained their cause by the magnanimity of their heroic sufferings. He perceived that this extraordinary race eagerly rejected all "superstitions" with the very spirit of superstition itself. He is delighted at their aspirations after freedom, but he is startled at their open avowal of intolerance. In truth, the history of the Puritans, as connected with the religion and the government of England, is a history peculiar to ourselves; nor is it for the foreigner to comprehend what even the natives themselves have frequently been at a loss to define.

Honest Fuller, in his Church History, felt a peculiar tenderness in the adoption of the very term Puritan, as being a name subject to several senses; much like the modern term Evangelical; it was ridiculous and odious in profane mouths, yet often applicable to persons who laboured for a life pure and holy. To prevent exceptions, he requests his reader to recollect that should the name casually slip from his pen, he is only to understand by it, Non-conformist. However, he divides them into two classes, the mild and moderate, and the fierce and fiery.* Fuller's difficulty existed ere he wrote; thirty years before, an honest Irish divine writing to Archbishop Usher that "some crafty Papists safely railed at ministers for propagating that damnable heresy of *Puritanism*; which word, though not understood, was, however, known to be odious to his Majesty" (James the First). To silence these railers, he suggests having a petition to the King to define a Puritan; and should his Majesty not be at leisure, to appoint some good man to do it for him. † Such was the extensive infamy of the odious term Puritan, that it was flung about to any adverse party, or obnoxious person. It was not always applied to the enemies of episcopacy, or of monarchy, but to persons of rigid morals, who were solely occupied by their private affairs, and neither hostile to bishops nor to kings. An intelligent contemporary said, "The Papist, we see, hates all kinds of Puritans; the Hierarchist another; the Court sycophant another; the sensual libertine another. All hate a Puritan, and under the same name hate a different thing." ‡ The writer makes this remarkable observation. "Judaism appeared to Puritans mere superstition; Christianity seemed to the Jews gross blasphemy; and now amongst Christians, Protestantism is nothing else but heresy; and amongst Protestants, zeal is misnamed Puritanism. § "

Amidst this diversity of opinions and principles, the history of the Puritans would offer to each historian, as his party

* Fuller's Church History, ix. 76.

† Parr's Life of Usher. Letters.

‡ "A discourse concerning Puritans," 1641. I have not discovered the writer of this able tract, who affects not to be what some would call a Puritan. At all events, we learn from this "the mistakes, abuse, and misapplication of that name." 57.

§ Ibid, 4.

inclined him, a theme for eulogy and triumph, or a subject for satire and obloquy. Heylin, in his "History of the Presbyterians," blackens them as so many political devils; these were "the fierce and fiery" of Fuller; and Neal, in his "History of the Puritans," blanches them into a sweet and almond whiteness, embracing not only the mild and the moderate, but even the fierce and the fiery.

The extreme perplexity of Monsieur Guizot, to whom we have alluded, interests by the frankness of his confession, where his philosophical candour, at variance with his political inclinations, seems to have thrown some embarrassment into his style.

"In respect," says Monsieur Guizot, "to the fanatical Puritans, the religious enthusiasts whom Mr. Hallam has judged, I think, with a little ill-humour," or as he afterwards says, "with a coldness rather inclining to irony"—"I shall perhaps have some trouble to say exactly what I think. In my opinion, and in despite of so much impure alloy, their cause was the good one, and it was that cause whose defeat would have been a defeat, whose triumph prepared a triumph, for reason and humanity. At the same time the general character of this party shocks and repulses one. I have no taste for that passion so arid and sombre, and for those minds so narrowed and stubborn, who have no feelings in common with mankind; their bilious enthusiasm disfigures man, as I think, and shrinks him into so diminutive a size, that in viewing his sincerity and his moral energy they lose much of their greatness. These Puritans, however, were sincere, energetic, devoted to their faith and their cause, though their sentiments are so little attractive, and their opinions raise our contempt. They first rose up against tyranny. We may not like them, but we must speak of them with esteem, and we may yield them our gratitude, if we cannot our sympathy."

It is evident that Monsieur Guizot has reflected much deeper on the Puritans than Rapin; but I would not decide whether they fare better in his hands than in Mr. Hallam's "coldness rather inclining to irony."

A modern critic of a loftier mood writes of these saints with a saintly spirit. In this debate of mortal Puritanism, we shall

find that Heaven itself is evoked, and the genius of the modern critic comes

“In a celestial panoply, all armed.”

Never before, for Neal, in the creeping and slumbrous style of his history, has “no thoughts that breathe,” were the Puritans so solemnly inaugurated in an apotheosis of Puritanism. To me is left the ungracious task of developing mere human truths where beatitude is placed before us.

The modern critic has discovered that “the Puritan was made up of two different men; the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious.” In this dual man, one was he who would dash into pieces the idolatry of painted glass, break down antique crosses of rare workmanship, and burn witches—the other was he who would “set his foot on the neck of kings,” and, so we are told, “went on through the world like Sir Artegale’s iron man Talus, with his flail crushing and trampling down.” These Puritans “looked with contempt on the rich and the eloquent, on every nobleman and every priest.” Yet they themselves were “rich and eloquent;” rich in bishops’ lands, and eloquent in a seven-hours’ sermon.* They were also

* Many singular specimens might be produced. Mr. Vynes said in his prayer, “O Lord, thou hast never given us a victory this long while, for all our frequent fastings. What dost thou mean, O Lord! to fling us in a ditch and there leave us?” Mr. Evans thus expostulates—“O Lord! wilt thou take a chair and sit amongst the House of Peers? And when, O God! wilt thou vote amongst the Honourable House of Commons, who are so zealous of thine honour?” Another exclaimed, “O God, many are the hands that are lift up against us, but there is one God, it is thou thyself, O Father! who dost us more mischief than they all.” Mr. Cradock cried out, “O Lord, do not thou stand neuter, but take one side, that we may see which it is that is thy cause.” Another, “Lord, thou hast been good one year, yea, Lord, thou hast been good to us two years; Lord! thou hast been good to us fourscore years, but, Lord, thou art wanting in one thing!” A pamphlet entitled “Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence,” will amply supply the reader with the saintly effusions of these men; these men of whom our modern critic tells us that “if they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God!” Was balderdash ever inspired by “the oracles of God?” I dare not quote passages from the master-seer of the Covenanters, Samuel Rutherford, from their offensive lubricity and rank obscenity. Yet we are to be told that such vulgar spirits, “instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil,” by which the writer indicates the decent services of religion and the accessories of devotion, “aspired to *commune* with him face to face.”—We have seen their style!

“noblemen and priests” in their own seraphic way, for “they were nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand.” If their biblical names were not “registered at the Herald’s-college, they were recorded in the Book of Life,” wherein the elect could read no other names than their own. Whenever they met a splendid train of menials “they were haughty, that a legion of ministering angels had charge over them;” and “they scorned palaces” for “houses not made with hands.” Haughty truly, for more pride lurked under their black velvet scull-cap tipped with white satin, with their mortified look and their screwed-up visage, than under the mitre of a majestic primate. We are told that “if they were led to pursue unwise ends, they never chose unwise means.” That these novel citizens of the world should have been men of such deep sense and such happy fortune, is indeed saying a great deal—because that they were apt to fall into frenzies is not denied. The more exalted Puritan of the two which formed the one, is described. “He heard the lyres of angels, or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the beatific vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire !”

The fairy tales of the Countess d’Anois, that charming writer of innocent inventions, do not equal the daring genius of the modern critic. The indomitable being whom we have now to delineate, was yet unheard of in history or in fiction. “The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged; on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest, and who had been destined before heaven and earth were created.”* Such were the men for “whose sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed.” These were they who were appointed, according to one of their often bellowed positions, “to bind kings in chains and their nobles with links of iron,” and “to tread the wine-press of the wrath of God till the blood rose to the bridle-reins.” This Puritan, or this Covenanter, “like Vane, thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year; like Fleetwood, he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God hid his face from him : but when he took his

* Edinburgh Review, xlii. 337.

seat in the hall of debate, or in the field of battle," he was no longer the Puritan, but spoke and acted as men speak and act who call their intolerance "a regeneration," and immolate their fellow beings as "a sweet sacrifice." These were the Independents, the Jacobins of England—and the Covenanters of Scotland, of whom one of their chiefs, the Lord of Wariston, when he saw the Scotch army advancing, and the English Parliament voting monies for the Evangelical Host, exclaimed, that "the business is going on in God's old way!"

It must be confessed that if the modern critic be a great poet in history, we cannot discover an equal knowledge of history in his poetry. It hardly became a philosopher, even in such a playful effusion of his imagination, to eulogise so seriously barbarism, intolerance, and madness.

An important historical enigma remains to be solved. How did it happen that "the good cause," as Monsieur Guizot terms it, was the cause of these *Energumenes*? I may be allowed to employ a term which Monsieur Guizot would not disapprove. How came the great interests of mankind, the cause of civil freedom, to originate with zealots who had no feelings in common with mankind? An explanation of this point clears up all the ambiguity of their character, and reconciles the discordant opinions of our historians.

When we say that the age of Charles the First was a religious age, we might more accurately style it a Protestant age. The terror of Romanism propelled Protestantism. The Catholic policy was prevalent in Europe, and the Reformed party, everywhere, for their support, looked to our insular kingdom. With the cause of the Reformation, that of civil liberty became accidentally connected; I say accidentally, for certainly it was not necessarily so, as is usually considered. In freeing us from the yoke of Rome, if Geneva at the same time fettered us with one equally heavy, however altered might be the form, it cannot be said that we advanced in the purest principles of civil rights. Kings might be rejected as well as Popes, and yet the people might not be more free. The Democracy of Calvin was inquisitorial,—and yet to establish this novel despotism, it became absolutely necessary, at first, to adopt the most enlarged principles of civil freedom. The nation had to struggle for its

independence, ere it could proclaim its Presbytery and its "discipline."

It was necessary then, for the cause in which the Puritan or the Presbyter* were really engaged, to subvert the Government; and although perhaps the arbitrary measures to which the Government had often recourse were in great part produced by this very opposition, still absolute power and arbitrary rule were at length suppressed by the self-devotion of these energetic characters. Even in the great Revolution of Scotland, though carried on by fanatical zealots, the principles of political liberty were combined with its progress; before they could become Presbyters, I repeat, it was first necessary to establish their national independence. Their civil thus became inseparable from their religious liberty. Though we may treat their real object with indifference, and conclude that whether a Church be governed by Episcopacy and Convocations, or by a Presbytery and Synods, as of all national objects the most unimportant, yet by such miserable means great ends were pursued; and in the struggle of ecclesiastical predominance, civil liberty was mediately enlarged and strengthened. To the English Constitution were transferred some of its most wholesome correctives—the abrogation of the High Commission Court and the Star-Chamber; the prohibition of arbitrary proclamations; and the institution of Triennial Parliaments.† The discovery of these great advancements in our political acquisitions, advanced by these gloomy fanatics, occasioned to our historians so many perplexing opinions and contradictory notions.

But if the principle of civil freedom were announced to us in the progress of this revolution, the great actors themselves, Puritans or Presbyters, were certainly the irreconcilable

* The inveterate controversy about *Episcopus* and *Presbyter*, after all, may resolve itself into a mere change of terms, and depends on our translation of the Greek term *overseers of the religious community*. Knox introduced the official title of "Superintendents;" it was truly a war of words.

It is curious that the Spaniards seem to be the only nation who really have preserved the term *Presbyter*, in its purity, as appears by Cobarruvias's *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana*.

"*Presbitero*, vulgarmente vale el Sacerdote clerigo de Missa, Latine *Presbyter*, à Græco *πρεσβυτερος*, *Senex*, *Princeps*, *Legatus*; y porque se presupone que han de ser hombres de edad, de canas y seso. *Presbyterato*, *Sacerdocio*, dignidad de Sacerdote."

† Laing, iii. 209.

enemies to that popular liberty which they advocated. In their grasp of power they showed that nothing was more alien to the designs of their democracy than the freedom of mankind. The arbitrary will of the single tyrant; the excesses of the prerogative, seem light when compared with their more intolerant, more arbitrary, and more absolute power. When Presbytery was our Lord, even those who had endured the tortures of persecution, and raised such sharp outcries for their freedom, had hardly tasted of the Circæan cup of dominion, ere they were transformed into the bestial brood of political tyranny. It was curious to see Prynne now vindicating the very doctrines under which he had himself so signally suffered, for he invested the Executive even with that power of inflicting death on its Non-conformists. So the Covenanter Baillie held every man to be worse than fool or knave who disputed the *jus divinum* of Presbytery, and expresses a wish to have such hanged; as he would have hanged those who asserted the divine institution of the Bishops! This warm Presbyter, when provoked by Selden's Erastian principles, which placed the Government of the Church under the civil magistrate, in rage called this more philosophical state of religion "an insolent absurdity!" The passive obedience of *jure divino*, the rigid conformity against which they had fought, were now insisted on for themselves. Toleration, which had been a common cause with all the sectaries, and which they had so often pathetically claimed, was now condemned for its "sinfulness." The very persons who had so long murmured at the tyranny of the Licensers, when themselves were paramount, at once extinguished the liberty of the press, by reviving the odious office, and condemning every anti-presbyterial volume to penal fires. Toleration now seemed to their eyes a hydra, and one of these high-flyers, in ludicrous rage, called out against "a cursed intolerable toleration." For these facts no sophistry can apologise, and no statement can alter them. Thus these spurious advocates for civil freedom, for which their character has been exalted in our history, were, in truth, its most irreconcilable enemies.

Another obscure point in the history of the Puritans requires elucidation. The Presbyterians have always asserted that it was not them who dragged the sovereign to the block. They

would have been satisfied to have lapped the blood of the venerable Archbishop. The Presbyters, after dislodging the Episcopalians, had arrived at their "Land of Promise;" and while they fattened on the Bishops' lands, they would have reposed like fed lions. They were not hostile to monarchy; and the monstrous libels which issued from the school of Leighton and Prynne, never impugn the regal authority; never touch on the abstract points of civil freedom; never handle the nice points of the prerogative; never breathe a murmur against forced loans, which probably did not grievously affect this class. Many of these libellers, doubtless, would have submitted to death ere they would have touched irreverently a hair of the head of "the Lord's anointed." The doctrine of the divine and indefeasible right of Monarchy entered into their creed, since on that was grafted their own Presbytery. These were "the mild and moderate" Puritans of Fuller; yet in striking at "the root and branch" extirpation of the Ecclesiastical government of England, their spirit was not less terrible than that of "the State Puritans," as Rapin calls those who were intent on republicanising England.

The Presbyterians had nursed under their wing the monster which at length devoured them. This was the party who called themselves "the Independents;" it was a splinter sect from the block of "Brownism." The Brownists were the most furious children of Non-conformity. The curious history of these parties is instructive; but it is not the opinions, sane or insane, of sectarians, which we are seeking, in our pursuit of the history of man.

The earliest Non-conformists, not without reluctance, had dissented from an uniformity with the Anglican Church; they still kept within its pale, dreading nothing more than schism. They were indeed prepossessed with a strange notion that the Church discipline was to be found in the rude and simple practices of the Apostolic times, when no national church existed, and no form of Ecclesiastical Government was prescribed. This was the first stage of mild Puritanism. The second was the intestine war with the bishops, or "the lordly prelates," as the Mar-prelates called them. The severities adopted by the Government and the Church, to suppress these public disturbers,

or to reconcile them to the religious forms, established by Act of Parliament, only produced that reaction which inflames the in-compliant to obstancy. Renouncing all communion with their mother-church, which they now assumed was no true church, these rigid separatists formed a third state of Puritanism, founded by one Robert Brown, who became so formidable as to leave his name to a sect.

This Robert Brown was a fierce hot-brained man, who counted his triumphs by the thirty-two prisons in which he had been incarcerated; and in some of them, "he could not see his hand at noon-day." His relationship to Lord Burleigh had often thrown a protecting shield over his furious doings. In that day when all parties were insisting on "the true Religion," Brown announced that he would found "a perfect church without a fault." He was one of those who would exclaim, "Stand farther off; I am holier than Thou!" His friends stood aghast at their new prophet, and referred him with his new revelations to the Martyrologist John Fox. The old man exclaimed that they had sent him a madman, and thrusting Brown out of doors, predicted that this Neophyte of Ecclesiastical insurrection would surely prove a fire-brand in God's church. The new apostle journeyed about the country, like other self-elected missionaries. Preaching and persecution, however, seemed to interfere with each other, and as was then the mode, Brown and his congregation shipped themselves off for Middleburgh. The Hollanders were the only people in Europe whose policy had been contrived to accord with all the modes of faith among the religionists. One might be curious to learn, how that new government came to adopt such an enlightened toleration; for the Calvinistic individuals who formed that government, were themselves intolerant. The reverse has also sometimes occurred; in Switzerland, we are told, the Swiss themselves are very tolerant, and their government very much the reverse.

In Holland, Brown modelled his democratical church, without suffering the indignity of being driven into a saw-pit, to hide himself and his auditors. When once this perfect church of rigid separatists was raised, it fell like a child's house of cards, for the separatists separated among themselves, calling one another very ill names, and telling tales which "the Scorners"

would not forget.* Brown in his latter days seems gladly to have escaped from his own church; and returned to Northamptonshire, where all the while he had kept his parsonage, paid a curate, and took the tithes. It is doubtful whether he returned to his wife; the object too frequently of his irascible piety. When Father Brown was reproved for beating his wife, which he honestly acknowledged no man ought to do, he scholastically distinguished—that he did not beat Mrs. Brown as his wife, but as a cursed old woman. He died perfectly in character; proud, poor, and passionate; at the age of eighty he struck a tax-collector for demanding a parish rate; beloved by no one, and too decrepit to walk to prison, the stubborn apostle of Brownism was flung on a feather-bed into a cart, and died in a passion in the county gaol.

The Brownists in Holland began to excommunicate one another, often from private pique; till at length sons cursed their fathers, and brothers their brothers, in a clash, whether the governing power were to rest with the eldership, or in the Church? Many seceded from their “perfect Church,” but never from its democracy. This “perfect Church” proved to be a hot-bed of all dissensions, still persisting that “the new creature” may find perfection attainable in this life, amidst all the branglings and heart-burnings of their unsettled heads and meaner passions. Some modern sages indulge reveries on the perfectibility of man, but saints advance beyond, to perfection itself.

It was one of “the perfections” of these Brownists, that they would not be bound by any of their opinions, or come to any agreement; one of them insisted that the last thing he wrote, only should be taken for his present judgment; it therefore became doubtful whether he ever had any “present judgment,” or whether he would hold on Tuesday morning the tenet of Monday night.

A Brownist, of calmer dispositions, shook off the very name, considering it as “a brand for the making its professors odious

* One Deacon, of Mr. Johnson’s party, describes another of Mr. Robinson’s, with his company, as “*Noddy Nabalites, dogged Doegs, fair-faced Pharisees, shameless Shimeis, malicious Machiavelians.*” Thus saints of this class, even to the present day, scold and pun scripturally.—*Pagitt’s Heresiography*, 60.

to the Christian world." This man was the founder of "Independency."

This alluring title was assumed from its grand principle that every single community or congregation, was independent of any other. They presumed, as their first position, that equals have no power over equals. The clergy and the laity mingled together, in this democracy, allowing of no superiority. In this rude principle of equality we detect that germ of anarchy, the equality of mankind, which so long after was as little understood. But in the surprising history of mankind, for sometimes we are surprised by unexpected results, and observe the follies of man often terminating in wisdom, in this tenet of a mean sect originated the blessing of toleration. The arbitrary Presbyterians persevered in their hostility to liberty of conscience, while the Independents were its earliest advocates, from their aversion to the establishment of any predominant power.

Few in number, and poverty-stricken, to part with one another seemed a relief. Those who could, transported themselves, as adventurers, from the shores of Holland to the wilds of America, where they founded New Plymouth. Others ventured to steal homewards. During twenty years these latter shifted from house to house in their humble circle, but the eye, and sometimes the arm of Laud was upon them. As yet they were only Religionists, and of what stamp we may judge by one of their distinguished pastors, called "the famous Mr. Canne." On his principle that no human inventions were, to be permitted in divine worship, Mr. Canne furiously cut out of his Bible, the contents of the chapters, the titles of the leaves, and left his fluttering Bible without binding or covers. This saint might, however, have been reminded that the holy scriptures could never have existed without the aid of human inventions, in the parchment of the manuscript, and the print and paper of the book. Another pastor, of not inferior fame, was a cobbler of the name of How. Neal, the Independent, describes the cobbler as a man of learning; the contrary is the fact. This saint published a revelation of his, in a treatise on "The Sufficiency of the Spirit," to show that all human learning is dangerous and hurtful. This was the independency of Ignorance, and which a few years after led to a design, or a motion in the House of

Commons to shut up the Universities and to burn our records ! The cobbler's fame, and the danger in which the two Universities stood from his awl, inspired one of the flock to pun in a quaint epigram :

“ Cambridge and Oxford may their glory now
Veil to a Cobbler, if they knew but How ! ”

Amidst the disturbances of 1640, the Independents first made their public appearance in Deadman's-place, Southwark ! They petitioned Parliament, piteously craving the liberty of subsistence, “ be it the poorest and the meanest in the land.” They asked only for a single church. We seem to be chronicling the miserable annals of a Tabernacle in a blind alley—yet these men were to be, as they came to call themselves, “ the Keepers of the Liberties of England ! ” or as the Presbyterian, Clement Walker, retorted on them, “ the Gaolers.”

These humble creatures, too feeble to stand alone, lurked among the Presbyterians, earnestly co-operating till they gathered strength by concert. The principles of civil and religious freedom were in their system, but these were cautiously explained, or were wholly concealed. For them one great cause was always advancing, while the Presbyterians were striking at one-half the Monarchy in the ruins of the Hierarchy. The Presbyterians were willing to have a King of their own, a covenanting King, but the Independents thundered out the secret they had kept for several years—that there was to be no King on earth ! The Independents were always found among “ the fierce and fiery Puritans ” of Fuller. Their professed independency, while they had their fortune to make, wore a mask of universal brotherhood, and accommodated itself to all mankind.

The Independents were themselves adventurers in the State, but their prospects opened as they cleared their way by the work of demolition. Every change in the State was an approach to a Revolution. The lands of the Church, the estates of the nobility, and of our ancient families ; offices in the Government, commands in the army—all the spoils of the nation lay before them. What leading spirits would not enlist under their banner ? The needy broken man who knew not how to live ; the libertine who would live under lawless laws ; he who feared to be questioned, and he who had been ques-

tioned: every malcontent now found a party—and it came to this, that the very refuse of the people, leaving their hammers, and their thimbles, their lasts, and their barrels, pushing on their fortune, became some of the Independent Members of the House of Commons, and held those Scriptural debates which were the mockery of Europe! Clement Walker, a stiff Presbyterian and their great adversary, characterises the Independent as “a composition of Jew, Christian, and Turk.” Such a motley and desperate faction were more to be dreaded for the decision which would hasten extremities, reckless of all means, than for their number; they were but limbs and members of a body wanting a working brain and guiding hand. These at length they found in the tremendous genius of Cromwell.

This daring and rising faction scornfully glanced at the moderation of the monarchical Puritans of England, and viewed with abhorrence among some of the Presbyterians the remains of a tenderness for the rights and the person of the King. Equally hostile to the aristocracy, as to the monarchy; to the Presbytery as to the Episcopacy; they insisted on that universal freedom, which long fascinated mankind, till at length these Independents lost their name in acquiring another more significant, and are known in history as “The Levellers” of England and “the Jacobins” of France. Even the victories of the Parliamentary armies imparted little satisfaction, while their chiefs seemed half-royalist, and half-repentant of their conquests. It was this faction which dreaded nothing so much as a peace between the King and the Parliament. The true genius of Independency broke out in Cromwell. By a stroke of political adroitness, the Self-denying Ordinance new modelled the army, and every officer became an Independent. Smiling at the weakness of Charles the First, who would have arrested five members, the heads of a faction, his novel intrepidity emptied all the Commons of England in one morning.

In their political character, the Independents form a parallel with the Jacobins of France; this may not appear on the first view, since the Independents clouded themselves over in their mystical religion, and the Jacobins seem to have had no religion. But this circumstance, in the language of logicians, is a mere accident, or mode which may be taken away, without altering

the nature of the subject. The psalm-singing and preaching of the officers in the Independent army, and the metaphysical rhodomontades of universal liberty of the Jacobins, were only different means, but not different designs. Cromwell himself printed a sermon: in the French Revolution he would have jargonised like Marat, or Hebert, in some "Ami du Peuple." They moved by the same impulse; the prelude of every desperate act with the military saints was "to seek the Lord" and sword and pistol; as with the Atheistic crew it was to offer peace to every people whom they had prepared to conquer. It has been thought that the English Revolutionists were not as sanguinary as the French; I believe they proposed more massacres than they executed; there was one, of all the Royalists and Presbyterians, in the true Marat style of taking two hundred thousand heads off at one stroke. The sale of Englishmen as slaves to America was worse than the deportations to Cayenne. The parallel might be run much further. It is enough here to show that the English Independency was the forerunner of French Jacobinism. The democratic anarchy of "these Saints of the first grass" as the admirable Wit of their day calls them, was precisely the same, for they

"Agreed in nothing but to abolish,
Subvert, extirpate, and demolish.
————— and hate
Dependency on Church and State,
And scorn to have the moderatest stints
Prescribed to their peremptory hints,
But left at large to make their best on
Without being called to account or question."*

Such were the different classes of the Puritans. The profound politicians among the Patriots, as Pym and Hampden, had allied themselves to the Religionists. The factions at first amalgamated, for each seemed to assist the other, and while the contest was doubtful, their zeal, as their labours, was in common. Religion, under the most religious of monarchs, was the ostensible motive by which the Patriots moved the people. All the nation was thrown into a delirium of terror, and their confused heads, some few years after, exhibited a dreadful reaction, when vulgar Atheism and insane blasphemy raged among the multi-

* Hudibras, part iii. co. ii. v. 606.

tude. When on one occasion it was observed, that the affairs of religion seemed not so desperate that they should wholly engross their days, Pym replied that they must not abate their ardour for the true religion, that being the most certain end to obtain their purpose and maintain their influence. So true is the observation of Hume, that "the King soon found by fatal experience that this engine of religion, which with so little necessity was introduced into politics, under more fortunate management was played with the most terrible success against him."

That both these parties, or factions, the Religionists and the Patriots, the one having only in view the abolition of the Hierarchy, which was not the object of many of the Patriots, and the other, a revolution in the Government, which was not the design of the religionists, should, acting on distinct principles, with little sympathy for each other, and secretly aiming at two opposite objects in the State, have coalesced with such perfect unity as to have melted down into one party, and by a strange subtlety in the management of their own peculiar interests, and above all by a mutual sacrifice of their own principles, have aided each other in their separate designs, and finally conspired together to overthrow the monarchy and the hierarchy, was in its own day a result as mysterious as it was awful. It was a state of national affairs on which no theorist had ever yet speculated, or even imagined; and it still serves as a theme for political science, where a new path is opened for us, untracked in the experience of a thousand years.

So gradually matured was the vast design of these mighty factions in the State, so extraordinary the human agents and their sufferings, and so complete the accomplishment of their views, that every representative part of the established Government was immolated in the presence of a barbarous and a sorrowing people. The great Minister, faithful to his Sovereign, perished in the decapitation of Strafford; the Episcopacy was cut off by the axe which struck the venerable Laud; and Sovereignty itself disappeared when the head of the monarch fell from the block.

Thus the Patriot—the Puritan—and the anti-monarchist—had each their sanguinary triumph!

CHAPTER XXXIX.

HISTORY OF ALEXANDER LEIGHTON AND OF THE FAMOUS
STATE-LIBEL OF "SION'S PLEA AGAINST PRELACY."

LEIGHTON may be considered as the elder Decius of that party who were suffered to become popular favourites by their voluntary self-immolations.

This learned Scotchman, by the hardihood of his pen, had become the head of the anti-prelatical faction; this was now a large class of the people who were beginning to appear among the meaner sort. Heads which were working more busily than their hands; mechanics and even prophets!

Leighton had already sounded the tocsin in his "Looking-glass of the Holy War," which was the project of an evangelical crusade against the Romanists, in the cause of that kingly King of Bohemia the Palatine, on whose boyish adventure for a coronation, some chose to rest the great cause of Protestantism. Leighton tells us that this effusion of his fiery imagination "found respect from many nations;" but assuredly not from the ministers of the respective powers who were to destroy, or to be destroyed in, this aceldama of Europe. In this "Looking-Glass," however, he had thrown out an invective against bishops, which had roused their notice; but as the writer professed passive obedience to the Divine right of the Sovereign, and was only contesting that of Episcopacy, James only inflicted a reprimand, and sheathed the talons of the Ecclesiastical Hippogriff which was one day to grasp the Presbyter.

Leighton had now become a marked character, as a silenced minister, and he tells us that "some persons of the better sort of the city and country" applied to him to draw up a petition to Parliament of their grievances. Their claims were moderate, looking no further than a mitigation of the arbitrary proceedings of the High-Commission Court. But Leighton, like another Knox, acquainted them with his "simple opinion," which was, "*for an extirpation of the Prelates, with all their*

dependencies and supporters. The lopping of the branches had done no good ; but the striking at the root would make all fall together. *Frustra fit per plura, quod fieri potest per pauciora.* Many works in one, saves labour."

In two hours, our fervid innovator drew up that decade of propositions which afterwards served as the ground-work of his famous State-libel.

An extirpation of the Hierarchy itself affected the imagination of his disciples, who, acknowledging their master, implored Leighton to seize the pen under this afflatus of inspiration. Leighton, indeed, was well-fitted to be the forlorn hope of a faction, by his daring and indomitable nature.

But notwithstanding his own eager relish for the work itself, he ruminated on the evil day which, with a melancholy sagacity, he anticipated. Alluding to his former "Looking-Glass," he observed, "I was almost split upon a former employment, and none to hail me to shore. I shall now have more fists about my ears should this work come to light." He was then exhorted to print beyond the seas ; five hundred names were subscribed in approbation of his doctrine, but only fifty pounds were collected, and the missionary of sedition complains that "his expenses tripled the poor pittance, besides the intermission of his calling." A manuscript letter informs me that he was now practising as a physician.

The zealot passed over to Holland, and hastened two printed copies for the use of the Parliament ; these arrived at the moment of their dissolution. Thus baffled, he pretended it made him "shut up shop," pleading on his examination that he had never published "Sion's Plea" in England ; that he had used every means to suppress it, having addressed it solely to Parliament. However, the tract was always procurable at the price of a rare book, then twenty shillings.* Why Leighton should suppress, as he pretended, that which we shall find he was willing to seal with his blood, can only be classed among the common evasions which are practised by a defendant at the bar.

This State-libel, connected with the fate of the author, has

* Harl. MSS. 7000 ; Mede to Stateville, Feb. 1629.

occasioned much discussion; and by an odd circumstance of bearing a double title, and being usually quoted under the second, has often eluded the researches of historical inquirers. Even Mr. Hallam declares that he had never met with it, and it was long before I discovered "Sion's Plea against Prelacy" in the catalogue of our national library, under the title of "An Appeal to the Parliament."

Leighton seems to have been the first of our political scribes of this eventful period who invented a satirical date to their state-libels; an ingenious device of faction, which afterwards was carried on somewhat amusingly by successive parties under our mutual governments, by Lilburn, Clement Walker, and others. Leighton dates his publication as "printed in the year and month wherein Rochelle was lost." There were also accompaniments of satirical vignettes to attract his readers. In one a whole conclave of bishops are viewed toppled down topsy-turvy from a tower; and on "these intruders upon the privileges of Christ, of the King, and of the Commonwealth, he heartily desireth a *judgment and an execution.*"

Our Mar-prelate addresses the Parliament in this extraordinary style, "You are the Elders of Israel; you are as an army of generals; you are the physicians of the State; up and do your cure! The Prelates are the device of man, contrary to God's commandment, and men must remove them. Unless ye pluck up these stumps of Dagon by the very roots, their nails will grow ranker than ever they were; and they will scratch more devilishly than ever they did. Will any one daub or trim, or put a new cover upon an old rotten house that will fall about his ears; or will they not rather down with it, rid away the rubbish, and build a new one?"* Alluding to the spirited opening of the King's speech, that "the times are for action!" he says "it is a golden apophthegm, the very best theme for your meditation, and motive for your heroic accomplishments. The laconic brevity of King's speeches, as Homer said of Menelaus, is very acute and full of matter, and so they would have themselves understood. For a word is enough from the wise, and to the wise. Who knows yet what a deep aceldama

* An Appeal to Parliament, p. 174.

of blood our land may be? Who is the main impulsive cause of these evils of sin and judgment? Even these men of blood the Prelacy.”*

Heylin, who was usually employed by Laud to examine these state-libels, is supposed to have aggravated the charge against Leighton, who, he says, advises “to slay all the bishops by smiting them under the fifth rib.” These precise words are not found in the libel. Mr. Brodie has well observed that this was no unusual phrase in the theological controversies of the times. Heylin probably only meant, by adopting a current figure, to convey his own sense of the tendency of the libel, rather than any particular sentence in it. The words of Heylin were, however, alleged by the Laudeans to be an incitement to assassination, particularly when afterwards they were often threatened by some of Leighton’s friends. In truth, there are many significant passages hardly ambiguous, against “the men of blood.” Yet with the subtlety practised by libellers, in his closing page the writer suddenly alters his tone, pretending it is the Prelacy, and not the Prelates at which he aims. He couches his ambiguous mercifulness in an obscure figure, borrowed from his latter avocation of medicine. “We fear they are like pleuritic patients that cannot spit, whom nothing but *incision* will cure; we mean of their callings, and not of their persons.” But he who complained that “we leave God to do all the hard work by himself;” who had pointed out “execution by the word and the sword,” and finally had told us that “a word is enough from the wise to the wise,” and could not be supposed to design less than his accusers had charged him with, though in his closing page the artful libeller obscures the violence of his design, seems perfectly intelligible in his preceding ones.

While in imprisonment, before he received his sentence, the Attorney-General had inquisitorially tampered with Leighton to obtain the names of the five hundred who had incited him to the work, among whom were said to be several Members of Parliament—but he intrepidly resisted even the offer of pardon on the condition of declaring them. To induce him to recant,

* An Appeal to Parliament, p. 185.

they attempted to confute his principles; but this was a perilous enterprise, for it was to turn a syllogism, too confidently trusted in by the Registrar of the High Commission Court.

Leighton was conducted to an apartment where he found seven or eight of the members of that court seated at a table, with their Registrar, Sir Henry Martin. Sir Henry undertook to demonstrate that bishops by divine right should be our ministers. This logomachy has been reported by the theological duellist himself. It is a curious specimen of the dialectical genius of the scholastic Puritan.

Sir Henry demanded, "Is there not superiority in a Civil state? Was there not superiority in the state Ecclesiastical under the Jews; witness Aaron's superiority over the priests?"

"So that he reasoned thus in effect, Aaron was over all the Levitical priests, ergo Bishops by divine right, should be our ministers.

"I smiled to hear their champion while I beat the brains out of the cause with a beam of their own making or of the Pope's; I told Sir Henry, that his antecedent and consequent were of so deep distance that all the learning of the world could never make them meet.

"Yet he set a face to prove it by a sounder proposition. If Aaron were over the Priests, then Bishops should be over Ministers, &c.

"I denied the connexion, and told Sir Henry he could not of all the quiver have chosen a deadlier shaft against themselves, as should appear by the retorting of the argument thus,

"Aaron's priesthood was superior to the rest under the law; ergo, no superiority in Ministerial function should have place under the Gospel.

"The sequel I prove thus:

"That which was in form of a type of Christ under the law, must have no place under the Gospel, because it is done away.

"But not only the Priesthood, but also the superiority of Priesthood, or Ministerial function, was in form of a type under the law; ergo, superiority in the Ministerial function must have no place under the Gospel.

"The *Major* I cleared both from proof and reason, as Coloss.

xi. v. 17. The *Minor*, as it is undeniable, so he had granted it, by way of *Quære*.

“The premises being thus invincibly proved, Sir Harry for a while was silent, but at last broke out to his fellow-commissioners in this sort—‘Gentlemen, I can go no further, and I assure you, if it be thus, you may burn all your books!’ The three Deans or Parsons, or what they were, with the Doctor, sate still, mute as fish, not answering one word.”*

Such was the impregnable syllogism, the Major and the Minor, of the scholastic Leighton which disconcerted the learned Registrar of the High Commission Court, and cast the hierarchical Deans into a troubled silence. Systems of religion and political axioms were then made to depend on the fallacies of this artificial arrangement of the Aristotelian logic. The present triumph of the Presbyter depended on a point which his adversary was compelled to concede, but with a *Quære*—that the new Gospel had abrogated the ancient law. This no follower of Jesus could deny. But the syllogism of the Registrar might be changed in its form, and then a new antecedent would produce a new consequent. In the present instance Leighton had assumed that the Mosaic code and institution were but types of the Advent, and in the accomplishment of the law, that law had ceased. Yet on many other occasions he and his party are perpetually appealing to the sacred volume which has preserved the Mosaic revelation; they consulted it for its polity, they referred to it for their authorities, and they alleged it for their conduct: their habits of thought, and the very style of their conversation were all impregnated by the Judaic scriptures; and the customs which they had adopted, smacked oftener of the Synagogue than the Church. The House of Commons in the Protectorate of Cromwell was chiefly filled with these intolerant Jewish-Christians; and their gloomy austerity and stiff-necked pride marked the race of our Puritans and Presbyters.

Of Leighton’s “five hundred” who had subscribed their approbation to his “*Sion’s Plea against Prelacy*,” the greater

* An epitome or brief discovery, &c., of the many and great troubles that Dr. Leighton suffered in his body, estate, and family, for the space of twelve years, &c. 1646.

number were of that humble class of the people which we have noticed. This appeared when they flocked to his prison. A button-maker, refused admittance to his new apostle, was committed for putting his mouth to the key-hole of his dungeon, vociferating "Stand to it, Doctor, and shrink not!" An oatmeal maker, some time afterwards, persisted in keeping on his hat in the Court of High-Commission, as Leighton had set the example, declaring that never would he pull off his hat to bishops. "But you will to Privy-councillors," observed a good-humoured Lord. "Then," replied our Leightonian, "as you are Privy-councillors I put off my hat, but as you are rags of the Beast, lo! I put it on again!" When the Bishop of Winchester would have dismissed this frantic fool, the oatmeal maker exclaimed, "Hold thy peace, thou tail of the Beast, that sittest at the lower end of the table." Leighton—the button maker—the oatmeal man, *et hoc genus omne*, sate at that table ten years afterwards! and though these were often calculating the mystical number in the Revelations about "the Beast," neither they nor "the Beast" ever imagined that approaching metamorphosis.

Such were the confederating friends of the author of "Sion's Plea." They were devoted to the extirpator of bishops, and sent menacing letters to Laud to caution him that "he might expect a pistol, or something else in his belly, if Leighton escaped not." Another was sent to the Lord Treasurer. Fanatical arts were practised by Leighton himself. The day before he was to have received his sentence, he escaped from prison. In his prayer that morning he had mysteriously announced a miracle which would shortly be manifested, and his disciples spread a rumour that the prison-doors of their apostle would be opened, as for Peter. This miracle was the device of one of these people, a tailor, and it required the invention of such a genius. One Levington, "a zelotical Scotchman," and tailor, went to the Fleet-prison, accompanied by a Mr. Anderson, who was also visiting a friend. The tailor had craftily made a suit of grey cloth, the exact counterpart of that worn by Mr. Anderson. When they had entered the Fleet, each separated to go to his friend; the tailor hastened to shave his apostle, and dress him in the suit he had brought. The

porter at the gate, on his returning with his friend in grey, allowed the two to pass, apparently as they had entered. But when the real gentleman in grey afterwards appeared, he was arrested. Anderson declared he was ignorant of the whole plot; but both he and the tailor were heavily fined. Leighton wrote a treatise to prove the lawfulness of his flight, authorised by similar ones of Athanasius, Ambrose, Aquinas, and others. But no prophet should venture to write on the lawfulness of his flight till he had secured himself from a hue and cry, which in a fortnight brought back our apostle from Bedfordshire to the Warden of the Fleet.*

In this libel Leighton professes the utmost loyalty for the King, for whom he would lay down his life. Leighton was not conscious of the grievances of the Parliament—it was merely as a silenced minister that he felt what he considered as the grievance of the Hierarchy. “We proclaim what we think without flattery; that all Christendom hath not such a King for kingly endowments, as our Sovereign and supreme Governor.” And in a narrative of the inhumanity of his gaolers, who had hurried him from the chamber down many dark steps into a loathsome hole among felons, this cruel persecution did not come, as some have supposed, from the King, for Leighton confesses, “I was shut up twenty and two months notwithstanding the King’s command again and again, to replace me in my former chamber.” He had indeed offended the domestic feelings of the Sovereign by observing that “God suffered him to our heavy woe to match with the daughter of Heth, though he missed an Egyptian.” This poignant allusion to the French and Spanish matches made a great sensation. The defence of Leighton, on this passage which he addressed to the King, displays an odd subterfuge, by converting the obnoxious passage into a pretended compliment to his French Queen. “The phrase is a singular phrase,” observed Leighton,

* Rushworth is the only writer who gives some notion of the manner of Leighton’s flight, but his account is both obscure and imperfect. The Warden at the moment gave a false account to Laud of Leighton’s escape, as he said, over the walls, either to excuse himself or from not comprehending the mysterious tale of the porter, of “the two gentlemen in grey.” I find a clear narrative in a manuscript letter of the times: Harl. MSS. 7000. Mede to Stuteville, Feb. 27, 1629.

“and is as little as could be said, if anything were said, in that particular; for the *Hittites* were the kindest and trustiest neighbours that Abraham had.” Leighton, as afterwards did the Puritanic Government, was in this manner introducing perpetual allusions to Scripture history, to accommodate the public affairs of England to the Kingdom of Israel!

It was not, however, solely the hierarchy which received the deadly blow of our zealot's pen: the whole government is charged with a popular rumour, which the ill conduct of public affairs seems to warrant—that of betraying their country, or, as Leighton forcibly expresses it, “all that pass by us spoil us,” meaning France and Spain, “and we spoil all that rely on us,” meaning the Protestant Rochellers, whom he asserts we suffered to perish by famine. An eulogy bestowed on Felton, and the invocation of a future Brutus, startled the pondering lawyers, who in these apostrophes saw nothing less than high-treason.

Leighton himself has reported the conduct of Laud at the moment of his sentence; and curiously characteristic it is of that casuistry which Laud was accustomed to practise on special and critical occasions. “All this while this man of tongue (the bishop) spake what he would without controulment. At his conclusion, he added an apology for his presence and assistance in this great service, where he confessed that by the Canon Law no ecclesiastical persons ought to be present, or assist in such a judicature where there is loss of life or member, but, said he, to take away the ear is not loss of hearing, and so no member lost; so for burning the face, or whipping, no loss of life or member, and therefore he concluded he might assent to the censure.”

Neal, the historian of the Puritans, in order to aggravate the odium of Laud's persecution, and to mark a fiend-like triumph in the Bishop over his prostrate victim, has recorded that while the merciless sentence was pronouncing, “Bishop Laud pulled off his cap, and gave God thanks for it!” This circumstance rests on his single authority, and as we know the side to which his prejudices would lean, it becomes a suspicious one. If Neal has delivered to posterity a fugitive rumour as an ascertained fact, he has violated the solemn duty of an historian. This story of Neal has occasioned more offence to Churchmen than

perhaps it may deserve.* It is not difficult to imagine such an ebullition of the feelings of Laud at the discomfiture of this impious Corah. In the tragical condemnation of the extirpator of Prelacy, his Grace, always warm and hasty, might only have witnessed a public demonstration to support the established order; and indulging more of hope than of cruelty on the new system about to be tried, have expected that the terrible punishments which the barbarism of our penal code authorised, would be a preventive of future impieties against bishops.

Nor can we afford to Leighton all the commiseration his sufferings at first awaken. The intolerance of the enemies of the Hierarchy far exceeded any in the Church-government. The Genevan divines, the sons of Calvin, assumed that as the Mosaic Law punished idolaters with death, every Papist was involved in the same doom; and Leighton, on his own principle, condemns the Dutch Republic for suffering a Roman Catholic to exist in their State. Alluding to an accident, which produced a great sensation in that day, of a Romish priest and his auditory having been buried in the fall of an old house at Blackfriars, Leighton only sees in this deadly blow the finger of God covering the idolaters with blood and rubbish; and which, he adds, "pointed out the duty of *ministers* and *magistrates*, that they should have followed the blow, doing *execution* with the *word* and the *sword*. It is a great fault in men of place that they would have God do all the hard work by himself."† Such was the great adversary of the bishops! Had the places of the judge and the culprit been reversed, the sentence would not have been less merciless. And so it happened! In some lines by Leighton himself, he asks,

" Why put we not imperious Prelates down,
And set Christ's sacred senate in its room?"

When, ten years afterwards, this "Sacred Senate" sat on the

* A recent writer of the Life of Archbishop Laud has pursued an extraordinary mode of screening Laud from this popular odium. For, concluding that "there is not the slightest evidence that Laud was present at the trial," he proceeds, "Denying, therefore, that there is any evidence that Laud was present, &c., he must now be satisfied that this was a rash 'denial.' If the circumstance which has given so much offence had occurred, it would probably have been noticed by Leighton himself."—Lawson's Life and Times of Archbishop Laud. i. 530. And we see it is!

† An Appeal to the Parliament, p. 168.

case of the Quaker Naylor, they inflicted tortures as revolting in their detail as those of Leighton; it was, indeed, with the most difficult contrivances, and in protracted debates of several weeks, that a few calmer heads among the "Sacred Senate" prevented them from adjudging the crack-brained visionary to a horrible death.

A portrait of Leighton, engraved by Hollar, is inscribed with the revolting particulars of his tragical punishment—a picture of blood well suited to the graphical details of the political Spagnolets whose dark pencils have copied the torture stroke by stroke. Yet scarcely have they told us all the variety of his wretchedness during twelve long years of a troubled life in what the enthusiast calls his "Prison-palace"—a close dungeon! Leighton more pathetically describes the merciless condemnation as "having inflicted harder things upon a man and his family than death itself; it was a shuddering sentence and as cruelly executed."

Leighton went to his horrible execution in the orgasm of a wild inspiration; he thought and talked, even in his tortures, labouring with the spirit of martyrdom. Some philosophers in the calm of their cabinets, have conjectured that the view of a vast assembly of the people has stimulated to magnanimity, even the trembler at death, and abated even the sensation of torture—martyrdoms have been met with a rejoicing spirit—but far more intensely may that sympathy affect the unshrinking sufferer who listens to his triumph in the animating shouts of the people themselves. Leighton indeed required no extrinsic aid to support a failing spirit, otherwise he would have found it in his voluble and active wife, who marching by his side, beheld nothing less than a glorious crucifixion in the pillory, where her husband was to suffer nearly the pangs of one. Such a woman felt the importance of her own person. She went on before him to the execution, vociferating that "As Christ was sacrificed between two thieves, so was her husband led between two knaves," the officer and the executioner! The latter was made drunk to perform this bloody work. When Leighton put his neck into the pillory he exclaimed "This is Christ's yoke, and the spirit of glory rests on my head." When his ear was taken off, he cried, "Blessed be God, if I had a hundred I would

lose them for this cause." When they had slit his nostril and branded his cheek he cried out "Such were the wounds which were the wounds of Christ." The knife, the whip, the brand, and the fire were to be repeated, and a sepulchral life was to close over his miseries! With a body macerated and a mind bewildered, both worn out by their equal affliction, Leighton yet lived long enough to describe himself as "The wheat that comes from between the two millstones, tried and purified,—gathering grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles." The old man who had so often mysteriously invoked miracles which were to happen, might at length imagine that a great one was manifest, when his feeble eyes viewed Lambeth Palace changed into Lambeth Prison, and the Mar-prelate himself become its querulous keeper, at the sinking age of seventy-two. On Leighton's application to his former disciples and now his Lords, the Parliament, they appear to have left him to his own poverty, but to have consigned to him the Archiepiscopal Palace to range in, and make reprisals for his damages on those who had occasioned them. Nalson tells us that "he persecuted their purses, with as much rigour and severity as his masters did their persons." Laud notices the sacrifice of his goods which were sold at any price; but these were but the remainders of what Leighton did not seize on, who usually declared, that "All was his! Laud's goods, and all!" Yet the poor old zealot himself on the verge of the grave, was not so placable as usually represented. Addressing the Parliament in 1646 he could not forbear alarming his late "Tormentors, so many as yet live." "Though the laws of God and man call for revenge of innocent blood, yet I refer that to them to whom God hath committed the sword." Such were "the tender mercies" of the Puritan, who was as zealous as his "Tormentors" in appealing to that ultimate regal argument.

With the undisguised emotions of Laud, when, in that great revulsion of fortune, the Archbishop was consigned to the hands of his old Sectarian, we are acquainted; for his own hand has recorded this extremity of his fate. Laud felt it as a studied indignity cast on him, and the prognostic of his own doom. We have his words in the history of his Troubles: "Dr. Leighton

came with a warrant from the honourable House of Commons for the keys of my house at Lambeth, that prisoners might be sent thither. I then saw it evident that all that could, should be done to break my patience. Had it not been so, somebody else might be sent to Lambeth, and not Leighton, who had been censured in the Star-chamber to lose his ears for a base and virulent libel against Bishops and the Church-government established by law, in which book of his were many things which in some times *might have cost him dearer.*"

We may here perceive that notwithstanding the barbarous punishment inflicted on Leighton, the Archbishop considered this extraordinary libeller to have been leniently treated in having had his life spared. Laud once said on another libel of the same school, that "there was treason enough in it to hang a man in any state."

What a meeting was this of Laud and Leighton! These two old men, both grave teachers of Christianity, and having passed their "three score and ten," lingering on the verge of life, were still never to be reconciled! They should have embraced each other on bended knees, praying for mutual forgiveness—but the hatred of party, and the change of fortune only filled their narrow minds, when they lifted up their hands in amazement and horror at each other!

With regard to the inhumanity of the punishment which Leighton underwent, and which has thrown so deep an odium on the government, and more particularly on Laud, I think that this odium has originated in the artifices of party-writers, and the refinement of feeling in those, who, though no advocates for such revolutionary characters, turned aside in disgust from so barbarous a scene. This severity of punishment the philosophic Hume censures, without venturing to describe the horrible operations, but deems it "more just than prudent;" while the fierce Macaulay and her successors, with the address peculiar to genius and faction, have contrived to repeat the detail, horror by horror, as "a tyranny which outwent any example of former ages."

These exaggerations were not the real feelings of contemporaries. Neither did the government presume on this occasion

to be "tyrants ;" nor did the people consider "the tyranny to have outwent any former example."

In the manuscript letter already referred to, it is said, that had not Leighton aggravated his offence by his flight and his conduct, "his Majesty had been inclined to have pardoned all his corporal punishments." It was so declared in court. Lawyers are certainly not the profoundest politicians; they keep their immovable eyes on the written code. The Lords Chief-Justices declared that had the author of such dangerous assertions been called before another tribunal, they would have sentenced him to the punishment of high-treason, as lawyers, and therefore they inflicted the severest they could, short of life. The barbarous punishment of Leighton, must be ascribed far more to the sanguinary code of our jurisprudence, and the rude manners of the times in which those laws were passed, than to the temper of the judges who condemned him. Cruel punishments, at the mere recital of which we shudder—such as the quartering alive of men condemned for treason—were not then struck out of our penal laws. We must weigh the value and nature of things as well as of men, by the standard weights which were used in their own times. I believe that the cry so often raised against the government of Charles the First, or of the Archbishop, on account of the tragical fate of Leighton, has been an artifice practised by a political faction in recent days, who were certain that in painting such horrors they could not fail of exciting the indignation of every humane mind, and to lay the odium on the head of Laud, was to secure our abhorrence of that victim of State. To me the clearest proof that the severe punishment of Leighton was not in its day considered arbitrary and inhuman, as we are apt to conceive, is, as I have mentioned, that this very party, when in power, had recourse to the same penal law, and inflicted similar horrors on the Quaker Naylor; and that in the charges of Parliament against Laud, though the smallest were allowed to expand their list, the sentence passed on Leighton was never noticed.

Truly has Hume observed that this horrid punishment was "more just than prudent." The Statesmen of Charles the First had not been taught the danger a government incurs

when it excites strong sympathy for the criminal. When afterwards the same experiment was repeated on Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton, it produced the same effect of bad policy. About this time, Richelieu observing the triumphant manner in which some condemned Protestants died for their faith, in the presence of the people, that profound minister, terrified at this spirit, instantly ordered that no public punishments should henceforth be practised on heretics.

APPENDIX.

SIR JOHN ELIOT :

HIS CORRESPONDENCE DURING HIS IMPRISONMENT IN THE TOWER.

As no personal history of Sir JOHN ELIOT was known before I wrote, I considered myself fortunate in having been enabled to discover some positive facts, hitherto unknown, of this memorable patriot ; their results assisted in the development of his character.

When I had discovered that Sir John Eliot had formerly been the intimate acquaintance and fellow-traveller of the Duke of Buckingham ; that so late as 1623, Sir John had written in a strain of court flattery and humble intercession ; that he had then suffered an imprisonment, and declared that " having served his Grace with all affection, he had preserved the rights and liberties of the Duke, though with the loss of his own,"—could I pass over so many important circumstances, which hitherto no one had noticed ? Could I avoid combining them together, and then drawing the evident conclusion, that he who was so intrepid a patriot in 1626, had in 1623 been very differently affected towards this State victim ?

What I had said attracted the attention of the amiable descendant of that great Patriot. Lord Eliot favoured me with a correspondence on that occasion, in which the ability of the writer is only equalled by his urbanity.

I had said that Sir John Eliot was " of a new family," an expression retained from a contemporary writer, who at the same time seems to have considered that a family in Cornwall, not of ancient Cornish descent, was there " a new family." I read with interest his Lordship's accurate researches relative to the Family of the Eliots. I rejoice whenever I observe our aristocracy sensible that they have had ancestors, and that there is a posterity. Some appear to consider that they stand unconnected with either.

Lord Eliot writes:—"Without attaching any undue importance to antiquity of family, one may be permitted to entertain some little feeling on this subject; and I trust that you will not think that in mentioning the following circumstances I have dwelt on them at an unreasonable length." I am confident, since I have known him, that Lord Eliot entertains not a little, but a great deal of feeling on this subject. The descendant of an illustrious man has always to consider that a great ancestor is a perpetual rival.

Lord Eliot's researches in the antiquity of his family will interest some of my readers, as a record preserving several curious particulars; although his Lordship observes that "These statements may not be of any interest to the world in general, but they are still of some importance to the descendants of Sir John Eliot."

He then proceeds:—

"The assertion that Sir John Eliot was of a new family is incorrect. The great uncle of Sir John, who was the first possessor of Port Eliot, was, it is true, not of ancient *Cornish* descent, but his family had been seated in Devonshire for many generations; the name of one of his ancestors being found in the Sheriff's Returns of the gentry of that county made in 1433, 12 Henry VI., as may be seen in Fuller's Worthies. Prince likewise, in his Worthies of Devon, mentions the family of Eliots as being ancient. The Priory of St. Germans and its lands were obtained from the family of Champernowne, (to whom they had been granted by Henry the Eighth) in exchange for property possessed by Sir John Eliot's great uncle at Cutlands, near Ashburton. I do not know the exact year in which this exchange took place, but John Eliot died at the Priory of St. Germans, having given it the name of *Port Eliot*, in 1565.* An account of that transaction is to be found in Carew's Survey of Cornwall, published about 1580.† Chalmers, in his Biographical Dictionary, speaks of the family of Eliot of Port Eliot, and those of Heathfield and Minto, to be descended from a Sir W. Aliot, who came over with William the Conqueror, but this account is merely traditional, and cannot be borne out by proof. The Heralds' visitation of Cornwall made in 1602, and preserved in the Heralds' College, gives the armorial bearings of the family, the shield containing twelve quarterings,—a proof, at a time when pre-

* Oldmixon, in the "Critical History of England," i. 182, says, "The Eliots seated themselves at the Priory of St. Germans, now Port Eliot, in Cornwall, about the year 1540, eighty-five years before Sir John Eliot was chosen burgess for that borough, 1st Car. I. See there more of their Devonshire families.

† The first edition of Carew's "Survey," appears to have been in 1602. It was probably written about the time his Lordship notices.

tensions to heraldic honours were minutely scrutinised, that the origin of the family could not have been very recent."

I have already noticed, from the Report of the High Sheriff of Cornwall, and the Commissioners returning a *nihil*, when sent to inquire into the lands and goods of Sir John Eliot, and also from what he had himself declared, I surmised, either that means had been resorted to, to screen his property, or that Eliot was a man of ruined fortunes. I derived my information from a manuscript to which I referred.

On this Lord Eliot remarks:—"With respect to Sir John Eliot's ruined fortunes, I must be allowed to call in question the accuracy of this supposition. The lands attached to the Priory of St. Germans were of considerable extent; they have descended from father to son to the present day, and now form a considerable portion of my father's property—I am certainly at a loss to account for the report of the Sheriff and Commissioners, of which I was ignorant, and can only suppose that he must have conveyed his estate to his son."

This perplexing incident in Sir John's history has been perfectly cleared of any doubts, since I have perused his correspondence. The apparent destitution of Sir John, which startled his Lordship, was solely a contrivance to elude the gripe of the law. A letter addressed to his cousin Boscawen, which I have printed, fully explains "this management of his poor fortune, which through the disturbance of these times I may not call my own." Sir John grants an allowance of 200*l.* per annum to his youngest son for travelling abroad. This was no mean expenditure; Sir Symonds D'Ewes was allowed at college only 50*l.* a year, at a time his father was one of the six clerks in Chancery, with an income of 3000*l.* a year. I find Sir John in the Tower arranging leases for tenants, through the medium of his relatives, who held his estates in trust. He subscribes letters to a confidential servant, "Your loving Master." Nor does Sir John, abstracted as we shall find him in his platonic ethics, evince any deficient shrewdness in worldly affairs; take his opinion on one of his tenants' request to have a wall rebuilt to which Sir John was not liable—"There would be more charity than wisdom in this." It appears that none of the estates were forfeited, nor probably any of the ameracements paid. The vote of 5000*l.* afterwards granted by the Parliament to his sons, was probably a mere party object; and seems to have been a remuneration for a loss which had never been experienced.

An important circumstance in the development of Sir John Eliot's personal character was his extreme irascibility. I ascribed much of the turbulence of his genius to his hot temper, and I conveyed an idea of one

of these eruptions of passion by the extraordinary incident of Sir John's quarrel with the Moyles, when "in the hour of reconciliation, with wine before them, Eliot treacherously stabbed the father in the back." This is the most painful incident in the life of Eliot; and as he is held to have been a martyr in the cause of freedom, party writers, as Mrs. Macaulay and Mr. Brodie, in alluding to several anecdotes of his outrageous violence, for several are noticed, are pleased to say of those who have handed them down to us that "the charges in which they have indulged do not rest on satisfactory evidence." I was satisfied with the evidence I adduced,—namely, that of the very person who had received the blow, and told the particulars to his grandson, the learned Dean Prideaux, from whom Echard received it: I consider the fact is now confirmed by a curious apology sent by Sir John Eliot to Mr. Moyle, which Lord Eliot discovered among some family papers. I transcribe this singular document, with his Lordship's observation:—

APOLOGY OF SIR JOHN ELIOT.

MR. MOYLE,

I doe acknowledge I have done you a greate injury, which I wish I had never done, and doe desire you to remit it, and I desire that all unkindnesse may be forgiven and forgotten betwixt us, and hence-forwarde I shall desire and deserve your love in all friendly offices, as I hope you will mine.

JO. ELYOTTE.

(Witnesses)

WILLIAM CORYTON.

NICHOLAS NICOLLS.

BEVILL GRENVILL.

EDWARD CARTER.

DEGORIE TREMAYNE.

There are two other names which I cannot read; among those above, are persons distinguished in those times, and in Parliament.

On this document Lord Eliot observes, with a due feeling to his great ancestor:—"I do not know whether you will agree with me in thinking, that the language in which it is couched would hardly lead one to suppose that it was addressed by an assassin to his victim. It appears to me to be an acknowledgment of a hasty and unpremeditated act of violence, but not one which precluded, in the writer's opinion, the possibility of a restoration of friendly feeling between him and the injured party."

I perfectly agree with his Lordship, that this extraordinary apology was not written by a man who had stabbed his companion in the back; nor can I imagine, that after such a revolting incident, any approximation to a renewal of intercourse would have been possible. It is therefore evident to me, that this apology was drawn up for some former "great injury," whatever it might be—but it surely confirms the recorded tale. The

apology was accepted, and it was "*in the hour of reconciliation*, with wine before them," that the treacherous blow was struck. We remain, however, in ignorance of the cause of this implacable hostility, as well as of another far more important to learn, his personal invectives against the Duke of Buckingham. I discover by Sir John's letters, that on the death of Buckingham there was a suit pending, and accounts to be settled, between "My Lord Admiral" and Sir John. There is also a letter of Selden from the Temple, dated November, 1628. It relates to "a Patent of Sir John's, delivered to him in a box," for the purpose of Selden's examination whether the death of the granter made it void. This evidently was Buckingham—one of his earliest companions, and apparently his patron. We know, too, that Eliot was at Court—there was a connection with Buckingham and an intercourse with the royal circle, for Sir John was well known to the King, which in the short life of this declamatory Patriot are both remarkable.

In consequence of what I noticed of the singular portrait of Sir John Eliot, of which the late Mr. Belsham had informed me, representing the Patriot with "a comb in his hand," in which some mysterious allusion to his neglected state had been imagined, more particularly as Sir John had desired his posterity to preserve this very Portrait as "a perpetual memorial of his hatred of tyranny,"—Lord Eliot, with the same continued zeal, sent to town from Port Eliot two portraits of the Patriot, taken at different periods of his life—both undoubted originals. I have been favoured with a view of them. They should never more be separated. The one represents Sir John in the vigour of life, with a ruddy complexion; the more interesting portrait, bearing the melancholy inscription that it was *painted a few days before his death in the Tower*, betrays the last stage of atrophy or consumption. The contraction of the pallid face placed by the side of the broad and florid countenance of his early manhood, offers a very striking and pathetic image of mortality.

The mystery attached to "the comb" is perfectly cleared on an inspection of the Tower portrait. Sir John is painted in a very elegant morning dress, apparently of lace, holding this huge and clumsy instrument of his coiffure. It was the bad taste of the artist which produced this impertinent accompaniment; the picture, though somewhat hard and stiff, has a great appearance of truth.

CORRESPONDENCE.

I SAID in the preceding pages of these Commentaries, "During his long imprisonment in the Tower, Sir John Eliot found, as other impetuous spirits have, that wisdom and philosophy have hidden themselves behind the bars of a prison window; there, his passions weaker, and his contemplation more profound, he nobly employed himself on an elaborate treatise on *The Monarchy of Man.*"

When this was written, I was unacquainted with that series of correspondence, chiefly from the Tower, which Lord Eliot has since confided to my care. Nothing less than the abundant zeal which we mutually felt, for a very memorable character imperfectly known in our history, could have induced his Lordship to have exerted no ordinary pains, and me to undergo a slight martyrdom of patience, in conning the alphabet of Sir John.

Sir John Eliot, who loved the labours of the pen, preserved copies of his own letters, and many of those of his correspondents have been bound in the same volume; among these are the illustrious names of Hampden Selden, and Holles; the name of Pym does not appear.

The Correspondence will not throw any light on public affairs, or on the political life of Eliot. Not a single political allusion passes between Hampden and Eliot. The subject appears to have been studiously avoided. Eliot probably dreaded that his papers might be unexpectedly searched; and it was not without difficulty that some of the letters reached the imprisoned Patriot. It is to be regretted that we learn nothing of Sir John's preceding life. He tells his sons that it had been a busy one. There is no evidence of Sir John's disposition to rhyming in his Correspondence; his harsh imprisonment in the Tower had infallibly awakened that propensity, had he ever possessed it. I therefore do not know how to account for the satires said to be composed by him against the Duke of Buckingham. We find in the letters an abundance of philosophy, of the most abstract and elevated ethics; a singular mixture of the dogmas of the Porch, and the faith of Christianity. His classical attainments were considerable; his style of composition is Ciceronian; it is sometimes exuberant, and sometimes it requires great attention not to complain of its obscurity. But he aimed at a splendour to which he often reached; and the fortunate passages of his eloquence had been rarely equalled by

others in his day. He was a votary, perhaps a victim to stoicism; he had filled his mind with sublime reveries; and the stoical philosophy which he so ardently cultivated, may have offered consolations in a dungeon. His scholastic erudition injured his genius; in the Treatises he has left, he advances no position but on some authority; and Hampden, to whom Eliot sent his writings for revision, in performing the critical office with infinite delicacy, advised his friend not to bind up the flowers of others so much, as to draw from his own fertile invention. More than one large Treatise are the fruits of his imprisonment, and remain the monuments of the greatness of his mind.

The letters of Sir John Eliot which I have selected, appear to me to exhibit some novel and singular traits in his own personal character—in his chastised mind, abstracted from the ungoverned passions of society. The lofty strain of morality which he addresses to his sons, is at least admirable—it came from one who formerly had not been himself so familiar with that theory of morals, which charmed him in the dreary years of his confinement. The last days of Eliot seem to have been touched by a more melancholy tenderness,—the secret precursor of a life about to cease; the meltings of his unbroken mind.

I have preserved every letter of Hampden, of whom I have never met with any other writings. They delight from the charm of his manner, and the strong feelings which evidently dictated them. They are usually complimentary or consolatory; some bear a deeper interest; and all are stamped with the character of a superior mind.

(ELIOT PAPERS, 34.)

[This letter, which I could not venture to curtail, is a most uncommon address of a father to his sons. It not only conveys to us some particulars of the memorable writer himself, but displays at full the singular state of his mind—the high tone of his philosophical conceptions. The style seems too elaborate for ordinary day-life, but many reflections show the writer had been schooled by experience, while he lectures on a sublime theory of morals.]

SIR JOHN ELIOT TO HIS SONS.

SONNS,

If my desires had been valuable for one hour, I had long since written to you which (what) in little, does deliver a large character of my fortune, that in nothing has allowed me to be master of myself. I have formerly been prevented by employment, which was so tyrannical on my time, as all minutes were anticipated; now my leisure contradicts me, and is soe violent on the contrary, soe great an enemy to all action, as it makes itself unuseful—both leisure and business have opposed me either in time or libertie, that I have had noe means of expression but my praiers,

in which I have never failed to make God the witness of my love, whose blessings I doubt not will deduce it in some evidence to you.

And now having gotten a little opportunity (though by stealth) I cannot but give it some testimony from myself, and let you see my dearest expectation in your good, in which both my hopes and happiness are fixt as in their sphear, which moves with your endeavours, though guided by the influence of a greater power.

It is no small satisfaction to me when I have intelligence of your health, and I bless Heaven for it, as some effect of my petitions; but to hear of the progress of your learning, of your aptness and diligence in that, of your careful attendance in all exercises of religion, and the instruction and improvements of your minds, which are foundations of a future building, this does infuse another spirit to me, and extends my comforts to a latitude that hardly is expressible. I cannot but in general thus discover it, partly to intimate the pitch of my affections, that your course may rise with it; partly to represent your owne example to you, that you digress not from that rule which practise and experience continually must better.

It is a fine history, well studied, the observation of ourselves, the exact view of our own actions to examine what has past, it begets a great knowledge of particulars, taking of all kinds; and gives a larger advantage to your judgments truly to discriminate, for it carries a full prospect to the hart which opens the intention, and through that simplicity is seene the principle of each motion which shadows or dissembles for us the good or evil. From thence having the trew knowledge of particulars what we have done and how; and the judgment upon that, what our workes are to us; then come we to reflect upon ourselves for the censure (judgment) of any action wherein every little error is discovered, every obliquity is seene, which by the reprehension of the conscience (the most awefull of tribunals) being brought to a secret confession, draws a free repentance and submission for the fault, and soe is reduced to conformity again: this fruite has the study of ourselves, besides many other benefitts. The varietie of contingencies and accidents, in our persons, in our fortunes, in our friends, are as so many lectures of philosophie, showing the doubtful being and possession we have here, the uncertainty of our friends, the mutability of our fortunes, the anxieties of our lives, the changes and vicissitudes they are subject to, which make up that conclusion in divinity that we are but pilgrims and strangers in this world; and therefore should not love it, but our rest and habitation must be elsewhere.

If I should take occasion from myself to dilate this point more fully, what a catalogue could I give of instances of all sorts! What a contiguity of sufferings of which there is yet no end! Should those evils be

complained? Should I make lamentation of these crosses? Should I conceive the worse of my condition in the study of myself that my adversities oppose me? Noe! I may not—(and yet I will not be so stoical as not to think them evils, I will not do that prejudice to virtue by detraction of her adversaries.) They are evils, for I doe confess them, but of that nature and soe followed, soe neighbouring upon good, as they are noe cause of sorrow, but of joy; seeing whose enemies they make us, enemies of fortune, enemies of the world, enemies of their children, and to know for whom we suffer; for Him that is their enemy, for Him that can command them whose agents only, and instruments, they are, to work his trials on us, which may render us more perfect and acceptable to himself. Should these enforce a sorrow which are the true touches of his favour, and not affect us rather with the higher apprehension of our happiness?

Amongst my many obligations to my Creator, which prove the infinity of his mercies that, like a full stream, have been always flowing on me, there is none concerning this life wherein I have found more pleasure or advantage than in these trialls and afflictions (and I may not limitt it soe narrowly within the confines of this life which I hope shall extend much further) the operations they have had, the new effects they worke, the discoveries they make upon ourselves, upon others, upon all; shewing the scope of our intentions, the summe of our endeavours, the strength of all our actions to be vanitie; how can it then but leave an impression in our harts, that we are nearest unto happiness when we are furthest off from them, I meane the vaine intentions of this world, the fruitless labours, and endeavours that they move, from which nothing soe faithfully delivers us, as the crosses and afflictions that we meet, those mastering checks and contraventions that like torrents break down all outward hopes? This speculation of the vanitie of this world does not only shew a happiness in those crosses by the exemption which we gain, but infers a further benefit in that, by a nearer contemplation of ourselves; of what we doe consist, what original we had, to what end we were directed, and in this He whose image is upon us, to whom we doe belong, what materials we are of; that, besides the bodie (which only is obnoxious to these troubles) the better part of our composition is the soule, whose freedom is not subject to anie authoritie without us, but depends wholly on the disposition of the Maker, who framed it for himself, and therefore gave it substance incompatible of all power and dominion but his own.

This happiness I confess in all the trials I have had has never parted from me (how great then is his favour by whose meanes I have enjoyed it!) The days have all seemed pleasant, nor nights have ever been tedious; nor fears nor terrors have possest me, but a constant peace and tranquillity of the mind, whose agitation has been chiefly in thanks and

acknowledgments to Him by whose grace I have subsisted, and shall yet, I hope, participate of his blessings upon you.

I have the more enlarged myself in this, that you might have a right view of the condition which I suffer, least from a bye relation, as through a perspective not truly representing, some false sence might be contracted. Neither could I thinke that altogether unusefull for your knowledge which may afford you both precept and example. Consider it, weigh it duly, and when you find a signe or indication of some error, make it an instruction how to avoid the like; if there appears but the resemblance of some virtue, suppose it better, and make it a president for yourselves; when you meet the prints and footsteps of the Almighty, magnify the goodness of his providence and miracles that makes such low descents; consider that there is a nature turns all sweetness into venom, when from the bitterest hearbs the bee extracts a honie. Industry and the habit of the soule give the effect and operation unto all things, and that to one seems barren and unpleasant, to another is made fruitfull and delight-some: Even in this, by your application and endeavour, I am confident may be found both pleasure and advantage. This comes only as a testimony of my love (and soe you must accept it, the time yielding noe other waie of demonstration), and by this expression know that I daily praie for your happiness and felicity as the chief subject of my wishes, and shall make my continual supplication to the Lord, that from the riches of his mercie he will give you such influence of his graces, as your blessing and prosperitie may satisfy and enlarge the hopes and comforts of

Your most affectionate Father.

TOWER, 8 *July*, 1629.

(ELIOT PAPERS, MS. FOL. 173.)

[The present seems to be the first letter Hampden wrote to Eliot; the address being more formal than the others.]

NOBLE SIR,

I hope this letter is conveyed to you by so safe a hand that yours will be the first that shall open it, or if not, yet since you enjoy as much as without a contradiction you may, the liberty of a prison, it shall be no offence to wish you may make the best use on't: that God may find you as much his, now you enjoy the benefitt of secondary helpes, as you found hime yours while, by deprivation of all others, you were cast upon his immediate support. This is all I have or am willing to say, but that the paper of considerations concerning the plantation might be very safely conveyed to mee by this hand, and after transcribing, should be as safely

returned if you vouchsafe to send it mee. I beseech you present, my service to Mr. Valentine, Mr. Long my countryman if with you, and lett mee be honored with the style of

Your faithfull friend and servant,

JNO. HAMPDEN.

HAMPDEN, *December 8th.*

(ELIOT PAPERS, FOL. 23.)

[This is a complimentary letter of Hampden ; but the mention of Sir John's sons and his "papers" gave it some interest to the father and the author.]

ABOUT 1628 OR 9.

SIR,

If my affections could be so dull as to give way to a sleepy excuse of a letter : yet this bearer, our common friend, had power to awaken them, and command it, to the public experience of whose worth in doing, I can now adde my private, of his patience in suffering the miseries of a rough hewen entertainment : to be tolerated by the addition of your sonnes company : of whome, if ever you live to see a fruite answerable to the promise of the present blossoms, it will be a blessing of that weight as will turne the scale against all worldly afflictions, and denominate your life happy.

I returne your papers with many thankes which I have transcribed, not readd ; the discourse therefore upon the subject must be reserved to another season, when I may with better oportunity and freedome communicate my thoughts to you my friend. Till then with my salutations of all your society, and prayers for your health I rest,

Your ever assured friend and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN.

HAMPDEN, *January 4th.*

(SIR JOHN ELIOT'S MSS. FOL. 56.)

[The following letter shows that Sir John's estates were placed in trust to save them from a legal seizure, or amercement.]

TO MY COUSIN BOSCAWEN.

SIR,

Having a great confidence in your worth, as I find you to have been selected by my father-in-law, I have presumed likewise for my self to name you in a trust for the management of that poor fortune, which through the disturbances of these times I may not call mine own. As it concerns a prisoner, I cannot doubt your readiness to take such an object, from your charity : but the interest of my children being present likewise

in the necessity of orphans, and their extraction from your blood and kindred, give me no less assurance in your love than my libertie might impart. Your trouble will only be for the sealing of some leases now and then, upon compositions of my tenants, for which, as there is occasion, I have appointed this bearer, my servant, Maurice Hill, to attend you, to whom your dispatch in that behalf shall be a full satisfaction of the trust.

TOWER, 28th February, 1630.

(ELIOT MSS. FOL. 94.)

[Eliot remonstrates with his son on some remissness in his studies. He opens with some very exalted ideas of a Platonic cast; and impresses the necessity of "Privacy as the nurse of Studies." At the close the idea of *Intention* is remarkably used.]

RICHARD,

That your studies may not want occasion, if my letters do impair it, I shall often solicit you as now to the intention of that work, hoping more often by that means to hear again from you, for till the last conveyance I had no little doubt, after so long a silence, where you were, or whether you were or no; but now your paper has resolved me with some satisfaction to my hopes, that the reflection of your virtues will in time afford me both comfort and confidence; comfort in your happiness, and confidence against all accident. For as my hopes so my fears have their chief place in you, (you and your brother, for you two I make but one, in respect of the spirit and affection which shall always be between you,) who as in order and expectation you are first, are likewise the greatest object of my care, the success of which will stand for a pattern and prediction to the rest. Therefore you must endeavour to make this precedent exact, that shall have transition to others, and not to frame it to the common models of the time, but *contrarium mundo iter intende*, like the *primum mobile* and first shadow, thought for whole worlds, the generality of men, as the less orbs make their revolutions irregular; then let your motions have that regularity and fulness, as no others may impair them.

In this case it will not be enough to abandon some acquaintance, but to leave all; I mean the pleasure of society, that *esca malorum*, as Cicero calls it, and to retire wholly to yourself. Virtue is more rigid than to be taken with delights; those vanities she leaves, for these she scorns herself; her paths are arduous and rough, but excellent, and pleasant to those who once have past them. Honour is a concomitant they have to entertain them in their journey, nay it becomes their servant, and what is attended by all others, those who travel in that way have it to wait on them. And this effort of virtue has not, as in the vulgar acceptation, its dwelling on

a hill, it crowds not in the multitude, but *extra conspectum*, as Seneca says, beyond the common prospect, for what is familiar is cheap; and those things are always in greatest admiration which are least seen; the desire giving lustre to the object, *majus è longinquo reverentia*, saith Tacitus, all glory is heightened by the distance, not of place but time, that it is rarely seen makes it more glorious and admirable, which without a want and expectation, would be lost, at length neglected, as a prophet is not honoured in his country. Apply this then to yourself, for we may compare Mantua with Rome. Would you have estimation among men (for honor is no other), there are two ways to gain it, virtue and privacy, and the latter is an inducement to the former; for privacy is the only nurse of studies, studies of virtue, therefore for virtue or for honor's sake. What is most happy for yourself is most precious with others, where, that it may follow you, follow not that which flies when it is pursued; for shadows and honor are in that quality alike, if not the same.

But I doubt there are shadows of those shadows that are followed; something less than honour, while the substance and virtue is neglected. How comes it else that your tutor should complain you are careless and remiss? It cannot be when there is true affection, there should be indiligence and neglect; when studie is declined, the desires are alienated from the virtue, for no ends are attained without the means; and the neglect of that shows a diversion from the other. If it be since my last, I must resume my fears, that though your own judgment did not guide you, my cautions should be lost. If it should be hereafter when that advise, those reasons and the commands, and authority of a father (a father most indulgent to the happiness of his child,) which I now give you to redeem the time is spent; to redeem the studies you have missed, and to redeem yourself who are engaged to danger, or that hazard and adventure: if these make no impressions, and these must be read in the characters of your course, if they work not an alteration, if they cause not a new diligence and intention, an intention of yourself, and intention of the object, virtue; an intention of the means, your study, and an exact intention of the time to improve it to that end, I shall then receive that wound, which I think God no enemy could give me, sorrow and affliction of the mind, and that from him from whom I hoped the contrary—but I still hope, and the more confidently for the promise which your letters have assured me. Let it be bettered in performance by your future care and diligence, which shall be accompanied with the prayers and blessings of

Your most loving Father,

JOHN ELIOT.

TOWER, 7th of November, 1630.

To R. ELIOT.

(ELIOT MSS. 108.)

[On the removal of his lodgings in the Tower. These occasion no alteration in his mind. Sends some "light papers" for Sir Oliver Luke's corrections.]

SIR J. ELIOT TO SIR OLIVER LUKE.*

SIR,

My manie troubles of removing have a while hindered me from writing to you. The lodging which I had upon my first remove before Christmas being again altered, soe as I may saie of my lodgings in the Tower as Jacob for his wages. Now then ten times have they changed it, but, I thank God, not once has it caused an alteration of my mind—so infinite is that mercie which has hitherto protected mee, and I doubt not but I shall find it with mee. The greatest violence of that storme is like to fall on Valentine, he being retrencht of that libertie he had, which maie be some prejudice to his business. It threatens likewise some dropps on Mr. Selden, and has stopt the discharge was looked for—being yesterday, his day of appearance in the court, but the judges would not quit him, and therefore continued him again on baile for a while longer, that they might further advise therein.

* * * * *
* * * * *

When you have wearied your good thoughts with those light papers that I sent you, return them with the corrections of your judgment. I may one day send you others of more worth, if it please God to continue me this leisure and my health, but the best can be but broken, and in patches, from him that dares not hazard to gather them. Such things from me falling like the leaves in Autumn soe variously and uncertainly, that they hardly meet again—but with you I am confident what else my weakness shall present, will have a faire acceptance. Your charity is my assurance in this point, of which being most deserving, as of your praiers, I rest,

Your most affectionate servant,

JOHN ELIOT.

TOWER, 25th January, 1631.

* Knight, and Member for Bedfordshire.

(ELIOT PAPERS, 110.)

[Eliot complains of a difficulty in receiving letters. He alludes to some rumours of his liberation, and closes not without hope of rejoining the Grenville family.]

TO MR. GRENVILLE.

TOWER, 31st *January*, 1631-32.

SIR,

The restraint and watch upon me barrs much of my intercourse with my frends, while their presence is denied me, and letters are soe dangerous and suspected, as it is little that way we exchange; soe as if circumstances shall condemn me, I must stand guiltie in their judgments, yet yours, though with some difficultie I have received, and manie times when it was knocking at my door, because their convoy could not enter they did retire again, wherein I must commend the caution of your messenger; but at length it found a safe passage by my servant, made mee happie in your favour, for which this comes as a retribution and acknowledgment.

For those rumours which you meet that are but artificial, or by chance, it must be your wisdom not to credit them; manie such false fires are flyinge dailie in the ear: when there shall be occasion, expect that intelligence from frends, for which in the meene time you do well to be provided, though I shall crave when that dispute falls properlie and for reasons not deniable, a change of your intention in particulars as it concerns mysefe, in the rest I shall concur in all readiness to serve you, and in all you shall command me, who am nothing but as you represent. My humble service to your ladie, and tell her that yet I doubt not to kiss her hande—make much of my godsonne.

(ELIOT MSS.)

[Eliot describes the beginning of his fatal disorder, which he thought originated only in colds.]

TO KNIGHTLEY, HIS BROTHER.

TOWER, 15 *March*, 1631-32.

FOR the present I am wholly at a stand, and have been soe for this fortnight by a sicknesse which it has pleased my Master to impose, in whose hands remain the issues of life and death. It comes originally from my colds, with which the cough having been long upon me causes such ill effects to follow it, that the symptoms are more dangerous than the grief; it has weakened much both the appetite and concoction, and the outward strength, by that some doubt there is of a consumption, but we

endeavour to prevent it by application of the means, and as the great physicians, seek the blessing from the Lord, &c.

[About a week after, he says his health is amended, except the hoarseness, and some remainder of the cough, which he expects the season will remove.]

[He philosophises with good humour on his doctors. They had already considered his illness to be consumption.]

TO HAMPDEN.

Dated 22 *March*, 1631-32.

LATELY my business hath been much with doctors, so that but by them, I have had but little trouble with myself. These three weeks I have had a full leasure to do nothing, and strictly tied unto it either by their direction or my weakness. The cause originally was a cold, but the symptoms that did follow it spake more sickness; a gradual indisposition it begot in all the faculties of the bodie. The learned said a consumption did attend it, but I thank God I did not feel or credit it. What they advise as the ordinance that's appointed I was content to use, and in the time I was a patient suffered whatever they imposed. Great is the authority of princes, but greater much is their's who both command our purses and our wills. What the success of their government wills must be referred to Him that is master of their power. I find myself bettered, though not well, which makes me the more readie to observe them. The divine blessing must effectuate their wit—it is that medicine that has hitherto protected me, and will continue me amongst other affairs to remain

Your faithfull friend and servant,

J. E.

(ELIOT'S MS. LETTERS, 119.)

[Hampden sends some observations on his younger son, John Eliot; and on his elder, respecting some irregularity at College. At the close, Hampden gives some opinion of Eliot's manuscript.]

HAMPDEN TO ELIOT.

SIR,

I hope you will receive your sonnes both safe, and that God will direct you to dispose of them as they may be raised up for his service and to your comfort.

Some words, I had with your younger sonne, and given him a taste of those apprehensions he is like to find with you, which I tell him future obedience to your pleasure, rather than justification of past passages must

remove. He professeth fair; and the ingenuity of his nature doth it, without words; but you know vertuous actions flow not infallibly from the flexiblest dispositions; and love's only a fitt subject for admonition and government to work on; especially that which is paternal. I confess my shallowness to resolve, and therefore unwillingness to say any thing concerning his course, yet will I not give over the consideration, because I much desire to see the spirit rightly managed. But for your elder I think you may with security return him in convenient time, for certainly there was nothing to administer feare of a plott; and in another action that concerned himself, which he'll tell you of, he received good satisfaction of the Vice Chancellor's faire carriage towards him.

I searched my study this morning for a booke to send you of a like subject to that of the papers I had of you, but find it not; as soon as I recover it I'll recommend it to your view. When you have finished your other parts, I pray think mee as worthy of the sight of it as your former, and in both together I'll bewray my weakness to my friend by declaring my sense of them. That I did see is an exquisite nosegay composed of curious flowers, bound together with as fine a thredd; but I must in the end expect honey from my friend somewhat out of those flowers digested, made his own, and giving a true taste of his own sweetnesse, though for that I shall awaite a fite time and place. The Lord sanctify unto you the sournesse of your present estate and the comforts of your posterity.

Your ever the same assured friend,

J. HAMPDEN.

April 4th.

(ADDITIONAL MSS. 5016.)

[At the British Museum, which I accidentally discovered in a box. This letter never reached Eliot, it was intercepted.]

JOHN HAMPDEN TO SIR JOHN ELIOT.

NOBLE SIR,

'Tis well for me that letters cannot blush, else you would easily reade me guilty. I ame ashamed of so long a silence, and know not how to excuse it, for as nothing but businesse can speake for mee, of which kinde I have many advocates, so can I not tell how to call any businesse greater than holding an affectionate correspondence with so excellent a frend. My only confidence is I *pleade* at a barr of *love*, where absolutions are much more frequent than censures. Sure I am that conscience of neglect doth not accuse me; though evidence of fact doth. I would add more, but the entertainment of a stranger friend calls upon me, and *one* other *unevitable* occasion; hold mee excused, *therefore*, deare friend, and

if you vouchsafe mee a *letter*, lett mee beg of you to teach me some thrift of time, that I may imploy more in your service, who will ever be

Your faithful servant and affectionate friend,

JO. HAMPDEN.

Commend my service to the soldier if not gone to his Colonel.

HAMPDEN, *March 21*, 1631-32.

To my honored and deare friend Sr John Eliott, at his lodging in the Tower.

(ELIOT'S MSS. LETTERS, FOL. 126.)

[This animated letter of Hampden relates to Sir John Eliot's sons. He describes the promising character of Mr. Richard Eliot.]

SIR,

I am so perfectly acquainted with your cleare insight into the dispositions of men, and ability to fitt them with courses suitable, that had you bestowed sonnes of mine as you have done your owne, my judgment durst hardly have called it into question, especially when in laying downe your designe, you have prevented the objections to be made against it: for if Mr. Richard Eliott will in the intermissions of action adde study to practice, and adorne that lively spiritt with flowers of contemplation, he'll raise our expectations of another Sir Edward Verre, that had this character—all summer in the field, all winter in his study, in whose fall fame makes this kingdome a great looser: and having taken this resolution from Counsaile with the highest wisdome (as I doubt not but you have), I hope and pray the same power will crown it with a blessing answerable to your wish.

The way you take with my other friend declares you to be none of the Bishop of Exeter's converts, of whose minde neither am I superstitiously: but had my opinion been asked I should (as vulgar conceits use to do) have showed my power rather to raise objections than to answer them; a temper between Fraunce and Oxford might have taken away his scruple with more advantage to his years: to visite Cambridge as a free man for variety and delight, and there entertained himselfe till the next Spring: when University studys and peace had been better settled than I heare it is; for although he be one of those that of his age were looked for in no other booke but that of the minde would be found no ward if you should die to-morrow: yet 'tis a great hazard mee thinkes to send so sweet a disposition guarded with no more experience amongst a people, whereof many make it their religion to be superstitious in impiety; and their behaviour to be affected in ill-manners; but God, who only knowes the periods of life, and oportunities to come, hath designed him (I hope) for

his owne service betime, and stirred up your providence to husband hime so early for great affaires, then shall he be sure to find Hime in Fraunce, that Abraham did in Terar and Joseph in Egypt, under whose wing alone is perfect safety.

Concerning the Lord, who is nowe reported to be as deepe in repentance as he was profound in sinne: the papers, &c.: I shall take leave from your favour, and my streight of time to be silent till the next weeke, when I hope for the happinesse to kisse your handes, and to present you with my most humble thanks for your letters, which confirm the observation I have made in the progresse of affections: that it is easier much to winne upon ingenious natures than to meritt it. This they tell mee I have done of yours, and I account a noble purchas, which to improve with the best services you can command and I perform, shall be the care of

Your affectionate friend and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN.

HAMPDEN, *May 11th*, 1631.

Present my services to Mr. Long, Mr. Valentine, &c.

Do not thinke by what I say that I am fully satisfied of your younger sonne course intended, for I have a crotchett out of the ordinary way, which I would have acquainted you with, if I had spoken with you before he had gone, but am almost ashamed to communicate.

(ELIOT PAPERS, FOL. 132.)

HAMPDEN TO ELIOT.

SIR,

I received your commands by the hands of Mr. Wian,* and was glad to know by them that another's word had power to commaund your faith in my readinesse to obey you, which mine it seems had not. If you yet lack an experience, I wish you had putt mee upon the test of a worke more difficult and important, that your opinion might be changed into believe. That man you wrote for I will unfainedly receive into my good opinion, and declare it really when he shall have occasion to putt me to the prooffe. I cannot trouble you with many words at this time: make good use of the bookes you shall receive from mee, and of your time; be sure you shall render a strict account of both to

Your ever assured friend and servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN.

Present my service to Mr. Long. I would faine heare of his health.

HAMPDEN, *June 8th*, 1631.

* Sir John had written a letter of introduction for Mr. Wian to Hampden. Wian was his Proctor.

(ELIOT LETTERS, 135.)

[In this letter to the famous Holles, he does not darkly hint at the danger of his correspondence. Six months elapsed before Eliot received the answer. Both parties agree that they can only safely communicate by their hearts.]

SIR JOHN ELIOT TO D. HOLLES.

SIR,

Through a long silence I hope you can retain the confidence and memoire of your frende. He that knows your virtue in the generale cannot doubt any particular of your charitie. The corruption of this age, if no other danger might occur, were an excuse, even in business, for not writing. The sun, we see, begets divers monsters on the earth when it has heat and violence; Time may do more on paper; therefore the safest intercourse is by harts; in this way I have much intelligence to give you, but you may divine it without prophesie. 'Tis but the honour and affection which I owe you contracted in these sillables.

Your most faithfull frend and servant,

J. E.

TOWER, 23d June, 1631.

(ELIOT LETTERS, 159.)

WORTHY SIR,

I am confident you believe I have returned you a thousand of thancks, and as many answers to your loving letter, since you were pleased to honour me with it, as that before I did as many times visit you with my best well-wishing thoughts, and entertaine you with the offers of my faithfulest services, and that all this intercourse hath been really and truly acted, being done by the hart, which is both (as you say) the safest, and indeed alone real: for that is, though perhaps it appeare not, whereas great outward professions many times appeare when thei are in substance nothing. You and I have found this to be trew philosophy, which as your wisdom will make use of to discern a superficial frend, so lett your goodness do the same to judge aright of his silence and of all his actions, who is without complement,

Your most faithfull and affectionate frend and servant,

D. HOLLES.

I need not express here my desire to be remembered to the rest of our fellowes, nor need I name them.

DAMERAM, (query ?) 26th Dec. 1631.

(ELIOT'S MS. LETTERS, 140.)

[This is a literary letter, replete with delicate hints and nervous criticism ; it conveys a high notion of the good taste and the good sense of Hampden.]

HAMPDEN TO SIR JOHN ELIOT.

SIR,

You shall receive the booke I promised by the bearer's immediate hand. For the other papers I presume to take a little, and but a little respite. I have looked upon that rare piece only with a superficial view, or at first sight, to take the aspect, and proportion in the whole : after, with a more accurate eye, to take out the lineaments of every part. 'Twere rashness in me, therefore, to discover any judgment before I have ground to make one. This I discern, that 'tis as complete an image of the patterne as can be drawne by lines. A lively character of a large minde. The subject, method, and expressions, excellent and homogeniall, and to say truth, (sweet heart,) somewhat exceeding my commendations : my words cannot render them to the life ; yet, to shew my ingenuity rather than wit, would not a less modell have given a full representation of that subject? Not by diminution but by contraction of parts. I desire to learne, I dare not say. The variations upon each particular seem many. All I confess excellent. The fountains are full ; the channel narrow ; that may be the cause, or that the author imitated Virgil, who made more verses by many than he intended to write, to extract a just number. Had I seen all his, I could easily have told him make fewer ; but if he had bade me tell which he should have spared, I had been apposed : so say I, of these expressions. And that to satisfy you, not my selfe, but that by obeying you in a command so contrary to my own disposition, you may measure how large a power you have over

J. HAMPDEN.

HAMPDEN, *June 20, 1631.*

Recommend my service to Mr. Long ; and if Sir Oliver Luke be in town, express my affections to him in my words. The first part of your papers you had by the hands of B. Valentine long since. If you hear of your sons, or can send to them, let me know.

(ELIOT PAPERS, 130.)

[This is a curious letter of one of the country gentlemen, of Sir John's party, who gives an account of the commissioners for Loan-money. He "would not be complimented out of his money," and exults on "holding his hands fast in his pocket." He was probably the Mr. Scawen whose name appears in Lord Holles's Memoirs, 137, for a pension granted by the party of the Independents "to buy his voice." Scawen is characterised as "one who formerly had not very well liked of their ways." So that this sturdy Patriot, after all, turned out to be the pensioned of a revolutionary faction.]

MR. SCAWEN TO SIR JOHN ELIOT.

THE seconde fearfull commission is now past, and since by your servant you are pleased to demand it of me, I will present you with the relation of the progresse of it.

We were all called together (but in severall days following) at Bodmin. After the commission was read, we were like to depart without as much as any speech offered us; much tyme was spent in straining courtesy between the son and the father, and I think we had bin deprived of the expectation, had not the courtier brought down some of his court-phrases in exchange for the mony. I interpreted their longe silence to the best, thinking they meant by it, that they thought the matter such as no Cornish man would open his mouth in it, and therefore fittest for a stranger, who, for aught that I could perceive, directed his words more to those that should have spoken, than to us that should have heard.

We were directed the first day, that such as would not compound, should give their answers in writing; a course which, if they had held thorough, would have proved little to their advantage. The hundred of East was first called in, which (making choice of the pistors and men fittest for composition) they made pretty store of mony, till St. Germans, according to the direction, giving their several papers, had shewn the way of non-composition, (for of twenty-eight returned, not one compounded). Landrake and Landulph followed the president, upon which they thought it best to finish that day's service without calling out that one hundred. The West hundred had not many: Pyder and Stratton very few; Powder somewhat more; but the greatest proportion raised came from Penrith and Kerrier, Trigg and Lesnewth, they being under the command of the Castle, they thought it not wisdom to hold out. The total amounts to not more than two thousand pounds, of which the most of it comes from the meaner sort of people, and such as, I presume, scarce have the value. Some with great words and threatenings, some with persuasions (wherein Sir B. did all) were drawne to it. I was like to have been complimented out of my mony; but that knowing with

whom I had to deal, I held, whilst I talked with them, my hands fast in my pocket.

You will wonder to hear what things we had here returned for knights : but that nothing is now to be wondered at.

If any thing lie here wherein I may serve you, I shall take it an honour to be commanded ; and be assured, that as you suffer for others, so there are some others that suffer for you, amongst which is

Your servant,

W. S.

SIR JOHN'S ANSWER ABOUT THE LOAN-MONGERS AT BODMIN.

June 21, 1631.

SIR,

I thanke you for your intelligence of the late passages at Bodmin, wherein some satisfaction does arise, that though that country have not all the wisdom that they should, yet they are not in as great stupiditie as some others, but divide between folly and abjection. I am glad to hear your neighbours at St. German's doe so well, and by your example make themselves good presidents for others. Those that broke that rule will have occasion to repent it, when they shall see their gain only in the loss of their own monie, which may work a better circumspection for the future. Though I am at a great distance from you in my person, my affection is still with you ; and as I wish your happiness, my indeavours shall be readie to procure it. I praie, as to yourself whom I would have confident of this truth, give it in assurance to the rest, that in all things which may level with my power, none shall be more industrious to that service than

J. E.

(ELIOT PAPERS, MS. FOL. 146.)

[A complimentary letter, with the present of a small buck, from Hampden.]

DEAR SIR,

I received a letter from you the last weeke, for which I owe you ten, to countervaille those lines by encrease in number that I cannot equall in weight : but time is not mine now, nor hath bene since that came to my hands : in your favour therefore hold mee excused. This bearer is appointed to present you with a buck out of my paddock, which must be a small one, to hold proportion with the place and soyle it was bred in. Shortly, I hope (if I do well to hope) to see you ; yet durst I not prolong the expectation of your papers.

You have concerning them layde commaunds upon mee beyond my

ability to give you satisfaction in ; but if my apology will not serve when wee meete, I will not decline the service, though to the bewraying of my owne ignorance, which yet I hope your love will cover.

Your ever assured friend and servant,

JNO. HAMPDEN.

HAMPDEN, *July 27, 1631.*

(ELIOT LETTERS, 152.)

[Eliot's advice to his younger son John on travelling to Italy. Hopes he will avoid "the territories of the Church," and forbids his entrance into Spain: at that period so universal was the dread of relapsing into Papistry.]

TO JOHN ELIOT.

SONNE,

I have received and considered of your letters which mention your desire and reasons to pass speedily into Italy. Good company, I knowe, is a choise thinge, and as a pleasure so an advantage in your travells, which I presume you studie, not for name only, or the affection of some title, but as it meetes with virtue, and then it's truly valuable, that being the crowne and dignity of all honor. The opportunity I confesse which such company does present is a fair motive for the journey, but the time I doubt not yet seasonable to answer it. Autumn in those parts is most dangerous to strangers: the abundance of their fruites, the corruption of their aer through the strife of heat and moisture, and the natural disposition of all bodies to sicknesse and infection in the return of blood, makes it at first more fearful; besides, the plague has rained generally in that country, and some townes still are visited, by which both the aer and houses may be yet suspected, untile some frosts correct them. I leave to your better consideration to resolve to stay till Spring.

The reason which you give for the advantage of the language, has its truth meerly the contrary; for if without knowledge in the French you first shall seek the Italian, that will be then less pleasant and soe more difficult, by which the more necessary will be left, to be then gained when perchance there will be leasure for it: whereas if you shall gett againe some perfection in the French, and then gett into Italic, what you then lose will be regained againe at your returninge homewards, and you become a master in the tongucs. This winter spent in France I hope will be enough for preparation, and then at springe you may pass from thence to Italic.

For the danger that's pretended in your travells in those parts only with private company, I am confident there is no reason, but what the sickness may occasion, and that admits no privilegedge. The territories of the Church I hope you will avoid (those I confess are dangerous, as all

Spaine, which by no meanes I can allow you ever to enter), but other parts are free, and peaceable as in England, where with discretion you may as much rely on your safetie, for the present troubles in France I conceive little cause of doubt. To strangers they impart noe hazards or adventures, more than voluntarily they insure, but such advantage of knowledge and experience they may yield, which I did think the hope and spirit of that gentleman from whom you received that argument would not have declined.

Thus much in answer to your letter, which I make only on advise. I wonder you never wrote since your being over of Monsieur Durant. His wife inquires here for him, whom I would gladly satisfie, as know how you have agreed. Be careful in your religion, make your devotions frequent, seekē the blessing from above, drawe your imitation to good patternes, lett not vaine pedantries deceive you, prepare your estimation by your virtue, which your own carriage and example must acquire, wherein you have assistants in the most earnest prayers and wishes of

Your loving Father,

JOHN ELIOT.

TOWER, 1st September, 1631.

(ELIOT PAPERS, MSS. FOL. 163.)

[Hamptden sends news, and highly compliments the genius and studies of Eliot.]

SIR,

In the end of my travailes, I meete the messengers of your love, which bring mee a most gratefull wellcome: your intentions outfly mine that thought to have prevented yours, and convince mee of my disability to keepe pace with you, or the times. My imploiment of late in interrogatory with like affairs hath deprived mee of leisure to complement, and the frame of depositions is able to justle out the style of a letter. You were farre enough above my emulation before; but breathing now the same ayre with an ambassador, you are out of all ayme.

I believe well of his negotiation from the large testimony you have given of his parts, and I beleeve the King of Sweden's sword will be the best of his topicks to persuade a peace.

'Tis a powerful one now if I heare aright: fame giving Tilly a late defeate in Saxony with 20,000 losse; the truth whereof will facilitate our worke: the Spaniard's curtesy being known to be no lesse then willingly to render that which he cannot hold. The notion of these effects interrupts not our quiett, though the reasons by which they are governed do transcend our pitch; your apprehensions that ascend a region above those clouds which shadow us, are fitt to pierce such height; and ours to

receave such notions as descend from thence; which while you are pleased to impart you make the demonstrations of your favour to become the rich possessions of

Your ever faithfull friend and servant,
Present my service to Mr. Long. JOHN HAMPDEN.

HAMPDEN, *October 3.*

God, I thanke him, hath made me father of another sonne.

(ELIOT PAPERS, 168.)

[Sir John seems in the following letter somewhat doubtful of a political apostacy in his friend and fellow-sufferer, Valentine, who he confesses has "his jugglings."]

SIR JOHN ELIOT TO THOMAS GODFREY.

GODFREY DATES FROM GRANTHAM.

* * * * *

VALENTINE after his long travails did betake himself to rest, so as in a month or more, being at his lodging near the Gate-house, noe friends might see him but whom his Greatnesse would admit. Sicknesse was pretended, but there were that thought it counterfeit and affected; and yet there be that hold his dissimulation worthie punishment. Really I believe him (his juglinge set aside) in the same state he was, both in bodie and in businesse, for though the charge of the Attorney may have changed something in his favour, his fortune is not altered, but the expectations are the same, and as the virtue, such may be the man. This is all I can tell you of him, unless by supposition I could judg him, in his reservations and retirement, knocking at some back-door of the Court, at which if he enter to preferment, you shall know it from

Your faithfull friend and servant,

TOWER, *8th November, 1631.*

J. E.

(ELIOT PAPERS, 179.)

[Of 'all these letters the present seems the most beautiful, the deepest feelings are revealed in the most simple language. It is pathetic—it is even awful, when we find that it was the close of Eliot's correspondence¹², and the description of the emotions of his departing spirit. Hence the religious consolations; the mournful happiness which cheered the consumptive and weary prisoner, who was now anticipating that after-state, to which he was fast approaching.]

TO HAMPDEN.

SIR,

Besides the acknowledgment of your favour that have so much compassion on your friend, I have little to return you from him that has nothing worthy of your acceptance but the contestation that I have between an ill bodie and the aer, that quarrell, and are friends, as the summer winds

affect them. I have these three daies been abroad, and as often brought in new impressions of the colds, yet body and strength and appetite I finde myself bettered by the motion. Cold at first was the occasion of my sickness, heat and tenderness by close keepinge in my chamber has since increast my weakness. Air and exercise are thought most proper to repaire it, which are the prescription of my Doctors, though noe physick. I thank God other medicines I now take not, but those Catholicons, and doe hope I shall not need them: as children learn to go, I shall get acquainted with the aer, practice and use will compasse it, and now and then a fall is an instruction for the future. These varieties He does trie us with, that will have us perfect at all parts, and as He gives the trial, He likewise gives the ability that shall be necessary for the worke He will supplie, that does command the labour, whose deliveringe from the Lion and the Bear, has the Philistine also at the disposition of his will, and those that trust him, under his protection and defence. O! infinite mercy of our Master, deare frend, how it abounds to us, that are unworthy of his service! How broken! how imperfect! how perverse and crooked are our waies in obedience to him! how exactly straight is the line of his providence to us, drawn out through all occurrents and particulars to the whole length and measure of our time; how perfect is his hand that has given his Sonne unto us, and with him has promised likewise to give us all things—relieving our wants, sanctifying our necessities, preventing our dangers, freeing us from all extremities, and died himself for us! What can we render? what retribution can we make worthy soe great a majestie? worthy such love and favour? We have nothing but ourselves who are unworthy above all, and yett that as all other things is his; for us to offer up that, is but to give him of his owne, and that in far worse condition than we at first received it, which yet (for infinite is his goodnesse for the merits of his Sonne) He is contented to accept. This, dear frend, must be the comfort of his children; this is the physic we must use in all our sicknesse and extremities; this is the strengthening of the weake, the nuriching of the poore, the libertie of the captive, the health of the diseased, the life of those that die, the death of that wretched life of sin, and this happiness hath his saints. The contemplation of this happiness has led me almost beyond the compass of a letter; but the hast I use unto my frends, and the affection that does move it, will I hope excuse me. Frends should communicate their joyes: this as the greatest thereof, I could not but impart unto my frend, being therein moved by the present expectation of your letters, which always have the grace of much intelligence, and are happiness to him that is trulie

Your's,

J. E.

Had Charles the First been as intimately acquainted with the nobler aspirations of Sir John Eliot in his prison, as the reader is now enabled to be, the severity of that imprisonment had perhaps been mitigated. But Eliot, who seems to have been far more a man of sensation than a philosopher, in the active period of his life—that period when he struck at Moyle, and when his personal rancour broke out against his former friend Buckingham, had committed even a less pardonable irruption of his irascible nature. Eliot had implicated the King's connivance at the rumoured poisoning of his royal father. He alluded to something "which he feared to speak and feared to think." The harshness of Charles the First towards Eliot, and Charles is not accused of cruelty even by his enemies, indicates a cause of offence, either of a deeper dye, or of a more personal nature, than probably we have yet discovered.

END OF VOL. I.

